

insane who would seek to disturb that arrangement. Then, advancing from that, they came to the conclusion that in each province there might be a portion but not the whole of the natural resources of the province transferred to the ownership and control of the province. Finally, after we had attained office, a very rapid advance was made, and they asked that all the natural resources of the province should be transferred to them; and during the last year or eighteen months they have made a still further rapid advance and have asked not only that all the natural resources of the province should be transferred to them but that they should retain the grant made out of the federal treasury of Canada, as compensation for the natural resources. When my hon. friend suggests that there has been any change of attitude on the part of the present Administration, might I respectfully ask that he would turn his introspection upon the consideration of these kaleidoscopic changes and inform us what is the reason which has impelled this very rapid development and advance of policy in the Liberal leaders of the West?

I said to the hon. member for Regina (Mr. Martin), when he asked me a question in this House either last session or the session before, that we were standing upon this question exactly where we stood in 1905. The very declaration to which attention was then called, a declaration made in the Halifax platform of 1907, was this:

The restoration of the public lands to the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan upon fair terms.

And it was my hope and desire that when there was a conference between the Premiers of all the provinces of Canada during last autumn this subject would have been taken up and discussed at that conference, because every one knew that the question of the rights of the Maritime provinces in connection with the transfer of these natural resources to the western provinces had been made the subject of debate in this House. My hon. friend the member for the city of St. John (Mr. Pugsley) had, indeed urged this subject upon my attention in the session of 1912; and I said at that time what I hold to-day with regard to the whole subject. Mr. Pugsley asked me at that time, in connection with the Ontario boundary question and in connection, if I remember correctly, with the transfer of their resources to the western provinces, whether the position of the smaller provinces—Nova

[Mr. Borden.]

Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island—with regard to financial considerations would not receive attention. It was pointed out on behalf of the Maritime provinces at that time that being members of this Confederation they had certain rights in connection with lands that had been acquired by Canada in the first instance, and they also had certain rights by reason of the fact that Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba had had their boundaries very greatly extended and that there was no similar opportunity for the people of the Maritime provinces to have their boundaries extended. I said, in reply to the observations of the hon. member for St. John:

I quite appreciate the spirit and the object of the observations that my hon. friend has just submitted. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying to him what I have said very distinctly before, that the views he put forward do appeal to me, and I think, that in regard to the territory of these two very large provinces and in connection with the proposed transfer of the public domain to the three prairie provinces, the just rights of the Maritime provinces of Canada must be taken into consideration.

And I had hoped that that subject would have been taken into consideration by the representatives of the governments of the various provinces; but apparently that was not done, and the subject remains for the consideration of this Government, and later, no doubt, for the consideration of Parliament.

A very important letter upon this subject was addressed by the Premier of Alberta to my right hon. friend who leads the Opposition, on the 20th day of March, 1911, and I propose, for the information of the House, to place some extracts from that letter upon the pages of 'Hansard.' At a later date I propose to have all the documents in connection with this matter brought down in the form of a blue book so that they will be available to hon. members of this House. The letter from Mr. Sifton to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, under date of the 20th March, is very long. It sets forth many reasons urged by Mr. Sifton upon Sir Wilfrid Laurier for the transfer of a portion of the natural resources of the prairie provinces to the governments of those provinces. That portion of the letter which contains his claim is in these words:

Therefore, with these observations in mind, acting in accordance with the resolution of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, and believing that the request following will promote the good government and advancement of the province of Alberta without conflicting with the wider interests of the Dominion of Canada, the Gov-