

would be desirable to do so; and it is absolutely necessary, if we are to settle that country, that provision should be made for the settlement of communities like these.

Mr. BLAKE. The cases which the hon. gentleman puts before the House are provided for in section 6 and subsequent sections, which are specially directed to meet the requirements of those who wish to select lands in advance and settle together. But they do not involve the proposition which is made in this particular amendment, and by which individuals may acquire large tracts of land, which they may cultivate, or, as landlords, lease it to others, or, as vendors, sell it at a profit. It seems to me that the only condition in which this land should be disposed of by large sales, should be actual settlement, early settlement, and settlement in which the occupant of the property shall be its owner. I, therefore, do not see that the hon. gentleman has made any case, that he has given us any reason why this law should be altered in the particular in which he now proposes to alter it.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The party must be allowed to purchase, and the Government must have the means and the authority to make returns of the articles purchased. No Government in this country would be so foolish, and would run so contrary to the spirit of the country, as to grant large tracts of land, uninterrupted and continuous sections of land, giving the purchaser unlimited power to form a tenantry, or to a middleman to sell it at a profit. No Government would do that. But in order to induce individual capitalists to go in and purchase under conditions to be laid down from time to time, as the requirements of the country call for, and as the alterations of the circumstances from time to time call for, it is necessary that we should have this power, and I ask the Committee to entrust the Government with it.

Mr. MILLS. I think it unfortunate that the hon. gentleman should ask for the power mentioned in this section, and also that he should have resisted the policy which is provided for in the subsequent sections of the Bill. I am satisfied, from my short experience there, that the attempt to induce persons of capital to come out and take possession of large tracts of land with the expectation of their being settled, will always hinder the settlement more than it will promote it. From my experience I came to the conclusion that the sooner we ceased all attempts at reservation the better it would be in the public interest. It will be remembered that west of Red River seventeen townships were set apart for Mennonite settlers. I have no hesitation in saying that a larger number of people from Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces have been turned away from Manitoba, and have gone into Dakota and Minnesota, than would have settled that country. Instead of gaining anything by the Mennonite settlers, in so far as the occupation of the country is concerned, we have really lost by it. The hon. gentleman dissents from that view, but I have no doubt of its accuracy, and I am satisfied that to-day, between Grand Forks and Manitoba boundary, there are a larger number of Canadians settled in Dakota than of Mennonites in Manitoba, and that the larger number of those who, for the first two or three years, went to Manitoba, left there because they could not get possession of the lands which were reserved for people whose occupation of the lands was extremely doubtful. The same thing may be said in regard to almost every other reservation in that country. I am convinced that if the hon. gentleman were to give up the idea of granting large tracts of land as an inducement to secure a settlement, and would throw open the country to actual settlers of the soil and to any person who would come and take possession, he would do much more to promote immigration than by all other schemes combined. We know what the consequences have been in other

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD.

parts of Canada where large tracts of land were given to companies, that, instead of settling it early they have stood in the way of its settlement, and many sections in Ontario would have been settled a quarter of a century earlier were it not for the impediment of the Canada company. Railway corporations are in a different position, because they have a special interest in promoting settlement in order to obtain traffic for their roads. But that does not apply to any other parties; it does not apply to private parties seeking to get possession of large tracts of land; and the hon. gentleman is, in my opinion, providing by this and other sections of his Bill, to fasten upon the North-West Territories a very vicious system; and one which will do infinitely more to impede settlement than to promote it.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The only consequence of the hon. gentleman's plan will be that that country would be settled only by people who came there with their own money and select their lot of land, and no man would be assisted to settle who would be very glad to do so and who would do so with a little help. We would have a very few wealthy land holders, but we would not have the masses. What we want is to secure the settlement of that country, not only by wealthy men, but by great numbers of those who, though they may be paupers in their own country, if they were assisted a little would become valuable settlers in our North-West. Of course, if there are no restrictions upon purchasing and if we saw an evil growing up there Parliament could quickly interfere and prevent that evil from extending. We must now use every effort possible to get every person, whether he is a poor man or whether he has money, to come into this country, and run the risk of his taking 2,000 or 3,000 acres. There is no necessity of our running that risk, because we cannot provide that parties must state their intention of sending out immigrants to occupy these lands. They must agree that these lots shall be settled within a particular time, otherwise they will lose their lots and get back their money.

Sir RICHARD J. CARTWRIGHT. All that has been tried again and again and again, with the same results.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. With the most successful results.

Sir RICHARD J. CARTWRIGHT. With the most unsuccessful results. We have heard before about assisting persons without means to come out to this country, and under cover of that, placing large tracts of land in the hands of certain private parties. I do not doubt at all that there are in England and Ireland at this moment some benevolent individuals who would be willing to do this for the benefit of their tenantry or their country generally. But there is always a considerable number of people who are extremely desirous of becoming possessed of large tracts of land in our North-West country, and who would go out of their way for the sake of acquiring large territories there, and who would no doubt agree to comply with all the stipulations the Canadian Government choose to impose with the intention of reserving large tracts of land ultimately in their own hands, as they could easily do in a hundred ways. We could grant a quantity of land which we would consider insufficient for a family and which would appear to those people to be a considerable quantity. They will make grants of small portions to settlers, while they will retain all the remaining portions in their own hands. I know that is intended to be done. I know that there are parties who, under cover of such a clause as this, will go in at once. I have had communication with some of them myself. I was asked the other day by a gentleman in England to select several sections to be purchased for the benefit of a god-son of his, who had, I believe, just come into the world, and which were to be given to him when he became twenty-one years of age.