

of this undeveloped region is necessary, with a view to the protection of the timber, fish and game, over a considerable extent of the actual territory of the province.

The natives who occupy this region in coming south to hunt in the province of Quebec are the occasion of the most disastrous forest fires, as has been shown by Dr. A. P. Low, of the Geological Survey, and other explorers. Having caused this havoc they return to their own region, where they are beyond reach of the regulations made by the government of Quebec for the protection of its timber.

It is precisely the same with regard to the preservation of fish and game.

It is obvious that in view of its geographical position the region in question has everything to gain in becoming a portion of the province of Quebec. The government of this province is in fact better situated than that at Ottawa for administering and developing the natural resources which this district may contain. So far as the government of Quebec is concerned, the work of protecting and administering the territory would be but an extension of the system now existing immediately to the south, while in the case of the Dominion government it would be necessary to organize a special system which could have no important results save at relatively heavy expenditure.

Moreover, the enlargement of its boundaries can be claimed by the province of Quebec as compensation for advantages given the provinces of Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan by the extension of their respective territories to the western shore of Hudson bay.

For these reasons it is deemed proper to request the Dominion government to annex to the present territory of the province of Quebec all that country to the north of the northern boundary of this province and extending to the Hudson straits lying between the bay of that name and the Atlantic ocean, and including the skirt of land which is supposed to belong to Newfoundland extending along the shore of the ocean, and, on the western side, the archipelago and islands adjacent to the mainland, as well as the following islands and groups of islands: Ottawa, Sleepers, Baker's Dozen, Belchers, North Belchers, King George, Mansfield, Charles, all the islands of Ungava bay and the Button islands.

I am aware that if this territory is added to the province of Quebec, that province will be by far the largest of the Dominion. The Ungava district, land and water, contains no less than 456,000 square miles.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. Does that include the islands which the province of Quebec ask for in that memorial?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. No, it does not. If the territory of Ungava, which includes 456,000 square miles, were of the same character as to soil and climate as the valley of the St. Lawrence, we would not ask to have it added to the province of Quebec, but would make it another province. The conditions, however, are such that it is not possible to expect any large influx of population into that country. In fact, we cannot expect any influx of popu-

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lation there at all unless there should be the discovery of very large mineral deposits. Ungava has been known to civilized man for more than three hundred years. The French explorers knew it and explored it; French missionaries visited it, but no settlement has taken place, and there are no white people there except a few traders and hunters and trappers connected with the Hudson Bay Company and with a new rival to that company—the Revillon Company. Outside the traders, hunters and trappers, I am not aware that there are any civilized men in Ungava. No development of any kind has taken place in that territory. Recent explorers assert that its climate and conditions are such as not to invite civilized settlement unless there should be discoveries of minerals. Under the circumstances, it seems to me that the prayer of the people of the province of Quebec, that this territory should be added to that province, is not unreasonable. I am aware that some nervousness has been expressed more than once on the floor of this House regarding any extension of territory to the province of Quebec, because that province is the pivot on which representation must take place. In 1896, by one of the last Acts of the late government, one, however, that we fully endorsed and carried out, the boundaries of the province of Quebec northwards were readjusted, and by this readjustment it is asserted that an addition was made to that province of 118,000 square miles.

I have heard this referred to more than once on the floor of this House as being an invasion of the rights of the other provinces on the ground that probably it might have an effect on the distribution of the right of representation of the provinces. The point would have been taken with some degree of reasonableness if there had been any possibility at that moment—as there was not—of there being a population in that territory. But I am free to say, and everybody knows—it is a matter of general notoriety—that in the 118,000 square miles which are said to have been added in 1896 to the territory of Quebec, there is not one single voter, indeed not one single white man. And, in the new territory to be added to Quebec, under these resolutions, there is nothing of that kind to be expected. If the territory were of such a nature that it was reasonable to expect that there would be an influx of population there, the doubts which have been expressed more than once on the floor of this House as to the effect of this annexation would have to be considered. However, such as they are, I do not suggest that they should be minimized or ignored. I think it is a fair consideration to be brought to the attention of the Quebec legislature this nervousness expressed in some quarters, especially in the maritime provinces, that, possibly, the change