

with there is the second homesteading, and that question has two aspects. The first aspect is this: Men who come in under the Dominion Lands Act of 1883 came in with the right under that Act, when they got their patent, to get a second homestead. In 1886, on the 2nd of June, assent was given to an Act which took away this right that these people came in under. I consider that it was a most monstrous thing to do. It must have been done thoughtlessly, but it was a monstrous thing to do. In 1887, when I came down here, I put a little Bill on the paper, making some amendments to the Dominion Lands Act, and, amongst others, this relating to the second homestead. We saw my late lamented friend, the Hon. Thomas White, several times on that subject, my colleagues, the hon. member for Saskatchewan (Mr. Madowall), the hon. member for Alberta (Mr. Davis), and the late member for Eastern Assiniboia (Mr. Perley), who has gone to another place.

An hon. MEMBER. Carried.

Mr. DAVIN. Who says "Carried?" I hope there is not a gentleman in this House, either on the Reform or the Conservative side, who is so little aware of what his duties in this House are, and of what his duties as a member of Parliament are, as to hesitate to give whatever time is necessary to that great territory which you administer here. We saw the Hon. Thomas White several times, and we pressed, or rather I think I pressed, this question of the second homesteading on him. I rather think both my hon. friends differed with me on that, as well as the hon. gentleman who was then the member for Eastern Assiniboia. I may say here, in passing, if the House will excuse a personal word, that, when I have had to speak on this subject of the second homesteading before my constituent, I have stated on the platform what I say now, that my colleagues differed with me on this question of a second homestead, but I never introduced the subject without paying a tribute to the efficiency and the zeal of my colleagues, which I could not do here in their presence, because one can speak with more energy and enthusiasm behind the back of another than before his face. But, thereupon, some of those gentlemen who are always bent upon doing kind things and representing one exactly as one is, some newspaper would say that I had attacked my colleagues. This House is aware that it is not my custom to attack any man behind his back, especially men who are my personal friends. Well these gentlemen differed with me. However, I talked several times with the Hon. Thomas White about it, and I made an argument on going into committee on this Bill, just before we went to dinner, which I think irrefragable, and I call the attention of the Government to it now because it is an argument that cannot be got over. Under our legislation of 1886, men who never were entitled to a second homestead morally, that is to say, men who came into the country before such a thing as a second homestead was heard of, could get a second homestead, but not one man except those who came in during the eight days between the 25th May and 2nd June, who came in with that motive, could get a second homestead. I say that was a *reductio ad absurdum* of the position taken by the Government; and my hon friend, as you will see by the *Hansard*, rose up, after I sat down, and he said: "I have listened with great interest to the speech of the hon. gentleman, but he has not convinced me." However, I went over to him, I knew he was a journalist, and I knew very well that he would agree that such a thing as that would affect the public mind. I said to him: "Have you considered that argument?" He said: "I have, and I see the full force of it." Then I said: "You are going to act on it?" He said: "I do not think I can." Now I am not going to repeat the conversation that further took place between us; but he said: "I cannot act on it." Well, I got a little mad, that is to say, I got

a little aggravated; it is very seldom that I get mad, but when I do, it is merely a righteous indignation. I came over to my place, and after thinking for a time, I went over to him again and I said: "Well, look here, you have been very good to us, you have done nearly everything that could have been done by your department. You have got rid of that eighty acres, and that forty mile limit for uncancelled homesteads. You have done all that you could for us. Now put that on one year and I will be satisfied for the present, and we will let the Bill slide through the committee, making a few amendments." I know he would. "Well," he said, "I will risk it," and it was put on, as you will have seen. Of course, I may point out to you that the hon. gentleman admitted the principle for that year. He put in it on from 1886 to 1887, as you will find it in the Act passed in that year. I said, "Put it on one year, and make that 1887, instead of 1886, and we will be satisfied for the present." The reason that I did that was this: half a loaf was better than no bread. That would enable all that came in in 1884, all that were entitled to second homesteads that year, 1887, to get them. No man that came in in 1885 could get a second homestead that year. I said to him, moreover, that nearly all our people came in in 1884. I did not know, until I went back to the Territories, that a large number had come in in 1885 and 1886. Now, Sir, that is one part of the second homesteading. There is another side to it. We have what are called cancelled homesteads, that is to say, a man comes and enters for a first homestead. He does not fulfil the conditions. There are certain conditions as to residence, six months' residence each, conditions as to the building of a house, and conditions as to cultivation. If he does not fulfil these, if it be shown clearly that he has neglected these, the commissioner in Winnipeg will most properly give directions to have the homestead cancelled. The rule passed by the land board about these cancelled homesteads was this, that no man entitled to a second homestead could second homestead a cancelled homestead unless within forty miles of his original homestead. Well, as a large number of speculators had gone in in 1882 and 1883, as a large amount of land was cancelled, this was a very bad arrangement, because it prevented the man who was in the country from going and taking up a desirable spot that had been taken up by these land grubbers, and it allowed the man just coming into the country to take it up. Well, Mr. White agreed that that should be reduced to six miles; and after the land board had met it was arranged that a man could second-homestead a cancelled homestead within six miles. Now, Sir, what we say is this: What is the virtue of this six miles? The original idea, no doubt, in the minds of those who declared that you could not homestead a cancelled homestead, except it were forty miles distant from the original homestead—I have no doubt that the original idea was this: if we allow them to second-homestead a cancelled homestead near their original homestead, they will get some friend to homestead a desirable location, then leave it, and then they will go by-and-by and second-homestead it. I believe that the danger of that sort of thing was never as great as was expected. Nearly all the ideas, or a priori speculations, of politicians as to what would happen in regard to the North-West, have turned out to be groundless. One of the speculations about this second homesteading was this: that Ontario farmers would go in and homestead, would build a house, would cultivate the place, and then Englishmen, or Irishmen, or Scotchmen, would come in and buy their holdings, and they would go off and second homestead. Well, of course, that was a poor idea, because it would give you a perambulating settlement. I may say here that the very moment that fact was brought to my attention in 1883—it was in the autumn of 1883 when I first saw this second-homestead policy—I raised my voice against it, and protested against it. I saw that it was a dangerous