

of that character which ought to entitle them to receive consideration at the hands of this Government and Parliament; yet up to this hour, according to the statement of the Prime Minister of that Province—another friend of hon. gentlemen opposite—no answer, satisfactory or otherwise, has been made. I maintain that, with the full knowledge we have of the discontent which exists up there, and the impending crisis, the whole question is a fit subject for parliamentary enquiry. I have spoken to you of the Province of Manitoba and the farmers of that Province, but we must recollect that there is another representative body in the North-West, a body of equal, perhaps of greater importance—a body that rules over an area of 400,000 square miles, with a population estimated at from 100,000 to 150,000 people, a body which has sovereign power within the limits given to it by the Constitution under which it has its existence. I refer to the North-West Council. They, too, in solemn Council assembled, drew up a list of the grievances of which the North-West Territories complained. These grievances were sixteen in number—sixteen different grounds of complaint—and all these grounds of complaint have an importance and a significance well worth the consideration of those who are now at the head of the affairs in this country. I do not propose dealing with those grievances at any considerable length; I propose only referring to one or two of them; but in dealing with any of these grievances we ought to bear in mind that the importance to be attached to a protest of misgovernment, of bad policy, depends very largely on the source whence the protest comes. The first question that naturally arises is: Do the people who complain know whereof they speak? Are they conversant with the position and the circumstances of the country? Do they appreciate thoroughly the trials and the difficulties connected with pioneer settlement? And can they fully appreciate the errors of judgment or policy committed by the Administration in the great North-West? Are they free to give an honest and an unbiassed judgment on the questions on which they undertook to pronounce? If they are the friends of the Government, they surely cannot desire to embarrass the Government, and one cannot help coming to the conclusion that there must be some foundation for their complaints. We all know perfectly well that at least four-fifths of the North-West Council are the friends of the Government. Now, let us see what those friends of the Government in the North-West complain of. I know that at this late period of the Session the House will find it tedious that I should enter into this matter, but I cannot help it. I am bound to submit these facts for the consideration of the Government, in the expectation and the hope that the Government are, even at this late period, prepared to consider some, at all events, of what I believe to be the reasonable claims of the people of the North-West. The minute of Council transmitted by the Council of the North-West Territories to the Government here, is in the following words:—

*"To His Excellency the Governor-General in Council:*

*"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,*

*"Your memorialists, the Lieutenant-Governor and the Council of the the North-West Territories, show as follows:—*

*"1st. That the reservations held by the Government at Regina and Moose Jaw and the reserve known as the 'Mile Belt' reserve are detrimental to growth and prosperity, large blocks of land being held by the Government, and settlers being debarred from locating upon them, paralyze the expansive force of this young country, and by bounding the railway by a tract comparatively uninhabited, gives the traveller a false idea of the North-West, and an inadequate and sometimes misleading impression of the character of the soil. Your memorialists are aware, too, that many bona fide settlers have located upon lands included in these reserves, innocent of any order to the contrary, and have in many cases been driven from their claims, and in others have been prevented from obtaining those advantages which the inducements held out by the Government led them to expect. Your memorialists, therefore, pray that immediate action be taken to remove these barriers to the development of the country.*

*"2nd. Your memorialists also pray that immediate measures be adopted to determine titles to land that have been over three years in*

*cultivation; that patents issue at once to those entitled to them; that pre-emptions and squatters claims settled on prior to the 14th October, 1879, be allowed at a price in accordance with the Order in Council at the time of settlement; that settlers who have entered upon lands prior to survey and previous to the 14th of October, 1879, at which time there did not exist any distinction between odd and even numbered sections, and after survey, are found to be located on odd numbered sections, should be allowed their homesteads and pre-emptions on such sections at a price in accordance with the Order in Council existing at the time of settlement.*

*"That settlers on school lands, who settled thereon prior to survey, and ignorant of the fact, be afforded security in their holding. That the Government will use its good offices to obtain security for those who have in good faith settled on Hudson Bay sections prior to survey and after 1873, and in ignorance that they were such sections. Your memorialists further pray that those half-breeds in the Territories who have not participated in the arrangement to extinguish the half-breed claims in Manitoba, should enjoy the same rights as accorded half-breeds in that Province.*

*"3rd. Your Memorialists also pray for some extended surveys in the country of the North Saskatchewan; that the special settlement survey on the South Saskatchewan, in the Parish of St. Antoine, made by Mr. Adams, Dominion Land Surveyor, be approved, and that the Land Agent of Prince Albert be instructed to receive entries for such lands; that the lands in the Parishes of Grandin, St. Laurent and St. Louis, and fronting on the South Saskatchewan, be surveyed into ten-chain lots, it being occupied by settlers in this manner.*

*"4th. That the system of granting of leases of lands in western grazing districts be discontinued, as injurious, and for the reason that a very large portion of the land so leased is fit and required for actual settlement.*

*"5th. That homesteads cancelled for any cause should be again open for entry and not held for sale, as, we believe, best calculated to settle the country.*

*"6th. That the safety of documents, valuable alike to the Government and the people, demand that vaults should be erected in lands and registry offices in the Territories.*

*"7th. That at least two additional Stipendiary Magistrates should be appointed for the Territories.*

*"8th. That power be given to the North West Council to incorporate companies having territorial objects and to enforce ordinances by imprisonment.*

*"9th. That sub-section 2 of section 91 of 'The North-West Territories Act of 1880' be amended so as to vest all trails and highways in the Councils of the North-West Territories.*

*"10th. That the duties on agricultural implements and lumber should be reduced, it having heretofore been the policy of Your Excellency's Government to foster the industries of the country.*

*"We feel that the heavy duties imposed on lumber and implements used in agricultural pursuits, together with the heavy rates of freights which must be paid, is calculated to so increase the cost of building and of farming that the effect must be injurious to settlement.*

*"11th. That largely increased sums should be voted for expenditure on the Saskatchewan River, to improve the navigation of that stream, it being the only means of outlet for a very large section of the North-West, and the Canadian Pacific Railway in the south being at such a great distance, making it, as a means of cheap outlet, almost impracticable.*

*"12th. That mining laws and regulations should be assimilated to those of British Columbia and Montana Territory.*

*"13th. That the right of pre-emption should not be abolished.*

*"Your memorialists also pray, in view of the very large increase of the population in the Territories, and the consequent increased demand for various improvements, that a sum per capita, based on the assumed population of one hundred thousand now in the North-West Territories, be given for expenditure by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, as best calculated to suit the requirements of the people, than at present followed.*

*"15th. That the system of granting immense tracts of the choicest lands in the Territories to colonization companies is inimical to the best interests of the country. Your memorialists therefore pray that no more such grants be made; that the companies now holding the same be compelled to fulfil the conditions imposed upon them, in letter and in spirit, and that the agents of the companies be not allowed to act as the Agents of the Government in any respect; that granting lands already thickly settled, as in the case of the Edmonton and Saskatchewan Land Company, is contrary to the intention of the Land Act; that the company profits to an undue extent by the energy and forethought of the pioneers of the country, who are prevented from reaping the advantage of their own labour, in that the odd-numbered sections are locked up for speculative purposes which would otherwise be open for settlement or held for sale by the Government on reasonable terms: Your memorialists therefore pray that Your Excellency's Government will enquire into the matter and redress the above grievances.*

*"16th. Your memorialists believe that the success of the North-West Territories is of such importance to the whole Dominion that the time has arrived when representation for the Territories should be had in Parliament. At the present time the people of the North-West Territories are without representation of any kind, and have to depend solely on petitions and memorials to make their wants known."*

Now, these, shortly, are the grievances complained of by the people of the North-West Territories. Some of these grievances, since that document was drawn up, have been