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Provincial Natural Resources

THE premiers of the three Prairie provinces are expected to be in Ottawa during the present month for the purpose of considering with the Federal Government the claims of those provinces in regard to natural resources. The matter is now past the initial stage; the governments at Ottawa having conceded the right of the provinces to transfer of their resources. The details have to be worked out; and since the provinces are now claiming an accounting in respect to all lands that have been disposed of by the Federal Government since 1867, the basis of a final settlement is likely to be a matter of much argument, and the settlement will involve an enormous lot of work. It will be some time before the whole matter is cleaned up.

The other provinces do not object to the Western provinces being fairly treated in this regard. But as partners in the Confederation they will expect to be consulted by the Federal Government; and they will expect fair treatment in return. It seems to be quite just that the provinces of the West should be given control of the resources within their respective boundaries. The question how far compensation for lands sold should go is, however, a complex one in which the other provinces have a very lively interest.

Moreover, it has been understood that when the natural resources were handed over to the Western provinces, the whole question of provincial allowances would be reviewed so that justice might be done to all the constituent parts of the federation. That was the policy of Sir Robert Borden; and it would have been carried into effect if war had not intervened. It remains now for the King Administration to deal out even-handed justice to all of the provinces; and it is for the local governments to see that they get fair play for their provinces.

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