

Have consulted with the Minister of the Interior, and any arrangement satisfactory to the Indians will be quite acceptable to us.

Any bargain you can make, carry it out; satisfy them and you will satisfy us. I want to ask whether, in taking that position, they were discharging their duties and responsibilities towards the wards of the country for whom they were acting, or should have been acting? That is the position they took at that time.

Mr. GUTHRIE: Certainly.

Mr. CROTHERS: My hon. friend says 'certainly.'

Mr. GUTHRIE: For years the Government knew what the Indians wanted and knew that their price was a proper one, but the Government of British Columbia would not pay it.

Mr. BARNARD: Is the hon. gentleman making that statement with a knowledge of the facts?

Mr. GUTHRIE: That statement, I understand, is correct.

Mr. CROTHERS: It does not matter what they knew. This shows as clearly as a thing can be shown that their position was this: It does not matter what we have insisted upon getting from you in the past, it does not matter what we have thought about it the last three or four years, go on and make whatever bargain you like with the Indians, if you satisfy the Indians you satisfy us. And they carried that out. I have a good deal of sympathy with the position taken by my hon. friend as to the wisdom or unwisdom of paying these Indians \$10,000 apiece. I cannot conceive a man who had at heart the best interests of the wards of the Government consenting that these Indians should be paid \$10,000 apiece. Was anyone surprised to hear him read from the newspapers that these Indians, who had received this \$10,000 apiece, had in a few weeks dissipated the money, debauched their bodies and ruined themselves? He was not an ignoramus with regard to the character of Indians. He had been Superintendent General of Indian Affairs for many years and he knew then, as he knows now, and the right hon. leader of the Opposition knew then, as he knows now, that it was an unwise thing to put \$10,000 into the hands of each of these Indians. But these hon. gentlemen say that at that time they had to do something in order to secure the surrender from these Indians. Certainly they had. The Indians were unwilling to surrender and these hon. gentlemen say that they could not have disposed of this reserve without doing it in this way. On the 19th of May, 1911, the then Superintendent General of Indian Affairs secured the pas-

Mr. CROTHERS.

sage through this House of a Bill which would have authorized him to remove these Indians to another reserve and to have preserved the proceeds of this valuable piece of property in the interest of the Indians themselves. The Act passed on the 19th of May provides that where Indians do not agree to the disposal of their reserves within the limits of a town or city having a population of 8,000, or in the vicinity of such town or city, the Government may submit the matter to the judge of the Exchequer Court and secure authority to sell the lands, to purchase lands elsewhere for the Indians and to fund the balance of the money that they had received from the sale of the original reserve. He secured the passage of that Act and it applies to such reserves to-day. He might have secured the passage of that Act or he might have postponed dealing with the Songhees Indians until he had provided such legal machinery as would have enabled him to have preserved for the benefit of these children of nature, these wards of the country, the proceeds of the sale of their reserve. But instead of doing that he did what he is afraid the Government will do. I am surprised to find him taking so much interest in the welfare of the Indians in view of his conduct in reference to the St. Peter's band of Indians at Selkirk. That is fresh in the memory of every hon. member in this House and I do not propose to recall the facts in detail. In dealing with the St. Peter's band of Indians, he showed, as he did in dealing with the Songhees Indians at Victoria, the want of any appreciation of his duty towards these creatures who were unable to look after their own interests. It was not necessary for my hon. friend to bring this to the notice of the Government. The interests of the Indian in the Kitsilano reserve are the same to-day as they were on the first of April, or before anything was done in the direction that my hon. friend mentions, and we will see to it that these interests are protected. We will see that the Indians are properly treated with reference to this reserve and we will not have a repetition of what occurred on the Songhees reserve.

Mr. G. H. BARNARD (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, I just wish to say a word to correct one or two misapprehensions which appear to exist in the minds of some hon. gentlemen with regard to the facts in connection with the Songhees reserve and the present condition of the Indians. Hon. gentlemen opposite are possibly too readily disposed to believe statements which have appeared in the newspapers and the hon. member for South Wellington (Mr. Guthrie) has made statements with a desire possibly to shield his leaders from the effect of the