

boom that existed at Winnipeg a couple of years ago; but my hon. friend who sits behind me from the West Riding of Durham (Mr. Williams) has been over the ground, and says he would not give half the money for it. He has been over the ground, and on the farm, and has seen the improvements. On the 17th July, 1883, there was this further report from the Deputy Minister:

"DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
"OTTAWA, 17th July, 1883.

"SIR,—With reference to the Order in Council of the 7th inst., transferring to this Department the Indian farm situated on the Fish Creek, in the District of Alberta, North-West Territories, and authorizing the sale of the land, with the buildings thereon, as one farm, at a price of not less than \$3 per acre, I have the honour to call your attention to the fact that the papers from the Department of Indian Affairs, which are now on record in this office, disclose that the Hon. Theodore Robitaille, of Quebec, made an offer of \$10,000 some time ago for the property, and Mr. Dewdney, Indian Commissioner, who has had the best means of arriving at correct conclusions as to the value of the farm, recommends the acceptance of the offer.

"The area is 4,733 acres, and I suggest that Mr. Robitaille be given the opportunity of purchasing at the upset price named in the Order in Council, namely \$3 per acre. As the land is not surveyed, and the respective rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, the school endowment, and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, cannot at present be ascertained, I further recommend that for the purposes of the sale the area at the disposal of the Government be, for the present, computed at one half the whole area, or 2,366½ acres; that the terms of payment be one fourth of the purchase money of that area in cash, and the remainder in three equal annual instalments, with interest at the rate of 6 per centum per annum.

"When the survey is made and the interests of all the parties mentioned in this letter have been ascertained, the payments to be subject to readjustment, by increase or reduction, as the case may be.

"This would not accord exactly with Mr. Robitaille's offer, as it is evident he expected for \$10,000 to acquire the whole property from the Government direct, and the rate per acre would be higher than he contemplated. The proposition I make, however, is consistent with the policy of the Department, and in accordance with the provisions of the Order in Council transferring the farm."

This is a report from the Deputy Minister to myself. I believe it was the very best disposition of the property that could be made; I believe there has been a full value got for it and for the buildings; I believe that it would have only caused delay, without any good purpose whatever, to have advertised it, and put it up to auction. I am quite certain of that; we have had experience of that; we have been trying to sell the buildings at Fort Pelly; we have advertised them very largely, and we have not been able to get a bid for them, and the buildings are crumbling down. It is quite clear that the same result would have followed in this particular instance. This is the explanation. I am quite satisfied that the Lieutenant Governor of Quebec has not made his fortune out of this speculation; I am quite satisfied that, for the 2,000 and odd acres that the Government have sold to him, they are getting a high price, and much more than they would have got if it had been broken up into sections and homesteaded and pre-empted. The whole of the papers will be brought down with full particulars, and I shall have the opportunity of discussing the matter with the hon. gentleman again. In the meantime, I have not the slightest objection to the motion.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. It does not appear to me, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. the First Minister has quite met the statement of my hon. friend behind me. My hon. friend's objection was—and a most just objection it is—that sales should be made by private contract to gentlemen in the position of the Lieutenant Governor of Quebec, or any other party. Now, I heard something about this transaction myself. It was very freely canvassed and discussed in the North-West, and I will tell the hon. gentleman this: that I was credibly informed, and I believe it is the case, that one man, resident in the immediate neighbourhood of this same property, offered \$10 an acre for any 200 acres of this 4,700—not to the Government, but to the gentleman to whom the Government sold it. I was informed of that on authority which I am inclined to believe was correct.

I have not seen the property myself—I do not know whether the bargain may be a desirable one or not; but I do believe that the people in the North-West, and the people in the country generally, will agree with me in thinking that it is not expedient that private sales should be made by the Department of large portions of the public property to Lieutenant Governors or any other parties. It may be all right; the Government may have got all this property was really worth; but it is quite clear to me—and I think will be clear to everybody who considers the subject fairly—that to allow this to be done opens wide the door to all manner of jobbery and to an improper kind of speculation; and that it is much to be regretted that a transaction of this kind should have occurred between a gentleman occupying the position of a Lieutenant Governor and the Department of the Interior.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I understand then, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. gentleman desires the inauguration of a new policy. He desires that the lands in the North-West should be sold by public auction. Why, Sir, not an acre has been sold by public auction. It is in accordance with the law that every acre has been sold by private sale. The only exception—and it is made a special exception—is in regard to the school lands.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I think that at any rate the public ought to have known that that land was to be disposed of by private sale. Those people in the neighbourhood did not know that—no man appears to have known it, except the Lieutenant Governor of Quebec, and, perhaps, also some others.

Mr. BLAKE. It is quite one thing to talk of land being sold as this was, and another thing to talk of land being sold by private sale, in the way in which the hon. gentleman mentions. When he says this land was sold by private sale, and that land was sold by private sale, he knows perfectly well that the sales he speaks of were of properties which have been announced to the public as open to any man to take at a fixed price. Was that done here? Was the public made aware that this farm was open to anybody who chose to apply for it at \$3 an acre? We know it was not. We know, therefore, this case differs from the rule in the North-West Territories entirely—unless, indeed, there be other exceptions which we have not yet learned.

Mr. COOK. There is one thing that must be taken into consideration. The hon. leader of the Government has stated that if I went to the North-West, no doubt I would be entertained at the Lieutenant Governor's residence. I want him to understand that I do not go to the North-West. A great many of his own friends go there, and probably he had given them an opportunity of getting entertained at the hands of the Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Quebec. Probably, also, he is just paving the way for that hon. gentleman for another appointment as Lieutenant Governor of that Province. I wish to give my hon. friend to understand that I do not require to be entertained, nor shall I have the opportunity of being entertained at the hands of the Lieutenant Governor, even if he should come down to Ontario with his farm and the piggery upon it.

Mr. ORTON. I do not know that I can throw much light upon this subject; but a matter came to my knowledge that I think will go to show how difficult it is for the Government to obtain fair prices for buildings erected on the public lands in the North-West. I understand that at Livingstone, some time ago, something like \$40,000 was expended by hon. gentlemen opposite in erecting police barracks. A short time ago the present Government offered by public tender the section of land which was to form the town of Livingstone, on the old route of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and all the buildings, which cost something like \$40,000. They were offered to public