

and anyone who wants property will have to pay large prices. There are no good properties available there now. This Hotel Scribe building was one of the old properties that changed hands, and there are no more, around there, that I know of, for sale. And the consequence is, I should estimate that values in the next four or five years will be very large, that is, the increase of values.

Q. Do you know what was paid for the Hotel Scribe?—A. I did not until this morning.

Q. \$2,700,000?—A. That is what I am told.

Q. What is your opinion as to the reasonableness of that, as a purchase price?—A. The general opinion among business men of Paris who know somewhere near what it cost is that it was a good buy, and it was thought over there that there had been \$3,000,000 paid for it; it was rumored that \$3,000,000 had been paid, and they thought that was a very reasonable price.

Q. Do you know Sir Henry Thornton?—A. Yes.

Q. How long have you known him?—A. About a year; a little over that—that is, personally.

Q. Do you remember meeting him in Ottawa something over a year ago.—A. Yes.

Q. What time was it, precisely?—A. It was somewhere between the first and the 20th of April, I cannot exactly remember the date, but I know I was in Ottawa about that time.

Q. Did he have any conversation with you regarding this property?—A. He did.

Q. Did you express any opinion to him as to the value?—A. I did.

Q. And did you express an opinion to him similar to that which you have given to the Committee to-day?—A. Yes. As to values. I might say that was discussed very little. I was informed that they were negotiating for the building, and I replied that if they were, it was better for them to do it quickly because I knew of two other concerns negotiating for it.

Mr. KYTE: That is all.

*By Sir Henry Drayton:*

Q. Mr. Pratt, are you in the real estate business?—A. No, sir.

Q. Who were the real owners of the Hotel Scribe?—A. I cannot tell you. It was a stock company. That is, there were some insurance companies interested in it.

Q. Some insurance companies?—A. At that time, yes; I do not know who they were.

Q. Do you know Aronovici?—A. Very slightly.

Q. Do you know anything about Aronovici's option?—A. No, I did not know he had any.

Q. So you did not know anything about it?—A. No, sir.

Q. In your view, is this neighbourhood around there as you described it to be, gilt-edged?—A. Yes.

Q. That property in this gilt-edged neighbourhood—you say that was bought out?—A. It was bought within the past year by the Societe Generale?

Q. What are the dimensions of that property?—A. Of the Rue Edouard sept?

Q. Yes, the property bought within the year?—A. I cannot tell you Sir Henry, exactly. To my personal recollection I think it would run about double the size of the Hotel Scribe.

Q. And what was the price paid for that?—A. I cannot tell you that. I have only heard rumours.

Q. Do you know of your own personal knowledge the prices paid for any property around there?—A. Those are the only two properties I have any knowledge of.