

are worth more than we are selling them for, and we are selling them to the first comer at an upset price, why does he not put some money into them ?

Mr. LANCASTER. Does the hon. minister want to disqualify the hon. member ?

Mr. OLIVER. Does my hon. friend, as a lawyer say that that would disqualify him as a member of parliament ?

Mr. LANCASTER. Certainly it would.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Members on this side of the House do not get a look into any of these sales. I can only say that in disposing of these lands by private sale at upset prices fixed by the department, the minister is acting most unfairly towards the Indians of this country. Since I made the remarks I did a few days ago, I have received letters from prominent men in different parts of the country, urging me to press on the minister the necessity of putting these lands up at public auction. It is time that the minister took an active interest in the Indian Department and investigated every part of it, because not only are the Indian lands being squandered, but the Indian schools are not being conducted as they ought to be. Instead of these people being elevated and enlightened, so as to be fitted to be citizens of the country, they are being left practically in darkness.

Mr. MILLER. When the hon. member for East Lambton (Mr. Armstrong) spoke on this matter some days ago, I told him, and I will now say to the House, that in the northern part of the county of Bruce lands of the character he speaks of have been put up for sale at public auction at tax sales, and after being advertised for months in the newspapers have been sold at less than ten cents an acre. If the hon. gentleman desires to speculate in these lands, and the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Lancaster) thinks there would be any danger of him being disqualified if he purchased from the government, I think I could take him to a neighbourhood where he could get Indian lands from private parties at less than ten cents an acre and where, in purchasing them he would not run any risk of being disqualified.

Mr. OLIVER. My hon. friend from East Lambton (Mr. Armstrong) has entirely misstated the position. What we have done in selling Indian lands is this : In the northern parts of Ontario, where land is sold at a fixed price to the first applicant, it is sold on settlement conditions ; and I think it is sound public policy to have that land brought under occupation whether the price be great or small.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. How will that benefit the Indian ?

Mr. OLIVER. The Indian gets the price and the country gets whatever development

the land may be capable of. It is not the fault of either the Indian or the purchaser if the land is not worth more or is not capable of development. There are small islands in the Georgian bay, which, having been valued carefully, and being valued at less than \$100 each, are sold to the first applicant at the valuation, because we have not considered it worth while to hold an auction sale for lands of such small value. Islands valued at more than \$100 are sold either by auction sale or by tender. Lands in the western country, which are valuable for agricultural purposes, are invariably sold by public auction ?

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Why should the minister dispose of any of the lands of the Indians without putting them up at public sale ? The minister knows that he has disposed of scores of islands at a dollar apiece. What sort of valuation is that ? The men who pay a dollar apiece would no doubt gladly pay five or ten dollars apiece. A number of the islands might be put up at the same time at public auction. I think the minister is doing a very unfair thing towards the Indians in disposing of their lands in the way he does.

Mr. MILLER. I would suggest that the hon. member name some single instance and have it investigated.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. I am satisfied that the hon. member for South Grey knows full well that a great deal of this Indian land is worth more than ten cents an acre. What is the need of disposing of it if that is all that can be got for it ? When you find the department disposing of over 500,000 acres of Indian lands at private sale at upset prices fixed by the department, and disposing of quantities of islands in the same manner, you cannot help feeling that they have not been conducting the affairs of the Indians in a business-like manner.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. I observe that a part of this vote is for clothing. I suppose that would include clothing for the Indians on the Sarcee reserve. How many Indians are on that reserve at the present time ?

Mr. OLIVER. About 200.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. What is the area of the reserve ?

Mr. OLIVER. About three townships.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. When I brought this matter up in the House last session, I was told by the minister that the Rev. John McDougall had been negotiating with these Indians with a view to getting from them a surrender of their lands. Will the hon. minister tell me what success he met with, and whether or not the negotiations are being still carried on ?

Mr. OLIVER. We absolutely failed to get a surrender from the Indians. We have not yet been able to bring the negotiations to a successful conclusion.