

\$401.39. On looking through the bill, we find such items as these:

"Special report on title, 33 folios; engrossing and counsel fee, &c., \$9 90; counsel fee, \$10 (reduced by the taxing officer to \$30.)"

And then there is another long story: Fee on long and special consultation with Chief Justice Moss, Vice-Chancellor of the University, explaining matters to him, going over all papers, Orders in Council, &c.—which need not have appeared on this account. What did that interview cost this country? It cost us \$40. There is another little item. He has drafted a report; so he has sent a report to the Government about the title, for which he has not forgotten to charge, and then he comes down again with "Drafting a second report of title, fourteen folios, \$4 20, and fees on same, \$20;" reduced by taxation to \$10. Thus he is allowed \$10 for his fee on drafting a second report. Then we find such an item as this. You must remember what was this matter. The Government had written to Mr. Macdonell, asking him to state what he thought about a certain title to a little bit of land in the city of Toronto, and arrange some matters connected therewith, and in the bill for that work we find such an item as this: "Instructions for brief for Mr. Lash, Q.C., \$2;" Mr. Lash gave Mr. Macdonell general instructions, yet the instructions to prepare a brief of the papers for Mr. Lash to look over are charged and allowed. I do not object to the charging; I am simply deploring that the item was allowed. He then has a brief for himself and charges for it as follows:

"Brief for Mr. Lash, \$7.50. Instructions for brief for Mr. Macdonell, \$2, brief, \$7.50."

And all allowed—\$2 for instructions from himself to himself and \$7.50 for a brief for himself. Then there is attendance with Mr. Langton for plans. This item, I must say is, I think, without foundation in fact, and there never could have been an enquiry into this charge or it would have been found, I think, that there was no foundation for it. Then there is the charge: "Counsel fee on meeting of arbitration, \$50." There was no arbitration of any kind, and if the taxation had been properly looked to, if it had been an honest taxation and not a colourable one, there would have been some evidence required to prove that item, or it would have been disallowed. There was no arbitration, nothing like an arbitration, there was never anything to arbitrate about, and that is a pure fiction in order to swell this bill. There may have been some friendly adjustment, nothing more. Then, take another item, a scandalous item:

"Counsel fee on meeting Mr. Langton and Mr. Wells at observatory when it was settled that \$20 per annum, 6 per cent. on amount expended, should be paid for rent of both cottages erected by the University on our land. As to compensation for land appropriated by them for the purpose of a road, the University will grant us, on the same terms as we hold the observatory land, so much of the land to the south of the observatory as they can spare without detriment to their building lots, \$50."

That meeting with Mr. Langton and Mr. Wells to settle the rental for a cottage, and in the face of the letter of the Deputy Minister of Justice to Mr. Barwick, informing him that it was not a case for counsel at all, yet a counsel fee of \$50 was charged and paid. No one ever heard of a counsel fee being allowed in settling the terms of a rental of a cottage between two persons. This bill is a gross overcharge. To summarize some of these transactions, we find as follows:—That it cost the people of Canada \$603.80 solicitors' charges in connection with the purchase of a piece of land in Hamilton \$105.79; for similar services in connection with the purchase of another parcel of land at St. Thomas \$106.78; for like services in connection with another parcel of land at Chatham; and \$169.89 for similar services in a similar transaction in Leamington. Surely it is not a mere coincidence that the titles to all the lands that the Government buy are so intricate that such charges as these are proper. Therefore, I

was glad to hear the hon. the Minister of Public Works express, very strongly, I may say, for him, his regret at the charges. Now, unfortunately we have to regret that they should have been paid; and I am glad to have the Ministers assurance that the Public Accounts are not again to be disgraced by such entries as these in them.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. We ought to have some further explanation about these things, surely. Has the hon. gentleman nothing to say in relation to this? All I can say is, that according to the statement made by my hon. friend, this person—I will not call him a gentleman—has committed a deliberate fraud. If the statement made by my hon. friend, that \$50 were charged for an arbitration that never took place, is correct, it is simply fraud, most dishonest and scandalous fraud, and I do think the Government owe it to themselves to take steps to recover some of the money which has in this way been robbed from the country.

Mr. BLAKE. I do hope that some steps will be taken in this matter. I never heard of such charges as these being made. I never heard before of such a principle of charging as has been adopted with reference to the titles. I am not very conversant, I confess, with conveyancing charges, but I have never heard or seen such a principle of dealing with the question. This young man, whose professional earnings might, perhaps, amount to \$2,000 or \$3,000 ordinarily, for searching one title has charged \$600; for nine days' absence at Hamilton he has charged \$20 a day, day in and day out, and then, at the end, \$359 of a fee in addition to all the other charges, including this \$20 a day, which is in itself too much. These bills are not honest bills. The taxation by the officer was not an honest taxation, and the protection of the rights of the Crown by the person who was appointed to protect them was not an honest protection. That is the state of the case. Neither the officer the Crown employed served it faithfully in presenting such bills as these, nor did the officer who was appointed to protect its rights protect them faithfully, nor the judicial officer, who was either ignorant of his duty or discharged it in a shameful manner; and it does look to one as if this was an arrangement, in some shape or other, to remunerate for his services a gentleman who, for some years, was the political agent of the political party in Ontario.

Mr. McLELAN. Two of the cases mentioned come from my Department—the Toronto observatory, and the Leamington lighthouse. I am not very familiar with either of them, because they were about closed when I came to the Department; but in regard to the Toronto observatory, there was a great deal of correspondence and a good many papers connected with it, and I saw it was a case which required a great deal of attention on the part of some one, and had received a great deal of attention. It was quite involved as to the boundary lines of the land of the observatory and the University in Toronto. I saw that the bills were pretty large, but on enquiry I was told and learned that they had gone through all the regular forms, and there was no avoiding their payment. I must say that the bills appeared to me, coming from the Maritime Provinces, rather higher than we had a reason to expect, from the custom of that country; and I have been very careful in my Department to see that as few legal expenses were incurred as possible, seeing that the practice of this section of country is so much in advance of the charges paid in Nova Scotia, as far as I have had experience in legal matters. I think, with the exception of these two cases, for the last few years you will not find very many charges for legal expenses in my Department.

Mr. MULOCK. Could the hon. gentleman tell me why the instruction of the Deputy Minister of Justice was not carried out when he instructed Mr. Barwick to have these bills taxed by Mr. Thom, the taxing officer of the Court of Chancery, and instead of that he had them taxed by Mr.