

purchase of these lands. It is a letter addressed from the first National Bank, Millbank, S.D., to the secretary of the Department of the Interior, Ottawa, Canada. The writer of this letter, who is evidently a shrewd American, wants to know under what authority these gentlemen are endeavouring to sell these lands and he writes to the secretary of the Department of the Interior :

Dear Sir,—I desire to obtain all the information possible regarding the Peace river country north of Edmonton. Can you send me maps and descriptive matter pertaining to that locality? I am informed that a certain grant was made to some priests for colonizing purposes some years ago covering lands in this valley. Can you give me any information as to who the grantees were and where I can reach them; also terms of the grant and whether conditions have been complied with. Do you know if the land has been transferred from the original grantees and if so who the present owners are. Assuring you that your information will be greatly appreciated, I am, &c.

F. B. ROBERTS.

Then follow the reply of the department and letters from Messrs Ewart, Osler, Burbidge & Maclaren, Ottawa, dated Ottawa, 26th August, 1906, to the secretary of the Interior Department, Ottawa :

Dear Sir,—Re the Peace River Colonization and Land Development Company. We are acting for Messrs. Lafleur, Macdougall & Macfarlane, solicitors for the Peace River Company. On July 27, 1900, and July 8, 1904, two orders in council were passed in favour of the above company. We should like to order certified copies of the applications made by the Peace River Company on which the orders in council were based.

As the company is in a hurry for these documents, we would ask you to let us know as quickly as possible if we can get the same.

This is signed by the firm I have named. Then comes the answer of the department giving the information. Then there are letters about settlers going in and other communications from the department concerning them. But we find the following letter dated the 4th of January, 1907, sent out from the Department of the Interior over the signature of W. D. Scott, Superintendent of Immigration. This letter is addressed to E. H. Kent, Esq., president of the Kent Realty and Investment Company, Grand Forks, North Dakota, who I understand, has still the option on the lands, and I am informed that he has been in the old land this year trying to unload them at \$7 an acre in England, Belgium, France and elsewhere he can get them taken up. I do not know whether he has yet returned or not. The letter of Mr. Scott is as follows :

Through some correspondence with this department my attention has been drawn to an

offer made by your company for settlement in the Peace river district, and I would bring to your notice the terms of an order in council dated 8th July, 1904, in which it is stipulated that the Peace River Colonization and Land Development Company (with whom this arrangement was made) is required to place fifty settlers on this tract in the Peace river district before the 1st October. After the company has located these first fifty settlers, it is given an option for five years from the 1st October, 1903, within which to purchase one-third of the total leasehold at \$1 per acre. From the above it would seem clear that the company cannot undertake to dispose of any lands by sale until such time as these first fifty settlers have been placed on the land and the company has paid the price of purchase for lands required.

One of my correspondents has forwarded a number of your letters in one of which written under date November 2, this man is advised :

Here follows the quotation from Mr. Kent's letter, I presume a circular letter, sent out to the gentlemen whom they desired to become settlers on these lands :

We will sell this land on our special ten payment plan, and will guarantee each purchaser a homestead adjoining the land he purchases. Each purchaser must agree to enter upon the land and make his final selection not later than July 1st, 1907.

From this it would appear that these gentlemen only got the alternate sections. The statement which I have read shows that they were granted sixteen townships, but it does not say whether they were granted the alternate sections or not. I was not favoured with a copy of the order in council. Can the Minister of the Interior tell me whether they were granted the sixteen townships en bloc or only the alternate sections ?

Mr. OLIVER. I cannot answer definitely. The question can easily be settled by reference to the order in council, which I can bring.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. This letter of Mr. Scott goes on to say :

Again under date 13th idem this correspondent is advised as follows : 'We are asking a special introductory price for \$11 per acre for land purchased, terms \$4 per acre in cash, balance in nine annual payments with interest at 6 per cent. We also guarantee each purchaser of a quarter section a homestead at his option, either adjoining or in the vicinity of the land purchased.

So it would seem that the homesteads are reserved. Mr. Scott goes on to say :

I beg to draw your attention to the fact that the offer made this person is scarcely a bona fide offer, as the company has not satisfied the department that fifty settlers are actually on the land, and also to the additional fact that no payments have yet been made for the