

ments. The most notable of these sales was that of the estates belonging to Sir Edward Cunard, and Mr. William Cunard. Sir Henry Walsh and Sir Graham Montgomery were also sellers. But during these years several attempts were made by the Legislature, supporting the general view of the occupiers, to settle the question, but without success. Meanwhile a second great constitutional change took effect. The Confederation Act made Prince Edward Island a province of the Dominion of Canada, and substituted the Governor-General, for the Colonial Office, as the authority to allow or disallow the legislation of the province. In 1874 the (now Provincial) Legislature of the island passed a new Bill for compulsorily buying out the proprietors' interests. But the Dominion Government pointed out to Lord Dufferin, the Governor-General, that it did not provide for an impartial arbitration in which the proprietors would have a representative voice; and Lord Dufferin disallowed the Bill. In a subsequent dispatch, however, he reported to Lord Carnarvon, then Colonial Secretary, that a new Bill had been passed providing for an independent Commission, by which each of the proprietors' estates would be valued, and that he proposed to assent to this Bill. The proprietors would name one member, the Local Government another, and he himself the third; and he added that I had agreed to be Chairman of the Commission, and to retain the chair long enough to adjudicate upon the principal estates, especially those held by English proprietors.

In spite of vehement opposition from the landlords, the Home Government approved of Lord Dufferin's proceedings, and I left for Charlotte Town in the course of the summer of 1875.

My wife and I arrived at that very pretty place in the latter part of July. We were received by the Governor, Sir Robert Hodgson, who had insisted upon our staying at Government House during the proceedings of the Commission. I found that my two colleagues would be Dr. Jenkins, a member of the Assembly, and (for most of the cases) Mr. Haliburton, a son of the judge well known as "Sam Slick," both of them most agreeable and well-informed gentlemen. We spent a few days in settling preliminaries and formalities, which were somewhat tiresome,

as there were no precedents to guide us. But we had the assistance of the law officers, and above all of the Governor, who, having been Chief Justice, was invaluable as an adviser. We then devoted our entire time until the middle of August to visiting the proprietors' estates, the greater part of which were within reach of one or other of the stations on the railway, a well-managed narrow-gauge system of nearly 200 miles.

On the 16th of August I opened the Court. Our proceedings took the form of an action at law, in which the Commissioner of Crown Lands was plaintiff and the several proprietors defendants. We had before us a bar of eight or nine counsel, including an eminent Q.C. from New Brunswick, who was, however, taken ill on the first day and only addressed us once. Our great anxiety was to establish that the proceedings were not political, and in this we succeeded. We sat for sixteen days from 10 A.M. to 6 P.M., and in that time we dealt with the ten leading cases. On the 4th of September we formulated our awards in those cases. They dealt with above 180,000 acres, to be bought for nearly 370,000 dollars.

Later in the month I left Charlotte Town, and a few days afterwards my place on the Commission was taken by Lieut.-Governor Wilmot from Nova Scotia.

But the most serious troubles then began. Two of the proprietors, affected by our awards, appealed against them to the Supreme Court of the province. The pleadings were very formal and technical, but the main objection was that we did not set out in our awards sufficient detail. Of course it could not be stated that the form of the awards had been settled by the former Chief Justice, but I do not think that this would have influenced the Court, whose very lengthy judgments setting aside our awards were entirely in favour of the landlords.

Whether the abolition of landlordism has been an unmixed good, I do not pretend to determine. If I live to pay an eighth visit to North America, I may have an opportunity of collecting opinions on this point. Anyhow, the complete agrarian transformation through which Prince Edward Island has passed affords much instructive material for reflection.

For the success of that transformation the main credit is due to Lord Dufferin; who, after half a century of failures by less determined statesmen, both in Downing Street and in Canada, seized the favourable opportunity and brought about an agrarian revolution almost unobserved outside the Dominion.