

did not close his options, if he took any. On a sudden change of Government policy in favor of purchasing land in another place it was found that Mr. Pearson rose to that occasion also, got in ahead and secured options there.

COTTON FACTORY SITE.

On November 7, 1905, Mr. Pottinger wrote to Deputy Minister Butler informing him what had been done, and stating that he had a few days before written to the mechanical manager recommending him to examine some ground on the Cotton Factory branch or siding. Nothing further was done openly, so far as the record shows, until Mr. Butler himself, with his principal officers, visited the spot. This was on January the 19th. The Deputy Minister had with him the general manager, chief engineer, the mechanical superintendent, and incidentally it may be remarked that the Minister himself was present. It seems to have been practically decided at this visit, if not sooner, that the land would be purchased. On the 9th of March Mr. Butler wrote to the Minister giving a description of the property required at the Cotton Factory siding, and closing his letter with these words:

"The whole of this property should be secured for the purposes of the Mechanical Department at the earliest possible moment. It is a fairly level piece of ground and one where the shops can be constructed at reasonable cost, and no other parcel of ground in the vicinity of Halifax is at all comparable with it for such purposes. It is not advisable that it should be known that the railway is desirous of securing this property until the purchase is closed; and I therefore recommend that immediate steps be taken to secure firm options, and to complete the purchase of the property above described.
(Sgd.) M. J. BUTLER."

THE MIDDLEMEN WERE AHEAD.

But while Mr. Butler may have thought that he was proceeding with secrecy the parties who were to have the rake-off seem to have been pretty well informed of the proceedings and possibilities. On the 16th of March, one week after Mr. Butler's letter to the Minister, the Deputy wrote to Mr. Pottinger, sending tracings of the land and issuing the following order:

"Please instruct Mr. MacIlreith to go ahead and close the matter, using Mr. Henry Read as valuator. I understand that we can secure the whole of the property for between thirty-five and forty thousand dollars . . . the matter should be pressed and closed as quickly as possible."

It will be observed that the same valuator was chosen as in the other case. Mr. Read arrived at Halifax on the 12th of April to make his valuation. Some time before that options on the whole of the property required had been obtained by Messrs. Henderson and Pearson, aforesaid.

THEY WERE SHARP ON TIME.

Now we shall consider a few other significant dates.

Lot No. 1 in the list of properties purchased was acquired in February for \$750 an acre by Mr. Henderson for himself and partner. The purchase