

"No. 2" provided for the sale of the entire amount of land in townships at \$2 per acre for cash, with the same provision as to rebate of one-half of the amount paid, upon compliance with certain conditions. Here was a policy which could not be said to have been conceived or executed in the interests of the settlers; here was a policy in both those instances, to sell the public lands in unlimited quantities at a dollar per acre on credit, and a policy which encouraged the organisation of those colonisation companies that were practically calculated to promote speculation in the lands of the North-West, and that were not conceived in the interests of the settlers. The Opposition challenged this policy as early as 1880. On the 5th April, 1880, the following resolution was moved with regard to the Government's land policy:

"Mr. Charlton moved that the House do now go into Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolutions:—

"1. Resolved, That in the opinion of this House, the proper policy with reference to the disposition of the public lands of Canada should be, as far as practicable, to sell such lands to actual settlers only, on reasonable conditions of settlement, and in lots or quantities limited to the area which can be reasonably occupied by a settler; and that the sale of public lands to speculators, free from conditions of settlement, is impolitic and calculated to injuriously affect the settlement of the country, by keeping large quantities of land locked up for years, and by obliging the settlers thereon ultimately to pay a price much larger than that which is paid into the public Treasury for the same."

"2. Resolved, That, as under the existing regulations respecting the disposal of public lands, for the purposes of the Canadian Pacific Railway, large quantities of fertile lands are being offered for sale, and sold to speculators at one dollar per acre, for one-tenth cash down, and the balance in nine equal annual instalments, with interest at 6 per cent. per annum—terms which enable the speculator to obtain control of lands for a cash outlay of ten cents per acre; thereby, not only in effect, loaning to the speculator on the part of the Government, nine-tenths of the capital required for speculative investments, but giving rise, as experience shows, to great expense in the keeping of accounts, and to indefinite delays in the realisation of the stipulated price; that, so long as the system of selling public lands to speculators without conditions of settlement or restrictions as to quantity is continued, the price at which such lands are sold should be paid in full in cash, at the time of sale."

It was moved in amendment by Mr. White, of Cardwell:

"That all the words after 'That' be left out, and the following inserted instead thereof: 'the policy of the Government for the disposal of the public lands in Manitoba and the North-West, is well calculated to promote the rapid settlement of that region, and to raise the moneys required for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, without further burthening the people, and that it deserves the support and approval of this House.'"

Well, Sir, that policy received the approval of the House by a vote of 120 to 40, but the allegation of the amendment, that the policy was one calculated to promote the rapid settlement of the country and to raise the moneys necessary to pay for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, has been belied by subsequent events. So far from its promoting the rapid settlement of that country, there are to-day, according to the estimate made by the Government, but 132,000 settlers in Manitoba and but 100,000, including Indians, or about 50,000 whites, in the North-West Territories—a population of from 170,000 to 180,000 settlers who have gone into the whole of that vast region during the nine years that have elapsed since the question was discussed in this House; and so far from realising the \$58,000,000, or any portion of it, that we were told was to be realised by 1891 from the sale of lands, we have realised nothing. The sale of lands has not paid the expenses of management; and in place of having any considerable sum to apply to the liquidation of the expenses incurred by the Government in the construction of the railway, we are actually out \$70,000,000 in hard cash, the sum given to the railway in the form of bonuses, the cost of the portion which was constructed and handed over to the company, and the \$10,000,000 given to the company in exchange for a portion of its land grant. Now, it is evident that the predictions made by the Government with reference to the results that would follow the inauguration of this policy in 1879 have not been fulfilled; that, in point of fact, the whole thing has proved in a great

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measure a flat failure; that we have not induced settlement to the North-West; that the country has not prospered; that something has been the matter; and I shall show, a little further on, that in addition to its policy towards the settlers, the Government has erred in other matters. The Opposition steadily adhered to the policy it laid down in 1879. On the 16th of March, 1881, when the Dominion Lands Act was under consideration in this House, amendments to that Act were moved in the following directions. The first was by Mr. Mills, who moved:

"That the Bill be recommitted, with instructions to amend the fourth clause by providing a limitation of the area of land which may be sold by the Government to one person."

Which, of course, was lost. It was moved by Mr. Charlton:

"That the Bill be recommitted, with instructions to amend the fourth clause by enacting that except or otherwise provided by resolution of this House, all lands shall be disposed of subject to conditions of actual settlement."

Which, of course, was lost. It was moved by Mr. Holton:

"That the Bill be recommitted, with instructions to amend the fourth clause by providing that the unappropriated even-numbered sections in each township shall be disposed of only upon condition of actual settlement."

Which was lost. Mr. Blake then moved:

"That the Bill be recommitted, with instructions to amend the fourth clause by providing that the price of Dominion lands, sold without conditions of settlement, shall be payable in cash at the time of sale."

Which was lost. All these amendments were in the direction of the public interest. There was not one of them that did not contain a principle that ought to have been embodied in the Bill, without the necessity of any amendment being offered by the Opposition at all, and the passage of these amendments in the negative was in every case detrimental to the interest of the country. Then, following these challenges of the Government's land policy, we have other votes on record with regard to the same matter. On the 27th of March, 1882, the leader of the Opposition in the House challenged the policy of the Government with reference to the disposition of coal lands and pasture lands, by the following motion:—

"That the future of the vast Territories of the North-West is largely dependent on the supply of fuel at a moderate rate;

"That the present information as to the country and the coal areas is not sufficient to warrant Parliament in creating long-enduring interests in large quantities of coal areas;

"That the regulations as to coal lands laid on the Table make no provision for the application, as a general rule, of the just principle of public competition to the acquisition of those valuable lands, and thus leave open the door to disadvantageous cessions of the public domain for the benefit of individuals;

"That the said regulations make no adequate provisions to check the consolidation of large blocks of the coal lands in a few hands and the consequent restriction of competition and enhancement of the price of coal;

"That the said regulations make no adequate provision to secure any working of the coal mines by the lessee;

"That the said regulations provide, by arrangement, for 21-year leases, renewable, for the creation of interests of longer duration than prudence at this time would, as a general rule, lay down;

"That they make no proper provision for the settlement of the terms of renewal;

"That the said regulations do not become operative, if disapproved of by this House; and the House is responsible for their coming into operation;

"That this House disapproves of said regulations."

Which was lost on a division. Then Mr. Blake moved:

"That in the opinion of this House the existing system of granting timber limits is liable to result in gross abuse, and in the cession of valuable interests in the public domain for inadequate considerations to favoured individuals;

"That it is expedient to apply the just principle of public competition to the granting of timber limits."

That liability to abuse was fully realised in the history of the granting of timber limits since the year 1882. We have still further an amendment moved to Bill No. 145, relating to public lands of the Dominion. In 1883, on the 2nd of May, Mr. Charlton then moved: