

DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, 29th May, 1882.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 23rd inst., requesting, on behalf of your Government, information in reference to certain alleged sales by the Government of the Dominion, of the Island known as "La Cloche," situated near the north shore of Georgian Bay, and of the Duck Islands, south of the great Manitoulin Island.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant,
EDWARD J. LANGEVIN, *Under Secretary of State.*

His Honour the Lieut.-Governor, Ontario.

TORONTO, 23rd May, 1882.

SIR,—I understand that it has recently been stated in the public journals that the Government of the Dominion have assumed to sell, for a nominal consideration, the Island known as "La Cloche," situated near the north shore of Georgian Bay, between Manitoulin Island and the Mainland, upon the claim that the Island of La Cloche was vested in that Government in trust for the Indians.

My Government would be glad to be informed whether this fact is as so stated, and they respectfully request information as to the grounds upon which the claim of the Dominion Government to the Island was founded, as so far as they are aware, this Island has, ever since the making of the Indian Treaty with Sir Francis Bond Head, at Manitowaning, in 1836, been deemed to be free from any claim of the Indians.

If there was ever any doubt of the fact of the complete cession of "La Cloche" under that Treaty, the doubt would appear to have been removed by the Treaty of 1862.

But it is submitted that there never was any doubt that under the Manitowaning Treaty, this Island, like the numerous other Islands along the north shore of Georgian Bay, became the property of the Crown, discharged of any trust in favor of the Indians, and that the most that was ever supposed to be reserved to the Indians under that Treaty was the three Islands which had been known by the name, "Manitoulin," namely, the 2nd Manitoulin, or Cockburn Island; the 3rd, or Great Manitoulin, and the 4th Manitoulin, or Fitzwilliam Island, and the right given as to these Islands was not a general right of property attaching to all Indians, or to any tribe or tribes, but was a right of habitation, to be conferred upon such Indians as should take up their residence there.

At the time this Treaty was made, it was contemplated that a large number of Indians would remove to these Islands, but as this expectation was disappointed, a new arrangement was made by the Treaty of 1862, before referred to, and the right of the Indians to any beneficial interest in any of the Manitoulin Islands, except the Great Manitoulin, or in any Islands adjacent thereto, was surrendered, the Government undertaking to sell for their benefit such of the lands in the Great Manitoulin Island as should be assigned to the Indians upon that Island for their occupation.

In case a sale has in fact been made, my Government will be glad to be informed of the amount of the purchase money and the name, or names, of the purchaser or purchasers. Rumor has stated the price at \$1,500.

The Island contains in the neighborhood of 40,000 acres, the greater part of which is land of excellent quality.

It has also been stated that the Government of Canada has assumed to sell the Duck Islands, which lie at a considerable distance to the south of the Great Manitoulin Island. My Government desires to learn whether this statement is correct, and, if so, the name of the person or persons to whom the sale has been made, and the price obtained.

If the Dominion Government has assumed to make these sales, my Government most earnestly protests against any further sales by the Dominion of any lands in any of the Islands on the north shore of the Georgian Bay, except in Great Manitoulin, unless with the concurrence of the Government of Ontario.