

lieve the hon. gentleman has made some efforts to get the Indians to release a certain proportion of their land. I hold probably the same view as the minister that the trust is sacred to the people of Canada. The Indians are our wards and we have to protect them, but I take the position that if they cannot use the land for the reserve and if the disposal of the land would result in the development of the country, the land should be disposed of. I also realize that the Indian has to be controlled. I cannot say that I endorse the methods which are employed in the handling of the Indians. I do not know much about the subject, but I think it is a mistake to try to educate the head and allow the Indian to continue as a savage in the treatment of his stomach. I think that if we worked the other way we would make more of the Indian. However, I do not suppose the minister wants to listen to my theories on that subject. Does the hon. gentleman believe with me that it is in the interest of the settler, and that it is in the interest of the Indian as well, that the land should be sold? I understand the hon. gentleman to say that we cannot sell Indian reserves. That is quite true, but the Indian is an individual that can be controlled. He can be advised as long as he has confidence in the people that he is dealing with. That has been my experience with the Indian. I do not hold to the opinion that a good Indian is a dead Indian. I want to ask the hon. gentleman if he has not made efforts to get these Indians to dispose of some of that land? I understand that he has, but if he would, when he is in the country, endeavour to make it possible himself to see the Indians, I believe that it could be accomplished. There is no use sending a boy on a man's errand to the Indian. He likes to get hold of the chief muck-a-muck of the country when he is going to do anything. I think that if the hon. gentleman would take that into consideration and if, when he is in that section of the country, he would let us know we would endeavour to meet the Indians and see whether that cannot be accomplished. The hon. gentleman goes as far as I do in believing that a portion of this land might be sold and that the settlers should have the opportunity of buying it and paying a proper price for it. I do not believe in taking advantage of the Indian, and I do not believe anybody in Canada wishes to do so. But there is the settler starving for land; there is the Indian without the means of occupying more than probably one-third of his land; he is dying off, and as time goes on, unless we can get the Indian to sell some of his land, he will disappear without having received any benefit from his property and it will revert to the government. I would like to hear

Mr. MAGRATH.

what the hon. gentleman has to say with regard to this proposition. As far as the expenditure is concerned I have nothing to say.

Mr. OLIVER. As the hon. gentleman has said, I am fairly familiar with the conditions connected with the Blood and Blackfoot reserves, the two largest reserves in the west, the best situated and of the very greatest value. I am entirely at one with the opinion expressed by my hon. friend that it would be very much in the interest of the Indians that a very considerable portion of these reserves should be disposed of, the money made available to the Indian and the land made available to the man who would use it. That is the policy I have been carrying forward to the best of my ability and in pursuance of which we have secured a number of very substantial surrenders of Indian lands, to the benefit, I think, of the Indians who surrendered, and, of course, to the benefit of the settlers and of the country by reason of the land having become productive, whereas it would have remained unproductive had it remained in the hands of the Indians. We have undertaken to secure surrenders of part of the Blood reserve, and we have had some discussion in regard to the surrender of part of the Blackfoot reserve. We have not been successful in securing the surrender. I do not know that it is a thing that will be advanced very much by being spoken about.

Mr. MAGRATH. The Indians do not read 'Hansard.'

Mr. OLIVER. The Indians are apt to hear what is said and to translate into it their own ideas and possibly to get exaggerated views of their own situation. So far we have found them indisposed to sell at any price; I may say they have practically refused to consider the matter. That of course is the result of the domination of certain individual men of influence in the band and any one who knows the persistence of the Indian character will believe that so long as these men remain it is going to be a very difficult matter to get their assent. An instance of this persistence on the part of the Indians is the case of timber on the Dokis reserve which was sold last year. Here was a reserve small in area, of absolutely no value to the Indians, and yet they held it for years and years while its value was in danger of being absolutely destroyed by the timber being burnt. But although they lived in poverty while they were rich in the value of that reserve, yet for years they would not listen to a proposition of surrender. At long last we secured the surrender of the timber and this little band of 83 Indians at once came into wealth to the amount of over \$800,000 in cash, and