

know whether he is a lumberman or not, I am not sure as to that; he is here and can speak for himself. Now, we never sold a limit to any one who was not a lumberman; we never sold a limit without the condition of erecting a mill and cutting lumber for the use of settlers; we never recognised the right of any party who is not a mill owner or not engaged in the lumbering business, to acquire a limit, because if we did we were sure it could only be acquired for speculative purposes, and we did not think it was right or ought to be the policy of the Government to encourage speculation in the public domain. Then I find also, in looking over the returns that have been brought down to the House, that those who subsequently acquired limits were allowed to select areas as small as three square miles. Now, I do not think that was in the public interest. I am not questioning the motives or the moral conduct of the Government in reference to the matter at all, I am simply speaking in this respect in regard to the public policy of allowing areas to be obtained of such limited extent, and I think that the effect would not have been in this respect in the interest of the settlers. Now, the next matter for consideration is this: Whether the time had come when this policy of permitting the private sale of timber limits ought to have come to an end. The hon. gentleman had, in his Bill of 1872, expressed what his view of the public policy was; the right hon. gentleman showed that he could not give effect to what he regarded as the ideally perfect—or approximately so—system of public policy with regard to timber limits. He was obliged to make sales in contravention of the terms of the statute, by private understanding with parties, without competition, either by tender or by public auction. When the hon. member for East York came into office he found exactly the same condition of things existing. Now, in this very correspondence, when application was made to me in the first instance, in 1877, for this timber limit, I informed the parties that it was the intention of the Government to sell these limits, if possible, by public auction. That was the answer given in the first instance, but upon enquiry we found that impossible. As far as the territories of the Upper Saskatchewan were concerned, situated remote from any means of communication, knowing that the lumber cut there would be cut only for the use of settlers, that the extent of the market would depend wholly upon the progress of settlement, we found it so much a leap in the dark on the part of lumbermen that we could not get parties to compete with each other, and so we were obliged to press parties to purchase the timber limits and to erect mills, rather than to hold them in restraint. Now, that was the condition of things existing in 1878 in that territory. When the Canadian Pacific Railway was surveyed further south, when the railways were being pushed on westward from Winnipeg, you had a different state of things existing, and that different state of things is disclosed by the correspondence that has been put upon the Votes and Proceedings. I have made a statement with regard to the conduct of the previous Government, and with regard to the conduct of the right hon. gentleman himself, and his colleagues, with reference to these timber limits. We may differ as to what is the proper public policy to adopt with regard to this question. That is a fair subject

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell)

for a resolution. It is a question to be argued and voted upon, but that is not the question now before us, and I ask the House not to confound, nor to confuse, a question of public policy in regard to the conduct of the Administration, with the question of the personal conduct of the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Rykert). They are different questions altogether. If we had the question of the public policy of the Government before us, we might very fairly point out, what is the necessary outcome of the policy which the Government have adopted, and contend that it ought to be changed or modified, or superseded by the policy which we have often held to be in the public interest. The wisdom or fault of the public policy of the Administration is one thing; the personal misconduct and misrepresentations, and the attempt to use his position, as a member of this House, for the purpose of making enormous gain at the expense of certain parties, is a question which this House should not ignore. I do not say that correspondence is reliable, and I suppose the hon. gentlemen on the Treasury benches would not declare that they have the most implicit confidence in every statement made in these various communications that have been published, and which have been made the subject of the resolution that is now before the House; but it does show that there was existing at that time what had not existed a year or two earlier—that there was competition, that parties were ready to bid against each other for timber limits; that the practice of selling at a fixed price, which was a matter of necessity so far as the Government was concerned, from 1872 to 1880, was a condition of things that no longer existed; that a change had taken place, and that that policy which the hon. gentleman desired to adopt when he proposed, in 1872, the clause in the Act of 35 Vic., which I read, was possible in 1882. That is perfectly clear from what has happened; it is perfectly clear that when the Government sold this timber limit at \$5 per square mile, and the hon. member for Lincoln sold it at \$2,000, there was a considerable demand for the acquisition of timber limits, and that the condition of things that existed in 1877, and in 1878, did not exist in 1882, so far as that particular district was concerned. Now, that is, in my opinion, a reason for having changed the policy and returned to that policy that everybody admitted was desirable, but that everybody had found at an earlier period was impracticable. I have said this by way of explanation, and by way of defence of what was done. A more straightforward transaction, one, in my opinion, more in the public interest, one more calculated to facilitate settlement and promote the interest of the settler, was never made, than that Order in Council that granted the 200 square miles to Messrs. Cook & Sutherland, on the 7th October, 1878. It was adopted after very careful consideration, it was adopted in the public interest, and it would, in my opinion, if the hon. gentleman had allowed it to go into operation, have operated in that interest. And he will see that his proposal to divide that limit and sell it in smaller areas did not accomplish the end he had in view; for I observe, by the returns brought down, that Captain Moore, who had already a limit of very considerable extent, acquired 100 square miles of the territory proposed to be disposed of; and the sales made to the hon. member for East Assiniboia (Mr. Dewd-