

Mr. SPROULE. I have not had time to read over the papers and, therefore, I have not reached that, but I am looking at the terms on which the tract was granted.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. If the minister reads the notice of cancellation to the House it will be seen that there is a great string on the notification.

Mr. OLIVER. There is no string except what exists on all such notices, of the authority of the courts to adjust any dispute that may arise as between the Crown and individuals as they could between two sets of individuals. It is, I think, the ordinary way in which notice is given, to show cause why it should not be cancelled. It is the same notice as we give to the homestead settler to show cause why his homestead should not be cancelled. I fail to see the position my hon. friend is taking.

Mr. SPROULE. Notice was given to the McGregor crowd who held the lease to show why it should not be cancelled, yet it was held for four or five years until they were able to dispose of it, and the same course will be followed here—and that is what amuses the minister.

Mr. OLIVER. I am afraid my hon. friend is mistaken in that as in many of his other statements. I think it would be well for him to read the files before undertaking to instruct the House. I am not aware that McGregor was ever asked to show cause. He held a lease under order in council and I have no knowledge of his having received notice of cancellation.

Mr. SPROULE. I have a distinct knowledge of having heard letter after letter read in this House notifying him that payment must be made within a certain time or it would be cancelled, yet it was not. Notice was given three times to H. B. Brown, of Grand Forks, in regard to the cancellation of the lease, yet it was not cancelled, and came into the hands of parties who sold it for a large amount of money. If the minister and his department are doing this it is not creditable to them and not to the advantage of the country. It should not, in my judgment, be a matter of levity or amusement that we have a Minister of the Interior who is so reckless with regard to the eminent domain, and so careless with regard to the interests of the country that he will enter into an arrangement of this kind. But I am dealing with the principle upon which it was made in the first instance. I have had handed to me the notice which was sent to this company and it reads as follows:

Department of the Interior,
Ottawa, January 4, 1908.

Sir,—As it is understood that the Peace River Colonization and Land Development Company, of Montreal, has failed to comply with the terms and conditions provided in the order in council, of the 27th July, 1900, as

Mr. OLIVER.

modified by the order in council of the 8th July, 1904, I am directed to request you to file here within thirty days of this letter satisfactory evidence (by solemn declaration) of the action which had been taken by the company to comply with the terms of the agreement under the two orders above mentioned; or, if the company has failed to comply with the terms, to show cause why such agreement should not be cancelled forthwith, after the expiration of such period of thirty days.

I am, sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Sgd.) P. G. KEYES,
Secretary.

That was in January. These thirty days were up in February. Here is a letter dated January 15, which, I presume, is the reply:

Re Peace River Land and Development Company.

You require the company, within thirty days of the date of your letter, to furnish proof that it has fulfilled the conditions of the grant.

Immediately upon the receipt of the letter I cabled Father Lemieux, the president of the company, who is at present in Rome on very important business. I have just received his reply stating that he is ill at present, and for this reason and the fact too that he has not yet concluded his business, he cannot return at once to Canada.

Under the circumstances I ask you to extend the time you first mentioned until the return of the Rev. Father Lemieux, as to which I will give you notice.

That is the reply. What action was taken on that reply? Has he yet returned? Have the government any information with regard to this? Have they done anything towards the cancellation of this agreement or to secure compliance with the conditions of it? As far as I know they have not. Therefore, I say it is a farce and I am justified in saying it in view of the transactions which have been carried out along the same lines by the Department of the Interior with regard to grazing and irrigation lands.

Mr. OLIVER. The hon. gentleman is entitled to say what he pleases and I am entitled to laugh if I like.

Mr. SPROULE. I am saying what the facts disclose and I am commenting upon the improvidence of such conduct by the Minister of the Interior. I am willing to leave it to the public to say whether the observation of the Minister of the Interior is any answer to the allegations which are put forth from this side of the House with regard to the improvident transaction that we are dealing with to-day. I am dealing with the question of their advisability of locking up land in any portion of the country for thirty years, with the unwisdom of selling 122,000 acres of land for \$1 an acre and allowing these people five years to select it, selling it for that amount to the