

counter room to make the enquiries they desired. Many of these people had their families and effects with them, and naturally desired to remain at large expense in Winnipeg, as short a time as possible. A great many bought sections from us the day they arrived, and went off at once to take possession.

It has been suggested that we should get better prices if we sold by public auction at short intervals. I am of opinion that the result would be different. People will pay us, for the reasons I have already stated, higher figures by from \$2 to \$3 an acre than they can buy elsewhere. In the case of the Canadian Pacific Railway, they pay us three times as much as they can buy for from that Company. To say to intending purchasers that they must wait a certain length of time, at considerable personal expense, for an auction sale, when they may not be able to secure the section they require, will send them to some other land office, and we shall lose them as customers entirely.

I am not aware that any Land Company, or railway owning lands, either in Canada or the United States, has adopted the plan of having auction sales for their farming lands. They have all, so far as I have been able to learn, followed the plan we pursue, and none of them I believe, under circumstances similar to ours, have obtained such a high average, as we have so far done. I do not believe that farm lands are materially affected in value whether they are 1 or 5 or 6 miles from a line of railway running through a new and undeveloped country. In the course of 10 or 15 years, when the country has become comparatively settled up, a difference of value may arise, but does the Company desire to wait that length of time, losing interest and paying taxes and other expenses. I do not believe that land round small intermediate railway stations is going to be increased in value because of its proximity to such small station, at least for a great many years. I think the same general principle will apply to farming lands round larger towns and centres, with perhaps some slight modification.

Then take the case of Regina, a prospective town of considerable dimensions according to the views of some people. The owners of the site have laid aside 4 sections, or 2,560 acres, as the proposed town and have divided it into about 25,000 lots. To have every one of those lots occupied by a separate individual, will require a population at least equal to the present population of the City of Winnipeg. To-day Portage La Prairie has a population of from 4 to 5,000, and Brandon has not more, if so many, than 2,500. With such facts before us, is Regina going to be peopled at such a rate, that 25,000 lots will in any reasonable time be disposed of and the growth of population be so great that it will be