

land in the Cowichan Valley is worth \$15 an acre. His statement simply shows his want of information; and I, as a member from that part of British Columbia, cannot allow such a wholesale misrepresentation of the lands in the Cowichan Valley to pass unnoticed.

Mr. ANGLIN. How many acres are there?

Mr. BUNSTER. Considerable. Not being a surveyor, I cannot tell the hon. gentleman exactly; but I wish to tell the hon. member for Victoria (Sir John A. Macdonald) that there are lands there as well worth \$100 an acre as one dollar is worth another.

Sir ALBERT J. SMITH. How many acres are there?

Mr. BUNSTER. About 200. There is plenty of land in that valley which you cannot buy for \$100 per acre, and upon which the proprietors are making far more than the interest on that amount. There are many of our industrious farmers who make from \$40 to \$50 an acre upon their lands, and that simply by their own labor, without counting the cost of extra help. I am surprised and sorry at the remarks of the First Minister, and I only hope that he will come out and see our country for himself, so that he may be able to form correct judgments about it.

Mr. DECOSMOS. I take it that this Parliament employs the Ministry to do its work, and I think that Parliament has a right to require reports of any business which the Ministry may transact—and especially a departmental matter such as this one is. From the manner in which the First Minister has spoken of the character of Mr. Trutch's relations to the Government, we must infer that Mr. Trutch has been sent out to British Columbia as a spy, with a view of his prying into any little matters which may happen in that Province, and reporting to the Government thereon. I think it would be better for the Government to appoint honest, capable and responsible men as its officers, so as to do away with the necessity of appointing a person as a spy upon matters which may happen there and then to report to the Minister, without one being able to see his reports. I certainly condemn all such arrangements, and upon a motion upon which I intend to speak at a later period, I shall take occasion to speak a little more plainly and a little more fully upon the matter. If, however, the hon. Minister will say that he will send out instructions to Mr. Walkem and Mr. Powell to hear evidence upon and examine into the whole question and report upon it, the matter will be advanced one stage in the right direction. But I certainly do not feel disposed to withdraw the motion, especially in face of the fact that Mr. Vankoughnet wrote a letter to me on behalf of Mr. Munro, which was really based on the report which I now ask shall be brought down. And now we have the statement made by the head of the department, who has charge of Indian affairs, to the effect that Mr. Munro should have recourse to the Courts of law, and there assert his right before the House can get a document on which the letter I have referred to was based, on the instructions given by the hon. Minister, I, for one, protest against such proceeding, and I shall continue to do so until the time arrives when I shall see spies and confidential reporters on behalf of the Government driven from the shores of British Columbia. So far as the remarks of the hon. Minister about the price of land in the Cowichan Valley are concerned, Mr. Munro has no objection to referring the question of price to competent judges or arbitrators. I may also remind the hon. Minister that I presented a certificate from two responsible land agents stating that they could sell the land at \$15 per acre, and I know myself that the land in question is as good a piece of land as there is in that part of the Province.

Hon. MEMBERS. Withdraw.

Mr. BUNSTER.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I hope my hon. friend will consent to withdraw his motion. I regret that he should have used the language he chose to use with respect to Mr. Trutch, a gentleman who is respected by everybody who knows him—a gentleman in the best sense of the word. On account of his experience and his interest on the subject, we sent him there as a confidential agent with respect to various great interests which the Dominion have in that Province. My hon. friend has himself been a Minister, and he knows that the confidence in such cases is what gives value to the report, and that such a person can give valuable confidential information to a Government—information which would be valueless, but that it is confidential. Such reports are for the purpose of supplying information upon various interests free from the possibility of its being afterwards properly or improperly used by persons whose interests might be affected by those reports. Of course the Government are responsible for all their acts, no matter under what advice, and the Government must assume the responsibility in the present case. I hope, however, the hon. gentleman will not press his motion.

Mr. BLAKE. While I agree with the hon. gentleman upon the question that a Government may, upon proper occasions, employ a confidential agent, still it seems to me that his general proposition is one which is open to considerable observation. If it is understood that they have a gentleman employed in the public service in British Columbia, who is to act as confidential agent with reference to all things which may take place there, to receive confidential instructions from the Government, and make confidential investigations and reports of them, I think that is new machinery to our system of government altogether. As to the particular subject in hand, which has been exposed to us at great length, and with much lucidity, by both the hon. members for Victoria, I really fail to apprehend what there could be confidential in the nature of their report. You find various reports from various public officers, and you find the matter in dispute stated, and why we should have these high questions of confidence and non-confidence, and secret communications, with Mr. Trutch's opinion on the question, one fails to understand. One is much indisposed to question a statement made by the Government if it is not in the public interest to be brought down; but when that statement is made as the hon. Minister now makes it, because he has got a confidential officer there, and all these reports must be secret, then I must say, it seems to me to be rather extraordinary. I did not know we had any such officers in our service, unless they be attached directly or indirectly to the Excise Department.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. We will not enter into the general question just now, but I will just mention to the hon. gentleman one reason why this report should not be brought down: it is because this report brings up to a considerable degree the delicate question of the relations between the Indians and the Government in British Columbia.

Mr. MACKENZIE. That is all settled.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. No; it is not, unfortunately.

Motion withdrawn.

TELEGRAPH LINE FROM NEW WESTMINSTER TO YALE.

Mr. BLAKE moved for the advertisements for tenders for the building of the telegraph line from New Westminster to Yale, copies of the tenders received therefor, and of the written action thereon; also, for copies of any reports by, or letters from, Mr. Gisborne, Inspector of Dominion Telegraphs, or Mr. Wilson, or any other officer, on the subject of that telegraph line; also, for copies of any papers