

been given title in severalty for a portion of the reserve, but to-day he works himself into an agony almost because they have not been given titles to the whole of their reserve. He read what Chief Justice Howell had to say on that point. These people possibly had rights as individuals besides their rights as Indians, and the effort of Chief Justice Howell in making the transaction was to wipe out both their individual right and their Indian right in the one transfer, and hence the granting to them of a portion of the land in severalty, and hence the ground of the complaint that my hon. friend urged last year so strongly as to the morality of the transaction and as to its legality. This year he finds his strongest argument against the surrender of the land as Indian land, in the fact, as he asserts, that it was really half breed land and not Indian land at all.

I will not follow my hon. friend in his flights of oratory as to the merits of these people and as to their various achievements. I have already said that it is a matter of historic record that they were better men 40 years ago than they are to-day; that they have lost and not gained by their close association with civilization; that it is absolutely in their interest that they should be removed to another locality more suited to their mode of life, and where the temptations of civilization will not be constantly before them; that the conditions and terms upon which this arrangement was made have been absolutely according to law and according to precedent, except in its extraordinary liberality, and in the fact that it extinguished the half-breed rights as well as the Indian rights. The people of the town of Selkirk and the people of my hon. friend's constituency are beyond any question largely benefited by the arrangement which has been made, and by its being carried into effect. The Department of Indian Affairs, in this transaction, from beginning to end, has not had anything to conceal nor to apologize for. All information has been placed at the disposal of the House and of my hon. friend. We have asked on previous occasions, and we ask again, for the support of the House to this transaction on its merits as an act of sound public policy in the interest of the Indians of St. Peter's, and of the white people of Selkirk, and as the carrying out of a principle which is for the good of the Indians and the white people all over the Dominion of Canada.

At six o'clock, House took recess.

After Recess.

House resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. T. W. CROTHERS (West Elgin). I venture to believe, Mr. Speaker, that an 185½

intelligent and unprejudiced jury, listening to the hon. minister, would convict him on his own statement, because his manner and words, as he followed my hon. friend from Selkirk, (Mr. Bradbury) bore all the earmarks of guilt. The evidence adduced by my hon. friend from Selkirk this evening, was brought to the attention of this House a year ago, and a portion of it, if I remember right, two years ago. No attempt was made a year ago to contradict that evidence and none has been made to-night. Let us see what a portion of that evidence is. The affidavit of William Asham will be found in 'Hansard' of last year at page 7055, a very lengthy affidavit, and I shall quote a portion of it. Speaking of the meeting to consider the advisability on the part of the Indians of surrendering St. Peter's reserve, Mr. Asham said:

The meeting was held in an old schoolhouse on the reserve, too small to hold more than half of those present. Those present representing the government were Chief Justice Howell, Frank Pedley, Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, S. J. Jackson, M.P., E. Raynor of Selkirk, John Semmens, Inspector of Indian agencies, J. O. Lewis, Indian agent, and Dr. Grain.

When the meeting was called to order, Frank Pedley was selected to take the chair, and I was called in from the outside and requested by one of the gentlemen to act as interpreter. This I declined to do, stating that I wanted a free hand, but William H. Prince, one of the councillors, acted as interpreter, and interpreted parts of the proceedings.

As soon as Mr. Pedley took the chair, I immediately stepped forward and asked if this was a public meeting. The chairman said, certainly. Then I said it was free for every one to express his opinion on the subject before the meeting, and Mr. Pedley replied, certainly. Mr. Pedley started to explain the conditions of the surrender, informing the meeting that he was sent there by the government to arrange for the surrender of the reserve. Mr. Pedley explained to the meeting what the government was willing to do if we would agree to surrender the reserve. One proposition he made was that the chief would receive 180 acres of land, and each councillor 120, and each Indian would receive only 16 acres of land. I immediately demanded the reason why the chief and council should receive more land than the ordinary Indian. Mr. Pedley replied that they were getting the extra land for their recognition. I then stated the only recognition they had was the coat they wore and the extra money they receive annually. I also stated that they were not entitled to one acre more land than the ordinary Indian would receive, but as the agreement of surrender was already prepared there was no change made at the time.

I further declare that at least two-thirds of the Indians present did not understand the conditions as stated by Mr. Pedley. I, understanding the English language, did most of the talking against the surrender of the reserve, and after talking several hours back and for-