

that the protection should be removed, and that the statement made by the minister in this House was entirely misleading when he said that was the only condition on which he could obtain the surrender of St. Peter's Indian reserve. These Indians declared, as dozens have told me privately, that there was no demand made by the band that the Indian Department should not stand between them and the white man. The Indian knew that he was not capable of handling such valuable possessions, and the duty of the department was after it had given these people these lands, (which I contend was a crime in the first place) the manifest duty of the Indian Department was to see that the Indians were not robbed by a few hungry land sharks. I submit that that is strong evidence to show that the removal of the protective clause in the surrender was not made a condition of the surrender by the band, but that this clause was struck out simply at the bidding of a few irresponsible Indians who were no doubt in the pay of those who did not want any power to interfere between them and their intended victims, the Indians. As I pointed out, there was no effort made by the deputy Superintendent General—who was responsible for this surrender, and who I believe is responsible for this whole transaction—to retain the protective provision in the surrender. It would almost seem there was an understanding of some kind between these men and the men who acquired these lands. The more I see and hear of this transaction the more I am satisfied that the whole thing was arranged so that these lands should pass into the hands of the few men who got them, and a scheme was devised, first, to give them to the Indian, and then to make it impossible for the public to interfere, and these four men were allowed and assisted by the Indian agent to acquire these lands on their own terms and conditions from the poor unfortunate Indians. Well, Mr. Speaker, when the minister was before the committee some time ago I again called his attention to the scandalous conduct of the land speculators, and also to the protests that were entered by the Indians against the whole transaction. I then, two months ago, pressed for an investigation, but the minister flatly refused. However, I learned a few days after that he had despatched his law clerk from the Indian Department with instructions to make a secret or private investigation. On learning this I quite naturally visited the department to ascertain if this were true. I could not believe it possible, in face of what the minister said to me across the floor of the House, that he would have taken action without at least having given me some little notice, knowing the interest I was taking

in the matter. Well, Sir, after visiting the department, and asking a question from one or two of the officials, these men simply shook their heads; they did not know anything about it. When I put the question straight to them: where is Mr. Williams, the answer was; he is away on duty, and when I asked: has he gone to Selkirk, the answer was: I do not know, you will have to see the deputy. I did not see the deputy, I felt it was no use under the circumstances, but the deputy was seen, and the deputy refused to give any information. But I knew that this man had gone to Selkirk and I went to Selkirk myself and I found that the minister had sent Mr. Williams there and that he was making a private investigation. There was no attempt to make a public investigation, no attempt to arrive at the truth regarding these scandalous transactions. What this man was evidently doing—as is borne out by the report which he makes—was simply seeking to get evidence to combat the statements made by me on the floor of the House, and the statements made by the Indians in the letters and petitions sent to the minister. In every page of that report which this law clerk brings down he shows his utter inability to cope with the conditions existing around Selkirk. You might as well send that gentleman to Hong Kong to inquire into Chinese conditions, and expect a proper report, as to send an innocent young man like him in among the land sharks that secured this land. When I went into Selkirk where did I find him? I found him with the Indian agent, the man who had been a party to this transaction; I found him with these land dealers, the men who had been parties to the scandals complained of. Is it any wonder that his report bears the complexion it does. What do you find in this report? You find the Mr. John Smith sold so many acres of land to George Tracy, and according to George Tracy's books he received payment in full. That is the way he wipes out every one of these charges; he goes according to their books. I have no hesitation in saying, Sir, from my place in the House, that as to a large number of these amounts that are charged up to these poor unfortunate Indians they never saw one dollar of the money. Of course, the books were all right as a matter of book-keeping—these men are good book-keepers as results show.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the course of the criticisms that were made in the House on a previous occasion, the minister stated that he had secured a number of surrenders from different reserves throughout the country, and that in every case the land had been duly advertised and put up to auction. At that time I took exception to that statement of the minister, and in the