

## THE CHARGE OF CORRUPT ADMINISTRATION.

Let us take the first head. The Government of which I have been a member for the last year through your kind sympathy and support—this Government is attacked by its opponents on the ground that it has corruptly administered certain great public trusts. I reply to that charge on behalf of the Government, not with reference as I said before to what may be urged against the personality of any member of the Government or of any supporter of the Government, but with reference to the Government itself.

Now if you group all these charges of corrupt administration you will find them under this head: "You have corruptly administered the Government with reference to the great public trusts reposed in you in the lands and riches of the Northwest, especially with reference to its coal areas, its grazing areas, its colonization areas and its timber areas," and in all these our opponents say and say it daily, we have been guilty of reckless, dishonest and corrupt administration. That is the charge. Is it true or not? If it is true then turn out the Government that will administer in such a manner the affairs of the country and violate the trusts reposed in it; turn it out and put honest men in; but before doing so, be sure you do not mistake the charge for proof, look for evidence of the truths of the charge, consider well all the facts in relation to it and use your own judgment in the matter.

With reference to the public trusts, so far as I have referred to them, in connection with which those charges are chiefly brought, what are the facts of the case? Our opponents say that we have administered these wrongfully, have administered these corruptly, have given them neither aid, neither to our followers for the purpose of corruption. Let me give one firm, flat denial to all such charges. I state first that no coal area, no grazing area, no timber limit nor colonization area has been given away by the Dominion Government during the term of its administration. (Wociferous applause.) Every one that has gone out for the time being from the hands of the Government has gone out according to Act of Parliament and according to regulations founded upon Acts of Parliament, which are open for your perusal and which are open to all men to take advantage of. None of these with the exception of coal areas and colonization areas have gone out of the hands of the Government by any other way than by way of lease, returning to the Government when the lease expires. We sell coal areas and we sell colonization areas: we lease timber limits and we lease grazing areas.

## THE ADMINISTRATION OF COAL LANDS.

First, with regard to the coal lands. As I said before, a certain price is put upon them and certain districts are set apart which are considered to be good coal areas. Any man who wishes, any company that wishes, who have the means to work them and who apply in good faith for them for the purpose of working them for the benefit of the people, can get coal areas in the Northwest over this limited region at the rate of \$10 per mile and \$12.50 per mile, according to the kind of coal, whether bituminous or anthracite; that is the only way they can get them. They are sold by the Dominion Government and they become the property of those who buy them and the money goes into the treasury. The only change, so far as the public trust is concerned, is that instead of having the property as land we have it in the shape of money which is equally yours and which is administered by the Government in your behalf. But a greater change is made, so far as the people in the Northwest are concerned. It was at one time considered that the absence of coal in the Northwest would prove to be one of its cardinal defects, but the result of explorations has been to lead to the discovery of coal areas of large extent and the wisdom of our policy of selling coal lands has been best demonstrated by the rapid development of coal mining, so that now in Winnipeg coal can be obtained at \$8 per ton where formerly they had to pay from \$16 to \$20 per ton for the coal they burned. Today at Lethbridge and near Medicine Hat and beyond that in the Rocky Mountains coal is being mined in large quantities, employment is being given to the people and to the railroad and the consuming population get their coal at less than half the price they before paid, and I repeat that no man can say today that a single acre of that class of land has been given away by the Government; every acre has been sold and sold according to regulations which are open to you or any of the people of this Dominion or out of it, if they comply with the terms laid down.

## THE GRAZING LEASE POLICY.

Next with reference to the grazing leases. Out under the shadow of the Rocky Mountains where the warm Chinook winds sweep the prairie we have the most valuable grazing lands on the continent of America. The Government said what shall we do with these lands, shall we sell them in immense tracts to such persons as desire to purchase them, or shall we allow them to remain unused and unproductive, or how shall we administer them? It finally came to the conclusion to put them under lease upon certain terms and under certain conditions. The leases run for 21 years (and may be cancelled before expiring by the Government for cause) at the rate of 2 cents annually per acre. Those who get the leases have to put a certain number of cattle or stock upon the land during the first three years and afterwards maintain them bona-fides. What has hap-