

It had been said that the Government was to retain the timber. That unquestionably had been mentioned as being the policy of the Government; and when the question came to be discussed, and it was shown that the Government wished to avert the dire resort of direct taxation, by husbanding the timber which constituted so large a portion of the real wealth of the country, he was satisfied the people of Ontario would say that the Government had done right. They knew that many of those who had gone upon lands, pretending an intention to settle upon them, only went to cut the timber—and, when the timber was gone, where were they? With that experience, were they to throw away the valuable resources they had in the pine timber, which was now getting scarce through the country? As the timber was becoming more valuable, it would be the duty of the Government to bring down a scale of charges, which must be higher in proportion as the demand was greater, and which would give the Government the revenues of which they had hitherto been deprived. Some hon. members were disposed to look upon the timber limits as a patrimony for future settlers. But he knew that in his own section the pine lands were inferior to other lands; and the intention of the Government was that the settler, in selecting land, should, under the direction of the Crown Land Agents, select a lot which he could really live upon, and that he should not be allowed to select timber lands, with the view of selling the timber at prices which would pay him well for going upon the land, and leaving it after he had sold the timber. The Commissioner of Crown Lands would probably give notice to-morrow of the resolutions which embodied the policy of the Government on this subject, and would bring them before the House for discussion in the course of next week, and the House would then be able to enter upon the

subject with that grave deliberation, which was due to so important a subject. The House, he was sure, would not suppose that the Government had any object in view except what pertained to the advantage of the country, when they insisted that the pine lands of the country should not be at the disposal of the settler, except in so far as he required the pine timber upon his land for any improvements, as for fences or building. He wished it also to be understood that this Government was not responsible for the past conduct of the Crown Lands Department, which had not been such as to commend itself to the people of this country; and that, before they granted further privileges to lumbermen, they were determined to know what they were giving away, and to have that description of information which would justify the policy they deemed it right to pursue.

Mr. HAYS said that in the western section of the country, thousands of acres had been laid out as town plots, which there was no prospect would ever be occupied as towns. The settlers on these lands suffered a great deal of inconvenience, from inability to get their patents, and he hoped the matter would engage the early attention of the Commissioner of Crown Lands.

Mr. COCKBURN said the regulations of the Crown Lands Department in past times had generally been very good in themselves; but they had been perverted. The member for Lincoln was very much in error when he spoke of the settlers having been badly used by the lumbermen coming in and cutting their timber. That was a mistake. The lumbermen could not do so under the regulations of the Department. He was surprised to hear the Commissioner of Crown Lands say that he was unable to tell where good lands were to be found. Under his (Mr. Cockburn's) own observation, the Department had run several exploratory lines, and the surveyors had taken notes of the character of the land for three miles on each side of these lines, and their notes were now in the Department, with regular plans and coloured sections. As to settlers going on lands to make a dishonest speculation out of the timber, he thought these must be exceptional cases. He could not agree with the Attorney-General, that pine lands were poor agricultural lands. He maintained that good lands bore the best timber.

Mr. R. W. SCOTT said the member for Lincoln appeared to take it for granted that the lumber trade was hostile to the settlement of the country. He (Mr. S.) was prepared to show that the lumber trade had been rather the hand-maid of immigration—at all events, in the section of country from which he came. The lumberman had generally preceded the settler. The settler had in all cases followed the lumberman,

finding a good market for his produce. He had known hay in the lumber districts as high as \$40 a ton, and oats from \$1 50 to \$2 per bushel. He had known lumbermen not only favouring settlement, but offering premiums to settlers to come in. On the other hand, he knew there were instances in which settlers had been sent by the Government into the white pine country, not fit for settlement. These settlers might get along for a few years, while the lumbermen cut the timber in their neighbourhood, but, as soon as the timber was cut, as the land was not worth cultivating, starvation ensued, and they had to go away. He believed all the settlements on the Opeongo Road had been abandoned, except one or two. As for the fitness of white pine land for settlement he might mention that in 1863 a Parliamentary Committee received evidence, not only from agriculturists, but from distinguished geologists, all agreeing that, as a rule, the white pine land of this country was not fit for settlement. A great deal of speculation had been practised under the name of settlement. Thousands of acres had been taken up, particularly in the Ottawa country, by parties who went on them simply for the purpose of selling the timber, who had in that way deprived the Crown of the dues it would otherwise have received, and who, after they took the timber, in nine cases out of ten, abandoned the lands. And this had led to the destruction of timber in another way. Parties who had no interest in the locality, except to get the timber, frequently by carelessness set fire to the woods, consuming the standing timber, and it was estimated by those who knew the facts that a quantity at least equal to what was exported from this country, was annually destroyed by fire. Considering that the value to this country of its lumber trade, was in excess of all other branches of our export trade, as shown by the trade and navigation returns, it would be understood how great a loss the country thus sustained by the carelessness of settlers.

Mr. RYKERT said he thought the Government must have misunderstood the purport of the latter part of his resolution. They were only asked to make the return "as far as practicable;" and, if the Government said it was not practicable to make the return, upon them let the responsibility rest. The member for Ottawa had somewhat misconstrued his remarks, when he charged him with representing the lumber trade as hostile to settlement. Yet, if he had said this, he would have been borne out by evidence which appeared on the journals of the Parliament of Canada. Mr. Rykert here read evidence by Mr. Hayes, late Government agent on the colonization roads, to the effect that the lumber trade had exerted a detrimental influence on settlement, chiefly in consequence of the high-handed manner in which the employees of some of the lumbering establishments had acted towards settlers, in disputes about rights to timber. In support of another of his statements, which had been disputed by the member for Victoria, he read the evidence given on the same occasion by a gentleman in the interest of Mr. Gilmour, the greatest lumberman in the Province, to the effect that settlers frequently had the first intimation of a timber license having been granted, which covered their locations, by lumbermen coming upon them to cut the timber. He (Mr. Rykert) did not, of course, blame this Government for the conduct of the Crown Lands Department in past times, but he hoped we would have a better system for the future. This evidence showed that, whenever a surveyor made a correct report to the Government as to the qualities of the land he surveyed, he never got another survey. When Mr. Peterson, of the Hastings District, made a report to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, showing that in the whole of the townships he had surveyed, there was very little agricultural land, he got no more work. If he had stated that the land was fertile and fit for settlement, he would have got a dozen more surveys.

Mr. K. GRAHAM (Hastings) said that in 1865 he was employed by the County Council of Hastings to go as valuator upon the Hastings Road, and he found that nine out of every ten houses which had been put up there were deserted—that country not being capable of supporting an agricultural population. If the timber and minerals were not turned to account, it was a country which must have been made in vain, for it was good for nothing else. He was told that if he went further back he would come to good land. That might be the case, but he did not see it. He was told by neighbours of his who had gone to British Columbia by the overland route, that in the valley of the Saskatchewan, there were mil-