

in any way in the matter. Ten years from the present time he felt satisfied the people of the country would feel convinced that the sale had been prompted by a wise judgment. He professed to know something of the lumber trade. It had taken him two years to convince the hon. gentlemen composing the Sandfield Macdonald Government that it was to the interest of the Province to stimulate the trade by abandoning the regulation then in force that lumbermen were to work all their limits or pay double dues. He had fought against that system for years and years. The hon. members for East Toronto and Niagara would remember this perfectly well. He believed any line of policy he had ever recommended for the trade was in the interest of the country. The great terror of this country was, he said, direct taxation, and he felt that we could avert that for at all events the next half century if our timber resources were properly managed. He thought that he had proved the other day by figures that we had large resources that would yield to this country \$25,000,000, and would at the same time give \$25,000,000 to the parties who licensed the limits. A charge had been made that the Government had made no explorations. They had the reports of explorations since 1858, but no returns or explorations that could be made would give the people to understand what the value of the timber was. It was the most difficult thing in the world to tell what was the value of a timber berth. He knew as a fact, and he stated it from experience, that a lumberman who had been working his limit for some time came to the conclusion that it would not last for more than another season, and sold it, that the purchasers worked it for fifteen or twenty years and then sold it to others, who still further worked it. This was a fact well known in the trade. Hon. gentlemen should recollect how difficult it would be, in going through a forest, to reckon how many pine trees stood on a single acre. It would take about two years to tell how many were in a single township. When the late Government held their sale of limits in Muskoka, they sent an agent up only three or four days before the sale to find its value, and then the report was given to private parties.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON said the hon. gentleman seemed very sensitive about the accusation against himself, but had no hesitation in accusing others. The information referred to had not been given to private parties.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Who held the report during the sale?

Hon. Mr. CAMERON—Mr. Miller, who was an officer of the Department.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—He was not long an officer of the Department, but immediately after the sale went into the firm of Dodge & Co.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON—Mr. Miller was an officer of the Department at the time of sale. If he made the substance of the report known, that was not the fault of the Government.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT said the general impression was that he did make it known. What he (Mr. Scott) wished to be understood was that it made very little difference how long the Government might take to have the country examined, the result would be of little value.

Mr. RICHARDS asked if the hon. gentleman meant to say that some gentlemen had not bought a large number of townships, and after the sale had them examined and then refused to complete the purchase. He himself knew of one such case.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT said such might possibly have happened. It was impossible for the Government to force anyone to complete their purchases.

Mr. RICHARDS asked if one or two persons, instead of carrying out their purchase at the time, had not obtained from the hon. gentleman time to send up agents to examine the country for themselves.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT had heard of no such cases. A list of those who had not completed their purchases—some fifteen or twenty—would be sent to the House. He believed it would be advisable to have an Act passed which would authorize the Government to issue from time to time such regulations for the government of their timber business as were in the interest of actual settlement, and to withdraw from licensees such portions of their territory as was considered necessary to supply local mills with timber. He also thought an occasional revision of the tariff of dues a necessity. Whether this should be done every five or seven or ten years it would be for the House to consider. He hoped that now that this

question had been brought prominently before the notice of the people of Ontario that they would carefully consider what was best and most prudent in the interests of the Province, and he believed they would be doing that which was best in the interest of the lumbermen. If, in future years, the trade would bear a higher duty the profit of the lumbermen would increase accordingly. He thought that the lumbermen should be placed in possession of their limits on some such footing as would prevent them from denuding the forests, and endeavouring to get all their profits within a short period. He considered he was able to prove that the system of licenses was the best that could be adopted, and that we should get from ten to fifteen dollars an acre more than the people of the United States do. There were gentlemen who came to the sale in October and left in disgust, saying that they could do better in Michigan, where they could buy from \$150 to \$180 an acre. In New Brunswick the system was to restrict the licensee to a given number of years, he thought three or four, and then to resell. The result was that, as each licensee endeavoured to get as much as possible from the land during his time of possession, after two or three sales the limit was useless. Our system showed that both the Government and the licensee had a mutual interest. The licensee could protect the limits from plunder much better than the Government could. It was simply impossible for the Government to protect the lands that were not under license. In conclusion, he referred the House to the large increase that had this year taken place in the collections made by his Department. He rested his defence on these figures, perfectly assured that they showed that he had been acting in the interest of the people rather than in the interest of the lumbermen. (Applause.)

Mr. RICHARDS was of opinion that the late Government were entitled to the credit of the additional revenue from timber, because the accruals were from timber cut before the present Government went into office.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—The wood-rangers for 1872 were not appointed when he took office.

Mr. RICHARDS asserted that they were, and repeated his opinion that the late Government were entitled to the credit of the additional revenue. He repeated the old story that Mr. Scott had, while a member of the House, acted as the paid agent of the lumbermen. He came with a deputation of lumbermen to the late Government and argued in favour of granting the lumbermen a license for twenty-one years. He denied that Mr. Scott was entitled to any credit for the regulations of the Crown lands; that credit was due to him when he was at the head of the Department. He proceeded to condemn the proceedings connected with the sale in October.

Mr. OLIVER said this was a question which had been discussed very frequently, and was one which never lost its interest in the country. He had felt some doubt as to the propriety of selling these timber limits, but he must admit that there was a great deal of force in the argument that such a course was needed to promote the settlement of the territory. He knew that the lumberman was deeply interested in inducing settlers to go along with him, because he must have supplies, and it cost him a great deal to bring his supplies from the old settled portions. Both the timber and mineral wealth of the country were made available by settlement. He was of opinion that some more time might have been given to examine the limits that were sold, but there was this difficulty about it—several parties would have had to be sent up there, and it was possible that certain parties might have been favoured to the disadvantage of others. On the whole he was inclined to believe that it was wise to sell a portion of the timber limits when the price of lumber was higher.

Mr. RICHARDS wanted to know if the report was true that the hon. member for South Oxford had, either himself or with others, purchased 30,000 acres of timber in the mineral lands of Lake Superior, at half a dollar an acre.

Mr. OLIVER understood that an Order in Council was passed, offering the timber on the mineral lands at half a dollar an acre over and above the one dollar an acre paid for the minerals. He as well as others had purchased timber limits under this Order. He did not know that there was any law to prevent a member of the House from purchasing Crown Lands. These lands were open to the whole public. He had not bought as much as the hon. gentleman had stated, but if the hon. gentleman wished 1,000 acres of it at the price it cost him, he could have them.