

tion of authority ; to permit a contrary practice is to disseminate loose ideas about property which cannot fail to be of pernicious effect. It is necessary that every man who intends to farm should have land to cultivate, but it is neither necessary nor desirable that he should be allowed to roam about and make a selection of public lands anywhere between Winnipeg and the Rocky Mountains. But if this license be permitted to any one, it should be permitted to the Halfbreed, whose habits are more nomadic than sedentary, and who was born on the prairie. One evil arising out of the delay in settling the claims of the Halfbreeds is that, as time goes on, it becomes difficult to assign them any particular section of country; they will have made their own choice, and whether it be convenient or inconvenient for the great majority of the population, there is practically nothing to do but to confirm it. It would certainly be inconvenient to have a shiftless population like this mongrel race occupying all the best positions on the great rivers, though to them it would be an advantage, since it would enable them to supply themselves with fish, and they would be much more likely to catch fish—which is work for the squaws among Indians and quite beneath the dignity of a brave—than to cultivate the soil. But, wherever the Half-breeds have taken up land there seems to have been no disposition to disturb them. Sir John Macdonald stated, in the House of Commons on Monday night, that, "All the agents have been instructed to inform the Half breeds that they would not be disturbed. Not only have they been so informed by the agents, but in all the other places where there are half-breed settlements, surveys have been conducted for the purpose of conveying to them their lands, and they have been informed by the agent, and I have no doubt the agent was so instructed, that the mode of survey would not in any way interfere with the laying out of their lands and the granting of their patents." And Sir John added that "whenever an individual Halfbreed made an application to an agent he was so informed." This conduct on the part of the Government was as liberal as could be desired in intention ; but the chasm between intention and execution remained unbridged. This is the weak point in the practical administration ; the defect was not confined to one government, but the responsibility is greatest where the delay was most prolonged.

The Indians, some of whom have shown a bad spirit and committed many outrages, do not appear to have complained of any specific grievance, of any duty unfulfilled by the government. They have been influenced by their relatives the Half breeds, and as they were on short allowance, they required very little encouragement to induce them to steal the cattle and other property of the white people. Agriculture is fatal to the occupation of the hunter race. With the going-in of settlers, the bison of the North West has disappeared, and with it the chief food of the Indian, whose mode of life cannot be changed rapidly enough to furnish him with other adequate sources of supply. The Indian's quarrel is with the march of civilization,

which, to his mode of life is fatal ; and should many tribes join in the Half breed insurrection, the task of quelling it would be greatly prolonged.

There are some scattered white settlers who are disposed to take advantage of a state of insurrection to make extreme demands for themselves. A document addressed to Government of the Dominion, from the district of Alberta, which purports to bear the names of 250 persons, is barely respectful in tone. "We require," the signers say, "patents for lands in occupation," to which, if entitled, they may rightly ask, but they ought to ask in a respectful way. In this document, dictation is carried to a ludicrous extent when, alluding to the withdrawal of townships 22 and 23 near Calgary, the signers say : "We require that these and other townships in this vicinity be immediately opened for entry and settlement." That is a question for the whole Dominion, not for two hundred and fifty people to settle. These people also "require" the cancelling of the leases of the cattle ranches, the effect of which would be to destroy their productiveness for years to come. Some of the requests, such as representation in parliament, are not unreasonable ; but the whole tone is bad and little calculated to produce the result required. Certain journals have been found to publish threats from the neighborhood in question that some settlers might join the insurrection if these demands were not granted ; the encouragement which publication implies is highly culpable and responsibility for the act is not duly felt. As a whole, the settlers in the North-West may be relied on to do their best to put down the insurrection, which many of them are in fact now doing.

ADDITIONAL AID TO THE PACIFIC RAILWAY.

Before the session opened, it was understood that additional aid to the Canada Pacific Railway Company would be asked for. It had all along been asserted, and is still repeated, that the loan of last session was sufficient to complete the construction. But the company has a floating debt, which is probably not less than \$6,000,000 ; and the means for equipment were wanting. If the Government loan to the company be increased by \$5,000,000 and the company be allowed to issue bonds, in addition to those it gives to the government, to the amount of \$7,000,000, means of paying off the debt and effecting the equipment will be got. The way in which it is proposed to raise this additional sum of \$12,000,000 is this : \$35,000,000 of the company's bonds is to be handed to the government, and the lien by which the \$30,000,000 loan is secured is to be discharged. The government will have to hand to the company \$5,000,000, which will increase the loan by this process of exchange of securities, from \$30,000,000 to \$35,000,000. Besides this a temporary loan of \$5,000,000, repayable on the 1st July 1886 is to be made on the security of a deposit of \$7,000,000 of bonds, which are intended afterwards to go into the hands of the public, if purchasers at a price which the government may think satisfactory can be found.

It is easy to show that the transaction is not one which the government would seek or which it would accept on any other ground than that of necessity. The new security is not the same as the old ; the penalty of forfeiture of the mortgaged property for default is withdrawn and in its place a receivership under the guise of a commission will undertake the management of the property for the benefit of the bondholders. It is said that \$7,000,000 has been expended on the property since the last loan was made, over and above the amount of the government subsidies, and that this forms a basis for the additional advance. But the security of the government is no longer an exclusive security ; the holders of the \$7,000,000 of bonds are to have an equal claim with the government, and to one-fifth the amount. This is a reduction of the security now held of twenty per cent. The net effect of the change will be that instead of the mortgaged property vesting in the Government, as as a penalty for default on the part of the Co., it would go into the hands of receivers to be administered for the joint benefit of the Government as bondholders, and the holders of the seven millions, if sold, of other bonds. The chance of the Government getting back the property, which was a minor motive with many to support the loan of last session is cut off. The increased advance by the Government is accompanied by reduced security, and the possibility of getting back the property is gone : in two ways the company gains and the Government loses. The Government in making the loan of last session was making an advance of \$30,000,000 more than it was required by the contract to make. It was understood that in making the contract it was dealing on strictly commercial principles and with contractors who were able to carry out what they undertook to do. But this proved to be a mistake, and a most portentous mistake it was. The Government was willing to give a liberal subsidy in land and money, but of a definite, limited amount ; if Parliament had been told when it made the contract that the contractors would fail in their part of the undertaking, and that the Government would have to advance \$40,000,000 additional, there can be no question that the bargain with the Syndicate would not have been ratified. When the first \$30,000,000 additional was asked, it was natural to contemplate the possibility of farther lapses on the part of the contractors, and it was provided that default in the payment of interest, if continued for a year, should cause the absolute forfeiture of the property. If forfeiture were the best thing for the public, strict commercial dealing would require its enforcement. But we are not certain that forfeiture would be the best thing for the public ; that is a matter of opinion, on which equally competent judges differ. It may look like a temptation which ought to be eagerly embraced, to take possession of a property which has cost some \$125,000,000, by foreclosing a mortgage of \$30,000,000 ; but whether this property would be productive in the working, after foreclosure, is a question to be considered. Against foreclosure the moral reasons are not precisely such as rule in an ordinary mortgage ; but