

mission after commission. I do not want to blame them for it. I think it would be hardly fair to blame an Administration when they have to deal with such a vast territory as this. I would like to know, however, if hon. gentlemen opposite will tell me whether in 1878, eight years after the rights of the half-breeds had been declared by Act of Parliament—not seven years, as the hon. member for Quebec East stated, with respect to the half-breeds in the North-West Territories—but after eight years of investigation on the part of hon. gentlemen opposite and their predecessors, they had left half-breed claims in Manitoba unsettled, and how many claims did they leave unsettled? I do not wish to be hard with them, but at the same time they ought to know the difficulties of the situation; that really it is not an easy task for any Administration to deal with the half-breed question in the North-West. I say that notwithstanding all these commissions the present Government, after coming into office in 1881, had to appoint another commission, composed, Judges Miller and Dubuc, of the Superior Court, for the sole purpose of making a new enumeration and completing the list of claims which had to be examined in Manitoba; but notwithstanding this commission, another Order in Council had to be passed, with a view of giving full justice to the half-breeds who had no other title to their land but occupation, and on the 25th February, 1881, an Order in Council was passed by this Government, with a view of coming to the relief of those half-breeds of Manitoba who had not obtained justice. Yet the hon. gentleman had five years to do that after all the work which had been done by their predecessors. But, as I said at the beginning of my remarks, even if these half-breeds had some complaints, even if the scrip came too late, even if the patents to their lands also came too late, I say that was no reasons why they should resort to arms. They should have done like the rest of the population in this country. Are hon. gentlemen going to tell me that during the whole of their administration the people of this Dominion were satisfied? There was a cry from one end of the country to the other that the National Policy should be introduced into this country. But they would not do it; and the consequence was, that poverty was becoming general, from one end of the Dominion to the other, but still the people did not resort to arms. They appealed to the Government, and when an election came around they took the remedy into their own hands. Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to allude to the commission of Messrs. Street, Goulet and Forget, which was appointed a few days after the uprising in the North-West, and which, if we are to judge from the account of *Le Manitoba*, is giving so much satisfaction. The leader of the Opposition the other day quoted the conclusion of that article of *Le Manitoba*, stating that it was a great pity that this commission was not appointed a long time ago. Well, I will not take my authority from a newspaper article written since the rebellion began, but I take my authority from public documents, which show that the Government have really acted for the best. Now, I pass to the other articles of the Bill of Rights of the half-breeds, at their meeting at Prince Albert, in September last. Article 8 says:

“Contracts for Government works should be, as far as possible, given to the people in the Territory, in order to encourage them and to increase the circulation of money among them.”

What just complaints can they have in this respect? The contracts for work are given in the North-West Territories, as everywhere else in the Dominion, by public tenders, and there is no reason why the Government should change its policy in that respect. If the people residing in a locality cannot tender successfully with the residents of the older Provinces, the Government cannot be blamed for that.

“Article 9. That the Canadian Government should feed the Indians, and not offer to the christian world the spectacle of a people dying of starvation. If the civilisation of our century does permit it, and if the Province wishes it, the Government should make the Indians work about  
Mr. GIROUARD.

as much as Pharoah did the Jews; but, at all events, they should not leave them a victim of hallucination and in the delirium of starvation. They do not wish the people to talk with the Indians, but the Indians are all the time around the half-breed establishments. The half-breeds and other settlers spend more for the Indians than the Government does, and the people are going to be prevented from mentioning this state of things. It is not just that the Federal Government should administer Indian affairs.”

It is perfectly plain, after the exposure I have made of the policy of the Government towards the Indians, after everything the Government has done for them, after the millions of money we have spent to feed them and instruct them, it is plain that whoever framed this article of the Bill of Rights did not know what the Government had done for the Indians. It must be remembered there is no complaint in this article of the Bill of Rights that the Indians have not received their supplies, that the quality was bad and that they were hardly used by the officials. The 10th article of the Bill of Rights contains a demand for educational institutions. The answer to this is, that to-day there is a complete organisation in the North-West for the education of the youth. At the time Bishop Grandin applied to Minister of Interior for a grant there was no such organisation. But since 1876 there has been a board of education, comprised of six Protestants and six Roman Catholics, and the Government, on their representation, have granted such aid as in their opinion might be necessary. Therefore, the matter referred to in this article will be dealt with as it is in the older Provinces, under the constitution of the North-West. Article 12th of the Bill of Rights demands the erection of the districts in the North-West into so many Provinces. They claim that they should become Provinces when they obtain the same population as Manitoba possessed at the time of its entry into Confederation, and besides that this erection of districts into Provinces should be accompanied by all the advantages of responsible government and the administration of the Crown lands. I have already alluded to this matter while dealing with other portions of the Bill of Rights. That is a portion of the articles of the Bill of Rights which is most unreasonable. Not only do they want the North-West to be erected into Provinces, but the half-breeds want to have as many Provinces as there are districts. We have to-day five districts, Keewatin, Alberta, Assiniboia, Athabaska and Saskatchewan. Therefore, there would be five new Provinces to be established. We are, therefore, asked to increase the burden of taxation on the older Provinces to the extent of \$400,000 or \$500,000. And, what is more, the half-breeds want to keep all the lands in the North-West to themselves. We have constructed a Canadian Pacific Railway round Lake Superior to the Pacific Ocean, with a view to opening up that immense Territory, embracing a couple of billion acres of lands, and now that the railway is practically built, the people of the North-West, and among others, the French half-breeds, say: “We want all the districts to be turned into Provinces; we want subsidies from the old Provinces; we have got railways and land offices, and you are going to take care of the Indians, and we are going to take the last possible assets which the country can possess, and that is the land.” A pretention of that kind is simply absurd. I have passed over every article of the Bill of Rights as adopted by the half-breeds at a meeting at Prince Albert in September last, and hon. gentlemen opposite will notice that it does not contain a complaint about surveys, in regard to which subject so much capital has been made. There is not a complaint in regard to surveys from the half-breeds along the river, where it is said great tyranny has been committed by the present Administration, so much so, that the half-breeds at that time had sufficient reason to resort to arms. Is it not astonishing that during their last protests, their last declaration of rights, detailing their list of grievances, there is nothing said about the surveys of the river lots? I might perhaps stop at this stage