

in the least degree, blame the Government for calling out the troops, although they may have acted in the wisest manner, is, of itself, an unfortunate event. It is an unfortunate circumstance, because it will be made to appear that this affair, slight though it may be, is yet serious enough to call out this action and this display of force, and the opinions of people outside, in which their good opinion as to the peace, the order, the contentment, the prosperity, the good administration, the safety, the security and the harmony in which we dwell, which is important to us at this junction, and particularly with respect to this locality, will be rudely shaken by the occurrence of the last few days. I say that hon. gentlemen opposite, having found it necessary to take this action, ought to have informed us; and they ought to have informed us fully of the action they deemed it necessary to take. When the hon. gentleman was asked, and even without his being asked, what was being done on the 23rd, we should have known then that the Government had decided that the field battery and battalion should be called out; we should have known that they had taken this step. Although hon. gentlemen were asked, we were not told it. It is hardly possible that the decision should have been reached after the session of the House, and at a late hour; but if the information given at an earlier hour became incorrect by change of events at a subsequent time, before the House adjourned, the information should have been given us and an opportunity afforded of deciding as to the exact condition of affairs, so far as the Government knew it. But the Government seems to have treated this question with apathy and neglect. What force there is in the accusation, launched at them by their most devoted partisans through the columns of the public press, that the lands of the settlers have been patented for favorites and supporters, through bribes given to officials, I cannot say; I do not know. It is not their enemies who have said this but their own familiar friends, their influential, their patriotic, their subsidised organs. However that may be, we know they have been very active in the North-West; so active, that with other things they have not had time to attend to this one. The hon. member for North Perth (Mr. Hesson), the other day, caused a large bundle of documents to be laid on the Table of the House; and it was not the only package which the hon. gentleman can cause to be laid on the Table, because there is another and a still larger bundle of similar documents on a similar subject. He can find thousands of applications for timber limits and grants of land in the North-West. He can find influential members of Parliament, influential partisans of the Government outside of Parliament, influential members from all quarters of the Dominion who have made application; he can find that there was the carcass at which the eagles that follow in the wake of the Government were gathered together; and I suppose the effort to organise those various applications to suit and please everybody, that everybody and his son-in-law or daughter-in-law, or his friend, or his ally, should have a suitable timber limit, or mine, or location of some kind, was perhaps enough to exhaust the energies of hon. gentlemen opposite, and leave them little time to deal, in the course of the seven or eight years during which the claims have been pending with them, until they have reached this head. I say it is most unfortunate that this question was not dealt with. What is done now? The hon. gentleman says, forsooth, that he has issued a commission. I asked, When? The hon. gentleman said that one of the commissioners selected was selected some time ago, but he resigned. Perhaps he did not want to go into that quarter just then, so he said another has been selected. I asked, When? He replied, the other day. I suppose that means the day before yesterday. It means as soon as the row broke out, when the militia was called out, when the trouble had come. The hon. gentleman then thought it worth while to issue a com-

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mission to investigate the new and fresh grievances of the half-breeds of the North-West, which he had not been able to glance at for a long time; and he hopes, with the assistance of the cavalry, of the foot guards, of the artillery, of the militia-men, and of General Middleton on the one hand, and the olive branch, to be borne by his commissioners on the other, he may get himself out of the scrape. I am sure I hope he will; but without serious damage having resulted to the country, by having allowed this matter to go so long and so far, and reach this point, without taking the proper steps, that, I regret to say, is absolutely impossible. Now, we have a peculiar anxiety to know what the hon. gentleman is going to do on this occasion, having regard to the *personnel* involved in this transaction. What will he do with Louis Riel?

An hon. MEMBER. Catch him.

Mr. BLAKE. Some years ago the hon. gentleman announced in the town of Peterborough that "he wished to God he could catch Louis Riel." Riel was at that time out of the country; and the hon. gentleman inveighed against me as being the cause of his being unable to gratify that fervent prayer to his Maker, that patriotic aspiration for his country, because, forsooth, with the almost unanimous assent of the Legislature of Ontario, I had caused to be issued a proclamation, offering a reward for the arrest and trial of the same Louis Riel. He said by issuing that proclamation I had forced him across the line, where, in safety and comfort and security, he could plot against the peace of Canada; and the patriotic cheers of his Tory friends greeted the hon. gentleman's fervent prayer that he wished to God he might catch him, and those patriotic cheers were redoubled when they found that it was due to the malign influence of the humble individual who now addresses you, by offering a reward for Louis Riel, that he had crossed the border, and that the hon. gentleman's fervent prayer could not be realised. A little while afterwards, in the course of some investigations which went on here, a right reverend prelate informed us—and he brought the letters to prove it—that the hon. gentleman had appointed him a special commissioner to arrange with Louis Riel to leave the country; that he had handed him out of the secret service money \$1,000, to pay his expenses when he was out of the country; and that it was at the hon. gentleman's own instance, at the hon. gentleman's own request, with the public moneys of this country, supplied by the hon. gentleman for the purpose, that Riel was induced to leave Canada and remain in the foreign country to which, he said, Louis Riel had been driven by me, and where, he said, wrongly driven by me, he was plotting in peace, and safety, and security, against the country. Under these circumstances, it is extremely desirable that we should know, what will he do with him? What is the hon. gentleman going to do with Louis Riel on this occasion? He told us with—I was going to say *naïveté*—but that word would hardly be applicable to the hon. gentleman—this afternoon, that he had received a sort of intimation, that Riel had actually expressed a sort of an idea that if he got a sum of money out of the public treasury he would not disturb them any more. Of course, the hon. gentleman said that was impossible—for the second time such a thing was impossible. Why should he think so? Where did Riel learn the lesson? Who taught him it paid to kick up a row here, that he might get an Archbishop to negotiate for the public money of Canada to console him? It was from the hon. gentleman he learned the lesson which he was endeavoring to repeat this year, but which, the hon. gentleman forcibly says, could not be thought of on this occasion—I suppose from the fact that no secret service money was available. There is yet another policy which may be adopted. The hon. gentleman may catch him, or he might bribe him to go away, or he might do what one of his most influential organs suggests