

affected. If only one section of it is affected, you will not have a rebellion. The report goes on further, and tries to show that Gabriel Dumont, Philippe Garneau, Baptiste Boyer, and some sixteen others who are named, of the leaders of the rebellion, had personally no grievances whatever. What is the object of this statement? The object is to show that Gabriel Dumont, Boyer and the other leaders of the rebellion did not act from any noble motive, but simply from the malice of their heart. This is a most unfair statement to make against Gabriel Dumont and his fellow leaders in the rebellion. There is one particular for which I have always admired the British character, it is that British men have never been chary of expressing their admiration for a brave foe. At the ceremony of Her Majesty's coronation, the one person who received the most cheers of the assembled throng was not the young Sovereign herself, popular as she was, but the French Ambassador, old Marshal Sult. As history says, wherever the crowd could get a glimpse of his face, they cheered with increased vigor. And what was the reason? It was that the British public remembered that Marshal Sult had fought their armies with undoubted courage, and had proved himself a worthy foe even of the Duke of Wellington. I am proud to say that it has been admitted that Gabriel Dumont has proved that he has a brave heart in his bosom. His conduct in the field drew from the First Minister himself the statement that he was the hero of that rebellion. If he had no grievance of his own, it only proves not that his fellow-countrymen had no grievances, but that he had a greater heart even than we gave him credit for. It would only show that, though he had no personal grievances of his own, he took up arms to defend the rights of others, though his own rights were not imperilled. Would it be the first time in history that men have rebelled though they had no grievances of their own, that men took arms not to remedy their own grievances, but the grievances of others who were suffering? When William of Orange, for instance, with his Dutch companions, placed themselves at the head of the English rebellion, surely he had no grievances against the English Government of that day, he had no personal grievances to avenge against the Government of James. Yet does the fact of his having no grievances alter the fact that at that time the English nation had been tyrannised over by the Government which was ousted on that occasion? And, when the Marquis de Lafayette and his companions forsook the splendor of the court of Versailles to court death on the battlefield in order to aid the American insurgents, it cannot be said that they had any grievances to avenge against the British Government. But does that alter the fact that the American colonies were fighting at that time to uphold the British principle that taxation is not to go without representation? I know the difference that separates these great men from the poor and uneducated half-breeds that live in the North-West, but though the difference is great, it only shows that reason may be found in the breast of all men, without distinction of class; and if these men had no grievance whatever, it is no evidence at all that the nation had no grievances. Have we not the fact that the commission has been dealing with a class of men who had grievances? Have we not the fact that that commission have issued scrip to something like 2,000 applicants? Thereby you have evidence that a great number of half-breeds in the North-West had serious grievances against the Government. Archbishop Taché had estimated the population at 1,200 families, which would probably give a population of 6,000 souls, out of which number one-third actually had their rights acknowledged by the commission. Will any one say, in face of that fact, the people of the North-West had no grievances? Will any one say that Gabriel Dumont and his fellow leaders in the rebellion, even if they had not personal grievances, were not fighting for men who, at that

Mr. LAURIER.

time, did have grievances against this Government? No doubt Gabriel Dumont and his fellow leaders were wrong in taking up arms. Though their complaints had been ignored during so many years, they should still have persisted in their agitation, rather than take the supreme course they adopted. But if they were wrong in taking up arms, still they were excusable. The contempt with which their demands had been received, the fact that their appeals to justice had always met with a refusal, made their action at last excusable. But what excuse can be made for this Government in denying the rights of these people? What excuse can they invoke to shield themselves from the indignation of the people of Canada? What excuse can they offer for having so long refused to act when they had been urged to do so? What excuse can they bring for having so long refused to do justice, when justice simply meant the granting of a few acres of land? What excuse can they offer for having allowed the hearts of these men to swell with bitterness, when a few simple words of right would have softened them into docility? What excuse can they offer for having so long refused legitimate and constitutional demands, which at last they yielded to violence? Sir, excuse there can be none. The Government have forfeited all claim to indulgence. Of all the rights, of all the duties devolving upon the Government, the prime duty is to maintain peace and harmony in the land; and when a section of the population becomes dissatisfied it is the duty of the Government, to investigate the causes thereof, and to remedy the complaint as speedily and as fairly as possible, consistent with justice, and if they fail in this, they fail in their most sacred duty. But when the dissatisfaction proceeds from the fact that the Government have ignored their own obligations, then, Sir, I say that the people of the country would be remiss in their own duty if they were to condone such an offence, for by so doing they would strike at the very roots of their own liberty. I think these principles are true, I feel them deeply, and because I feel them deeply, I beg to move:

That all the words after the word "that" be left out, and the following inserted in lieu thereof:—It was the duty of the Government to proceed with diligence under the authority they obtained from Parliament in 1879, to settle the claims arising out of the Indian title of the half-breeds of the North-West Territories, and also to settle the claims of those of the Manitoba half-breeds who were temporarily absent during the enumeration, and that in this respect the Government has been guilty of neglect, delay and mismanagement, prejudicial to the peace, welfare and good government of Canada.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). The hon. gentleman, in the earlier part of his speech, before dinner, dealt almost exclusively with the fact, as he alleged, that the Government had resisted the petitions made to them for the extinguishment of the Indian title by the half-breeds of the North-West. He pressed upon the House that all these petitions had special reference to the fact that these half-breeds had the same claim as their brothers of Manitoba, and that the Government resisted the extinguishment of their Indian title by refusing to treat them as the half-breeds of Manitoba had been treated. And then, Sir, towards the close of his speech, he apparently, judging from the usual careful and logical manner in which the hon. gentleman deals with public questions, having received new information since he left the Chamber at six o'clock, came back and told us these petitions did not ask for the extinguishment of the Indian title at all, but that they were complaints of the grievances which they had, irrespective of that question altogether. Now, it seems to me that the hon. gentleman should take one ground or the other. If there were petitions coming from the half-breeds of the Saskatchewan district—and with these half-breeds especially we have to deal—which complained that their Indian title had not been extinguished, and that they were entitled to concessions similar to those which the Manitoba half-breeds have received, if he is prepared to take