

that which was essential in their view to the interest of the country is, that they were afraid to bring down the necessary vote because they feared the criticism of a weak Opposition—an Opposition that hon. gentlemen jeer at and deride, when it serves their purpose, but which now, it seems, is strong enough, without one word, by the mere fear of words it may perhaps speak, to control the policy of the Administration of the day. Now, the hon. gentleman found no difficulty in proposing last year a vote of twenty-nine millions and a-half for the Canadian Pacific Railway. He finds no difficulty this year in proposing a vote altering the condition of our securities, and making a further loan of five million dollars. He has found no difficulty in proposing to Parliament an expenditure in connection with the Canadian Pacific Railway, upon the whole, of something over one hundred million dollars, in one way or another. These things did not stagger the hon. gentleman, but he was so afraid of the criticisms of the Opposition that he could not find the money, he could not find it in that brave and gallant heart—which must be brave and gallant, when it belongs to a Minister of Militia—to ask for money for uniforms for five companies in the North-West—three mounted companies and two infantry companies. What a curious sort of difficulty this is. The Government are bold when they want to do a thing. They were not apprehensive of our criticisms when they proposed that you, Sir, should be put in that Chair. They went on. They were not apprehensive of our criticisms when they proposed that we should have two heads to the Library. They went in. They are not apprehensive of our criticism when they propose, in one block, to vote half a million dollars more in permanence for the Mounted Police. But they are so afraid of us that they could not ask for money for the uniforms for the volunteers, so that because there were no uniforms they had to go without drill, and thus the whole thing came to an end. What a curious kind of cowardice this is in the hon. gentleman. It strikes him just when he wants to be struck. When he wants to be afraid of something he is very much afraid, but when he wants to do something he is as bold and as brave as need be. Now, the hon. gentleman has said that I am in the habit of declaring things upon my own imagination, and that what I believe I believe so strongly that I am quite sure it is a fact, although I am contradicted, and that I believe there must be a report of Col. Houghton, and because I believe it, I say it. The hon. gentleman denies it, and he tells me there is no such report.

Mr. CARON. Except the one that appears.

Mr. BLAKE. No such report, except the one that is in the Blue Book, that there is nothing to be brought down. Now, Sir, I know that there is such a report from Col. Houghton—I do not merely believe it, I know it as a positive fact. I aver it to be a fact, and I shall prove it this moment. I read from the report of Col. Houghton himself in this very Blue Book :

"Fortunately this catastrophe was averted by the excellent management of Major Orozier, Superintendent of Mounted Police, and the steadiness and discipline of the men under his command. I allude, of course, to the Battleford fracas with the Indians in the early part of last summer. Having already, however, reported to you fully with regard to the impressions formed by me when travelling through that section of the country last July (see report of 28th July), I must not here repeat my views therein expressed, and which have not since altered."

Now, there is Col. Houghton's own statement, that he made a report on the 28th of July last, to the officer commanding the forces. He does not repeat it, but he declared, I think in the month of November, that this view remained unchanged. These are the reasons why I said I knew there was a report from Col. Houghton, and I think the hon. gentleman should admit that they are good reasons, since he brought that Blue Book down to Parliament. The hon. gentleman has said that I said nothing about the North-West companies while they existed, but

that I waited until it was all over. The hon. gentleman is mistaken there again. I said nothing about specific companies, but I have read to-night my statement made in the year 1882, on a debate such as this, with reference to the Mounted Police, as to the importance of creating and encouraging important corps of volunteers in the North-West; and I suggested, so far as from being disposed to unreasonable criticism, that extra expense in the way of pay should be incurred in order to make them efficient. I have read that in the House to-night; therefore the hon. gentleman will see that in the year 1882 I expressed myself at one with the policy of local corps in the North-West, and indicated that it might be necessary that increased expense on an unusual scale should be incurred, in order that that should be done, and of course took the responsibility of tendering the advice to the Government. I am not going to say a word about the conduct of our volunteers, about the hon. gentleman's management of the campaign, about the various other patriotic topics by which he sought to escape from a somewhat difficult position. I am aware that the hon. gentleman says that I do not know much about military matters. We are both lawyers; and I will not dispute the hon. gentleman's superiority in our profession, and certainly not in military matters. But it does not require much knowledge of military matters to understand that particular art which is employed when an hon. gentleman gets into a difficult position and proposes to beat a retreat. There are feigned attacks, diversions, something to draw away the attention of the enemy, something to cheer and encourage one's friends, something to raise a cloud of dust, under which the retreat is made. So the hon. gentleman, with patriotic exultation and an exuberant expression of praise with respect to his own conduct, sought, amid the cheers of his followers, to escape from the question in hand. We are not going to discuss the campaign or the hon. gentleman's conduct of it, or the conduct our volunteers. Neither are we going to discuss the munitions supplied to our volunteers, or the tunics and uniforms supplied to them, or the transport supplied to them, or the hard tack and pork supplied to them. These are not the questions for discussion. I was pointing out that we had a policy with respect to the defence of the North-West, and the maintenance of order there; that that policy consisted of our having two classes of forces in that country, the Mounted Police and the volunteer force; that we had debated the subject of the conjoint action and development of those two forces; that both sides of the House had agreed, myself speaking from the left, as leader of the Opposition, and the First Minister speaking from his place, as leader of the Government, in substance to the proposition that there should be encouragement of the local forces, and they were to discharge an important part of the duty. I was pointing out that that policy had been adopted in form by the Government for two or three years before; and I was pointing out from the Blue Books of the hon. gentleman how that policy had been handled subsequently, and in what it had resulted when the time of stress came. That was pointed out. I pointed out that the question was: What shall be our policy in the future? Has that question yet been settled? Are we going to organise a large volunteer force in the North-West? Have we settled the great question of trowsers? Is that great question, like the question of buttons, settled yet, and is the hon. gentleman prepared to decide what uniform shall be worn? If so, you want to handle the subjects together, as the hon. gentleman's own officers have dealt with them. I have read extracts from reports from the hon. gentleman's own officers, containing suggestions as to how to manage in places where there is a small force of police and a company or two of militia, and in other places where there are no police and quite sufficient militia. What is to be the policy of the future? I say these are very important questions, and they are all the more important when we consider the