

were in office, and find out year by year the amount they expended for Indian affairs, or under any other head, we would find also large sums of expenditure; but this is not a fair way of attacking the Government. The fair way is to bring one charge at a time, and let us investigate that charge. But the hon. gentleman spoke for two hours as fast as he could, charging the Government under every possible head, and then concludes by saying: You are extravagant, you are incapable, and you have shown culpable neglect. I again deny the charge; and I have no doubt that when the vote is taken, this House will show that it does not sanction the charge. This House will say: The Government we have supported for the last eight years, the Government which has been supported by the people for that time, has still the confidence of the people, and we do not consider it an extravagant Government. This House will find that the Government is managing the affairs of the country with due regard to the interests of the country; that we have not shown incapacity in our management; that the people have shown they have confidence in our capacity by maintaining us for the last eight years in office. We have done our best. I have no doubt there may be some officials who have mismanaged affairs in the North-West; but whenever we find out any mismanagement, we cause an investigation to be made, and every time we find an official who does not do his duty, or who is guilty of mismanagement in the North-West, against the authority and against the instructions of the Government, that officer is punished accordingly. I leave to others now to answer the hon. gentleman, if another answer is required.

Mr. PATERSON (Brant). It will not be necessary for me to detain the House at any length as the very strong speech by the hon. member for West Huron (Mr. Cameron), backed by the facts and the figures which he gave, remains practically unanswered. The hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat seems to have contented himself with defending the Government simply by boasting of their strength in the country. He seems to have contented himself by simply relying on the statement that my hon. friend from West Huron (Mr. Cameron) had been guilty of something that was reprehensible in introducing his motion at present. He has told us, what we all regret to know, that the First Minister is incapacitated by illness from being in his place, and he was pleased to taunt my hon. friend with a desire to introduce his resolution while the First Minister was unhappily in that condition. I think that was rather ungenerous on the part of the hon. gentleman. No one would seriously believe, not even the hon. gentleman himself, that the hon. member for West Huron (Mr. Cameron) is afraid to formulate any charges he conceives it his duty to make, in the presence of anybody, and I am sure it would have afforded my hon. friend greater pleasure to formulate his charges while the First Minister, who has more particularly charge of the affairs of the Indian Department, was in his place, than to be obliged to formulate them in his absence. I think that the First Minister would not have adopted the line taken by the hon. gentleman who has just spoken on his behalf to-night, he would not have asked that public business should stand still because he was unable to take part in it. I think he would have had a higher opinion of the members of his Cabinet. I believe he would have said: I am surrounded by capable men, men whom I have selected from the flower of my party to associate with me, and in whom I have implicit confidence; they will have sufficient knowledge of the general working of all the departments to be able to answer anyone who will prefer charges and substantiate them, after diligent search and enquiry through the books with which the Government themselves have furnished the House. I, therefore, have no faith in the argument put forth by the hon. gentleman. The argument that

consists simply of the proud boast that the present Ministry have had the confidence of the country during the past seven years, and will have it in the future, seems to me scarcely to answer the different concise statements put forward by the hon. member for West Huron (Mr. Cameron). I do not know that it is necessary to allude to the idle boast made as to the position the Government hold in the country and the probable result of another election. The Minister has been pleased to tell us that the Government were ready at last election, that they were not then afraid but were prepared and willing to meet the people, and that they will be prepared also when the next one comes. We recognise that to be a fact. They were fully prepared at the last election, they had done everything to fortify themselves by means of the Gerrymander Act; and that they will also be prepared the next time is evident because their revising officers have completed their work so far as they have been able to complete it. It is not an answer to specific charges, backed up by statements and figures from the blue books, to say: We have done everything well, and when we appeal to the country you will find such to be the case. Without desiring to be unduly harsh on the Department of Indian Affairs or on its officers, the Opposition have a duty to perform, and that is to examine into the way the affairs of the country are conducted; and I think gentlemen opposite, even those independent members among them, even that hon. gentleman who manifested his independence to so remarkable an extent that he was willing to call in the members after the charge had been made and not one word had been said in reply or in rebuttal by anyone on the Government side. Or with that other equally independent member who, before you, Mr. Speaker, could read the motion, after listening to the indictment and not hearing a word of denial or refutation, was pleased from his place in the House to cry "lost." I think even gentlemen manifesting as much independence as these will admit that there is a duty devolving upon the Opposition, and that if the Opposition makes statements which are not correct in point of fact, and adduce incorrect evidence in support of them, that should be pointed out. That has not been done up to the present time. The hon. gentleman has stated that those who will follow him will be able to deal with the matter in that light. I had prepared myself to reinforce many of the statements made by the hon. member for West Huron (Mr. Cameron), but, in view of the statement of the hon. gentleman, the House will no doubt consider it to be my duty to abstain from doing so under the present circumstances, inasmuch as the charges which have been made remain unanswered and it is therefore unnecessary to reinforce them. I point out that the hon. member for West Huron has taken his facts from the blue books. It is true that he has fortified himself by statements made by parties outside of the House, but I ask if the authorities that he has used are not gentlemen to whose words some importance ought to be attached. He has quoted statements of the Rev. Mr. McDougall, the Rev. Mr. Robertson, and the Rev. Mr. Trivett, and other gentlemen of the like standing. They affirm these matters, and they re-affirm them, as in the case of the Rev. Mr. Robertson, only a few days ago, when his statements were contradicted, and he in plain and emphatic language re-affirmed his previous charges. I have the extract under my hand in which that gentleman re-asserts what he had stated previously. I will read a sentence or two to show that he is prepared to abide by the statement he has previously made. The Rev. Mr. Robertson, taking cognisance of some statements made by a gentleman in contradiction of what he had stated, says:

"Mr. Andrews asks, where are the Indians starving, searching refuse heaps and swill barrels, and ravenously devouring crusts of bread and scraps of meat?—At Minnedosa, Birtle, Broadview, Fort Qu'Appelle, Prince Albert, Battleford, Moose Jaw, Medicine Hat, and the rest, I have