

to-day, because the discussion of the conduct of the Government will—the papers being yet unprinted, and it being necessary, therefore, to make a more exhaustive review than if they had been printed, as they ought to have been, and the course of events over a period of eight years being necessarily to be traced—over-tax one's strength, and for the same reason I propose to summarise only a large number of the more nearly related matters. I am relieved from the necessity of engaging now in any discussion of some important topics. I have already taken occasion to point out to the House the events of the year 1869-70, and their bearing upon the more recent transactions. I have already stated my view of the nature and extent of the responsibility of the Government in connection with North-West affairs. I have already pointed out that the Government, in view of the late events, is really on the defensive, and is bound to vindicate itself, being *primæ facie* responsible for such occurrences as have taken place in a self-governing community. The Government has declined that challenge, but it has courted enquiry, it has challenged attack, and it has denied all fault and blame. One question, which is very material to be discussed, I have already treated in part—the question of local defence—the course of the Government with reference to the local corps of the North-West; and I have also taken the opportunity to refer to another very important point, the lack of those representative institutions, which, had they been granted earlier and been as effective as we might expect, would have proved the safety valve which would have prevented the recent affair. I may say at once that there has been, in my view, a scandalous breach of duty on the part of the Government, with reference to bringing down the papers. From the earliest period at which we had news of the revolt, I have been appealing for those papers. They have come down reluctantly, at long intervals, with pretence of a difficulty in copying, and, when produced, those which have been produced have borne upon their face marks that they had been ready for production for many days before it was thought fit to lay them on the Table. From time to time essential papers have been declined, and even to-day papers which as I shall show are extremely important, in order to reach the full extent of the culpability of the Government, are retained—papers which it is essential should be produced, and which, if they be not produced, must be elicited at some future day through the medium of a select committee. But, although gravely compromising papers, as I believe I shall be able to show, have been withheld, yet enough has come to light in my judgment to enable us to decide in the affirmative on the motion which I shall place in your hands. Now, Sir, to deal with events and a course of administration which runs over so many years at all effectively, it is necessary to grapple with the state of the facts as to each important question separately, and I propose to take that course; but it must never be forgotten that the combined operation of the different series of facts, and of several grievances, concurrently acting upon the mind of a population, is much greater than that of simple addition—that the operation is intensified, and that the difficulties are infinitely greater than if the same sets of grievances were operating at different times. There are questions which arise concerning the half-breeds, questions concerning the Indians, and questions common to whites and half-breeds alike. As to Indian affairs, I have already shown the great importance of the Indian question. I do not propose to embarrass this discussion—as I might by the multiplicity of proofs which I should have to bring forward—by dealing at length with the Indian question, for the sufficient reason that the proofs upon that subject are more easily accessible to hon. members and to the country than the unprinted proofs to which I shall have to refer upon other questions. They are to be found in the Blue Books, and in the reports, and

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they show, in my judgment, neglects, delays, incompetence, bad appointments, mistaken policy, and breaches of promise, resulting in the fact that many of the Indians had got into a highly discontented and excited state, and were ripe for trouble in 1884-85. But this fact is undeniable that, to whatever cause it was due, such was the condition of many of the Indians at that time. Now, Sir, with reference to the half-breeds, I propose to examine the facts in connection with the claims of the half-breeds of the North-West Territories to recognition in respect of the extinguishment of the Indian title; the facts in connection with the claims of the unenumerated half-breeds of the Province of Manitoba in respect of the extinguishment of the Indian title; the claims of the land holding half-breeds for grants and for surveys, particularly in connection with river lots. And as to the whites and the half-breeds in matters of common concern, I shall touch, though only touch, on the claims of the land holders for grants and surveys; the claims as to the reserves of various kinds; the claims in connection with wood regulations and local improvements; and claims as to representative institutions. But on these questions I shall only repeat the expression of my opinion as to their importance, and their felt importance, to the people. I do not propose, Sir, to engage in the discussion of the actual outbreak or the events of the campaign. I think, as I have more than once said, that it would be entirely premature to do so, and with the exception of perhaps one slight incident I shall disembarass the present discussion from the question of the immediate preparations for and the actual conduct of the campaign. And before I engage upon the enquiry to which I have just pledged myself, I may say, that having passed a good many years of my life in this House and elsewhere, in the investigation of evidence and the analysis of facts, I never rose to state a case which was based upon facts, with a more absolute conviction of the overwhelming character of that case and the inexorable conclusion which is to be drawn from those facts, than I do upon the present occasion. My task is therefore, in this respect, easy. It is rendered difficult only by the number and range of the events, and the multiplicity of the proofs which I shall have to endeavor to adduce, and which I shall submit to all candid persons inside and outside of this House, in the conviction that but one conclusion can be reached as to the result. Now, Sir, with reference to the claim of the half-breeds of the North-West Territories for consideration in respect to the extinguishment of the Indian title, I call attention to the fact that that claim was recognised, in so far as the half-breeds of the original Province of Manitoba were concerned, in the course of the events of 1869-70. By the bargain that was made, incorporated in the Act of 1870, 1,400,000 acres of land were set apart to be divided amongst the half-breed minors in respect of the extinguishment of their claims to the Indian title. By subsequent legislation, it was provided that the half-breeds, heads of families, should get a 160-acre grant. I maintain that the claim of the half-breeds of the North-West Territories to consideration in respect of the extinguishment of the Indian title was then settled in principle. Justice is the same on the banks of the Saskatchewan or the Qu'Appelle as on the banks of the Red River or the Assiniboine. It was impossible to find a different rule to be prescribed for different parallels of latitude, and it was absolutely impossible to say that that which had been granted in the one case should be declined in the other. Now, I rejoice that it happens to me, who am not of the same race or of the same creed with these French half-breeds, to point out these circumstances, because it cannot be said of me that I am moved by those prejudices or predilections which might be charged against one of their own race or creed. It is not on any such grounds that this question is to be handled, it is to be handled as a question of justice, of policy,