

of the North-West have for their base the fertile lands of that territory, and therefore the policy which is to be pursued with reference to the development of that country is largely a land policy. As to certain classes of these lands, it has been agreed that the regulations shall be subject to the disapproval of Parliament on being laid on the Table; but as to the bulk, the Government have taken absolute and uncontrolled power to make regulations, and we find series after series of regulations issuing, with almost the rapidity, though hardly with the symmetry, of the views presented by the kaleidoscope. The short motto we have adopted, year by year, for the North-West, has been "the land for the settler, the price for the public;" and after objecting as we did, though unsuccessfully, to the sale of land on other than conditions of settlement; after arguing again that if you should sell otherwise than on conditions of settlement, you should sell for cash only; after propounding resolutions in these directions for two Sessions in vain, we have found that the Government have conceded in part. We have found that what was proposed has been applied to the individual, and if he is to buy other than on conditions of settlement he is to pay cash. But what is good for the individual speculator is good for the party speculator, and the party speculator under one class of regulations, at any rate, is still to be permitted to purchase on credit. I very much dread that the effect of the last regulations in some important particulars will be to depart still more seriously from that motto, to introduce a system of large speculative holdings, and a system of middlemen, who will receive from the colonist a larger sum than the public gets, and thus to retard settlement for a long time and produce ultimate loss to the settler. We have to consider the regulations with regard to arable lands, to grazing lands, to wood lands, to coal and mineral lands and to town sites. All these are subjects of vastest importance, and subjects which one can do no more than make reference to at this time or until the regulations are before us, when they can be discussed profitably in detail. Amongst the subjects not alluded to in the Speech, is the exercise in the discretion of the Government, of the power of disallowance; and we see by the public papers that other instances are now pending before the Council or the Minister, in which it is seriously contemplated to pursue the same policy. I think it would be profitable for this Parliament, during the present Session, to engage in a discussion of that subject. It is of the last consequence that we should decide on the principles—applicable, of course, to all the Provinces—for they have all an identical and common interest in the matter—on which disallowance should be exercised—and decide, not in a limited sense, but in an enlarged sense, in a sense that, if it be necessary for the Government to take such action, will not make confederation a delusion and a snare, and result in bringing about that federal union which was once, and I presume is still, the dream of the hon. the First Minister. We have other subjects. We have had the Minister of Finance issuing a little circular—no, two—no, three little circulars, each of them corrective of the others, and circulars which I undertake to say Parliament considered it to be far beyond his power to issue, when he was authorized to issue any circulars at all—circulars, for instance, containing demands for statements regarding the private affairs of banks. He has done something else, too. We were told last year that it was utterly impossible, without lowering the dignity of Parliament, without insulting the representatives of the people, to inform them until the House should meet, until the Speech should be assented to, until the document itself should be laid on yonder Table, what the details were of a gigantic contract on which they were to be asked to pass within a few days of the time they were informed of it. But, how far is it in accordance with the respect due to the representatives of the people that public meetings of the electors should be informed months before

the meeting of Parliament, what the policy of the Administration was to be in an important particular—that they should be told distinctly and plainly that the taxes on tea and coffee should be removed, and that we should hear nothing at all about it now in the Speech? It is true, I have heard the hon. gentleman frequently, when he was asked, in advance, what he was going to do about taxes, say: "I cannot tell you that until my Budget is brought down. It would never do to let a word out." But he has changed his views, and the change is so radical, so revolutionary, that while he is quite decided that we are not to know anything about it before he makes his Budget Speech, he is decided that all the rest of the world shall know all about it long before. The most extraordinary thing is, that the hon. gentleman, in this particular, appears to have been animated by benevolent intentions toward the trade, and that the trade seems not to appreciate his benevolent intentions. I am glad to observe that he is quite disposed, in discussion with the trade, to change again somewhat if that will suit. I observe, although he has not told Parliament about it, by a letter addressed to a gentleman in Montreal and published in the newspapers, that he now states that if it will do them any good to prolong the disturbance he will postpone the removal of the duties for two months more. When they are complaining that trade is paralysed, that difficulties are increased by a long postponement, and when they desire to be out of their pain, the hon. gentleman asks them to wait two months longer and keep things in the pleasant condition they are for that space of time. I suppose it is because he has not finished that correspondence that we have no announcement on that subject in the Speech. We will have no doubt an announcement on that subject, and the hon. gentlemen who have been rejoicing, and who are rejoicing to-day, in the surplus, and who are glorifying the Administration for having produced it, will immediately afterwards glorify the Administration for having taken off the taxes. First of all they call upon us to bless them because they imposed the taxes, then they call upon us to bless them because the taxes produced fruits, and presently we are to be called upon to bless them because they take the taxes off again. I recollect the story of a person who was found one sultry summer day walking up a steep hill with a fence rail on his shoulder. He was met by a friend, who said: "What are you carrying that heavy rail up the hill for when there are plenty of rails on the top?" He answered: "It is rather burdensome to carry it up, but then how well I shall feel when I lay it down on the top of the hill." Such is the view of the Minister. He put on the taxes; it was all right and a great blessing. He takes them off; it is all right and a greater blessing still. That surplus is no doubt very large, and the change in the tariff, which has been communicated by the Minister in the sense of a reduction of taxation, is what we suggested to him last Session. We said that the surplus ought not to be so large and that the taxes should be light. We were told that it was premature, that two or three years would be time enough to talk of reducing the taxes; and we are glad to know that in this case it takes but a few months, and that one Session after he made the proposal it is to be realized. That surplus has produced, as I have said, an increase of taxes, it has not been produced by an abnormal consumption of imported goods. The consumption has not been in the gross, at any rate, much in excess, if at all in excess, of that which, judging from the past of this country, we might have expected; but it is produced from a moderate importation, because that moderate importation is taxed at a rate extremely oppressive in the gross, and still more oppressive if you consider the incidents of that taxation. The legislation of last Session included the power to appoint judges for the Province of Quebec. While in some other subjects hon. gentlemen opposite have been active; while we have