

to talk about carrying the whole department over here. That is not becoming in him or any other Minister of the Crown. As representatives of the people we would fail in our duty if we did not get the information before voting this money, and the Minister is very much mistaken if he thinks he can put us off in that jaunty manner. The hon. gentleman can sit there and laugh in derision by the hour, but if he thinks that all the information in the world is boxed up in that cranium of his, and that we are bound to take everything on trust because he is at the head of the department. I can tell him that the country has not that unbounded confidence, either in his integrity, his ability or his frugality, that would lead them to be satisfied with his ipse dixit. We want more than that, and if he does not give it, he cannot expect us to vote the money.

THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. What I desire to point out is simply this. I stated that I had the report, and that I would bring it down if it were asked for; but the hon. gentleman did not say he wanted it.

MR. SPROULE. I did not hear the hon. gentleman say that, or I would certainly have asked for it.

THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I perfectly recognize that it is the duty of a Minister to furnish all the information he can possibly furnish in any shape or form; but no matter how much information he brings, there will be some things that he cannot foresee, which will be asked for, and about which it will be necessary for him to send and get information from the department; and any information which I have in the department I am willing to obtain and furnish to the committee to the very best of my ability. The only information I have not furnished is that report. I stated in a general way what it contained. If the hon. gentleman had asked for it, I would have sent to the department for it, and would have it here by this time; but it would not give the committee any more information than I have given. I have not got a detailed statement of what the trustees propose to do with the money. I stated that when I was asked. I have a general statement of the necessities of the colony, and I am asking the committee to vote the money to be advanced to the colony, leaving the trustees to exercise their discretion in regard to its disposal.

MR. WALLACE. I have observed specimens of the most colossal—cheek, I was going to say, if it is not improper; but I say this, that when a Minister gets up and tells us, on every item that comes along, as the Minister of the Interior is doing to-day, and as other Ministers have set the example of doing before him, that if he had known, if he had had the slightest inkling

MR. SPROULE.

or knowledge that we wanted any information, he could have furnished us with the information, but that it is sprung upon him as a matter of the greatest surprise that he would be asked for any information about any item of expenditure. I assume that when a Minister comes and asks for a vote of money, he comes loaded up with information on which he can justify to the House and the House to the country, the appropriation that is made. The Minister of the Interior says he has furnished all the information. He has furnished absolutely none. His statement was that the settlement there was fairly successful. That is the whole extent of the information he has been able to give to this House. Anybody could make that statement; it does not mean anything. We must assume that there has not been very great success or they would not require to come back here for another grant. The Minister tells us, too, that we are estopped from making any objections because in 1895 we did not object. The hon. gentleman was not here in 1895, and does not know what occurred then. But if we failed in our duty in 1895—I am not stating that we did—is that going to prevent us seeking information to-day or requiring the Minister to justify himself in asking for this money? In 1895 this was stated to be an experiment; it was to be a new departure with reference to the half-breeds. After that money was appropriated, inspectors were appointed to supervise its expenditure, and after all the safeguards have been taken, and they come back here and ask for another grant for a similar purpose, they are in duty bound to tell the House what they did with the last money, what measure of success they had, how many people have gone in there, and all other particulars. The Minister comes and says: "I have the report, but I left it at the department; I did not think it worth while to submit it to this House." We want that report here. The Minister thinks the House of Commons is of too little importance to bother himself furnishing any information to except what information may be dragged out of him piecemeal, which is very little, because either he has no information on the subject or he is afraid to communicate that information to the House. He tells this House that he cannot carry all the information around with him. I know that his capacity for carrying information around with him is quite limited; but, Sir, we can fairly ask him to furnish us with the documents, and we will load ourselves up with the information; but he has not done that. He is struck dumb with surprise that he should be asked to do that. Then he tells us, "You cannot show a case in which a detailed statement is made of money expended under similar conditions." To commence with, there is no money expended under similar conditions. He said there was money voted for seed grain. As has been