

express no opinion. It is for the Government, who have the responsibility and the means of information as to the actual condition of the country, to present at the proper time such information as the public interest permits, as justifying the proposal. I quite agree in the view, that what is necessary to produce a feeling of security, and the elements of security and a lack of apprehension on the part of those who are there and of those who are to go there, must be done by us at all cost; but it is an unhappy sequel to the doubling of our permanent force there last year, by the increase of the Mounted Police, that we should be told that several hundreds of military personages are also to be placed there for some time to come. It is quite true that, if these are drawn, as we are told by the papers they are to be drawn, from the schools and batteries and so forth, there will be in one way a less expense than if the volunteers were employed; nor would it be possible, except by frequent changes, to establish a permanent garrison of our citizen soldiers in that country. I will repeat, however, this statement, that I retain the opinion that we ought to push the organisation of the militia forces of the North-West; I retain the opinion that the peace of that country ought to be very largely committed to the hands of the settlers of that country themselves, facilitated by proper and liberal arrangements such as are required in a new and sparsely settled country, arrangements even more liberal than are needed to organise an effective regiment of militia in our own country. Now, the circumstances which the Speech alludes to, the statement that the outbreak was so serious and that these are the expected results, are but another proof of the guilt of those who are responsible, as I believe, for that condition of things. I am sorry that such a statement should have to be made, but I am not surprised that that neglect, that delay, that mismanagement with which we charged the Government last year, which we believed and which we still believe to be gross and inexcusable, has produced its natural proof.

"The children born of thee"—

We may say of an hon. gentleman opposite:

"The children born of thee are sword and fire,
Red ruin and the breaking up of laws,
The craft of kindred, and the godless hosts
Of heathen swarming o'er the northern land."

We charged hon. gentlemen opposite last year with high crimes and misdemeanor in this regard. I believe we then proved our charge. I believe that their conduct in the years that followed their late accession to power, was rightly described in a spirit of prophecy by their former colleague, the Hon. Mr. Macdougall, when he truly wrote to one of them, to the Secretary of the Interior in the old Government, with reference to their conduct, prior to the outbreak of 1870, saying this:

"The authority for the Dominion has at length been established over that vast region, and can only be endangered by treason or incapacity at Ottawa. The latter, we know, reigns supreme in every department; the former is more than suspected in your own. When I use the word 'treason,' I desire that you should understand it in its widest sense treason, not to the lawful sovereign of the Dominion, alone, but treason to the people of Canada; treason to the interests, civil and religious, of the people of the North-West; treason to human progress, freedom, and civilisation in every Province of the Dominion."

Those words, I believe, are as applicable to the latter as to the former conduct of the hon. gentlemen. However, I recognise the inconvenience of dealing with this subject at any length at this time and under these circumstances. You know that I pointed out last Session, repeatedly, the absence of various important papers. Although hon. gentlemen brought down what they said was adequate material for the formation of a judgment, they acknowledged that there were many most important papers not yet brought down. I expect the production of those papers at an early date; I expect them, though, with some apprehension and with some misgiving, because I recur once again to that

record of a former colleague of those hon. gentlemen, to the letters of Mr. Macdougall, addressed to the then Secretary of the Interior, where he said:

"Before leaving Ottawa"—

He, too, was going to the North-West—

"I took the precaution to obtain copies of all the dispatches, draft agreements, and documents relating to the North-West, which I have since found was a wise precaution. I knew by experience that it would be unsafe to rely upon official promptitude or perspicacity at Ottawa, or to assume that the proper Ministers, or a quorum of Ministers, would be found at the Capital in any emergency that might arise. And I knew, what this case has conclusively established, that you and the majority of your colleagues would not hesitate to garble or suppress important State papers, even when demanded by Parliament, if their production was likely to expose or embarrass the Government."

But it seems that what happened before has, in the case of a much larger insurrection, happened again; and what happened before may, in regard to the important documents, also happen again. As to the condition of the Indians, we must, of course, all be extremely anxious. The accounts we have received from year to year in the reports of the Indian agents, and particularly of the Mounted Police, the accounts in the public papers, the recent statements of priests and missionaries, and, amongst others, the statement of Mr. Jackson, one of the members of the North-West Council, are certainly of a character to attract attention. And I will add to that the statement that I have observed made in a number of ministerial papers as to the course which had been pursued by the Department, of set purpose, with reference to those bands which had been more or less engaged in the recent outbreak, last winter, namely, of administering to them but half rations, and those two or three times a week, which strike me as a most unwise as well as a most inhuman policy. I do not think that any milder words than those can be properly applied to that course of policy—if unfortunately it was pursued—and I draw my information from editorials in the *Mail* newspaper, which declares that it was the policy which the Administration had pursued. I did not know before that torture by starvation was considered as a proper punishment for Indians. Now, Sir, there is another subject which was but remotely alluded to by one of the hon. gentlemen, and to which I desire to make a very brief allusion—to those steps which it was thought necessary to take for the restoration of authority, and in the execution of law in the North-West. I trust that in respect to the judicial proceedings and the execution of sentences which has been carried out, the Government will, at a very early day, lay before the House full information. I believe that Parliament is entitled, in the exceptional circumstances of the case, to receive that information, and to engage in a discussion of the questions which grow out of that execution and those sentences. I believe that those circumstances justify, if they do not demand that course; but I believe, also, that a fair opportunity ought to be given to the Administration to produce those papers and to give that information. And it has been rumored that some gentlemen, supporters of hon. gentlemen opposite, who differ from them on a single question arising out of that execution, propose to introduce that subject to our consideration at this time by challenging the judgment of the House upon it, by an amendment to the Address. Upon this question, as hon. gentlemen may perhaps know, I do not, even amongst my own friends, assume to speak with the authority of a party leader, and certainly, I have no right to offer advice to supporters of hon. gentlemen opposite; but as an humble member of this House, interested in the regular course of the proceedings and in the proper methods of conducting its business, I take leave to deprecate, for my own part, any such proceeding. I believe that the proper course will be, to give the Administration an opportunity of producing the papers, and then to let that subject be fully, fairly, and thoroughly discussed at