

gentleman has read several documents, and he says that some of them were not answered, or that the answers do not appear among the papers. In January or February, 1878, a petition asking redress was presented to the Government of that day, and until the time the Government went out of power not even an acknowledgment of the receipt of the petition was sent. What was the condition of affairs when we took office in 1878? We found that the preceding Government had taken no steps whatever; that they had not remedied the grievances; that they had not even discussed them. In 1869 we obtained possession of the country; in 1870 Manitoba was established as a Province. It is within the recollection of several members of this House—at all events, it is in the history of the country—that in 1870, in order to secure peace and order—in fact, to obtain possession of the country—it was necessary to enter into an arrangement by which that Province might be acquired, that turbulent feelings might be put down and Canada might secure peace and quiet in that country. In order to accomplish that result the Government of the day entered into negotiations with certain delegates from the Province of Manitoba, which culminated in the Act of 1870, creating Manitoba a Province. In that Act it is provided that in order to secure the extinguishment of the Indian title 1,400,000 acres of land should be settled upon the families of the half-breeds living within the limits of the then Province. Whether they had any right to those lands or not was not so much the question as it was a question of policy to make an arrangement with the inhabitants of that Province, in order, in fact, to make a Province at all—in order to introduce law and order there, and assert the sovereignty of the Dominion. The Hudson Bay Company, the old proprietors of the country, had guaranteed certain rights to parties; they had acknowledged certain claims acquired in certain settlements, not only along the banks of Red River, but of the Assiniboia, and it was provided that, after a careful calculation, 1,400,000 acres would be quite sufficient for the purpose of compensating these men for what was called the extinguishment of the Indian title. That phrase was an incorrect one, because the half-breeds did not allow themselves to be Indians. If they are Indians, they go with the tribe; if they are half-breeds they are whites, and they stand in exactly the same relation to the Hudson Bay Company and Canada as if they were altogether white. That was the principle under which the arrangement was made and the Province of Manitoba was established. All white settlers who had not lost their land by lack of occupation or by silent acquiescence in the old Province of Assiniboia were allowed to keep their lands. So far as the half-breeds were concerned, 1,400,000 acres were set apart for the purpose of meeting their claims. There was a census taken, under Lieutenant Governor Archibald, the first Governor of that Province, and it was reported that there were about 10,000 half-breeds with their families that had a right to claim the land. If that census had been adhered to there would have been no difficulty. It was accurate, as accurate as a census can be taken in a new country without municipal institutions and means for enumerating the people one by one. But it was a correct census, and for it 1,400,000 acres had been assigned to meet the half-breed claims; and if that census had been adhered to, there never would have been any trouble. But the truth of the matter is, that the moment we went out of power it was necessary that everything we had done should be reversed, and the Government of the day chose to say that there were not 10,000 half-breeds in the Province of Manitoba, and they appointed Mr. Matthew Ryan and Mr. Machar, the latter a gentleman whom the hon. member for South Huron knows something about, for the purpose of undoing—I will not say of undoing, but of disregarding the census previously taken. That is the fact. If the census that had been taken and returned

by Governor Archibald had been accepted there would have been land enough in the appropriation to have settled all trouble, as well for the half-breeds who were actually registered and got their lands as for the half-breeds who happened to be away on the plains at the time the final adjudication was made. But it did not suit the Government of the day to accept that. Oh, no. The claims of the half-breeds in Manitoba were bought up by speculators. It was an unfortunate thing for those poor people; but it is true that this grant of scrip and land to those poor people was a curse and not a blessing. The scrip was bought up; the lands were bought up by white speculators, and the consequences are apparent. I am told that even at this moment, in the vicinity of Winnipeg, instead of the surrounding country comprising smiling farms, settled with industrious people, the land is unsettled, in consequence of the scrip having been bought up for a song by speculators. In enacting the legislation necessary to the erection of the Province of Manitoba, in 1870, the Parliament of Canada provided that a tract of 1,400,000 acres of land should be set apart, from which to make grants to the children of the half-breeds resident in the Province at the date of the transfer, which date, for the purposes of the Act, was fixed as the 15th day of July, 1870. An enumeration of those entitled to share in this allotment was obtained by a census, which Lieutenant Governor Archibald, in December, 1870, reported as having been carefully taken, and which showed that the number was then estimated not to exceed 10,000. It was then decided to grant to each of the half-breed inhabitants of the Province a free patent for 140 acres of land, in extinguishment of their Indian title; but the question was raised as to whether the legal construction of the Manitoba Act permitted the heads of families to obtain any share of the 1,400,000 acres reserved by the Act. This question having been submitted to the law officers of the Crown, they decided that the half-breed heads of families were not so entitled; and the Government of the day then concluded that there would be such a reduction in the number of persons entitled to share, consequent upon the decision of the law officers of the Crown, as would permit of the children of half-breed heads of families born at the time of the transfer receiving an allotment at the rate of 190 acres each. The Indian title of the half-breed heads of families was extinguished, under an Act passed in 1874 (37 Victoria, chapter 20), by issuing scrip for \$160 to each, that is to say, to the mother as well as to the father. Upon the census made under the direction of Lieutenant Governor Archibald an allotment was made to the half-breed children at the rate of 190 acres each, in 1873, all the lands affected having been previously surveyed with that object in view. It will be remembered, however, that in the fall of this year a change of Government took place, and the gentlemen who then became responsible for the administration of public affairs, in accordance with a general plan adopted for the purpose of discrediting the acts of their predecessors, and also for the purpose of finding employment for their hungry followers, rushed to the conclusion that the half-breed census was in some way or another deficient, and that they must make a new examination into the claims and obtain a new enumeration of the claimants. In May, 1875, nearly two years after this matter had been satisfactorily closed by an allotment made under the auspices of their predecessors, a commission, consisting of Mr. Matthew Ryan, of Montreal, and Mr. J. M. Machar, of Kingston, was sent out to visit the several parishes and make this new enumeration. The final report of this commission was submitted to the Governor General in Council in March, 1876; but examination shows that the commissioners themselves admitted their work to be incomplete, and the agent of Dominion lands, at Winnipeg, was authorised to continue the enumeration. In consequence of the incompleteness of the examination and