

charity right and left, so that, as far as the principle of the vote goes, I do not change what I said a moment ago. I may say that, like him, I have every possible confidence in Father Lacombe, in whose hands this money is to be put. I have the very same confidence that I had in him before, but the right hon. gentleman cannot say the same thing, because, some three years ago, when Father Lacombe wrote to him on the school question, he had not the confidence in the judgment of Father Lacombe that he seems to have now.

Mr. McNEILL. I would like to say to my right hon. friend, when he seems to think we are hard to move in reference to this matter, that I think he was scarcely quite fair in the observations he offered a few minutes ago, although I am quite sure he did not intend to be unfair. What we ask for is information in regard to this experiment. A vote was taken in 1895 for this work, and surely it is reasonable to expect that we should know something of what the result of the experiment has been. I confess that when my right hon. friend pointed to the labours of Father Lacombe in connection with this matter, and referred to the absolute trustworthiness of Father Lacombe himself, that it had a very strong effect on my mind. Still, I must say that the House has a right to know the result of this experiment commenced four years ago. We know that Father Lacombe is most anxious to do what he can to assist these people, but it is one thing to vote money in order to carry out an experiment which may be useful, and it is another thing to vote money, as stated by the Minister of the Interior, for pure charity. We are entitled to be informed whether these half-breeds who go there and receive the benefit of this grant, and we are also entitled to know whether any half-breeds who have received scrip, also receive aid from this appropriation.

The PRIME MINISTER. Though I had several conversations with Father Lacombe on this matter, I have never gathered that the half-breeds who received scrip would receive a share in this grant also. My answer to the statements of hon. gentlemen is that we can rely on Father Lacombe that he would give these seed grants to those who are needy and not to those who are in affluent circumstances. It is our misfortune to be called upon occasionally to give seed grain, on the plea that certain people happen to be in needy circumstances, and it goes without saying that such grants should only be given to those who are in want. Father Lacombe may be relied upon to give this grant only to those poor fellows who have been persuaded to give up hunting, and to try if they cannot make a livelihood by farming. I repeat frankly that no instructions have been given on this point. It would never enter into the minds of any-

one I am sure that Father Lacombe was so wanting in business ability, indeed I would say so wanting in charity, as to give this grant to persons who do not need it. I suppose if there is a report in the department the Minister will bring it down. As I have said, I have had several conversations with Father Lacombe on this matter, and his opinion is that the experiment has been only partly successful. I would not say that it is altogether successful, and I think Father Lacombe's reports will be found to run in that direction.

Mr. SPROULE. I do not object to vote money for charitable purposes when that becomes necessary. But I do object to vote public money until we know what has been the result of similar expenditures in the past. The Minister (Mr. Sifton) said this grant was equivalent to a grant for industrial schools, and he knows that every year we have a detailed report of all that is being done in these industrial schools. Now, we only want the same information in regard to this expenditure, it being an analogous vote as the Minister says. The Minister says we voted this a few years ago without having the information, but he must remember that was at the very beginning of the enterprise when there was no possibility of getting any information. The experiment has now been carried on for some years, and we ought to know whether it has been successful or otherwise. How much seed grain has been raised by them, how many of them are becoming self-supporting, are they taking to civilized life and learning to cultivate the soil: these are all things we ought know about after experimenting for five years.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. This is only the second vote that has been taken.

The PRIME MINISTER. There was a vote taken in 1895, and none has been asked for since until now.

Mr. SPROULE. That would somewhat alter the case, but nevertheless we should have the information.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I said I had a report in the department, and if the hon. gentleman asked me for that report, he would get it.

Mr. SPROULE. We have been asking for that for the last hour.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. You have not asked for it yet.

Mr. SPROULE. The Minister is derelict in his duty in not bringing down that report.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I cannot carry the whole department over here.

Mr. SPROULE. When we ask for information in this House the Minister has no business to treat the matter with levity and