

lands; many of the lots are settled; and of those that are not settled, the majority are fraudulent claims, made by Métis who got their 240 acres as Manitoba half-breeds, and then went out to the plains, having squandered the value of the scrip of the land they got in Manitoba, saying: One Métis looks like another; the Government will never know it; and they claimed the land again. The cause of the delay was that the Government tried to prevent these frauds being practised, that they tried to prevent the man who got his 240 acres in Manitoba from getting 240 more on the plains, and after that, asking for 160 more as a settler under the homestead right. That has been the cause of all the delay; and many of the claims have been settled. When the hon. gentleman speaks about a commission having been issued the other day, I may tell him that we have had official after official examining and settling those claims, and it is only the residuum of those claims that have not been settled. Mr. Pearce, for instance, who was Inspector of Dominion Lands, and is a very efficient officer, was appointed to examine into these claims, but the Métis thought that he did not adopt towards them a sufficiently conciliatory manner, and this to a certain extent interfered with the success of his mission. He, however, settled many of those claims in a most benevolent manner, if I may use the expression, towards these people. Mr. Duck also settled a large number of claims in the immediate vicinity of Duck Lake, where these people have taken the law into their own hands; and it was only to wind up the matter that some months ago it was decided to send a commission up there in the spring—we could not well send it in the middle of winter—for the purpose of settling up and winding up the final claims. In the meantime not one of those half-breeds has been disturbed; more than that, they have been personally assured that their possession was just as good as if they had the deeds in their pockets; but, mind you, these men are quarreling among themselves, just as white speculators do, when they try to jump each other's claims; and it is to settle the residuum of these claims this commission has been appointed. We asked some time ago, but we could not get, the gentleman we wanted to go. We wanted to press him; he accepted at first, but found his health would not allow him to go; and I will mention the names of the chief commissioners who are appointed to wind up the troublesome claims, the litigated claims, in which these people are disagreeing amongst themselves. Mr. Street, a lawyer at London, whom everybody knows, a man of the highest position as a man of honor and a professional man; Mr. Goulin, who is on the spot, a half-breed himself; and Mr. Forget, a very able man, a French Canadian, who has been there for many years, and is the clerk of the Council of the North-West. These three men have been appointed to go up on the spot and sit judicially, and settle the quarrels, not only the claims against the Government, but the quarrels and the contradictory and conflicting claims of the Métis themselves. That is the course taken by the Government, and I ask the House if there could be any other course, if there could be any more proper course adopted, than has been taken by the Government—first, to assure the people, from door to door, that their rights would be respected, that not an acre would be taken from them, that their possession was as good as a deed. But, oh, says the hon. gentleman, there has been apathy in this matter; these people have been driven to desperation; these people would not have sent for Riel if the sense of injustice, if the denial of justice, had not forced them to take this extraordinary step. If the hon. gentleman waits until the Indian or the half-breed ceases to grumble, he will have to wait till the day of doom. They always grumble. If you give an Indian four pounds of pork, and it is two pounds more than he is entitled to, he will grumble because he does not get six; and the half-breed has

all the acquisitiveness of the Indian, and the strong desire to press his claims of the white man. But the hon. gentleman rests his attacks upon what he calls the organs of the Government, and it is in this Parliament and at this time, with men in arms against us, that he sees fit to quote the organs of the Government, the *Montreal Gazette* and the *Mail*, and the *Ottawa Citizen*, as speaking for the Government. Mr. Speaker, the Government speaks for itself. I have heard the hon. gentleman, when he sat on this side of the House, indignantly deny that he would be responsible for the *Globe*, or for any of the papers that usually supported his party. Fancy Sir Stafford Northcote getting up just now and reading the *Standard* or the *Morning Post* as a charge to be brought against Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Gladstone's Government. In the first place, he would not be allowed to read the newspaper; and, in the next, he would neither have the want of patriotism nor the want of taste to do it. But, Mr. Speaker, lo, and behold, according to the old law of England, whenever the militia is called out Parliament must be summoned. That has disappeared to a great extent, and the reason for the original rule has altogether gone. We all remember that, in those days, when the kings of England not only reigned but governed, there was a permanent standing fight between the House of Commons and the Crown, as to who should command the militia. There was always a jealousy against the standing army, because the Crown had the clear right and the only right to command the standing armies, but the militia force was a citizen soldiery, they were under the command and control of Parliament, and the Government could not call them out. They were under the complete check of the House of Commons. Read the contests that were fought with the Crown from the time of Charles I. upwards, as to who should have the control of the trained bands, the Crown or the people. The people gained it, and, with their usual conservatism, they held to that principle that the militia should not be summoned in any way except with the command, with the sanction, with the immediate knowledge of the representatives of the people. But that was because there was a danger that the citizen soldiery might be used as the army of a despot to crush the, at that time, infant liberties of England. Here we have no such fear; our militiamen are the same as ourselves. We are all militiamen. I am not very sure, but I suppose that, at my age, I am in the reserved rank, and that I cannot be called out, even to put down Louis Riel. The hon. gentleman is, fortunately for himself, not over the age, and he may be drawn. I wonder, if he is called out to put down Louis Riel, if he will say: It is unconstitutional; Parliament must be called and Parliament must meet; I won't go; when Parliament is consulted, and after three or four votes of censure and want of confidence, perhaps Parliament may say that the riot has become a rebellion, and then constitutionally we will go and kill a great many thousand half-breeds and lose a great many people of our own; but we will, at all events, back up the constitution. So strange is the utter want of fear of the militia in this country, or rather, to use the hon. gentleman's phrase, the apathy of the people when such an attempt, such an atrocious attempt against their liberties is made by this Government as calling out the militia, that Parliament has actually handed over the right to call out the militiamen to any two justices of the peace; the mayor of a town and a couple of magistrates—I forget exactly the provisions of the Act—can call them out and crush an incipient rebellion, and I think that, if the warden of a county or the mayor of a town or incorporated village, or two councillors can exercise that power, in order to keep the peace, Her Majesty's Government can do it. But we are to be considered guilty of a great breach of the liberties of the subject because we did not consult Parliament, because we did not make a low bow and explain the whole