

Government than we are to-day. I think the conduct of the Government on this one point is sufficient to condemn them, at any rate in the estimation of the people of the lower provinces. I know already it has had very great effect indeed in changing the opinions of the fishing population as to the merits of the present Government. It is now very late in the day to begin to do anything. It does not seem that anything has been done yet; and I do hope that the Government will make up by prompt and vigorous action now for their neglect in the past—that they will take steps to secure the statistics which they ought to have got before, and that they will vigorously and energetically protect our rights in our inshore waters. I trust that they have taken steps already to secure the assistance of the Imperial navy in protecting our fisheries. Supposing the Imperial Government have no right to contribute towards the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, I think the least they can do, seeing that we have done so much for them in furnishing them with such a magnificent military road as the Canadian Pacific Railway, will be to allow us to utilize their navy to protect our fisheries.

As to the next two or three paragraphs of the Address I do not propose to say anything. They refer to matters that I think must meet with the approval of every hon. gentleman. It is desirable that the Consolidated Statutes should get into use as soon as possible. I am glad to see that the consolidation is now about completed and ready for submission to parliament; and undoubtedly it is a desirable thing to improve the judiciary system that obtains in the North-West.

The fifth paragraph speaks of the taking of the census in the North-West Territories, and indicates that it is proposed to introduce a measure for the representation of the people of the North-West in Parliament. I am glad that it is so; and I agree with the hon. gentleman who spoke before me in thinking that if the people of the North-West had been represented in Parliament during the past few years the recent disturbance might not have taken place at all. One thing struck me as being singular—that, while so many petitions were undoubtedly sent from the North-West to the Government,

so few of them found their way before Parliament. If that country had been represented in the House of Commons and in this body, undoubtedly we should have had years ago petitions giving us information which, as things have turned out, was unfortunately only in the hands of the Government, and, as it appears, in very bad hands indeed. When I say the Government, I do not mean to say the blame is to be borne equally by all the members of the Government. It is generally understood that the leader of the Ministry has had North-West affairs under his special control; and that even when the hon. gentleman whom we regret not to see amongst us now was Minister of the Interior he was guided and controlled by his leader.

I am glad to learn from the 6th paragraph of the speech that a measure will be laid before us to provide for a better mode of the trial of claims against the Crown. I think there was room for improvement in that way. There is one subject referred to in the 6th paragraph of the speech which I cannot help feeling some apprehension about. His Excellency tells us that a measure will be laid before us for the administration of the rights of the Crown in the fore-shores of the Dominion. I am afraid that, in introducing a measure of that kind, we are about entering upon a course of difficulty such as we got into by our interference with the license question. I think the intention of the framers of the constitution clearly was, and the practice of all the Provinces since the Union has been, that the grants of water or of land covered with water should be made by the provincial governments. I am sorry to see an intimation here that it is the intention of the Government to take this matter into their own hands. I think before any measure of that sort is introduced the government should have the opinion of the Privy Council on the question of right. I have always felt, and I should not speak so positively if I had only my own opinion, but I know numbers of gentlemen of sound legal learning who believe that the decision on which this measure is to be based was an erroneous one.

The 7th paragraph, which is addressed more particularly to the House of Commons, tells us that the estimates of receipts