

been, and is now being, developed. We also believed, notwithstanding my hon. friend was an unbeliever at one time, in the future of that country. We always believed in the value of the land, and I was ridiculed—and by none more than my hon. friend—at the valuations that I ventured to place on some of the lands.

Mr. BLAKE. The calculations, not the valuations. You were only four millions out.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Well, I did not then give full justice to the power of my hon. friends opposite to keep back the development of the country. I did not believe that their candid, conscientious statements as to the future of the country would have such an injurious effect on its progress as they proved to have had. Still, we have overcome even the influence of their opinion and their authority as to the worthlessness of the land for present purposes, and as to the prospect of an early immigration into that country. We have got over that now, and the country is rapidly being settled. It is quite true, the hon. gentleman says, that a large European immigration has not yet set in. There is a very wholesome transfer of the population from the older Provinces to the North-West. I coincide with my hon. friend that that is not to be regretted. The people of this country have a right to go to where they think their interests can be most promoted; and every man who, by going to the North-West either from Quebec, Ontario or the Maritime Provinces, increases his comfort, wealth and means, adds thereby to the wealth of the whole Dominion. Not only that, but I believe that in Ontario, especially in the most fertile portions, there was going to be too great a subdivision of the farming property. What is the consequence? The man who had his farm in Ontario or Quebec does not throw it away, nor does he abandon his home. No; he sells to his richer neighbor, who wishes to remain in the older Province, at a reasonable price. The farmer who buys is the capitalist, and in view of a change in the older Provinces of the products of farms, the larger those farms become in the hands of the capitalist, the better. So that I do not think it is to be regretted. On the contrary, I believe it is to the interest of the old and new portions of the Province that a portion of the population should be moved from one section to another, if, by that transfer, the parties so moved gain in comfort or in wealth. The hon. gentleman spoke of the increased Indian expenditure. He said he had warned the Government some two years ago against the commencement of the expenditure which is now going on. It is very easy to give a warning, but I will venture to say that if my hon. friend had been in the Administration at the time those votes were asked for, he would have felt himself bound to make the same demand, and would have expected to receive the same response from Parliament. It was by no fault, either of the Government or the Opposition, that the buffalo, the food supply of the Indian, are disappearing. They are being diminished by the progress of civilization and by the senseless slaughter that goes on in those regions; and further, the Indians in our country have been almost deprived of that source of food supply by the action of the American Government in keeping back, so far as a cordon of troops can do so, the herds of buffalo from crossing the line towards the north. It was an absolute necessity to any Government to take care that those people should not be allowed to starve, as they were literally deprived of their chief sources of food supply. In some districts the Indians could fish, and were no burden to the Dominion Treasury, but in the places where the animals and game are rapidly disappearing with the advance of settlers, and the buffalo are disappearing altogether, there was but one thing to do, either to feed the Indian or let him die. That being the alternative, of course Parlia-

ment, as one man, and without objection, except perhaps the warning my hon. friend mentions, voted the necessary supplies, the Government have tried their best to induce the Indians to settle on the lands, and betake themselves to the raising of cattle and the cultivation of the soil. I believe, on the whole, the experiment has been successful, and, strange to say, the greatest success has been attained with the wildest tribes. The Blackfoot Indians seemed irreclaimable, but they have betaken themselves with extraordinary readiness to their reserves, and we have good hopes that near the Rocky Mountains, extending to the North Saskatchewan and Peace River, the Blackfeet, the Bloods, and other tribes, will ere long be self-supporting. With the other Indians we have not, on the whole, succeeded so well. While the Indians have got this year an unexpected supply of food from the partial return of the buffalo, I believe, on the whole, it is to be regretted, because they have been told that the buffalo had disappeared, and that they must become farmers or cattle raisers, on which belief they had betaken themselves to those enterprises. But when they learned that the buffalo had returned, they remarked that all the white men's prophecies as to the final disappearance of the buffalo had been falsified, and in very many instances they had left their reserves and fallen back into their old habits. We must, in the language of the Speech, submit to that consequence of our acquisition of the country. Of course, the hon. gentleman is quite right in his remarks upon the supply of food to the aborigines. No one felt, more than myself, that the consequence of giving such food as was absolutely requisite to save them from starvation was an inducement, to a certain extent, to abstain from working. The Indian will not work if he can get enough to eat without working, and no doubt one of the consequences of our assisting them has been a supply of more food than was absolutely requisite to keep them from starving. But on the whole, as far as I can gather, the distribution has been as economical and judicious as possible under the circumstances of the case. I have no doubt that hon. gentlemen opposite will feel that one of the obligations thrown upon us all, as a civilized people, is to take care that these poor aborigines, who are deprived by the progress of civilization of their own country, of their hunting grounds and usual supply of food, are furnished with the necessaries of life for a certain period. It is true the Government have thought it necessary to increase the Mounted Police Force, but not to repress the Indians, as my hon. friend has suggested. The force, I believe, at this moment numbers but 300 men. It was thus established, in the first place, by the Government of 1873, their policy in this respect being followed by the Government of hon. gentlemen opposite when in office. This force would have been quite sufficient to keep the Indians under proper restraint if no white men had gone into the country. The necessity for an increase is not the keeping of the Indians quiet, but the prevention of collisions between them and the white men. You can quite understand that if an Indian is starving, and sees a white man's cattle grazing, he will not starve—he will shoot the white man's ox for food, and it was not unlikely that the white man's ox will shoot down the Indian.

Sir RICHARD J. CARTWRIGHT. Will the hon. gentleman explain the process by which the white man's ox is to shoot the Indian?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I was going on to say, had I not been rather uncivilly interrupted, that our object is to prevent white men and Indians coming into collision. There are large herds of cattle coming into our North-West Territory from the Southern States—brought in by herdsmen and drivers from Texas, and the region between that State and the International boundary; and we know from