

figures given last year have not been verified by results? Is it because there would be an unpleasant contrast between the figures of 75,000, exclusive of the suggested Irish immigration *en masse*, which we were told would enter the North-West last year, and the results? I think we might know, even to-day, whether those steps were taken which for two or three years have been pressed on the hon. gentleman, and which last year he promised me very faithfully he would see fulfilled, for the admeasurement of the actual settlement in that country. Up to this time my opinion is, as I have said before, that the principle of calculation upon which he has proceeded is one which is purely conjectural, and which does not actually measure what the settlement in the country was. Well, we have not, as I have said, the figures, and so, although the Speech has told us that there is a rapid increase of population; although the hon. gentlemen were instructed as to the figures in other parts, we were not told how rapid that increase has been which interests this legislation. Now, there is nothing more, as I have said, on the North-West, but much more ought to have been said, and here it is that I complain a little of the silence of those who have proposed to assent to this Speech, as well as of the absence of a statement in the Address itself. We know that there is more to be said about the North-West; we know that there is disappointment; we know that there is discontent; we know that there is agitation and difficulty there; we know that many things which a year ago we pointed out, which for several years we have been pointing out, would tend to create discontent in that country, are creating trouble and discontent, and that no word is said as to the task which is to devolve upon this Parliament of considering these great questions, and of taking care that so far as they may be remediable the causes of that discontent may be remedied. Hon. gentlemen may say, no; it is nothing, it is merely a tempest in a teapot; it is something that is not serious. But I observe the Prime Minister of that Province, a friend of hon. gentlemen opposite, only the other day, at one of the banquets that are given to Members of Parliament in Winnipeg, and of one of which I believe the hon. Member for Provencher (Mr. Royal) was the fortunate recipient, followed immediately afterwards by a banquet, participated in by the hon. member for Wellington—I observed so late as the 9th of January the Prime Minister of the Province is reported to have said:

"At present we are on the verge of a crisis from which we must emerge in a better or worse condition. Not, however, until the masses were made aware of the situation would they stand up and maintain their rights. The time had arrived when Manitoba must be placed on a level with the other Provinces of the Dominion."

He referred to the cry that Manitoba was petted and pampered, and said:

"Not one new arrival had been in the Province three months before he who before was loud in its denunciations was equally loud in demanding its rights. The eyes of the farmers had been opened, and they were alarmed at the prospect. These matters would shortly engross the attention, not only of the Provincial but of the Dominion Parliament."

That is the statement which the First Minister made at a recent period in reference to the condition of that country, but of it we have heard no word, either in the Speech delivered to us or in the observations of the hon. gentlemen who have indicated the general run of the discussion for this Session. Now, we know that the policy of the administration in that country—one particular part of their administrative policy—could not be effectively criticised during last Session for the reason that the papers which were demanded were not brought down. I refer to the papers connected with the closing of land in southern Manitoba. They were asked for, and the order was promised, but they have not yet reached the House, and by consequence, it was impossible to engage in a discussion upon that subject. It is impossible to say that that order has been

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reversed, and that at a very late period the policy which had dictated, most improperly and wrongly, the closing of southern Manitoba to settlement, has been changed. I have observed that the ordinary sources of information on the part of newspapers which support the Government have praised each of these transactions. When southern Manitoba and the mile belt were closed, it was a wise and statesmanlike thing. When it was attempted to sell, by public auction, these lands, that also was a wise, statesmanlike and a proper thing. But when the policy for closing was reversed, when the policy of selling was reversed, and when once again they were opened, that was the wisest and most patriotic, the most sensible thing of all. Well, I believe it was. But it seems to me hon. gentlemen are easily satisfied if, with all these various policies in the course of a short few months, they are equally pleased as each one is presented. Sir, the policy did not last a long time, but it lasted long enough to do a great deal of harm. There were numerous persons who had settled upon homesteads in southern Manitoba who had a right to expect that the keeping of that country open would be continuous; who had a right to expect that the neighbouring lands would be opened for homesteading; who did expect, and who went there on the faith of it; who communicated with friends to go on and join them, and who were disappointed in their expectations, as were many of those who did go and attempt to join them, by the closing of the reserves. Of that step no explanation has been given. I think an explanation is due to the country, because I believe it is to be one of the not unimportant causes of the difficulties in the North-West, and to have created a set-back which will last much longer than the policy itself has lasted. Well, then, there were other difficulties which were attracting the attention of the people of that country, and have attracted the attention of the constituted authorities of that portion of it which extends beyond the bounds of Manitoba. We complained of the policy of locking up lands by the lavish arrangements which were made as to the acreage to be granted to various colonization companies. We pointed out the hon. gentleman was repeatedly informed that the practical results of the arrangements was that the companies asserted in some shape or other, and effected in some shape or other—whether by law or without law was immaterial to the purpose—some sort of control or check over those lands which were said to continue open to homesteading, and the general settlement was interfered with to a much larger extent than hon. gentlemen indicate. It was not very long after this policy was adopted that it, too, was reversed by the Government itself. It is not many months ago since, I believe, an Order in Council was passed suspending a further grant of lands for colonization purposes, and we know that the very great bulk of the companies which were organized have utterly failed. But there, too, their policy and the consequent opening of these lands for settlement or sale has not prevented a mischief from being done, because at a time when the eyes and expectations of numerous people were upon that country, and when there was a strong desire to settle, difficulties were thrown in the way of settlers and the progress of the country was seriously checked. I have said that the constituted authorities of the North-West have protested against the companies which were in active operation, and I believe amongst the remonstrances which were forwarded to the Government, is one which is from the North-West Council, in reference to the operation of the policy and the operations of a particular company. Well, there were other causes of discontent, to which also we have referred. We pointed out that the settler in that country, although when he first came there he would treat as part of his capital expenditure, as part of his investment, the expenses of transport and the necessary incidentals to the first settlement, yet would he be found seriously inconvenienced, as a rule, by these necessary