

it. What are the unexpected circumstances? We knew of the ranches then. The hon. member for Huron had pointed out that the ranching mania was in full blast at that time, that there was application after application, some well-known names applying for ranches—here, there and everywhere; all sorts of fortunes were expected out of them, and out of other things in the North-West. There is nothing new as to the increase of population; and as to the condition of the Indians, I have read an extract from the hon. gentleman's speech in 1882, which shows how ominous was the condition at that time. Then it was agreed by the hon. gentleman that it was a good policy to establish local corps in the North-West, which should supplement and co-operate with, and form a junction, at the proper points, with the force for defensive purposes, for the peace, order and good government there. Not merely was that the statement of the hon. gentleman, but I have shown that was the established policy of the Government itself. We know that in 1879 corps were established at places which have lately become notorious, and I have shown how those corps languished and died. It is true the hon. gentleman stated, in answer to somebody, that the arms were removed because there were no men enlisted. Of course, the season of three year's service had expired. Why were there no men enlisted? Why had there been, for years, only a nominal force? I have shown the reason. It is because this force was systematically discouraged, for some reason or other; and so it has happened that the policy of the Government has been, as announced to Parliament by its Acts, between 1879 and 1882, as stated in the debate when last discussed, the increase of the Mounted Police—their policy has been departmentally or executively reversed; and instead of encouraging the formation of local corps, instead of yielding to applications that were made from various points in the district, as I have proved to you by the Deputy Adjutant General, and authorising the formation of more corps, instead of purchasing uniforms, instead of authorising drill to be performed, the applications were neglected, the uniforms were not purchased, the drill was not authorised, and ultimately the corps were gazetted out of the list of the active militia altogether. Now, if it is the intention, as it seems to be the intention, since the North-West corps have been gazetted out, that the North-West is to be defended and protected and regulated, so far as force is concerned, entirely by the Mounted Police, and not by local corps, we ought to know it. As I said, this policy may lead to indefinite expansion of expense. The subject requires to be treated, as I have said, in a more comprehensive manner than the hon. gentleman has adopted. It involves very large considerations—the expense of half a million dollars or more a year, and it involves still larger considerations of policy. It involves still larger considerations as to how the North-West is to be handled—even as to how it was to be handled before the outbreak, and as to how it is to be handled, considering the present condition of things and the consequences for some years to come, of the events of this winter. I am not making these observations with a view to express any definite opinion as to whether the hon. gentleman's proposition to double the force of mounted police ought to be rejected. I do not think we are in a position to express that opinion. I think that in order to express that opinion, in order to say whether it should be dealt with at all, we require to have some statement from the hon. gentlemen opposite of what their views are, generally, upon these two subjects, which, as I have pointed out, are necessarily and inextricably intermingled. Is it true that the disturbed districts in the remoter parts of the Territory—the districts of Edmonton, Battleford and Prince Albert—are, for the future, to be garrisoned by the Mounted Police? If so, we want more Mounted Police, and that is a reason for that policy; if not, the question arises how far the formation of local

Mr. BLAKE.

corps is to be applied, and to what extent it can fairly be applied; and you have got to settle both these questions in some general sense before you can decide the exact amount of corps that you propose to put in motion. Sir, I trust that after what I have said the hon. gentleman will feel disposed to give us that further information to which I have referred before we are asked to make much progress in this matter. We ought to have the Mounted Police report, we ought to have the report of Col. Houghton, to which I have referred, and we ought also to have a statement from the Government of a larger and more comprehensive character, before we are asked to decide how our votes shall be recorded upon the proposition now before us.

Mr. CARON. I regret that I was not in my seat when the hon. gentleman referred to the Department over which I preside. I regret, also, that I am not in the position of having a brief so carefully and elaborately prepared as the brief from which the hon. leader of the Opposition has spoken. But I believe, that without a brief and without any previous preparation, except a knowledge of the facts which have come under my notice as Minister of Militia and Defence, I can give, possibly, some information to this House and to the country contradictory of the statements which the hon. gentleman has just made. When the hon. gentleman stood up to-night and spoke of the administration of the Department of Militia, it seemed to me that he was forgetting that on more than one occasion the hon. gentleman, when I appealed to the House and the country, and asked the House to provide the money which was indispensable to keep up a force, a force such as Canada should have kept up, invariably met me with the opposition of himself and his friends to every vote I asked for the purpose of maintaining the militia. I remember well, that at the very outbreak of the disturbances in the North-West, when remembering what had taken place, which the hon. gentleman knew as well as I did, that he had opposed every vote I had applied for, he nevertheless, from his place, as leader of the Opposition, declared that he would hold the Government responsible for the life of every man who should not be provided with all requisites when sent forward to fight the battles of Canada in the North-West. The hon. gentleman at that moment, rising in his seat and appealing to the feelings of the House, and stating that among his friends and family some had been sent up to the North-West, announced that he would hold the Government responsible for any deficiency, although, if any deficiency had occurred, it was because the hon. gentleman and his friends, Session after Session, refused to vote the amount which the Minister of Militia brought down to this House and asked it to vote. I am ready to leave this question to be discussed before the country, and I am ready to leave the people to decide whether the leader of the Opposition, at that time, was following a patriotic course, and whether he was doing his duty by his country in refusing, and in his friends refusing, to sanction the votes required to keep the militia force properly organised. But I take the statements which the hon. gentleman has made to-night, and I find that the hon. gentleman objects to the money which is being expended in maintaining the Winnipeg corps, the 90th Battalion—

Mr. BLAKE. No.

Mr. CARON. I beg the hon. gentleman's pardon. He said that from the reports which had been made the whole money spent in the North-West was being expended upon the Winnipeg corps.

Mr. BLAKE. No. I beg your pardon. I read an extract from the speech of the hon. member for Marquette. I made no such statement as the hon. gentleman has mentioned.

Mr. CARON. The hon. gentleman read an extract from a speech by the hon. member for Marquette, and he gave his sanction as to the opinion it expressed.