

the claim of the North-West Territories and attention to the just claims of the half-breeds. With this question, which has been made one of party politics, it is not thought becoming to deal here. Upon such a charge, when made in a constitutional manner, the Government will be responsible to the representatives of the people, and before them they will be prepared to meet and disprove it.

That the Government should be compelled to submit their reasons for having enacted, goes as a matter of course. They were to give their reasons—they were responsible to the people. This is a matter of course. But this is not what is contended here. The contention laid down is that when the people of Canada are to examine the action of the Government in executing Riel, the question whether or not the rebellion was provoked is not to be taken into consideration. Was there ever a more unconstitutional, more intolerable doctrine propounded? I say it is contrary to the true doctrine, for if there is any occasion when the Government is bound to search into the matter to see if provocation has been given for the commission of an offence, which has involved the death penalty, it is when the offence charged is purely a political one. It is always with regret I am sure, that the Minister of Justice finds himself unable to report in favour of the commission of a death sentence. Whenever in this country a sentence of death is passed upon any of our fellow beings, it is the duty of the Minister of Justice to enquire into the causes of the crime in order to see if the requirements of the law would not be equally satisfied by a death sentence were not carried out. Nothing is left behind that can lead to that desired end. And yet we are told here that when a man is

Charged with a political crime, the Government are not to consider whether there was provocation or not by the Crown. With the Government all rebellions are alike, whether provoked or not and they have all to be treated in the same way. You are to look at all rebellions as utterly bad. You have to look upon the rebellion of Riel as

and the attempted rebellion of Gaiteline as equally bad, namely, on the contrary, that this is one of the grounds on which I assign the Government. It was their duty when they came to consider whether the death sentence should be carried out on Riel, to consider whether he had received provocation for the deed which brought him into that situation; and having failed to do so, the Government, on their own confession, stand guilty of having failed in a duty which is one of the most sacred that ever can fall upon man. The doctrine of the Government is so untenable that they could not adhere to it to the last. Even before Sir Alexander Campbell had reached the end of his factum, he abandoned his theory, for in the very bottom lines, he says:

"Whether rebellion alone should be punished with death is a question upon which opinions may differ. Treason will probably ever remain what it always has been among civilised nations, the highest of all crimes; but such conviction for that offence must be treated and disposed of by the Executive Government upon its own merits, and with a full consideration of all the attendant circumstances. In this particular instance, it was a second offence, and, as such, the first occasion."

The Minister of Justice, however, is not content with saying that we should not look into the causes which had induced the rebellion; he had conveniently left aside looking into the causes, but he no less conveniently looked into the fact that this was a second offence. So it was, and for the second time the Government was guilty of that rebellion; for the second time Riel was a rebel, and was a rebel on account of the conduct of the present Government. Sir, I am not of those who look upon Louis Riel as a hero. Nature had endowed him with many brilliant qualities; but nature had denied him that supreme quality without which all other qualities, however brilliant, are of no avail. Nature had denied him a well-balanced mind. At his worst, he was

A subject fit for an asylum. At his best, he was a religious and political