

this man who came on his knees to the Government, to show how the Government were injuriously affecting the interests of the country. That is not the way an hon. member usually gets information. We find, in consequence of the continual pressure of the white men, in consequence of the fact that the half-breeds at Prince Albert were the slaves of the white men, of the fact that they held meetings and might rise in arms or might do whatever the white men chose to ask them to do—we made up our mind that although we did not consider it for the interest of the people in the Territories, yet if they would accept nothing else, and we offered them 160 acres of land—if they would place themselves at the mercy of cormorants, who were ruining them and holding them as slaves, and continually keeping up an agitation, we cannot help it; we will give you scrip, although we know it is not in your interest, and it will be thrown away, and will be secured by people who will give you the smallest possible sum for it; but we cannot help it; this matter must be settled. I do not hesitate to say that I did it with the greatest reluctance. I do not easily yield, if there is a better course open; but at the very last moment I yielded, and I said: "Well, for God's sake let them have the scrip; they will either drink it or waste it or sell it; but let us have peace." And my successor, my respected and able successor, Sir David Macpherson, acted upon that decision, which was carried out in January. At that time we knew there was a discontented people; that the white people were making trouble. I say, and I appeal to the judgment of the House to say, if we did not act as we ought to have acted when, in 1879, when we took possession of the Government, when we found that the Government who were behind us had taken not a single step to settle this question; when we found that the Government had denied the right of the half-breed; when the whole thing was thrown upon us—if we did not act wisely, afterwards when we took power, when we went to the chief men of the country, to the men who were known to be friends of the half-breeds, when we went to the hierarchy and the clergy, both Catholic and Protestant; we went to everybody who could give us information, and they were unanimous in saying that it was wrong that this scrip should be used in this way, and that the land could be got possession of for little or nothing. We held out as long as we could, but such was the influence of the half-breeds, who already got a share of their lands in Manitoba, that they went to the North-West, they became dwellers on the plains, they played Indians, and pretended that they had lived in Manitoba; that they were suffering; that their Manitoba friends had got lands and scrip; and nine-tenths of the men claiming it had already got scrip, and were attempting to put up bargains in the North-West. Fourteen out of seventeen petitioners, in one case, were shown to have got lands already in Manitoba. Isidore Dumont, brother of Gabriel Dumont, had land; he applied again, and it was one of his grievances that he did not get more land in the North-West. Gabriel Dumont got not only his 160 acres, as promised, but he had the best house in Batoche; and so it was with very many of these men—they had already got their lands and scrip, but they were greedy to get more. Appetite grew with eating; and though they had got all much more than originally by law they ought to have got, they are clamoring for more. If time would permit, I could prove many such cases; but, perhaps, I may take another occasion, as the hon. gentleman has said we are going to hear from him again on this subject—I may take another occasion to show that the fact of the half-breed not getting, at the moment he wants it, his scrip or his claim for 240 acres, was a mere pretence; yet, Riel, from the beginning, when he went into the country until he left, went there for the purpose of making money. He came there for the most sordid purposes possible, and he told all kinds of lies. Among other things,

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he said that the hon. member for East York, when he was in the Government offered him \$20,000, and I offered him \$30,000—he remembered perhaps, the old matter, when he got some money on the frontier, in order to clear away. One of the letters read to-day by the hon. gentleman was that he had been promised a senatorship or a seat in the Cabinet. He came there, and he ruled these men for the most sordid purposes. The white men in Prince Albert and the vicinity, or many of them, subscribed to bring him there, and encouraged him there, for the sake of making a little fuss and drawing attention to Prince Albert and for the sake of threatening the Government into settling the claims of the half-breeds, or, in other words, putting money into their pockets. Sir, I shall not detain the House any longer on the subject. As the hon. gentleman has stated, it is a subject which cannot rest here. This subject must be fully dealt with. I have not alluded to the statements of the hon. gentleman, with respect to the land regulations, the treatment of the whites; and these questions the hon. gentleman has ingeniously mixed up with the question he brought before the House. He has been preparing himself for, I will not say how long, while this House was studiously and earnestly discussing the Franchise Bill; while they were occupied night and day working out that great problem, the hon. gentleman was diving into this question. Well, he has dived into it, and he has gone pretty low into its depths. The hon. gentleman first took up the half-breeds, then the land laws, then the whites, then the colonisation companies—and I do not know what else. But let him take each subject separately, clause by clause, sentence by sentence, impeachment by impeachment, charge by charge, and deal with them, and I shall meet him, and convince this House that the charges are groundless, that the Government are safe and sound, in the opinions of the people and of the country, because they have done what they believed to be the best in their judgment, ought to be done; and because I know that although perhaps they may have made occasional mistakes, although in the tentative process of settling a new country, they have committed, perhaps, an occasional error, they were not too proud to change; and when they came to the conclusion that they had committed an error, they did not indulge in the miserable vanity of thinking they could do no wrong. When they found that any of their conclusions, from their own judgment or on reference to their responsible officers, had better be altered, they were brave enough and honest enough to admit the error, and cure the error, and make amendment. What was the consequence? Sir, I believe we stand well among the whites of the North-West. I know we stand well with the red men of the North-West.

Mr. MILLS. Hear, hear.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The hon. gentleman says hear, hear, but I can prove by the testimony of every Indian that has been in arms—of Poundmaker, and Big Bear, and Beardy, and Little Pine, and Little Poplar, and all those Indians—I can show to you, not only that they have been well treated, but that those who have been their guardians, their clergy, and those who watched over them, admit that the Indians had no wrongs to redress; and if you will read the press of the North-West, read such papers as the Saskatchewan *Herald*, and will find that we were wrong—that we have been pampering and coaxing the Indians; that we must take a new course, we must vindicate the position of the white man, we must teach the Indians what law is; we must not pauperise them, as they say we have been doing.

Mr. MILLS. Hear, hear.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The hon. gentleman says hear, hear. Why, Sir, I have come to this House again