

single issue, bring in other issues, to which my hon. friend, the Minister of the Interior, in his speech replied, as well as to the specific issue which was brought. Two or three hon. gentlemen have spoken of Mr. Pearce's report. Mr. Pearce's report seems to bother some hon. gentlemen and the only way that they can get round it is to say that it was instigated, that is to say, that the Minister of the Interior directed Mr. Pearce to get up a certain report for a certain purpose; and thereby they endeavor to discredit the report of Mr. Pearce, which pricks a good many bubbles which have been floating around in sight of the country during the past few months. Now, I prefer to believe that Mr. Pearce made an honest report; and if the report is not honest, it will produce a better effect before the House and the country to take Mr. Pearce's report and show its inaccuracy rather than to throw doubts upon its honesty. My hon. friend said that nothing had been done by this Government from 1879, till after the rebellion broke out, and he stated in the same breath that the extinguishment of the Indian title for the half-breeds was a most important thing, and that because it was not carried out, the Government were thereby guilty of neglect and criminal action. I want to say to hon. gentlemen if, in the now historic language of the leader of the Opposition, "justice is justice, upon the banks of the Red River as well as upon the banks of the Saskatchewan," I want to enlarge that just a little, and ask hon. gentlemen whether justice is not justice between 1873 and 1879 just as much as it is between 1879 and 1885; and if it was criminal, cruel, callous neglect in this Government to keep the half-breeds out of that extinguishment of the Indian title from 1879 to 1885, was it not just as cruel and callous and criminal a neglect on the part of hon. gentlemen opposite, who, with that intuitive sense of justice which they possess in so strong a degree, allowed the years to pass from 1873 to 1879, and had nothing better to say in reference to the extinguishment of the title than to append the cabalistic marks, "No.—D. M." upon their petitions? I say that justice is just as much justice in one year as in another. If hon. gentlemen were so anxious to have justice crowned and elevated, and not simply used as a whip to be used for party purposes, I think they would say that they were guilty when, with their intuitive and strong sense of justice, they allowed all those years to pass by without making a single provision in order that these poor men might have the right which they claimed so strongly ought to have been granted to them. My hon. friend involved himself in a complete circle in his reasoning. He started out to show, and showed to his own satisfaction if not to ours, that the rebellion was caused—and the leader of the Opposition cheered in his most vigorous and trenchant way when that statement was made—by the action of the Government, because the Government took action with the view of having these very claims rectified, and the moment they took that action the flames of rebellion burst forth. Yet about fifteen minutes afterwards, in equally as strong terms, he declared that the Government took no action at all until after the rebellion had been some weeks in progress. I leave my hon. friend to reconcile these two things for himself, and to chase his own argument around the circle and see how long it will take him to catch it. He said nothing was done by this Government from 1879 to 1885. I think that is not quite correct. In the first place, something was done which was not done by hon. gentlemen opposite. Legal enunciation was given to the fact that the half-breeds had rights in the lands of the country. That was given in 1879, and it was more than hon. gentlemen opposite had given. They state in the same breath that it was not the intention of the Government to give these half-breeds any rights with reference to the extinguishment of the Indian claim, and yet that the express intention to extinguish the claim was enunciated in legislation and that the Gov-

ernment are to blame because it did not carry out that intention. Now, I think something was done, and my hon. friend has shown, by the very facts he has adduced, that there were difficulties surrounding the question which could not be settled in an off-hand way. When Archbishop Taché and the North-West Council, which was so good an exponent of the circumstances and wishes of the time, were quoted as far apart as the poles almost with reference to their plans for settlement, I think my hon. friend has shown conclusively that the question is one difficult of solution and not to be settled off-hand. He has stated that the North-West Council knew better than any other body of men what should be done, and they came to the front with a proposition in which they started out by combating the theory and plan of the archbishop, and it is not likely that, if the plan of the council had been carried out, the half-breeds would have been satisfied, because what the half-breed wanted was that they should be able to turn their lands or the worth of their lands into scrip, for which they could get a ready sale and ready cash. That is where the difficulty lay, and where Archbishop Taché saw the difficulty. We had not simply the allaying of bad feelings to take into account, but the difficulty that by giving scrip to the half-breeds which they could sell, we were helping them to their own injury. What we wanted first was to see that the half-breeds retained their heritage and were not put in a position to dissipate it in a moment. The difficulty found in carrying out the Act of 1879 was how to satisfy the half-breeds, as far as sentimental grievances were concerned, and at the same time how to do the best for them in the long run by keeping for them some portion of the heritage which was so justly theirs. It is said that nothing was done. Well, I am not going minutely into this question, but intend merely touching another point before I resume my seat. To hear my hon. friend, in his earnest but very good-natured way, applying his strong, epithets, on the one hand, to the half-breeds, in the way of pity, and on the other hand to the Government, in the way of denunciation, one would suppose that no people under the sun had such terrible grievances to complain of as had the half-breeds with reference to the extinguishment of the Indian title. I may state that their grievances, conceding them the right to complain, because their claims were not immediately settled, were trivial in comparison with the grievances which people in various ages of the world have to struggle against; and when you talk about heroism and justifiable rebellion, you will find no rebellion in the whole course of history which stands upon the elevated plane of heroism and struggle for liberty, which does not appeal to a principle deeper far than the mere sentimental grievance arising out of the non-possession of land, which those who claim it have no intention of cultivating. Has the hon. gentleman proved that one single half-breed was ever dispossessed of the lot of land on which he settled, or the hut in which he lived, or the house that sheltered himself and family? Has he proven that the thongs were ever put about his limbs, that his liberty was ever curtailed, his social freedom interfered with, his religious equality and freedom of worship in any way restricted? If one or all of these things could be shown to have existed, there would be a foundation for grievances which might well have found expression in rising against the authority that exercised the tyranny, but because the half-breed, although he has in his lot more than he ever intends to cultivate, does not get at once 160 acres to tack on that, which he never intends to cultivate, he must, forsooth, rise in bloody rebellion, and imperil the peace and constitution of our country. The pretension is absurd on its face; and what is more absurd still is that eloquent hon. gentlemen should rise in this House to justify the rebellion, and seek to elevate to the plane of heroism, which such men as George Washington and others all the way back through a line of heroes occupy,