

The jury were in a far better position to judge as to

THE NEED OF MERCY

than the House, as the former had all the evidence before them. He referred to the course taken by the Minister of Justice in furnishing a political justification of the Government's course before the meeting of Parliament. As to the causes which led to the rising, the Conservative newspapers were furnishing the country with evidence that the Indians had been treated most shamefully—they had been cheated, wronged, and ill-used. He contended that they were not called upon either to palliate or condemn the conduct of the Dominion Government until all the evidence was before them. He thought the people were entitled to knowledge of the circumstances which induced the Government to disregard the recommendation to mercy. While he had no desire to sympathize with rebellion, still they must know whether the people were so goaded as to induce them to go into rebellion. The country must know whether the people had been protected, guarded, and their grievances listened to by the men who were paid to look after the people.

Mr. ROBILLARD contended that the cry against the Dominion Government's course in the Riel matter was only from professional politicians and demagogues. He stated that at first he had been in sympathy with Riel, but he had changed his opinion. He recounted the hardships of the Halfbreeds, and still contended that they had been magnified. Mr. Robillard took the items in the Speech *seriatim*, and favoured the House with his views on each. He said the question of the amendment to the amendment would not be settled here, but at the polls at the general election.

Dr. McMAHON said that the amendment introduced by the member for North Essex appeared to have been moved with the sole

PURPOSE OF CATCHING VOTES.

(Cheers.) But he believed the electors of Ontario would pay little or no attention to the question of how any man voted upon the amendment. The great difficulty was that it involved a discussion of the whole of the troubles in the North-west. He had hoped that this, a purely Dominion question, would not have been raised in this House; and it was questionable whether it was wise or judicious to discuss it here at all. (Hear, hear.) But as it had been dragged in by the members of the Opposition it must be met fairly and squarely. He had been very much surprised at the remark made by the member for Russell, when he spoke of his friends in Quebec as having been deluded in this matter in the manner in which they had acted after the execution of the unfortunate Louis Riel. That was a question which he could not pretend to discuss. He believed that according to the laws of the North-west he was tried legally. But the question naturally arose, and there was a great difference of opinion upon it, whether, after being tried and condemned as he was, he should have suffered the extreme penalty of the law. He was not going to say whether or not he should have suffered it. One of the great questions raised by Riel's compatriots was that of his sanity. The people of Quebec, and he believed a large number of the people of Ontario, were not at all satisfied in regard to that point. In his opinion he did not receive fair play in regard to that Commission. That Commission had not reported so far as he knew. At all events, they did not report at the time in such a manner that the public could judge whether he was insane or not. The question whether he was guilty or not guilty had been decided by the Courts. But he was not ready to agree with the remark made by the hon. member for Russell when he insinuated that that unfortunate man pursued the course he did

FOR PURPOSES OF GAIN

or lucre. All that he did from the commencement to the termination of that unfortunate rebellion precluded that idea. It was true he had asked for \$35,000, but for what purpose? His intention, if his own statement was to be believed, was to go over to the other side to enlist the sympathies of his compatriots and then conquer the North-west Territories. It was to be remembered that he came to Manitoba at the request of the Halfbreeds themselves—at the request of those whom hon. gentlemen opposite were asking to have released—they were asking the House to approve of the execution of Riel, and at the same time they were asking that mercy should be extended to the very men at whose call he came into the country. He regarded the amendment as a mere political trick devised with the idea—delusive as he believed—of catching votes, and he thought he would be doing right in voting against it.

Mr. MORRIS reviewed the circumstances of the rebellion, and contended that Riel had had a fair trial. He repelled the idea that

the Dominion Government were responsible for the loss of life and destruction of property by the North-west rebellion.

Mr. YOUNG—I cannot compliment the hon. member for Essex on the amendment he has proposed. It appeared to me to be a very weak little bit of party stratagem, and as improper as weak. (Applause.) The weakness is due to the fact that, though its professed object is to secure an amnesty for the Halfbreeds, we all know perfectly well that when an offer was made from this side of the House to give a unanimous vote in favour of this proposition, he declined to accept it. This is proof that his object is not to secure so much an amnesty as a miserable party advantage.

Hon. C. F. FRASER—An amnesty for Sir John Macdonald. (Applause.)

Mr. YOUNG—So far as the object of the amendment is to secure an amnesty there is not any opposition to it. I believe there is practically no difference of opinion throughout the country in favour of clemency being shown the Halfbreeds. Indeed, I think it was the leading Liberal journal which first suggested that an amnesty should be given, and I am personally in favour of it, because the facts show that generally they have been

MORE SINNED AGAINST THAN SINNING.

I suppose the whole country understands the little device of the hon. gentleman, by which he thought to place us before the country as having voted against an amnesty, but he appears to be unaware of the fact that the Liberal party in this House will have an immediate opportunity of putting themselves right. He was surprised to find Mr. Morris taking up three-quarters of an hour in urging an indictment in this House against Riel. The hon. gentleman had been wasting his time. No person on the Government side of the House had undertaken to defend Riel. If he had needed any proof that the amendment to the amendment was prepared when such matters were prepared—in Ottawa—it was the warmth which the leader of the Opposition had manifested in dealing with it. He reverted to the former rebellion, and asserted that if the Dominion Premier had done his duty then there would have been no second rebellion.

It being six o'clock, the Speaker left the chair.

AFTER RECESS.

Mr. YOUNG, continuing, said that when Sir John Macdonald, after the former rebellion, held communication with Riel and gave him money to live in the United States, he directly encouraged him to come over and try the same thing on again. The leader of the Opposition said that the Halfbreeds had no just cause for complaint. He (Mr. Young) knew that the land policy of the Government had created universal dissatisfaction in that country, and many of the inhabitants had gone to Dakota.

Mr. CREIGHTON—Where the regulations are not so liberal.

Mr. YOUNG said he thought the settlers were the best judges of that, and they would hardly have sold out and left for the United States if they had not had some substantial grievance. In Dakota there was a tract 200 miles long and 100 miles broad settled almost entirely by Canadians, most of whom had left the Canadian North-west by reason of the land regulations. While in Manitoba and the North-west he had heard numerous complaints about the land regulations, and the loudest denunciations of the Government came from men who had been staunch Conservatives. But for the deafness of the Dominion Government to all warnings we should have saved all the loss of blood and treasure which took place in the North-west. There was little doubt that one of the colonization companies created by the Government was the spark which kindled the rebellion. The Mail had admitted that the Halfbreeds had grievances. "This was the way," said The Mail, "in which the officials treated the just demands of the Metis," and we agree with Mr. Blake that their negligence was gross and inexcusable, and contributed to bring about the insurrection. . . . Had they had votes like white men, or if, like the Indians, they had been numerous enough to command respect and overawe red tape, without doubt the wheels of office would have revolved for them; but being only Halfbreeds they were put off with an eternal promise, until patience ceased to be a virtue. We repeat again, that the departmental system under which such callous and cruel neglect of a portion of the community was possible, was wrong and should be censured." But in order to prove that the

HALFBREEDS HAD GRIEVANCES,

it was not necessary to look beyond the action of the Government itself in appointing a commission to settle the claims of the Halfbreeds—a commission which had settled between 1,800 and 2,000 claims. It was not surprising that the Halfbreeds, fearing evic-