

some further information with respect to the state of affairs at Prince Albert and the North-West generally, and with respect to the action of the Government. I feel that full information is due to the House with respect to the causes of this affair, and as to what the Government have done.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The situation stands very nearly as it did before. There is no information as yet, and there cannot be very well until to-morrow, of a junction between the body commanded by Commissioner Colonel Irvine, and the body at Carlton under Superintendent Crozier. When those bodies are united they will have a force of 250 men. There are 100 men of the 90th Regiment now at Qu'Appelle ready, if necessary, to proceed from there in the direction of the South Saskatchewan. They will be followed by the remainder of the regiment, 200 men, and half a battery of artillery. Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney telegraphs me to-day that he has seen the principal men of the Indians on the reserve near Broad View. Some reports have been circulated about those Indians being excited. They were exceedingly indignant at such charges being brought against them, and demanded that they be brought face to face with their accusers. We have received messages both from Battleford and Edmonton, and everything is quiet there. I had a telegram from the Rev. Father Lacombe to-day, and he vouches for the loyalty of all the Blackfeet Indians at Carlton and the west. We are quite unaware of the approximate cause of the half-breed rising under Riel. Riel came into the country, invited by them, some time ago. I believe he came in for the purpose of attempting to extract money from the public purse, and during this last summer occasionally there were hints—and more than hints, intimations—that if we gave him a sum of money—and a particular sum of five thousand dollars was mentioned—he would depart in peace. Of course that could not be entertained for a moment, and he has remained there, inciting the half-breeds, and attempting to arouse the Indians by stating to them that the country all belonged to them, and that the whites had no rights whatever. As I stated when I last was asked the question about the state of affairs there, it has been alleged that Riel is exceedingly indignant at being told that he was an outlaw—that he was not a British subject—and had no rights there; but such an intimation, so far as I can discover, was never made to him in any way by anybody. He has a great influence over the half-breeds and some over the Indians. From former occurrences in the North-West he is considered a sort of martyr in the cause—a sort of half-breed Mahdi—and they look up to him with a sort of superstitious regard, and from that feeling he is able to act upon these poor people. I do not believe there is the slightest danger from the half-breeds unless they should be joined by the Indians. If the Indians were brought once into the field no one could foresee what the consequence might be, but I am exceedingly glad to state to the House that our information goes to show that the Indians are quite quiet, and there is no danger their joining with the half-breeds. There are one or two Indians, whom we know pretty well by name, who are troublesome men; I had better not mention names, because all these things go over the wires—but there is one who has always been troublesome for years. The hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills) would know his name if I mentioned it. I asked about him and the answer was, "It is all bluster and tobacco." The most influential Indian in the North-West is Chief Crowfoot, head of the Blackfeet tribe, a remarkable and very able man, and for his fidelity and loyalty I believe there is every guarantee. I am quite sure that to a great extent if he were permitted—which of course we could not permit—he would show by action on his own part how loyal he is.

Mr. BLAKE. The hon. gentleman has spoken with reference to the proximate causes; will he say what are the remote causes of this rising?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The causes of the rising are what I have expressed. The half-breeds have had a great many claims, some of them, as I have stated, reasonable enough, but some of them are not reasonable. The House knows that at the time the arrangement was made for the settlement of land titles in Manitoba, on the creation of that Province, a large number of Indians settled on the Assiniboine and Red River who had got places, localities, little properties, in possession under the direct sanction, though perhaps not by any other title, of the Hudson Bay Company. Those claims were recognised and a certain quantity of land was appropriated for their satisfaction. Land scrip was issued to those Indians to the value of their holdings. The half-breeds scattered over the plains had no such rights from the Hudson Bay Company or any one, but as they heard that the half-breeds had received certain moneys, or money's worth, within the Red River settlement, they claimed that they all had the same rights. Among those half-breeds that are at Prince Albert and along both banks of the Saskatchewan, there are a number who received their land scrip for their land on the Red River, who have left Manitoba and are on the plains beyond the bounds of Manitoba. They made their claims and they pressed them, thinking they would not be recognised again. They pressed their claims again; they said they were half-breeds, and they tried to enforce a double claim on their behalf. A great many of these have been identified and have been refused. As a whole the half-breeds have been told that if they desire to be considered as Indians there are most liberal reserves that they could go with the others; but that if they desired to be considered white men they would get 160 acres of land as homesteads. But they are not satisfied with that; they want to get land scrip of equal quantity—I think upwards of 200 acres—and then get as a matter of course their homesteads as well. Then there was some difficulty about the plots on which these half-breeds had settled along the Saskatchewan. No man has been disturbed in his settlement, and he has been told that he would not be disturbed. Sometimes the half-breeds quarrel amongst themselves, because in the bends of the rivers one man's claim overlaps another. These claims have been very difficult to settle. There have been several reports from different officials for several years, and a great many of these have been settled, but some remain unsettled. Finally there is a commission which we hope will proceed in the spring, or as soon as possible, to settle the few claims that remain unadjusted.

Mr. BLAKE. When was the commission appointed?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The commissioners were selected some time ago, but one of the commissioners was unable to go and resigned, and we have appointed another only the other day.

Mr. BLAKE. Will the hon. gentleman state what proportion of the volunteer forces, and how many of the mounted police are there, or on their way to the scene of action? I could not well make out from what the hon. gentleman stated.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. There are 100 men at Carlton.

Mr. BLAKE. Mounted police?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Yes. From the last information we have received there are also 40 volunteers from Prince Albert. There are also upwards of 90 of Irvine's