

able greed and unreasonable alarm on the part of the Metis; of confused uncertainty upon the part of the English-speaking descendants of the Selkirk settlers, and of the natives of the English parishes, with a third element of the imbecility and helplessness of the Hudson's Bay Company officials. As to the leader of the revolt, Louis Riel, junior, he gave in his youth as a student promise of quickness and intelligence, but by his self-conceit, importance, and his assumption of a Kaiserlike air and attitude as he dwelt in Fort Garry, in whose cells he kept in misery a band of prominent and innocent Canadians charged with no crime. It is far from being just to say that Louis Riel had no good parts. He had some prominent features of leadership in speech and in demeanour he was impressive; his courage and executive ability were undeniable. His authorization of some acts of cruelty and injustice probably arose from fear. An exile for fifteen years, his inspiration of the natives and Indians to rebellion in Saskatchewan in 1885, led to an ignoble end, and his attempt to introduce a new religious faith seems to have indicated a disordered mind. The attempt to make Louis Riel a martyr has failed to impress itself on any class of Canadian people.

VIII.

HON. JAMES MCKAY.

The prevailing distinction among the native people of Rupert's Land was to be able to run a foot race, chase a wolf, ride a restless broncho horse, or pursue the dangerous rush of a herd of buffalo. As in the old Biblical day a man was famous when he could with rapidity and skill cut down the mighty oak trees, so here men of great nerve and muscle gained a general reputation for deeds of skill or unwearied bravery. Such a man was Honourable James McKay having a trace of threefold blood in his veins. Broad and heavy set, he was nevertheless a champion runner or sprinter as the local usage would speak of him. His two brothers were respectively a Government official and a missionary to the Indians. When Assiniboia became absorbed in the new Province of Manitoba, after the transfer of 1870 it was thought necessary to have an Upper House or Legislative Council. McKay became a member of it and on account of the French blood in his veins he became a representative of the Metis section of the people. He was a man of means, of high reputation, as well as an example of political skill. When the Legislative Council was abolished in Manitoba in 1876 James McKay became a member of the Provincial Cabinet, while a majority of his colleagues were given other positions. His residence of "Deer Lodge" west of the young

