

them to demand justice and draw the attention of the Federal Government, who, let it be said, are far less guilty than the heads of the Department and its other officers. Our correspondent in Prince Albert sends us a word on this subject in the letter that we publish to-day; and since then a despatch informs us that a great meeting, composed of new settlers and French and English half-breeds, has been held a few miles from Prince Albert. At this meeting, the despatch says: Mr. Louis Riel spoke in very moderate terms. The Hon. Chas. Nolin, ex-member of the Government and of the Legislature of Manitoba, also spoke at this meeting, as well as Mr. W. S. Jackson. It was resolved to prepare a petition to the Government, asking that justice be done to the parties interested.

"Notwithstanding all the good reasons that our friends of the North-West can allege in support of their demands, notwithstanding all their neglected rights, we hope, we even have the certainty, that they will not be guilty of any act or any threat of violence, which could only be injurious to their cause. On the other hand, how can one avoid blaming the Federal Government, or rather the Department of the Interior, which is the primary cause of all this discontent?"

On 8th July, 1884, the Government received a telegram from Crozier, of the Mounted Police at Battleford:

"Louis Riel arrived at Duck Lake with family, brought in by half-breeds. They brought him in, it is said, as their leader, agitating their rights."

On 15th July Mr. Mathew Ryan, formerly stipendiary magistrate in the Territories, and who had been engaged as commissioner in connection with the enumeration of the half-breeds, wrote a letter, which was published in the *Manitoba Free Press*, from which a few extracts may be read:

"In common with many others, no doubt, I expected that the opening of the Sixth Council of the North-West council would be marked by some reference to the state of disquietude manifest in the half-breed settlements of St. Laurent and adjacent places."

After stating his own official relation to another phase of the question, Mr. Ryan proceeds:

"In the discharge of this duty, I found that a large number of half-breeds had no claim under the Act (that is, the original Manitoba Act), not having been residents of Manitoba at the date of the transfer. I also see that this exclusion caused much discontent, and I did not fail to urge, from time to time, that the proper remedy should be applied."

Mr. Ryan then states the memorandum of the North-West Council of 1878, and the Land Act of 1879, and adds:

"But nothing further has yet been done in the premises. In a letter which I have lately received from a gentleman in a high position in the Territories, it is written: 'For what reasons the Government has not, so far, done anything in the premises, is a mystery to me. The half-breeds feel that they are slighted, and the feeling of discontent is daily growing amongst them.'"

This letter derives a great portion of its significance from the fact that it was published at the time and became the property of the Government as well as the property of the public. At this time the Deputy Minister of the Interior, Mr. Burgess, was in the North-West, and upon his return, when suffering very severely, I believe, from an unfortunate accident, he was interviewed; but I have reason to believe that, according to his memory, the report of the interview is not correctly stated, and therefore I do not trouble the House with it. I would not refer to it at all, except for the fact that it was the foundation of action by the North-West Council. On 21st July, 1884, the North-West Council, being in session, and having before them the report of the interview with Mr. Burgess, passed a resolution, which is not brought down, but of which I find a copy in one of the newspapers, and have translated it. It was proposed by Mr. Macdowall, representative of Lorne district, comprising the disturbed district, and seconded by Mr. Jackson, of the Qu'Appelle district, which contains numerous half-breed letters:

"That this council regret the expressions attributed to the Deputy Minister of the Interior, in an interview with a reporter of the *Manitoba Free Press*, published 17th July, 1884, respecting the half-breed claims. In the absence of more definite information upon this subject, this council desires that it should be understood, notwithstanding that it recognises absolutely the justice of the claims of the Métis of these Territories, so far as concerns the grants of land which they demand,

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that the question of the claims of the half-breeds in these Territories be referred for disposition to the Executive."

You will observe, Mr. Speaker, that there was action based upon, and very naturally based upon, the statement attributed to Mr. Burgess. I find, although the Government has not thought fit to bring down that resolution, that the Government replied to it, for I find the following in the *Moose Jaw News*, 30th July:—

"His Honor stated to the council that he had a telegram from Sir John A. Macdonald, to the effect that the Minister of the Interior, on his return from Europe will take into his serious consideration the questions relating to the half-breeds in the North-West Territory."

However, the Government has not thought it worth while to bring down the telegram from Mr. Dewdney, or the response from the First Minister, nor have they brought down any results of that serious consideration which was so promised earlier, at any rate, than the year 1885. On the 27th July, 1884, Mr. Crozier, Superintendent of Police, writes to the Government from Battleford, as follows:—

"I have the honor to inform you that Riel has held meetings at both Prince Albert and Duck Lake. I am informed that his meeting at the first named place was an open one; some little difficulty took place, but was promptly put down."

"At Duck Lake his audience was composed of French half-breeds and Indians. He is said, though I have not official information to that effect, to have told the Indians that they had 'rights' as well as the 'half-breeds,' and that he wished to be the means of having them redressed."

"I am also informed that he expressed a wish to confer with the Indian chiefs. I have already reported."

But I wish to say that that report has not been brought down—

"that I believe the Indians sympathise with the half-breeds, nor could anything else be expected, being close blood relations and speaking the same language."

"What may be the result of the half-breed agitation, or what effect it may have upon the Indians, of course I cannot foretell. I before said."

But the letter in which he said so has not been brought down—

"I before said, and still think, precautionary measures should be taken, such measures as will not only prevent turbulent spirits carrying their schemes to an extreme, but prevent both Indians and half-breeds even making an attempt to resist authority or organise for illegal purposes, for these constant 'excitements' must have a most injurious effect upon the country, and among those effects, not the least, a sense of insecurity among settlers."

"I believe now that Big Bear and his followers would have been upon their reserve but for the emissaries of Riel, who, it is said, invited him to meet that person at Duck Lake."

"Certain it is he has gone there, and that after having promised, and received provisions, to go to Fort Pitt, he had proceeded with the camp some distance on the road, but they turned back after hearing from Riel."

"There are very many rumors about as to what Riel has said to the Indians, that, if true, are intending to cause discontent among them as to their present condition."

On the 29th of July, 1884, the correspondent of *Le Manitoba* wrote a letter from Prince Albert, which was published the following month, to this effect:

"The week which has just finished has been very quiet, following always the old proverb: The calm after the storm. The *Times* of Prince Albert, seeing its ill success in its efforts to prejudice the English public opinion against Riel, has lowered its flag and it is holding itself silent. Meanwhile, the national movement continues its progress quietly and peaceably. Committees are being formed in the different parishes of the district, and each one is preparing a list of their grievances, which will be submitted at a general meeting of these committees, and upon which will be based the memorial which will be sent to the Government. The *Herald*, of Battleford, of the 12th July, seems to endeavor to ridicule these peaceable proceedings of the whole population, who desire to have their rights recognised, because Riel is there. It says, for example, that 'if Riel wants to establish a Government in the Saskatchewan, he will find, in his immediate neighborhood, many of his old partisans, and, no doubt, his former secretary, Louis Schmidt, will resign with pleasure his office of assistant clerk at the Land Office, at Prince Albert, to offer his services to his country and to his old master.'"

"That deserves a word of answer. First, Mr. Riel has not, so far as I am aware, the intention of forming a Government on the Saskatchewan; but should he desire to do so, you would see coming to act as his secretary, not Mr. Schmidt, but a crowd of aspirants of the school of