

the money or lands. This alarmed them, and strong remonstrances were sent home. For a while the matter was in abeyance, and finally the fiat went forth:—"The Chief Factors, Chief Traders, and Officers of the Hudson Bay Company, were to have no share in either money or Lands!" and from *that* moment commenced the *History of the Red River Rebellion*.

The first news of the transfer of the country to Canada was hailed with universal joy by all classes of the population of Red River. French, as well as English, looked upon it as the consummation of the hopes and wishes of years. Petition after petition had been sent, praying for escape from Hudson Bay servitude and for annexation to Canada, and on these petitions may still be found the names of John Bruce, that of the Father of Louis Riel and of many others among the French people, and there is no doubt but that for the unfortunate state of feeling existing among the Hudson Bay Company's officers, the advent of Governor McDougall would have been hailed with the greatest demonstrations of joy.

At this juncture (spring of 1869) Chief Factor and Acting Governor Mactavish returned from his mission to England, which had for its object the securing to the officers in the country a share of the purchase money; he had failed in this, and came back by way of Ottawa. There he had interviews with the ministers, and told them that the Company were in a position to surrender the country peaceably, as was stipulated in their agreement. On being directly questioned as to the necessity of sending a detachment of the Royal Canadian Rifles, then available, he stated that there was not the slightest necessity, and repeated his assurance that the country would be transferred in peace. That this assurance was to cause serious trouble to Canada and afford great aid to the promoters of the rebellion, we will soon see; and taken in connection with the disappointment felt by Sir Mactavish and the company generally, at his not having received the offer from the Canadian Governor or Lt.-Governor of the Province, will go far in support of the prevailing belief in Manitoba, that *Riel and his followers were simply the Agents of the Hudson Bay Company*.

Of course this belief involves a very serious charge against the resident Hudson Bay officers, whose duty it was to see the country peaceably transferred, and especially against Governor Mactavish, the Chief of these officers, who in discouraging the wish of the Canadian Government to send up troops, had incurred additional responsibility. It will be well then in the consideration of this