

Antoine Ferguson says: "I believe that Riel was insane during the rebellion."

Neil Jervais says: "I thought sometimes that he was not quite sane during the troubles."

Maxime Colin says: "He acted sometimes as if he had wished to be taken for an insane man."

John Sanserequet says: "During the trouble I thought that Riel was not quite sane."

Cyrille Lafond says: "I thought at certain moments during the trouble that Riel was not quite sane."

Charles Lavallee, Sr., says: "I had known Riel in Manitoba, and I thought he was not quite the same man during the troubles."

Pierre Vandal says: "I have said sometimes during the trouble that Riel seemed not quite sane."

Isadore Lafontaine says: "I thought at certain moments that Riel was not speaking like a sane man."

It is true a number of half-breeds also stated that they thought Riel was not insane. It is to be remembered, however, that their pride revolted against the idea of being influenced by an insane man. At the same time, it is not to be forgotten that these ignorant men may never have seen an insane man, and of necessity must have had hazy ideas of what insanity really meant. The more masked and subtle forms of it would be beyond their ken. This being the case positive statements like the above have more than ordinary value.

On July 28, 1885, the writer made a first visit to Riel in the prison at Regina, Northwest Territory. He was found to be a stoutly built man and of splendid physique. He was in good health, about forty-two years of age. He had a swarthy complexion and black eyes of great brilliancy, restless and searching. His movements were nervous, energetic and expressive as are so characteristic of the French. This was evidently a normal condition and not from apprehension as to his fate. He was very talkative, and his egotism made itself manifest, not only in his movements, but also in his expressed pleasure in being the central figure of a State trial, which was likely to become historic. The writer stated to him that his lawyers were trying to save his life by proving that he had been insane. At this statement he got very much excited, and paced up and down his cell like a chained animal until his irons rattled, saying with great vehemence and gesticulation, "My lawyers do wrong to try to prove I am insane."