

speech upon this subject at an early period of the Session, when he himself described the condition of the Indian population, and their mental mood and attitude at that time. Just before this time, the Deputy Minister of the Department was at Calgary, I observe, on his return from the mountains, and on the same day on which he was there a telegram reached that very point showing the state of affairs. In a word, I may say, that every storm drum was up at that time, that everything indicated, both from the point of view of the half-breeds and of the Indians, that whatever apathy may have existed before, whatever neglect may have existed before, whatever indifference had existed before, were causes for redoubled energy, for redoubled promptness, for enhanced liberality of treatment, in order to the avoidance of the crisis due to that more formidable agitation which was soon to supervene. Well, Sir, in the month of June, 1884, a delegation consisting of Messrs. Isbister, Dumont, Ouillet and Dumas, were appointed by a committee, and several resolutions were passed by the meeting which appointed that committee; but I have not been able to find those resolutions, so that I am not able to present them to the House as I would have desired. The delegates walked 700 miles into Montana to meet Riel, and they found him. They presented their papers to him, and they obtained from him a reply. He says:

"GENTLEMEN:—You have travelled more than 700 miles from the Saskatchewan country across the international line to make me a visit. The communities in the midst of which you live have sent you as their delegates to ask my advice on various difficulties which have rendered the British North-West unhappy under the administration of the Ottawa Government. Moreover, you invite me to go and stay amongst you, your hope being that I, for one, could help to better, in some respects, your condition. Cordial and pressing is your invitation; you want me and my family to accompany you; I am at liberty to excuse myself and say no; yet you are waiting for me; so that I have only to get ready, and your letters of delegation assure me that a friendly welcome awaits me in the midst of those who sent you.

"Gentlemen, your personal visit does me honor and causes great pleasure; but on account of its representative character your coming to me has the appearance of a remarkable circumstance which I record as one of the gratifications of my life—an event which my family will remember, and I pray to God that my assistance will prove so successful to you as to render this event a blessing amongst the many blessings of this, my 40th year. To be frank is the shortest. I doubt whether my advice given to you on this soil concerning affairs in Canadian territories, could cross the border and retain any influence. But here is another view of the matter: I am entitled, according to the 31st and 32nd clauses of the Manitoba Treaty, to land, of which the Canadian Government have directly or indirectly deprived me, and my claim to which is valid notwithstanding the fact that I have become an American citizen. Considering, then, that my interests are identical with yours, I accept your very kind invitation, and will go and spend some months amongst you, in the hope that by petitioning the Government we will obtain the redress of all our grievances.

"Montana has a population of which the native half-breed element constitutes a considerable portion, and if we include those white men who, through being connected by marriage, or in other ways, have a personal interest in their welfare, I believe that this element is a pretty strong one. I am just getting acquainted with them, and I am one of those who would like to unite and direct its vote for the furtherance of their best interests; moreover, I have made friends and acquaintances amongst whom I like to live. I go with you, but I come back in September.

"I have the honor to be, gentlemen delegates,
Your humble servant,

"LOUIS RIEL."

And he accompanied the delegates to the Saskatchewan. There is a correspondence of the influential French paper of the North-West, *Le Manitoba*, which I believe is under the proprietorship of M. de la Rivière, a member of the Manitoba Government, I think, and with which it is supposed my hon. friend opposite, the member for Provencher, sometimes had—perhaps I may say sometimes has—a little to do with. *Le Manitoba* thus announced the arrival of Riel:

"I learned yesterday that Mr. Louis Riel was to go to-day to St. Laurent. You are aware, perhaps, that after the meetings of this spring, a delegation of the English and French Metis departed to visit the ex-President of the Provisional Government of Red River, then in Montana, to inform him of the needs of those of his fellow half-breeds—because he is a Metis—and beg him to come among them. It appears that the delegation has succeeded, at least to this degree; it is said that Mr. Riel is

coming with his family. O, if he would only have the happy idea to remain permanently amongst us! That man only can do good to his fellow countrymen, and he is the only one who can unite them all on any question. His name is great among the Metis, English or French; and there is no doubt that his influence, if well directed, will be of immense advantage to them. Yesterday the people were to assemble in crowds to meet him."

Then, on 10th July, the correspondent writes in the same paper:

"The members of the committee forming the delegation sent to Mr. Riel, and appointed in the month of May last, had a meeting on the 8th inst. at Chas. Nolin's, to receive the report of this delegation. Herewith is the report that the delegates presented to the committee, which was read by the secretary; and also the answer from Mr. Riel:

"To Messrs. the members of the committee in charge of the seven resolutions adopted by the population of the Saskatchewan.

"WM. CROMARTIE, *President.*
"LOUIS SCHMIDT, *Secretary.*"

A number of statements are then made, which are immaterial, and the report goes on to say:

"After having made known to him the object of our mission, we presented to him our credentials and the six resolutions that we were to consider together, and also the document in which, in the name of the public, you invited him to come to the North-West. We asked him to come with us, if he could, and help us. This interview took place on the 4th of June. Mr. Riel read our papers and asked twenty-four hours to consider and give us an answer.

"The humble condition of his lodging made us think of the numerous occasions he had of becoming rich at the time he had the power in his hands. We recalled his firm attitude in the midst of thousands of dangers as meriting the confidence of his fellow countrymen. We knew what he had done for Manitoba and the North-West, and the little advantages he had personally received from the same. And returning from this long journey of nearly 1,400 miles, we feel twice as much confidence in that man whom we have been visiting in a foreign land. * *

"Mr. Riel comes here to help us, without any pretension. He hopes that before long the people of the North-West will be perfectly united, and that the Government will very soon do justice to all.

"The speeches of Mr. Riel inspire us with the greatest confidence, because his instructions are to help us; but while helping us he does not want, in the slightest degree, to create needless difficulties to the Government.

"We have the honor to be, gentlemen, your most humble servants and delegates,

"GABRIEL DUMONT,
"JAMES ISBISTER,
"MOISE OUILLETTE,
"MICHEL DUMAS."

The correspondent goes on to give the answer of Louis Riel, which I have already read. This same influential newspaper, on 17th of July, wrote, editorially, upon the North-West, in these words:

"For several months we have been receiving letters from the North-West which inform us of the agitation that is going on there.

"When the Act creating the Province of Manitoba was introduced in Ottawa, in 1870, the Federal Government, after long conference with the Rev. Father Ritchot, Judge Black and Mr. Scott, the three delegates of the colony of Assiniboia, had inserted in that measure some just and equitable provisions guaranteeing to the inhabitants of the colony the confirmation of the titles of the lands possessed by them up to 15th July, 1870. Another clause of the same Act gave a land grant of 1,400,000 acres to the half-breed children for the extinction of their rights as first proprietors of the country. Later on, by another Act, each head of a family received a land grant of 160 acres for the extinction of the same right. But all these provisions were made only in favor of the half-breeds living, at the date of the 15th July, 1870, on the territory comprised in the limits of the Province then created, and those of the half-breeds who were then and are still in the North-West never could participate in any manner in that act of justice on the part of the Federal Government."

The article proceeds to quote the resolution of the North-West Council of 1878, and the Act of Parliament of 1883, and it goes on to say:

"The great difficulty that the half-breeds meet with is, first, the obtaining a survey of their lands according to the limits and actual shape of those lands, the delay in the ratification of their titles, and the quasi refusal to give them the grant asked for the extinction of their Indian rights. These are to-day the causes of all the discontent. Several petitions have been sent to Ottawa; even delegates have been sent to the capital, at great expense, and yet without result. Is there a population in any of the other Provinces who would not have created a regular revolution if they had been subjected to such treatment? Certainly not.

"To-day meetings are called from all parts; the settlers who, though not being half-breeds, have the interests of the latter at heart, join with