

the writings and speeches made now and then, and certain of the acts of that unfortunate man, to know how gifted he was intellectually. My French-speaking colleagues in this House have wondered more than once who could be the writer of those letters which were sent to the newspapers in Canada, and which bore the name "Marguerite Riel." To us in the Province of Manitoba, it was no wonder this woman wrote those letters, and they were marked by elegance of language as well as purity of expression and sentiment. Now, Sir, in that family, devotion also seemed to be hereditary. In the winter of 1871, when the Canadian troops were in the barracks of Fort Garry, the hospital there contained some of the sick soldiers. The Sisters of Charity of St. Boniface had obtained from the military authorities the privilege of visiting these sick soldiers. One morning two nuns crossed to the hospital on the ice, and those two sisters were seen a few minutes afterwards going through the hospital from one bed to another, offering consolation to the soldiers, and otherwise kindly attending to them. One of them was the sister of Louis Riel. She was a Sister of Charity, and there was in her heart enough of devotion and Christianity—she herself being the sister of the doomed man—to go and offer her services to the sick soldiers who were sent to Fort Garry in 1870. Having said so much as to the population I have the honor of representing in this House, I will say that, most unfortunately, these people have been treated with a certain amount of neglect. In fact, Sir, if at this moment we remember how the Indians are treated, I believe I may say, with a certain amount of propriety, that the half-breeds have been treated worse than the Indians, although the Manitoba Act was, in the eyes of those people, a treaty to the same intent and purpose as the Indians look on their treaties with this Government. Now, Sir, when I state that they have been treated with neglect, I must add forsooth that they never were treated with more neglect than by the Administration which preceded this one. It is a fact in history that, to use the words uttered by the right hon. leader of the Government, there was a blank in the history of the Metis between 1873 and 1878. They were ignored; their nationality and their distinct rights were perfectly denied and set aside as having no right to exist. They were to be treated either as white men or as Indians. The object of what I have stated so far is to show that these men had certain rights by themselves, due to their origin and their condition of existence in those territories. The Manitoba Act only acknowledged the rights of the half-breeds who