

regarded as flattery. Mr. Street told me himself that the Half-breeds did not know how to deceive. So thoroughly honest were they that but one case out of the entire number dealt with sought to secure what he was not justly entitled to. In all cases where Half-breeds participated in the rebellion, they frankly acknowledged it to the commissioners without questioning, and resignedly submitted to the consequences, which meant exclusion from any share in the advantages accorded to the loyal ones. This testimony from gentlemen, who, had they any leaning, it would likely be in a direction favourable to the Government, might also be regarded as additional evidence that the Half-breeds would not rebel unless they had some substantial reason for so doing.

Eternal vigilance is said to be the price of liberty; but the Half-breeds, unrepresented as they were in any representative institution of the country, had no means of watching their own interests. They had no one to advocate their rights, and could only take what was given them. Thus they were at a disadvantage under which no other race, save the Redskin who had the treaty to fall back upon, laboured. In going thus far to justify their cause, I should not like to be understood as seeking to justify the extreme means they resorted to in order to secure redress.

A British subject who understands the Constitution knows that recourse can be had to the Crown, but every allowance should be made for the poor deluded Half-breeds who knew nothing about the Constitution, and who, if left alone, would never seek to inform themselves as to its provisions. I cannot help thinking, sometimes, that in a free country like Canada a race if it chooses has a right to eschew civilization, and, so long as it does not interfere with the laws of the land, live in its own unique manner.

Before discussing the causes which led up to the outbreak, mention should be made of the gallantry displayed by a race hitherto regarded as lacking in courage and valour. In an unequal fight maintained against troops well armed and fully munitioned, and being almost ten times as numerous, the Half-breeds displayed a bravery that would have gratified Wellington and a tact that could not fail to please the Great Napoleon.

Having, as I deem, fully dealt with the causes which led to the rebellion, I will now refer to the results—both of an immediate and prospective character. The first result, therefore, was, as indicated previously, a partial redress of grievances complained of; but that redress came so late that ruin and disaster was first spread in the once prosperous localities of Batoche, St. Catharines and Duck Lake. It came so late that the best Half-breed settlements in the Prince Albert district were broken up, and in all likelihood will never be renewed, for with characteristic superstition and fear of the legislative power of the whites, the poor Métis may either desert the country altogether, or take another stride farther west and settle in the Peace River country, where they can safely count on being unmolested for a decade or two. Although scrip was scattered among the Half-breeds with liberality it will afford but a temporary relief. The rebellion has been disastrous to them. Their homes have been pillaged, their effects, in the majority of cases, carried away; they have no crops this year, and ruin and starvation stare them in the face. True, the Government, through the Mounted Police and one or two other mediums, are making a feeble attempt to relieve immediate distress, but if continued in the form of charity it must be at the expense of the self-respect of the Métis, and that sunk they have little incentive for which to work. Some public work begun by the Government in the disaffected district, to afford employment, and thereby the means of subsistence to the Half-breeds has been suggested, but it is doubtful if even that would effect the desired result, for the Métis are very proud, and might decline, if they knew it, to work for a Government which they consider has treated them so badly.

When the rebellion first broke out a cry of alarm was sent up that it would check immigration, and that thereby the prospects of the country would be once more marred. Citizens looked to the relief that would be afforded by the money brought into the country by immigrants, and when they saw the cup dashed from their lips they were loud in their lamentations. But what was regarded as a disaster proved to be a blessing in disguise, regarded in the light of temporary financial relief. The millions that were squandered in supplies and transport, the hosts of old time-servers who received lucrative positions, and the not less number of sharks who were afforded an opportunity of glutting themselves with treasure out of the public trough, was indeed a "shower of blessings" for which this country has reason to be thankful, no matter what the cost may be to the Dominion at large. Temporary relief was an important desideratum to the citizens here, and a degree a thousand per cent. greater than would have been afforded by the immigration that we might have secured was obtained through the rebellion. Farmers readily disposed of hay and oats at a good figure, and with a team earned ten dollars a day. Contractors made money rapidly, store-keepers sold their goods, railway companies had a harvest, freighters got their own figures, and thus the money was scattered broadcast over the land. Viewed as an immediate result this was a most important one to the people of this country. Judging from the foreign inquiries made of the Government and land companies for land, it is quite evident that the advertisement given the North-West abroad through the medium of the rebellion has done the country more good in bringing it prominently before foreign powers than a hundred immigration agents could do in as many years. As the Red River Rebellion did so much in opening up the country so the Rebellion of 1885 will have a similar effect. It has been said that an important result will be the building up of a national sentiment. To those who believe in the future of Canada under the present Confederation system such a contention may have considerable force, but to Manitobans (and there are a great many who think so) who perceive that the future of this country is linked by nature to the future of the neighbouring Republic the contention carries little weight indeed.

There are scores of minor consequences which must follow such an event as a rebellion, such as the effect upon the Indians, the political and social results, etc.; but it will be to every Canadian a source of congratulation that a most searching inquiry into the administration of affairs in the North-West must of necessity follow in order that the root of the evil will be got at and the disease cured. It is very unfortunate for Sir John Macdonald and his Government that they have not been more judicious in the selection of officers who have been administering the policy of the Government in this country for years past, and to whose culpable negligence and cupidity the rebellion is doubtless due. It surely must have been that Sir John was deceived in his men here, or was too much absorbed with other matters of state to attend to the complaints that are sure to have poured into the Government from the Territories, for he is certainly possessed of sufficient tact to avert such a disaster had he known positively it was pending. Perhaps it was that he could not trust his agents here, and so disregarded the warnings which many of them assert they sent to Ottawa. Be this as it may, every Nor'-wester sincerely hopes that the inquiry which must be made will result in the establishment of a policy under which the North-West will be accorded fair play, and will be allowed the privileges in regard to railways and other matters she must enjoy before she can attain to her just degree of development.

The last, and to my mind the most important, consequence which must follow will be the final opening up and complete development of this vast heritage of man, the capabilities and resources of which are but dimly comprehended by even the best-informed in regard to the country. Crazy as Louis Riel appeared when he addressed the Court at Regina, urging reasons why sentence should not be passed upon him, he struck a key-note when he said that the people of the earth must soon recognize and occupy the North-West. It was a heritage provided by Providence for the increasing millions and must soon be taken up. The attention of foreign powers directed to the country by the recent war within its borders will be riveted here, investigation will follow, and suddenly Canadians will awaken to the fact that they have within their confines a territory vast, fertile and full of resource.

One word more: In his speech at Regina Louis Riel said that his mission here was to bring about "practical results." It matters little now whether the misguided and ambitious rebel be hanged or not; but the people of Canada will yet acknowledge that that speech of his was prophetic, and that "practical results" indeed were brought about by the poor Half-breed who was born within the sound of the chimes of St. Boniface—Louis Riel.

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SMALL-POX IN MONTREAL.

MONTREAL, August 29.

MONTREAL is suffering very severely from small-pox. Her death-rate has doubled in consequence of the epidemic, her commerce is seriously impaired, and the opening of her schools is postponed. The preventability of it all makes the most grievous feature of the case. A Pullman-car porter arrives in the city stricken with small-pox, he is placed in an open ward in an hospital with other patients, and of course the disease spreads disastrously. But why, it may be asked, did not general vaccination hold the small-pox in check, as in other cities of the civilized world? More than a sentence will be needed for an answer.

Our French Canadian population has a prejudice against vaccination for two reasons. In past epidemics there have been dreadful cases of disease communicated through impure vaccine; and as recently as three months ago there have been more instances of the kind. These cases have been fastened upon by some of our physicians, who either disregard the immense balance of evidence in favour of vaccination, or who look upon it when compulsory as a breach of individual rights. A much more active reason than this, however, exists. The Roman Catholic priests regard small-pox as a punishment for spiritual offences, against which material means of protection would be wrong,—nay impious. They do not openly oppose vaccination, but they do not use their vast power to promote it. Consequently the epidemic has slain but few victims outside their fold. Of these the great majority have been infants and young children, that, duly baptized, have, without doubt, passed to celestial bliss. And among a fecund race, with whom poverty is the rule, grief at the death of offspring soon passes into resignation.

As usual in epidemics, the death-rate from diseases other than that specially prevalent, has fallen off, especially among children under five. A word here as to the ordinary death-rate of Montreal, which is high. That death-rate parallels an uncommonly high birth-rate, and is swollen by the returns from the Foundling Hospital of the Gray Nunnery. That institution is a striking example of the perversion of benevolence when unguided by wisdom. To its wicket are brought every week ten to twenty infants, from not only the city, but the surrounding country as far as Quebec and Ottawa. Even Great Britain has sent in its quota. Frequently born without the physician's care, transmitted in valises and boxes, the wretched infants require the instant application of the baptismal touch lest their frail bodies be left behind by unregenerated souls. Can philanthropy and religion lift the suspicion of murder from all this?

How sincerely the small-pox epidemic is regarded by the Roman Catholic Church as a scourge not to be fought with carnal weapons is clear from the Bishop's order that prayers be offered to St. Roch, the saint who is believed to be specially charged with the relief of epidemics. To a theocratic explanation of the disease the French-Canadian is apt to join an indifference to it, as an infliction which is truly enough painful, but about as