

"2. That the above-named parties are resident in the parish of St. Louis de Langevin.

"And I make this solemn declaration, &c.

"Declared before me at Prince Albert, in the North-West Territories, this 16th day of February, A.D. 1886.

"ARTHUR S. SIRON,
"Notary Public."

"CHARLES E. BOUCHER.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). Is that document an affidavit, or is it only attested?

Mr. LAURIER. This latter is an affidavit.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). The document itself is not sworn to.

Mr. LAURIER. No, it is not. The hon. gentleman has also referred to the correspondent of the *Globe*. The correspondent of the *Globe* simply corroborates what is stated in those affidavits, and gives simply the particulars taken by the officer when he procured this declaration. It may be interesting to refer to the interview which took place between the *Globe* correspondent and William Bremner, a Scotch half-breed.

"You are on the lands of this Prince Albert Colonisation Company, I believe?

"Indeed I hardly know whose land I am on," was the reply. "One tells us that we are on the lands of that company, another comes along and says we are not. We are unable to read, and, with the exception two or three, unable to understand English. Of the outside world we know little or nothing. Newspapers and books are no use to us, and few strangers ever visit this place."

"One of your visitors was a Mr. Pearce?

"Yes. He was here last December, I think. He was accompanied by Duck, land agent, and a few others. He took me a paper to sign.

"Did that paper ask you to say you knew nothing of the Prince Albert Colonisation Society prior to Pearce's visit?

"Yes.

"You are quite sure?

"I am.

"Did you understand what was read to you from that paper?

"Some I did and some I did not.

"Why did you sign what you could not read or understand?

"I was told our signing it would do us good, and I was, to tell you the truth, afraid if I did not sign it, it would be worse for me. What can we do against the Government? Nothing."

Now, this is the true reason why those affidavits were signed. It is manifest that those people had heard of the company. The existence of that company was well known in the North-West Territory, and the moment it was known, these people, having petitioned so long for their patents and not obtaining them, they were uneasy, and so it may have been a cause, as I believe it was a cause, of the late uprising. I shall not say any more on this subject at the present moment. I regret that it did not come up earlier. I know that the hon. gentleman who moved the resolution has waited day after day for the production of the papers which were promised, and which, although we have reached the closing hours of the Session, have not come down.

Mr. AMYOT. I do not intend to make a speech, but I think it is my duty as well as my right to explain the vote which I intend to give. I cannot agree with all that has been said on this side with regard to this question. I do not think the hon. member for Quebec East went far enough when he spoke in favor of the half-breeds, and I think the mover of the resolution has gone too far in proposing the resolution. When in 1867 the question came up about bringing the North-West into the Confederation there was a petition presented by both Houses to Her Majesty the Queen, and in that petition it was said:

"That in the event of Your Majesty's Government agreeing to transfer to Canada the jurisdiction and control over the said region, the Government and Parliament of Canada will be ready to provide that the legal rights of any corporation, company or individual within the same shall be respected, and placed under the protection of courts of competent jurisdiction.

"And furthermore that, upon the transference of the Territories in question to the Canadian Government, the claims of the Indian tribes to compensation for lands required for purposes of settlement will be considered and settled in conformity with the equitable principles which have uniformly governed the British Crown in its dealings with the aborigines."

Mr. LAURIER.

Then there was a resolution, signed by Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir George E. Cartier and the Hon. Wm. Macdougall, in 1869, in which it was said:

"It is understood that any claims of Indians to compensation for lands required for purposes of settlement shall be disposed of by the Canadian Government, in communication with the Imperial Government, and that the company shall be relieved of all responsibility in respect to them."

At a meeting of the delegates it was furthermore resolved:

"That upon the transference of the Territories in question to the Canadian Government, it will be the duty of the Government to make adequate provisions for the protection of the Indian tribes whose interests and well-being are involved in the transfer."

In 1869, this Address to the Queen was signed both by the Speaker of the House of Commons and the Speaker of the Senate:

"That upon the transference of the Territories in question to the Canadian Government, it will be our duty to make adequate provision for the protection of the Indian tribes whose interests and well-being are involved in the transfer, and we authorise and empower the Governor in Council to arrange any details that may be necessary to carry out the terms and conditions of the above agreement."

Now, the Act of Council that was passed, the deed of surrender, contained those very words. So it was well agreed, here and in England, that it would be the duty of the Canadian Government to afford the Indian tribes every possible protection. When the North-West Territories were brought into the Confederation, the Government of the day, and all the Governments since, have seemed to forget the duties they owed to the half-breeds; and I cannot approve of the acts of this Government more than I can of the acts of the preceding Government in that respect. I do not speak of the Indians now, because the case of the Indians has been discussed already; I limit my remarks to the half-breeds. We say the half-breeds are entitled to their homesteads and their pre-emption, and if they are not satisfied with them, they may look for something else. I say that is not only not fair or legal, but the Government knew it; and when they gave them scrip it was a mere farce. It was simply giving away the lands of the North-West for nothing to speculators from other countries under the pretext of giving the half-breeds their rights. I want no other proof of that than what was said in this honorable House last Session. If you take the *Hansard* of the 6th of July, you will find in the mouth of the hon. leader of this House these words:

"The recommendation of Archbishop Taché was that the title should be kept away from the half-breeds for three generations. The recommendation of the council was that it should be kept away for ten years. What was the policy of the Government? Go, take your 160 acres; take your pre-emption for 160 acres more, and you shall stand as well as a white man, and shall get your patent after three years, no matter what the archbishop or the North-West Council have told us. We, the Government of the Dominion of Canada, have more confidence in the half-breeds even than their own archbishop and their own council. We say: We give you the land; occupy it, cultivate it, live on it, be happy on it, and at the end of three years you will get 160 acres, and you will stand free and independent, a freeholder, a yeoman, a free man in the North-West. You shall not be subject to this paternal Government which has been urged upon you by your own friends in the North-West."

Taking away from the half-breeds their paternal Government; taking away from them the right to have large reserves on which they might have lived as a single family; taking away from them the right which we do not refuse to any man, perhaps not even to a Chinaman, of 160 acres of land; exposing them to the aggressions of surveyors who wanted to survey over their property, and to the aggressions of colonisation societies; exposing them to the insults which they have constantly received from white people; taking away from them their very means of living, without the advantages of the civilisation and the education we have, and casting them upon the open prairie—I say this is not the meaning of the agreement which said that we would give them protection and full compensation. I said the Government knew it; and to show that, I have only to quote further, on the next page: