

knew that Canada had paid to the Hudson's Bay Company £300,000, for their rights in that country.

I explained to them that the Imperial Parliament had authorized the transfer of the North-West Territories to Canada, and that the Canadian Parliament and the Hudson's Bay Company had agreed upon the terms of transfer. I insisted that the Government, when established by the issuing of the proclamation to that effect, would represent the Crown of England and the Government of Canada, but that Canada only being substituted to the rights of the Crown and the Company, could not and would not interfere with the religious or private rights of citizens. I added also that many members of the New Council would be taken from amongst the population of this country, so as to represent as faithfully as possible all the various interests of the people, and that the policy of the Canadian Government could be ascertained by their general dealings with other Provinces, and by the speeches of ministers on this very question. The people of Canada would only be too glad to be relieved of a portion of their responsibility, by granting to those people free political institutions and self government as soon as practicable.

They immediately seemed to see the matter in quite another light, but they uniformly answered that it was too late, and that the insurrectionary movement had taken such proportions as to prevent any peaceful settlement at present. I was told in the meantime that a new Government was already organized, that a new constitution had been drafted, that elections had taken place, and that they were in negotiation with the English and Protestant half-breeds, to arrange all matters relating to languages, nationality or religion. The same committee, I was told, had also to decide what they would do in relation to my mission.

The general complaint of those men, as far as I could ascertain, was, that they had not been consulted on the new political changes about to take place. They said they tolerated the Government of the Company from the mere fact of its existence, and because in reality the charges were so light that they had no reason to ask for a change, though for many years they had agitated the question of electing their representatives in the Council of Assiniboine, and now they were resolved to take advantage of the recent changes to realize that desire. They said, moreover, that they had been greatly abused by a few people, looked upon as representing the views of the Canadian Government, and that they had been led to fear that great danger would arise to them from the establishment of the new contemplated Government. Under those circumstances they decided to prevent at once any possibility of establishing that new form of Government, by not allowing the newly appointed Governor to come into the country.

About four (4) o'clock p.m., I was introduced to the President of the so-called special committee of the half-breeds, who began by asking me in what capacity I was there. I explained what was your mission and my own. When he told me that as the newly appointed chief of the half-breeds he could not acknowledge the validity of any proceedings of the Canadian Government towards them, nor our appointment. Nevertheless, if the Canadian Government was willing to do it, they were ready to open negotiations with them, or with any person vested with full powers, in view of settling the terms of their coming into the Dominion of Canada.

I was told, moreover, that they would only receive such persons as representatives of the Canadian Government as they approved of for the purpose of negotiation, and that certain persons would be peremptorily objected to. Immediately after that interview, which lasted about twenty minutes, I was told I must leave at once for the Fort at Pembina. I heard afterwards that the crowd had been calling for me for two hours, and that they were very anxious to see me away. I left with a guard of thirteen armed men on horseback. Seven of them left next morning, and six came along with me as far as Fort Pembina, where I arrived the second day of November, at six o'clock p.m.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

J. A. N. PROVENCHER.