

that the military necessities of our position rendered it impossible for us to have brought them up large presents, but that whatever it was settled by the Government of Canada they were to receive should be given to them next year. There was the usual talk about loyalty to the Great Mother, and of their desire to live on good terms with their white brothers. They said that the passage of so many boats through their waters had frightened their fish, so that but little was now to be had; and complained of our men having at many places thrown empty barrels into the rivers, which scared the pike and sturgeon, alleging that even the grease from these barrels had been generally destructive to fish of all sorts. Some one had put this idea into their heads, and there was no eradicating it.

The costumes of these people were very grotesque, and all the warriors painted their faces most fantastically with red, yellow, or green. A fine tall fellow had one side of his face painted black and the other red, his coat being also of two colors similarly divided. All wore a blanket wrapped round their bodies, which gave them the appearance of height.

Fort Francis, or rather the ground about it, has a sacred repute with them; and here take place annually their medicine ceremonies, a sort of secret orgie, beginning with eating the flesh of dogs—white ones if they are to be had—and ending by initiating those anxious for instruction into various mysteries, and the use of many herbs.

Previous to leaving Prince Arthur's Landing, Colonel Wolseley had sent a proclamation into the Red River Settlement, informing the people of the objects of the Expedition, and calling upon all loyal men to assist him in carrying them out. Copies of it were sent to the Protestant and Roman Catholic bishops, also to the Governor of the Hudson Bay Company at Fort Garry, who were at the same time requested by letter to take measures for pushing on the road to the Lake of the Woods, already partially made. It was never anticipated that this road could be completed in time for us to use it, even should there be no hostilities; but it was considered advisable to impress Riel with the idea that we intended advancing by that route, so that in case he was bent upon fighting, he would frame all his calculations upon a wrong basis, and make his preparations along it for our reception. This ruse was successful; for we learned at Fort Francis that he had armed men on the look-out in the neighbourhood of where he thought we should disembark on the shores of the Lake of the Woods. A loyal half-breed of undoubted character had been despatched early in June from Prince Arthur's Landing for the purpose of going into the Red River Settlement by the Lake of the Woods road, and to obtain reliable information as to the state of affairs there up to the latest possible date that he could remain, compatible with his meeting Colonel Wolseley at Fort Francis on the 31st July. This service was faithfully performed. He had left his home in the Indian settlement on the lower Red River on the 20th July, bringing letters for that officer from the Protestant bishop and others, containing information as to the supplies of fresh beef and flour we could calculate upon obtaining at Fort Garry, and interesting but wholly untrue accounts of how things stood there. It was essential that the commander of the expedition should have the latest and most reliable information as to the rebel movements and Riel's intentions, before leaving Fort Francis; for it was necessary to decide upon the final plan of operations

there, as beyond that place we should be, one might say, in rebel territory, or at least where it would always be possible to attack us. The scanty intelligence supplied by the Canadian Ministry was not to be relied upon, as it came chiefly from disloyal sources, and had always percolated through rebel sympathising channels before it reached us. Under any circumstances it is difficult for a civilian to collect or to convey useful military information. General Lindsay had therefore sent a sharp, intelligent officer, who knew the North-West country and its people, round through the United States to Pembina, with instructions to net upon his own judgment as to his further progress from thence, but under any circumstances to adopt measures for communicating with Colonel Wolseley at Fort Francis. He was most successful, having managed to get to the Lower Fort, where he remained some days amongst the loyal inhabitants. Leaving on the 24th of July, by travelling incessantly he reached Fort Francis on the same day as the leading detachment of the force. He described the people as panic stricken—the English and French speaking populations being mutually afraid of one another, and both being in the direst dread of the Indians. The messages sent to us verbally, as well as by letter, were all in the same strain—"Come on as quickly as you can, for the aspect of affairs is serious and threatening." Riel and his gang had been for some time past busy in removing their plunder from Fort Garry, distributing it amongst his friends, and in places of safety within the United States territory. This looked as if he was preparing to bolt, although he still ruled every one most despotically. His great anxiety—now that the rebel aspirations had been satisfied by the Manitoba Bill—was that he himself should have an amnesty for the crimes he had been guilty of. The Government would have willingly given him an amnesty for all his political offences, but such would not have protected him from the charge of having wilfully and in cold blood murdered a loyal subject. Therein lay the difficulty; for, anxious as the Cartier party might be to secure him from all punishment, it was known that the English speaking people of Canada would not tolerate his being protected from legal proceedings in that matter. The rebellion had obtained for Bishop Tache and his party all that even the most sanguine had expected from it, and he was naturally afraid lest Riel, from personal motives and fear of punishment, might upset the whole arrangement by attempting to resist. He was wise enough to know that nothing was to be gained, whilst everything already gained was to be lost, by an appeal to arms. He therefore strained every nerve at this juncture to keep Riel quiet. He had left for Canada with the special object of procuring an amnesty by which he should be held entirely blameless; and this wily priest had impressed upon him the certainty of his being able to obtain it, his influence being so powerful at Ottawa. Riel knew not what to do: at one moment he talked of resistance; then, when the word amnesty was whispered in his ear, and visions of future political greatness came up before him, he would announce his intention of coming out to meet us for the purpose of handing over the government of the country to the commander of the Expedition. The result of this hesitation was that he did nothing; and his followers kept dropping off from him daily in consequence.

He still held Fort Garry with an armed garrison, and his published proclamations at the time, although indicative of declining power on his part, were by no means sufficiently reassuring or peaceable in their tone

to warrant any departure from all military precautions by us. Orders were therefore given to the leading detachments to approach Rat Portage at the entrance to Winnipeg River, with the greatest care and to take measures for guarding against surprise or ambush, as it was a very likely place for an attack should Riel mean fighting. The first detachment having arrived at Fort Francis on the 4th of August, and portaged its boats, &c. round the falls there, started again that same afternoon.

(To be continued.)

An interesting discussion took place at the Royal Artillery Institution, Woolwich, on the 16th ult, the subject being the future "Armament of Field Artillery." The attendance was large and many general officers of distinction were present. Lieut. Jones, an artillery instructor of high attainments, introduced the subject and took up first the question of metal to be used. Bronze he considered too soft and quite unserviceable, as recent experiments proved. The gas generated by the explosion of the powder lacerated the bore in rushing over the shot; and the rifled projectiles soon wore away the grooves in the too soft metal. Steel alone was too brittle, and liable to burst without warning. With the exception of the little howitzer, known as the Abbyssinian gun, with which they only fired small charges, England had no steel guns; they are unsafe, and the gunners had no confidence in them. Wrought iron by itself was not hard enough in the interior of the barrel; but a steel barrel, with wrought iron coils, was the best gun yet made. Some four thousand of these guns have been constructed in the last twelve years, and were almost as secure from bursting as the bronze guns. The only argument in favor of the bronze artillery was its cheapness. A sixteen pounder shell gun, just manufactured at Woolwich, on the principle above referred to, was expected to supply the endurance and safety now wanted. Lieut. Jones contended that every war ended in the introduction of a larger projectile. General Lefroy spoke of the extensive use of bronze guns in European armies; but Colonel Younghusband, on the other hand, asserted that no Government except Russia had any faith in them. It was urged by other speakers that "useless rubbish" in the shape of knapsacks, carbines, and camp kettles, should be removed from the limbers, and that the spare wheels should be run behind instead of being carried. [Lieut. Jones is a native of Toronto, and General Lefroy and Colonel Younghusband are married to Canadians.]

COLONEL RAY'S RETIREMENT from the command of the 62nd Battalion will be a great loss to that organization. The Colonel was the most popular officer that ever commanded the Battalion, and no officer could have done more for his officers and men than he. When the Battalion was handed over to him it was in a most wretched state, and required to be thoroughly reorganized, a work which Colonel Ray undertook and accomplished well. To his zeal and able management must be attributed in a large measure, the efficiency and discipline existing in the corps, while to his efforts for the interest and welfare of both officers and men, must be ascribed the harmony and good feeling existing in the Battalion.—*St. John paper.*

A negro, on being examined, was asked if his master was a true Christian. "No, sir, he is a politician," was the reply.