

CENSUS OF MANITOBA, NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES AND KEEWATIN

Mr. CAMERON (Huron) asked, Has the census of Manitoba, the North-West Territories and the District of Keewatin, or either of them, been taken under the Act 48 and 49 Victoria, Chapter 3? If so, what, by said census, is the white population of Manitoba, the District of Keewatin and of the North-West Territories separately, and what is the Indian and half-breed population in each?

Mr. CARLING. The census of Manitoba and the North-West Territories and the District of Keewatin has not been taken under the Act referred to. A census of the three districts of the North-West Territories, Assiniboia, Saskatchewan and Alberta, was taken in August, 1885. The population of the three districts was as follows: Whites, 23,344; Indians, 20,170; Half-breeds, 4,848; total population, 48,363.

FLOUR SUPPLIED TO NORTH-WEST INDIANS.

Mr. PATERSON (Brant) asked, Were any samples of the flour supplied to Indians in the North-West submitted, on behalf of the Government in the years 1884 or 1885, to any persons not in the service of the Government, to inspect and report thereon?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Yes; on several occasions. Thomas McKay & Co., millers, of Ottawa, have examined the flour sent from Ottawa to the North-West. Lieut-Governor Dewdney has frequently had the flour examined in the North-West by parties not in the service of the Government.

TRIAL OF LOUIS RIEL.

Mr. AMYOT moved for:

Copies of all documents forming the record in the case of Her Majesty against Louis Riel tried at Regina, including the jury list, the names of the jurors challenged, and by whom they were challenged, the list of the jurors empanelled, the motions and affidavits filed, the evidence, the incidents of the trial, the addresses of counsel and of the prisoner, the charge of the Judge, the names of the Judges or Assistant Judges who tried the case, the names of the counsel for the prosecution and for the defence; and in short, of every document whatsoever relating to the trial, and also of the verdict and of the recommendation to the mercy of the Court.

Mr. THOMPSON (Antigonish). All the papers embraced in this motion which are accessible, will be brought down in compliance with it.

Mr. BLAKE. I suggest to the hon. gentleman whether it would not be fitting to lay on the Table of the House formally, those documents which, during the recess, were circulated among members. Those documents emanated from the Administration; I refer to the memorandum from Sir Alexander Campbell.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Certainly.

Mr. BLAKE. I believe that document was very extensively distributed throughout Canada, and it appeared with the imprimatur of the Queen's Printer. I also refer to the report, or the so-called report of the trial. The Administration having taken the course of issuing the document during the recess, should have submitted it all spontaneously.

Mr. THOMPSON (Antigonish). This is embraced in the report of the trial.

Mr. BLAKE. I did not observe that the motion is wide enough to embrace the report of the evidence, but I made an observation relative to the hon. gentleman's motion, but entirely independent of it. I am making the suggestion that it is incumbent on the Administration, in taking the course of issuing these documents, themselves to lay them on the Table.

Motion agreed to.

RESPITES GRANTED TO LOUIS RIEL.

Mr. AMYOT moved for:

Copies of all Orders in Council respecting the several respites granted to Louis Riel before his execution.

Mr. THOMPSON (Antigonish). There are no such Orders in Council.

Motion withdrawn.

POST OFFICES IN NORTHERN DISTRICTS.

Mr. COOK moved for:

Return of the number of Post Offices established in the Muskoka, Parry Sound, and Nipissing Districts, with the cost and revenue of each office for each year respectively, since 1879.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. We will give all the information we can, but the cost for each year would be very difficult to obtain. We will, however, give the information as near as possible.

Motion agreed to.

ELECTORAL FRANCHISE ACT—INSTRUCTIONS TO REVISING OFFICERS.

Mr. CASEY moved for:

Copies of instructions or circulars issued to Revising Officers in regard to the performance of their duties under the Electoral Franchise Act of 1885.

He said: My object in making this motion is partly to call attention to what seem to me certain peculiarities in the conduct of some revising officers in the preliminary steps they have already taken towards forming a list of electors; and in the second place, to ask the Government whether instructions have been issued, or will be issued, to these revising officers, such as will secure greater uniformity in, and conformity with, the law, in the subsequent proceedings of the officials in question. The Act of last Session is presumably intended not only to secure the uniformity of the franchise throughout the Dominion, but to afford facilities to those entitled under the Act to obtain registration on the list of voters. But, Sir, unfortunately the revising officers are left by the Act in such a position of absolute unaccountability, irresponsibility, and plenary power, that the degree of uniformity of power obtained and the facilities afforded for registration in the different electoral divisions throughout the Dominion, depend entirely upon the will, the pleasure, or the whim of the revising officers for those divisions. The Act, as we pointed out from this side of the House very frequently last Session, if it does not directly encourage the putting of obstacles in the way of the elector who claims the franchise, affords tremendous opportunities for the putting of such obstacles in his way by these officers having the power, if they have the will, to place such obstacles. Now, the action of the revising officer who was appointed for the riding I represent, as well as for the other riding of Elgin, will illustrate perhaps better than any mere hypothetical statement of possibilities—the degree of irritation, the trouble and expense, that may be imposed on the elector who seeks to have his right to vote authenticated by registration on the list. If I refer to his actions in some detail, it is not for the sake of making an attack on that revising officer in particular, so much as for the sake of pointing out to the House and the country the dangers to which this Act subjects those who now claim the vote for the first time, to warn the electors of other parts of the Dominion of the troubles to which they may be subjected, and to notify them of the course they ought to pursue in order, with certainty, to obtain registration. My object is also to draw the attention of this House to