

able and satisfactory, we should have this rude awakening, and be obliged to open our eyes to the startling fact that we are really engaged in a war of no mean dimensions with half-breeds and Indians; and that it should occur now, when nearly everybody was of the opinion that satisfactory treaties had been made with the Indian tribes, and that the claims of the half-breeds had been met by a liberal issue of scrip, makes it the more extraordinary.

"If it had occurred years ago, when these now feeble tribes were mighty and could muster their thousands of proud free warriors, who revelled with delight in the very thought of war and carnage, we might have partially understood it; but in those days all who visited any of those tribes, no matter whether north or south of the boundary line, if they came with the proud distinction of being British subjects, were always received as trusted brothers, and were ever assured of a very cordial welcome.

"Now our hearts are saddened by the sickening details of precious lives lost, fair homes destroyed, and a spirit of unrest and disquietude aroused that will not subside for years.

"Many are anxiously asking, was there sufficient cause for this unhappy state of things; if so, what was it, and what is the remedy?

"First, then, as to there having been sufficient excuse for this uprising and defiance of law, we most emphatically say, no.

"There have been no grievances mentioned, even by the most bitter and rebellious of the Metis, to justify them in the lengths they have gone, and for the valuable lives they have taken, and for the injury they have inflicted on the country.

"For a long time, however, there have been influences at work which have made this uprising, which is really a conflict of races, a possibility. Many of these French half-breeds inherited both the traditions and feelings of the past. They well knew that there was a time when their French ancestors were the rulers from Quebec to the Mississippi. Some of their forefathers, with the humiliations following the English victory on the Plains of Abraham, and the subsequent surrender of Quebec, and then of the whole of Canada, had hurried away into the vast wilderness, and there amidst the excitement of almost savage life had kept alive in the hearts and memories of their children and grandchildren, as the years rolled by, the story of their fears and hatred of that race, which had made the *Fleur-de-Lis* of France go down before the Red Cross of England. Living under the semi-patriarchal rule of the Hudson Bay Company, whose requirements were few, and making their living more by hunting and trapping than by farming, they kept themselves aloof, except for purposes of trade, from the Scotch half-breeds and others speaking the English language, and were much more French than English in their prejudices and feelings.

"With jealous eyes, and bitter feelings, they

watched the incoming waves of Anglo-Saxon civilization. They chafed and fretted, and then with Riel—the dreamer, the egotist, the coward—they made that desperate attempt in 1869 and 1870 to retain their supremacy, which has become a matter of history. Into those events we cannot here enter, but vividly burned into memory's tablet are some of the scenes and incidents of those days, when the dear 'Old Flag' was for a time in the dust, and when the snow in front of the old Fort Garry was crimsoned with the life-blood of Scott, a moral, honest, temperate young man, a communicant of the Presbyterian Church, who was foully murdered for his outspoken loyalty, and for his contempt of the man who had dared to dishonor the flag he loved so well.

"With the half-breeds of Manitoba, the Government dealt most honorably and liberally. Hundreds of thousands of acres of good land, most advantageously situated, were allowed them; and in addition, scrip, which was a kind of a deed for much more, was granted them. They threw the scrip upon the market, which was almost glutted with it for a time. Soon after the opening of the country, when emigrants began pouring in, the restless spirit of the Metis manifested itself, and many of them, getting rid of both their scrip and farms, left their province and wended their way to the distant Saskatchewan and other places, where many of their class had gone before. Now, instigated by Riel, and soured by their straightened circumstances, the direct result of their own improvidence, they are found in open rebellion; and with arms in their hands, on ground stained with innocent loyal blood, are demanding their rights. The demand is preposterous in the extreme. It is still an open question requiring candid consideration, whether or not those who can prove that they have not been sharers in the Manitoba allotment, but have been and are settlers in those western settlements, have any just claims or rights beyond what they now enjoy. Common justice says: 'Give them the patents or deeds to the farms on which, as *bona fide* settlers, they reside—but we fail to see that they have claims beyond this which may not be as justly demanded by all loyal emigrants going in as settlers, be they English, Irish or Scotch.

"But the great cause of the present trouble is the scarcity of meat since the destruction of the great buffalo herds. Both Indians and half-breeds well know that the extinction of these animals is due to the coming of the white man, with his superior fire-arms, and his wanton slaughter for the mere excitement of the chase, and also his greed for the profits on the sale of the robes.

"The buffalo was ever regarded by the Indians as the special gift of the *Kiche Maneto*, the Great Spirit. His nutritious flesh furnished the best of food; his hides gave them their tents, bedding, clothing and moccasins; the sinews were easily made into