

out in the direction of a leather-bottomed stool, which Rodney took and waited until the cobbler's lips were released from the mechanical duty of holding pegs, and were set at liberty for conversation.

"Well, my son, did you find anything to do?" inquired the shoemaker, as he deftly "stropped" his thin, pliant knife-blade on the leather along the edge of his bench and proceeded to pare the edges of the tap.

"No, sir; nothing."

"Well, I wish you was a journeyman cobbler; so I do! I'd give you plenty to do while the soldiers are in camp here. Just look at that pile of boots to be patched! Then I've got three pairs of fine cavalry boots to make."

"But," he continued reflectively, as he rubbed the edges of the tap with a small swab dipped in a bottle of black stain; "it's a sorry thing all round! A sorry thing, my son! It'll only make a bad matter worse, for of course, every man who lives through the fighting will be deprived of his rights and property. No use for a man who has fought with Riel to stay round in these parts after this jig is over. He'll stand no chance for anything."

This put matters in a new light with the boy, who had not thought but what, if he should join Riel's forces and live through to see his side defeated, he might return to peace on the same ground that he had quitted it. This new consideration seemed almost to determine his future course, for he asked.