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The Trip Hammer.

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RIEL.

THERE are many rumors in the air as to the ultimate disposition of the unfortunate man, late leader of the half breeds and Indians of the North-West in their revolt against constituted authority, who now lies a captive in Regina prison. We use the word unfortunate not because we have any sympathy for him, far from it, but because it must always be considered an unfortunate thing when a fellow creature has committed crimes, the punishment of which is death. There can be no doubt in the mind of any reasonable man that Riel has richly earned

the halter which is even now about his neck, and from which it is not possible he shall be allowed to escape. There might have been some excuse for his treasonable course in 1870, but even then there could be none for unprovoked, cold blooded murder, such as he was guilty of in the brutal taking off of poor Scott. People who love the country which gave them birth; who still cherish a natural affection for the "land where the bones of their fathers repose" might easily find palliating circumstances in the Metis rebellion of fifteen years ago, and Riel's part therein, with the exception of the Scott murder. The Indians were the natural owners of the country. Its plains had been their hunting grounds for generations. They had fished in its rivers, had lived in the shade of its forests, and skimmed the surface of its lakes in their birch bark canoes, long before the aggressive foot of the pale face had left its ineffaceable print upon their soil. The half breeds, though dating from a later time, were also the children of the prairie, deriving their inheritance from their Indian mothers, and therefore entitled to share in the ownership, in so far as years of uninterrupted possession can confer ownership, of the land. True, portions here and there had been diverted and given to strangers by the "Great White Chief beyond the water," but there was practically no limit observed by Indians and half breeds when in pursuit of their game. Now all this was to be changed. The English pale face, like a cloud of locusts, was on his way to take possession of their country. The prairie over which the free feet of their fathers had roamed for centuries was to become the property of the white man; the forests were to be his; the buffalo; the deer, the fish in lake and river, the martin, the beaver and the musk-rat, were all to be his. The very grass of the field was to grow for him, and the Indian and the half breed were to be exterminated—shoved farther and farther "along the log," as Red Jacket once so quaintly illustrated, until they should be shoved off altogether. Riel himself, though more enlightened than his brethren, among whom he was regarded as a leader, and having, no doubt, then, as now, selfish ends in