

received orders to prepare for active service, are recruiting up to full strength. They will parade at the drill shed, and so forth."

Now, this is a statement in a telegram from Winnipeg, dated 24th March, and speaking of the orders which had been received from Ottawa, 23rd March; yet the hon. gentleman, when he was invited to give us explanations on the 23rd, vouchsafed to tell us that the Winnipeg Field Battery had not been ordered to proceed to the scene of disturbance, but he told us that the year before the Government thought prudent to occupy Fort Carlton with a force of Mounted Police. Not a word did he say about orders having been issued to the Winnipeg Field Battery to hold themselves in readiness to depart at a moment's notice, or about the 90th Rifles having been called out, and he let the House adjourn on that occasion without giving them any information that such a step had been taken by the Government. The correspondent goes on to say:

"Governor Dewdney, Hudson Bay Company's Commissioner Wrigley, and Lieut.-Col. Houghton held a conference here this afternoon. Mr. Wrigley on being interviewed, said he did not consider there was anything at all alarming in the situation. There had not been one drop of blood shed or a single shot fired. It was true there was what might be called an uprising in Carlton and Battleford, but it appeared to be of periodical occurrence. This time the misguided half-breeds, commanded by the outlaw, Louis Riel, have seized and made prisoners about forty whites, and confined them in a church at St. Laurent. Among the prisoners are (then he quotes the names) * * * * Further reinforcements of police are proceeding to the scene of trouble."

Then the *Mail* newspaper of the same day, in its editorial article, says:

"That dissatisfaction has existed among the half-breeds in the Saskatchewan country for years past is undeniable. They complain, as we have before explained, that while the Métis of Manitoba were given grants of 240 acres under the Act of 1870, their claims have been ignored; and they say, with equal truth, that the Government should at least give them free patents for the farms which they have been cultivating, and compensation for disturbances in cases where the Dominion surveyors may find it necessary to re-arrange the shape of their holdings, the old French form of delimitation being at variance with the modern system. These claims the Interior Department is trying to adjust, but it takes time to deal with questions affecting the rights of property."

Then the *Montreal Gazette*, another organ of the Government, on the 26th inst. published a dispatch from Winnipeg in these terms:

"There is little doubt but that the French half-breeds are mustering to bring pressure on the Dominion authorities to redeem grievances that they think have existed in regard to land claims for years, and raids are believed to have been made on stores of both the Hudson's Bay posts and Indian agents and the officials arrested, to be held as hostages for the immediate action of the Federal authorities."

"Not more than 500 of the rebels are armed, but they possess Remington and Winchester rifles, and, from long experience on the plains, are skilled in their use. The Indians have not yet been induced to join the rebels. Pi-a-pot is the only chief of whom the authorities are afraid, as Riel and his agents have been operating with the Indians north of Regina and Qu'Appelle with some success. Poundmaker and Big Bear are 200 miles north-west of the scene of the troubles, and not likely to be induced to rebel. A large number of white settlers are said to be in sympathy with the cause of the trouble, but are not disposed to take up arms, feeling sure that the Dominion Government will at once treat with the settlers and adjust the grievances. Parties who have been on lands for years have been unable, it is claimed, to procure their patents, and speculators and others, who have given fees to persons having influence, have obtained deeds and, in many instances, taken lands over the heads of the first settlers, who improved them for fifteen to eighteen years. This is the real cause of the troubles. The militia authorities are moving with alacrity. The Rifle regiment, 300 strong, under arms for two days, paraded to-night in full force, with the Field Battery and brass band. Five thousand people must have thronged the main street during the parade to the depot, where 125 men of the Rifles, under command of Major Boswell and Captains Ruttan and Clark, embarked for Qu'Appelle, taking ammunition and supplies. They will there await the arrival of the remainder of the battalion, as well as the artillery, who expect to leave on Friday with General Middleton, now en route to Winnipeg."

Then another statement:

"A prominent Catholic clergyman telegraphed last night from Edmonton that the announcement that the Dominion Government had appointed a commission to consider the claims of the half-breeds and investigate the cause of the present troubles was having a very beneficial and pacific effect on the half-breeds. He expressed the opinion that the appointment of the commission would result in an amicable settlement of the difficulty."

And then there is a note:

"No official notice of the appointment of the commission alluded to has been made, so far, at Ottawa."

Then there is this from the Ottawa correspondent of the paper:

"As a precautionary measure, 100 men of the 90th Battalion, Winnipeg, have left that city for Qu'Appelle, when, in case of necessity, they will proceed to the scene of operation."

Then, in to-day's edition of the Government organ in this city, the *Citizen*, I find a special despatch from Winnipeg, giving in substance the same information as that I have just now read from the *Mail* newspaper. I observe that the Government newspapers, while they give this account which I have just read of what is occurring, and these statements as to the causes of what is occurring, in their editorial columns complain most grievously of the Opposition newspapers and the course they are taking in reference to this matter, and so I have preferred, in view of the vials of wrath which are being poured down upon these unfortunate newspapers, to draw my information solely from the unimpeachable organs which sustain hon. gentlemen opposite, and which, of course, would be guided by the highest dictates of patriotism, of prudence, of accuracy, and of scrupulous regard to veracity in the statements they make in reference to the conjuncture which has occurred. You will observe that it is stated in these papers that the French half-breeds have had grievances for years; that their patents have not issued, and that influential persons have influenced officials and obtained lands belonging to settlers; that the half-breeds have good grounds of complaint, and that a Government commission has at this convenient season been issued upon the subject. And it is very plain, from what the hon. gentleman told us this afternoon, that, in so far as action is concerned, serious action was decided upon by the Administration, in the way of putting the military forces of the country in motion, on the 23rd, the period at which the hon. gentleman did not think fit to inform this House, which was then in session, and which had invited him to give it information, upon the subject at all. Now, it seems to me that the Government has not done that which it ought to have done in this regard. I say it is a very serious thing that the militia forces of this country should have been obliged to be called out. I am not in the slightest degree condemning the Administration for calling them out, but I say it is a serious and grave occurrence. For, I suppose, nearly two centuries, the law of England has been that, when the militia forces of that country are called out, the Parliament of that country is to be summoned within fourteen days from that date, and that law has been altered in late years, I think in the year 1875, upon the consolidation of the laws regulating the militia, by shortening the period within which Parliament is to be summoned to ten days, which is the present law there. It is obvious that it is regarded as a reasonably serious thing that the militia should be called out, not as we sometimes arrange that the municipal authorities shall call out the militia for purposes of avoiding local riots, but by the authority of the Executive Government, and that the Parliament, the great council of the nation, should be called in such an emergency. Well, Parliament was sitting at this time. The great council of our country was sitting. The Government decided to call out the troops in order to quell this disturbance, and did not think fit to inform us of the fact. On the contrary, being invited to give us information, the hon. gentleman told us they had thought it prudent last year, forsooth, to put 100 men of the Mounted Police in Fort Carlton, but what they had decided upon doing that very day, calling out a battalion and a company of artillery, he did not think fit to tell us anything about. The action of last year was news to us, not very fresh, but still it was news, but what they had done now he did not state. The difficulties are stated by Commissioner Wrigley, in the