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SPEECH
OF
MR. GIROUARD, M.P.
ON THE
DISTURBANCE IN THE NORTH-WEST.

OTTAWA, JULY 7TH, 1885.

Mr. GIROUARD. Some two or three months ago, at the beginning of the rising of the North-West, I felt it my duty to look into the facts which were alleged to have been the cause of the uprising. Like the hon. gentleman who has just taken his seat, and like every French Canadian, my sympathies were with the so-called rebels. I thought these rebels, the half-breeds of the North-West, had grievances, as the French Canadians had in 1837. Not being familiar with the facts, I had to make a special study of the political history of Manitoba and the North-West. I admit I was ignorant of the facts then. Like a great many others, I thought that my fellow countrymen of that far country were ill-used. But what has been the result of my study, and I have studied the question, not for the purpose of preparing a plea to defend the Government; I have done so as an independent member of the House.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. GIROUARD. Yes; I think there are very few members on the other side who have shown as much independence as I have in the past. I commenced that study for the sole purpose of getting information, as a representative of the people, who cares more for the sake of the country than for the sake of power, and I came to the conclusion that the half-breeds had grievances, undoubtedly, but not grievances of such magnitude as to warrant their resorting to arms. The whole speech of the hon. gentleman who has just sat down can be resumed in two points. He says, in the first place, the policy of the present Government was not to extinguish the Indian title in favor of the half-breeds, and in the second place, he charges this Government with being guilty of gross mismanagement in not dividing the river lots