

that time made a trip to the North-West. He arrived at Winnipeg on the 7th or 8th of November, so that he must have left Ottawa about the 3rd or 4th, or the 2nd of November; and before the hon. gentlemen had left Ottawa for Winnipeg, the sentence, if not recorded, had been decided upon by the advisors of His Excellency. We have the

### Evidence of the Premier himself

as to that. Here is a letter which was sent by the hon. Prime Minister to the hon. Minister of Militia:

"OTTAWA, 20th November, 1885.

"MY DEAR CARON.—You say you are charged with having left Ottawa before the decision of the Governor in Council was arrived at with respect to Louis Riel, and as if for the purpose of avoiding being party to the decision.

"This is not the case, the Council had come to the conclusion that it was necessary, in the interest of justice, that the sentence should be allowed to be carried into effect, in your presence as a Member of the Council, before you left for Winnipeg."

Sir, we must give the Minister of Militia his due; he has had a full share in the hanging of Louis Riel; let him have what really appertains to him. Before he left Ottawa, the sentence had been decided between him and his colleagues. Let him have his full share of the merit, if merit there be, or the shame; let him have also his full share of the comedy which was afterwards played before the public. For, I ask it of any man in his senses—I ask it of any man on the Opposition benches: I ask it of any man in this country—was there ever a more

### Shameful thing enacted by a Government,

than—after they had decided to execute for the purpose of blinding the public, to send a commission to enquire whether the convict was insane or not? What was the object of enquiring whether he was insane or not, if the Government, at that time, had made up their minds and decided that he should be hanged? The object was to do what has since been

done—to say to the people of Canada: We have consulted medical officers, and they have reported, and upon their report we have acted. Sir, it was not upon this report that they acted; this report was a false note, and they did not act upon it, because when they got it their decision had been arrived at; and upon this I arraign the Government of the country, not only as being guilty of a cruel act, but as being guilty of an attempt to deceive the people of this country. Sir, if the Government had been desirous of learning whether Riel was insane or sane, there was no need of sending a commission to examine him. It would have been sufficient to look at his history; it would have been sufficient even to look at his record in the rebellion. We have it now as a fact of history that while Riel was inducing that rebellion, he chose as his chief adviser and secretary, a man notoriously insane, William Joseph Jackson, who signed his letters and Orders in Council. Will it be pretended by any man that if Riel had been in his senses, if he had had a sane and discerning mind, he would have accepted an insane man as his chief adviser? Why did this not strike hon. gentlemen opposite? One of the things which we in Lower Canada have felt as deeply as we have ever felt anything, is that we have believed that the measure of justice which was extended to Louis Riel was not the same measure of justice which was extended to William Joseph Jackson. Jackson was put upon his trial, and I am bound to say this, in duty to the Crown prosecutors, that upon that occasion they did their duty. They acknowledged at once the insanity of the prisoner and directed an acquittal. The trial of Jackson took place on the 24th of July last. Mr. Osler, counsel for the Crown, in opening the case, spoke as follows:

"The prisoner is charged with having participated in the recent rebellion, with having acted in the capacity of private secretary to Louis Riel, the leader of the rebellion. He is charged here now formally with this crime, but it is understood that the counsel for the prisoner, Mr. McArthur, will be able to give