

this point, that the debate had better be adjourned, I have no hesitation to agreeing to that sentiment.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Go on.

Mr. ROYAL. I have listened with a great deal of pleasure and interest to some of the speeches made by hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House. Of course, I do not expect the same courtesy from some of them, for various reasons, but I believe if my pleasure here had been studied, it would have been better for me to have handed a ready-made speech to the *Hansard* reporters. I must say, in speaking upon the subject I have tried to impress this House with the importance of knowing the origin of the population which existed in the North-West Territories at the time of the transfer. I know that very little is known of that population and their history, from the very fact that hon. gentlemen opposite ignored that there was such a population as the half-breeds, and said that the population existing there were either Indians or white people. Well, Sir, that is not the case. That is contrary to history and facts, and I thought it was my duty to correct the idea which has gone aboard, that the population of that country was of no consequence whatever, that the number of that population was insignificant, that they had no political institutions, that they did not know anything about representative institutions, that whatever Government might be given to them they should accept, as a matter of course with the greatest grace possible. I feel it my duty to-night to vindicate the character of that population, and to show what history states about the origin and characteristics of that population. When it is stated by hon. gentlemen opposite that that population must consist of either Indians or whites, I believe that statement is very incorrect. Those people had enjoyed their rights and their existence in that country for many years, and they had some reasons to claim from the Government of Canada the recognition of their existence as a separate and distinct people. Now, Sir, I come to the period of 1869-70. I have no intention to recite in detail the events of that period—the criminal rashness of Lt. Col. Dennis, his efforts to incite an Indian war by his mad proclamation, calling on the Indians to unite with the Canadian party to make war on the native population of the country; the meetings of the settlers, French and English, to discuss the proposed transfer of their country to Canada; the stern determination to resist all such action, until the people obtained the recognition of their existence and their rights as free men and British subjects; the decision of the French-speaking population to fight, even if left alone and unassisted, for the granting of such rights, not only to themselves, but to the whole community; the organisation of the convention, which delegates from all parts of the colony attended; the subsequent election of members to maintain peace and order in the settlement, by the establishment of a provisional Government; the election of Louis Riel as president; the maintenance of such power at great risk and cost for over eight months; the refusal to receive Lieutenant Governor Macdougall; the selection and sending of delegates to Ottawa, in 1870, to negotiate the terms and conditions on which the people of the colony of Assiniboia would consent to form part of the Dominion of Canada; the passing of the Manitoba Act, and the final transfer of the colony, on the 15th of July, 1870, to the Dominion of Canada. It is not my intention to deal at length with these facts. But the hon. member for Quebec East (Mr. Laurier) stated yesterday that the rights to the property were the only cause of the rising in Manitoba, or in the Territory which now constitutes the Province of Manitoba. I must dissent from that opinion. Those men felt that if their rights to property were being tampered with they had a perfect right to revolt and repel any attempts that might be made to interfere; but there were other rights, which were more sacred to

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them, and it was the recognition of those rights, which have been in existence in their political institutions from 1822 to 1870, that they desired; and to state that the rights to their property were the only cause of their resistance to Canadian institutions is not correct. For instance, under their institutions they had the liberty of education, they had the separate school system, they had the use of their language, they had their own laws, administered in their own way, and the people clung to those laws and those institutions as strongly as to their rights of property, which the Canadians, then in the country, attempted to interfere with. Were I, Sir, to go into the details of that eventful period, I would point out the efforts of the party opposite, in their press and elsewhere, to make political capital out of the resistance of the Red River people. We heard, this afternoon, a most pointed speech from the hon. member for Ottawa (Mr. Mackintosh) on this subject. That opinion, coming from him, was more weighty, perhaps, than from myself. However, he showed that the *Globe* had been exciting the dispute and the resistance to Canadian authorities in the Red River long before we sent Lieutenant Governor Macdougall and his party up there to take possession of the country. It is to its language and to the efforts of its correspondents that we owe the resistance which was then offered to the Canadian authorities. The *Globe* stated that the half-breeds had no business to accept from the Canadian Government a ready-made government, and we have heard the hon. member for Ottawa quoting extracts from the *Globe* to prove that fact. I will only say that the calm and dispassionate historian of that eventful period, when years have passed away, will have a great deal to say in favor of the energy, moderation and public spirit evinced by the French-speaking half-breeds of the Red River; he will then be able to see that public opinion was so much worked up and excited by an unfortunate incident during the troubles, at least, among a great portion of the population of Canada; that the Government of the day found it impossible to redeem their pledge to grant a full and complete amnesty to those whose principal crime had been the obtaining for their country those liberties inherent to every British citizen. In fact, such a measure had become impossible for any Government, as it was fully demonstrated by the limited and incomplete amnesty which was proclaimed by hon. gentlemen opposite in 1875. The extracts and the argument of the hon. member for Ottawa, this afternoon, showed that the opposite party has done everything in its power to make political capital out of Scott's death, as they have done with every other public question. The men at the head of affairs in the colony expected that amnesty as the essence of their contract with Canada. Now, in fact, those delegates who were then sent from the *de facto* Government in the Red River district, treated with the Canadian authorities; they had interviews; they deliberated over the Bill of Rights, and on the various questions which were these submitted to the Canadian Government. Every one of questions was settled. Every man of common sense will imagine easily the amnesty to be certainly the essence of the contract, which was then thought to be made by the authorities in the Red River and the Canadian Government. There is a great deal of contention of opinion on the question; but we have, from the documents, from the records of the country, from the evidence taken in the committee struck by Parliament, in 1875, proof that the delegates were led to believe that an amnesty would be proclaimed before they returned to Manitoba. Such was the opinion of the people in the country at that time. I was a personal witness to the fact that the then provisional Government organised a reception to be given to Governor Archibald, when they expected him to arrive by the Dawson route. Carriages had been prepared, and an address drafted; and the address was to be presented to the Cana-