

of great brutality, but be that as it may, his murder, for it was nothing else, set all Ontario in a flame. This was fanned to white heat by the extremely injudicious action of a part of the press and people of Quebec who saw fit to exalt Mr. Riel to the dignity of a national hero, defending his race and religion, and who were even ill-advised enough to justify the execution of Scott as a perfectly legitimate, if not praiseworthy, act. Meantime Fenian emissaries were at work promising all sorts of aid and comfort to Riel and persuading him that the United States Government would, in case of need, interfere in his behalf. Had Riel listened to their overtures and had the Fenian leaders been men of any capacity, there is little doubt that he might have made a very formidable resistance. But he or his followers seem to have shown very little disposition to unite with that body.

REPORTER. Why did not the Canadian Government act at once?

SIR RICHARD. They could not; and nothing showed the extreme rashness of whomsoever was responsible for the withdrawal of the British detachment than the situation in which they found themselves. The Red River country was absolutely inaccessible at that time for many months except *via* the United States, and the knowledge of this fact should have prevented Mr. Macdougall and his friends from attempting any action till there was a chance of their receiving some support if things went against them. As it was, fully eight months had to elapse before Sir Garnet Wolseley was able to lead the Red River Expedition into Winnipeg, when Riel and his associates decamped without firing a shot or having attempted in any way to obstruct his progress.

REPORTER. Did they absolutely run away?

SIR RICHARD. I do not mean that they were cowards. They were brave enough in an ordinary way. But it was only a further proof of the statement that they never would and never had intended to fight against the British Government, and the moment that they found that a British force under a British officer was coming against