

"Resolution No. 3.—As by treaty with the Indians their title to any portion of the territory included within the district of Lorne has been extinguished, this resolution would need explanation."

It is a very extraordinary thing that this subject should have so little penetrated the brains of the Department up to that time that they were able to seize on the suggestion that the Indian title had been extinguished as an excuse, when it was perfectly clear to the most ordinary mind that it was the share of the half-breeds in the Indian title that had not been extinguished which formed the basis of the resolution.

"In closing, I am to say that the Minister will cause enquiry to be made through his own officers with reference to the several subjects of these resolutions, and will on their report have such action taken in the premises as may be in accordance with law and necessary."

On the 25th of January, 1882, Mr. Clarke, acknowledged the receipt of this letter, and dealing with resolution No. 3 he answers as follows:—

"I would respectfully submit that the Indian title no doubt has been extinguished, but evidently not that of the half-breed residents of the North-West Territories. The Government of the Dominion of Canada have repeatedly acknowledged the right in the soil of the half-breed inhabitants as is proved."

He then proceeds to cite in detail the Act of 1870, to which I have referred, the Act of 1874, the Act of 1876, the Act of 1877, and the Act of 1879, citing the appropriate clauses in each case to prove his contention; and he adds:

"It will be seen therefore that from the first enactment in 1870 to the last in 1879, the rights in the soil of the half-breed have been recognised by the Government, and provision made for the extinguishment of their title. A very strong memorial on this subject was laid before the North-West Council at its last meeting in June, 1881, and a resolution adopted by that body that the memorial should be remitted to the Governor General of Canada, with a recommendation that His Excellency would be pleased to draw the attention of his Ministers to grievance complained of."

On the 14th of April, 1882, the Deputy Minister acknowledges the receipt of the letter of Mr. Clarke, and says:

"The other points raised in your letter"—

Which are the points relating to half-breeds—

"are reserved for the Minister's special consideration."

They received that consideration in 1885. Now, I come to the year 1882. The report of the Minister of the Interior was presented on the 15th February, 1882, and it is the only document which indicates that any step had been taken in the matter:

"The condition of the half-breed population of the Territories, and the claims which have been preferred on their behalf to be dealt with somewhat similarly to those of the half-breeds of the Red River, have been receiving careful consideration, with a view to meeting them reasonably."

But nothing appears to have been done; the consideration appears to have been fruitless. If there were any notions formed, they did not refer to the matured condition of plans or schemes; no report was made by the Minister to Council; no action was taken whatever. In the month of October, 1882, and for several months afterwards, Bishop Grandin, who is the Bishop within whose diocese these parts are, was at Ottawa, on various matters relating to his diocese. I have little doubt, from what I have read and seen, that with reference to that protracted mission of Bishop Grandin there are papers; but I have not had access to those papers, and no papers whatever have been brought down by the Government relative to Bishop Grandin's mission, his petitions, or the results. But besides attending to his own special business, as to which the Government has left us wholly in the dark—if indeed there be, as I believe there to be, papers which would throw light upon it—Bishop Grandin, who certainly got some concessions, who certainly was promised a written reply, which written reply I am not sure he ever received, gave, I believe, warnings to the Government as to the impending trouble in consequence of the delays, and I charge that either then or

Mr. BLAKE.

earlier or later, Bishop Grandin made applications and representations, and received promises: and I will give the proof of that now. In an address which he made to a large assemblage of half-breeds at St. Laurent on the 5th of February, 1884, as reported in *Le Manitoba*, he used these words:

"As to the other propositions, I have busied myself already for a long time with these in your special interest. I have put upon the Federal Government all possible pressure to obtain justice; I have even obtained promises which I believed official, but which I have the pain of seeing to-day forgotten. I have felt the same discontent that you also have felt, and I have not failed to complain upon the subject in high quarters."

Where are the papers? In the month of October, 1882, the surveyors of the Dominion Government were at St. Albert, which, I believe, is the headquarters of the diocese. They were about to engage in a survey on the ordinary general principle of the lands in that neighborhood. They gave satisfactory explanations to Father Leduc as to the purpose of that survey, and as to its being followed in the course of a few days by a special survey of the recognised holdings on the river lot system. But later on fresh orders from Ottawa came, under which those special surveyors who had commenced their work were stopped. Excitement ensued; a public meeting was held, and Father Leduc and Mr. Maloney were appointed delegates to Ottawa. That poor population raised \$600 in cash to pay their expenses; \$100 more was raised on their way down to Fort Saskatchewan. Their demands were reduced to writing, and among those demands was one for the settlement of these Indian title claims. That demand was presented by the delegates to the Government at Ottawa, but it has not been brought down; it is not among the papers. They started on their journey; they were 24 days travelling to Qu'Appelle Station; they reached Ottawa; there were long communications, in which intervened the hon. member for Provencher (Mr. Royal), Sir David Macpherson, the hon. Minister of Public Works, and the First Minister himself. Promises were made; they asked for writings; the Minister replied to them: "Give a written memorandum and you shall have a written response." They gave written papers into the hands of the Minister, but they are not brought down. Amongst them, in March, 1883, was a memorandum signed by Father Leduc and Mr. Maloney, and it contains this paragraph:

"The inhabitants of St. Albert are for the most part French or English half-breeds, born in the North-West Territories or Manitoba. Before the transfer they were the natural joint possessors of the soil with the Indians. A treaty has been concluded with the latter for the extinction of their rights, but the half-breeds of the Territories have not yet received any compensation, notwithstanding they are on the same footing of right, in fact, with those of Manitoba. They demand then, by the intervention of their delegates to Ottawa, that the Act of Manitoba relative to the rights of the half-breeds and their children born before the transfer be extended to the North-West Territories."

They have received answers, but the answers are not brought down. I believe the answer with reference to this particular claim, which was not the special claim, which was the foundation of their mission, was that the question of this particular right of the half-breeds at that very moment occupied the attention of Parliament. It is true there were two ways in which it might be said to have occupied the attention of Parliament. One was because there was a motion before the House during the Session, made by myself, for the petitions of the people of St. Albert, which embraced this question; the other was that on that occasion a Consolidated Dominion Lands Act was passed, although no change was made in the Act of 1879 authorising the Government to deal with the question. I know of no other way in no extent to which it could be said that particular question was engaging the attention of Parliament than what I have said. But, notwithstanding these delegations, nothing was done in 1882, and the same observation applies to 1883. Early in the year 1883, in fact