

fresh in the minds of my readers ; but all are not yet generally known, especially those which concern Lieutenant-Colonel Ouimet and his regiment.

Certain newspapers of that period, prompted, no doubt, by mean motives of political interest, have sought to throw discredit on the French contingent sent to the North-West. Our soldiers were not affected by them in any great degree, and none the less did the brave fellows do their duty. Is it not true that at that period Lieut.-Colonel Ouimet crossed the prairie alone save for his three guides? Alone he lay in the Indian reserve of Battle River. The *habitants* were so ill-disposed that, two days previous, Colonel Osborne Smith ordered the Winnipeg battalion to load arms before he would risk himself in that region.

There remains a curiously interesting page to write on the part played there before Col. Ouimet. Accustomed hitherto to submit and abase themselves before foreign arrogance, the unfortunate people could not be brought to believe that it was possible that a Frenchman, and a Catholic like themselves, would be in authority giving orders even to the officers of the Hudson Bay Company, and having these orders unquestioningly obeyed. It is well known that he won the ascendancy from the first by his justice and moderation. His first act of authority was to order the disarming of the company of Edmonton Guards. They were of no use whatever. He replaced them by a company composed of French Métis, and the sequel proved that the Colonel had acted wisely, for these scouts made a very active corps of sharpshooters. It was they who espied the Indians assembled at the Alexander reserve, and it was they who rescued the St-Albert Mission from almost certain pillage. With even-minded justice, Ouimet was desirous of seeing the old routine regarding the distribution of contracts changed. Up to that time they had been handed over to the friends of the Hudson Bay Company ; hereafter they were to be given by tender. The mobility of the Métis character is well known. Unaccustomed to see themselves treated with common justice, they passed at once from fear and indifference to the most entire confidence. They were not tardy in giving a proof of this. Humble as they might appear, they were not unimportant in the midst of the events that unfolded themselves later on.

A wager had been offered and taken by Colonel Ouimet and two