

amined, and also to examine Dr. Vallée, of the Beau-  
 port Lunatic Asylum, who had Louis Riel under his treat-  
 ment for two years, and who was unable to attend the  
 trial because he was sick at the time. Sir, I blame the  
 Government for not having heard those witnesses who were  
 specially aware of the facts concerning the plea of insanity.  
 There has been a diversity of opinion expressed on the  
 floor of this House as to the value of the evidence adduced  
 during the trial concerning the mental condition of the  
 prisoner. I do not intend wearying the House by making  
 quotations from that evidence. Every portion of it has  
 already been quoted, pro and con, and is familiar  
 to all the members. But, Mr. Speaker, the way I read  
 the evidence I am convinced that the verdict was against  
 that evidence, so far as the plea of insanity was concerned.  
 It is said that the Court of Appeals in Manitoba was more  
 competent to express an opinion as to whether that verdict  
 was well founded or not than is this House. It is even said  
 we have no jurisdiction in the matter; but I believe I have  
 disposed of the latter point, that it is our duty to examine  
 whether the verdict was supported by the evidence.  
 Let us see whether there is any expression of opinion,  
 either from the jury, the judge, or from the Court  
 of Appeals of Manitoba, or from the Privy Council  
 in England, so far as the plea of insanity is concerned. It  
 is true the jury brought in a verdict of guilty; it is true we  
 should take that verdict as it is—that it means that Riel  
 was not so insane as to escape conviction. But the jury  
 undoubtedly considered the question of insanity when they  
 recommended him to mercy. Are we to be told that the  
 jury really meant nothing by it? What were the pleas of  
 the defence? They were: first, want of jurisdiction by the  
 court; and second, the plea of insanity. I do not agree  
 with the leader of the Opposition that a juror should  
 explain the intentions of the jury. That is not  
 the way a verdict should be attacked. I am more  
 inclined to believe that the recommendation of the  
 jury to mercy was based on what was before the  
 court. What was before the court? Were the grievances  
 of the half-breeds brought to the notice of the  
 jurors? Not at all. Evidence on that point was not allow-  
 ed by the judge. The only point brought to the notice of  
 the jury was the plea of insanity, and whatever may have  
 been the views of that particular juror who wrote to the  
 leader of the Opposition, my conviction is that the recom-  
 mendation to mercy can have no other legal meaning ex-  
 cept that the jury had doubts as to the sanity of Riel, not  
 strong enough to acquit him, but strong enough to cause