

amined, and also to examine Dr. Vallée, of the Beauport Lunatic Asylum, who had Louis Riel under his treatment 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 allowed 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 recommendation to mercy can have no other legal meaning except that the jury had doubts as to the sanity of Riel, not strong enough to acquit him, but strong enough to cause