

# FACTS FOR THE PEOPLE

## Mr. Laurier's Statement in Respect to Northwest Management

PROVED TO BE WITHOUT FOUNDATION.

### Not a Single Half-Breed Dispossessed of his Property.

A few weeks ago Hon. Mr. Laurier visited Ontario and addressed a number of meetings. In answer to the challenge to name a single half-breed who had ever been deprived of an acre of land upon which he had settled, or to which he had a claim by virtue of settlement, he has cited two cases, the first being a dispute between Father Andre and a Mr. Kelly, and the second, the case of a Mr. Salter, who made an entry for a quarter section of land in the parish of St. Louis de Langevin. In support of the first, he said there was a letter of Father Andre's complaining that one Kelly had jumped his claim and had put up a frame building upon it. It happens that Mr. Kelly is at the moment residing in Ontario, and seeing the statement of Mr. Laurier he addressed a letter to the London *Free Press* as to the correctness of the statement, in which he has made affidavit, giving the

#### FOLLOWING PARTICULARS OF THE DISPUTE:

"Mr. Laurier, it seems, can find only one outrage to justify the rebellion, but that one also appears in such a very bad case that 'no population in the world would have stood it.' Now, Mr. Editor, I happen to be the 'J. Kelly' who is mentioned, and I beg, through your permission, to let the country see how utterly Mr. Laurier fails to justify the rebellion by quoting my case as a case of outrage. In 1879 I went from Sarnia to Duck Lake, N.W.T., where my brother, Henry Kelly, had been settled for some years. Father Andre of Duck Lake mission, held 200 acres of land, on which the mission was built. Alongside the mission land lay 350 acres which had for two years been held by a French Canadian named Thibault, a member of Father Andre's flock, who claimed 150 acres as homestead and 100 acres as pre-emption land. Father Andre also laid claim to the pre-emption land, on the ground that it belonged to the mission property, though the survey did not show it; so, Thibault would not admit Father Andre's claim, and broke up four acres of the land to make his pre-emption title good. I was looking for land in March 1881; Thibault came to me and said that as he was a member of Father Andre's congregation, he did not wish any trouble with the mission, and he would sell me his claim to the pre-emption lot for \$1500 for the improvement. I paid him the money, and went to work to make improvements, and hired a yoke of oxen and began ploughing, and put up the frame of a house." Father Andre came and threatened that I must leave the land or he would fire me. "But I could not see that his title was as good as Thibault's, and I refused to go. Father Andre went to the agent at Prince Albert, then to Lieutenant-Governor Laird, at Buffalo, but both told him he had no case. Then he got up a petition among his parishioners to the Government at Ottawa, and his claim was not allowed there either. In the meantime, I went on with my improvements until the bright day of May, when Mr. Owen E. Hughes, manager of Gilbert, Eden & Co.'s business at Duck Lake, came to me and said he had an offer for me from Father Andre of \$1000 for my claim. I refused to take it. Mr. Hughes talked the matter over with my brother, who advised me to accept, as it might not be pleasant for me to continue a quarrel with Father Andre, and there was plenty of land as good to be got else by when nobody claimed. I told Mr. Hughes I would sell. A day was appointed, and Father Andre came to the office, paid Mr. Hughes \$100, which he handed to me, and accepted a receipt which Mr. Hughes drew out, and which I signed, transferring my right and title to the lot to Father Andre. That is plain and true statement of the whole case, and you will see that there is nothing but 'outrage' to justify the murder of the petitioners, the shooting of poor Scott Elliot, the Frog Lake murders, and all the other ghastly incidents of the rebellion. Mr. Laurier holds the lives of loyal Canadian citizens cheap if he thinks 300 people were justly in order because my land cost Father Andre \$100.

#### The second was

##### THE CASE OF MR. SALTER.

Mr. Laurier's statement was that Salter had obtained an entry for a quarter section of land at St. Louis de Langevin, which was already in the occupation of a half-breed, thus dispossessing the half-breed of his holding. The record in the Department of the Interior on this subject, as furnished by the deputy minister, is as follows:—

"Neither the registrar of the department nor the chief clerk of the Patent Office has been able to find anything to indicate that a claim at one time entered in the name of Thomas Salter, or Richard Thomas Salter, which is the proper name, have ever been claimed in any way by a half-breed, or anyone other than Salter himself. His entries were for the southeast quarter of section 19, township 45, range 37, west of the second meridian. AND THEY HAVE SINCE BEEN SURRENDERED AT HIS OWN REQUEST."

So that whatever may have been the original quarrel in this matter, the land has passed out of Salter's possession long ago, and there has been no further dispute about it. These are the only two cases mentioned by Mr. Laurier, and it will be seen that they utterly fail to meet the challenge given to

name a half-breed who had been dispossessed of his land by the action or inaction of the Government.

Mr. Laurier, as an evidence of the want of good faith of the Government, referred to the mission of the

#### REV. FATHER LEDUC AND MR. MALONEY

to Ottawa. His statement is that those gentlemen came to Ottawa in the interests of the half-breeds generally; that they were promised a re-survey of the lands of St. Louis de Langevin, and that the promise, although given in writing, has never been carried out. The facts in this case are as follows:—In the first place, the mission of Father Leduc and Mr. Maloney had no reference whatever to the claims of the half-breeds or to the surveys in the district of Prince Albert. They came as representing the inhabitants of St. Albert, Edmonton and Fort Saskatchewan, which are between 490 and 600 miles away from the south branch of the Saskatchewan, where the rebellion broke out. As explained by the report of the Deputy Minister, the action of the Government in ordering Mr. Michael Deane, the surveyor to whom had been given certain specific work in the Edmonton district, and who had commenced other surveys without authority, to discontinue these other surveys, led to the fear that the Government did not intend to proceed with the surveys, and Father Leduc and Mr. Maloney were sent to Ottawa on the subject. Their memorial presented to the Government, on March 10, 1883, addressed on behalf of "the inhabitants of St. Albert, Northwest Territories," asked for certain specific things, as follows:—

1. That a river survey be allowed to them, with the two miles limit, as in Prince Albert, Northwest Territories and Manitoba.
2. Their claims having been occupied for many years, some of them before the transfer, they asked for the recognition of their titles by the Government and for their patents.
3. They asked for behalf of the settlements of St. Albert, Edmonton and Fort Saskatchewan, that the river lot survey be extended from Edmonton to Fort Saskatchewan, both colonies included, "as elsewhere on the Saskatchewan at Prince Albert, the Assiniboine and Red Rivers."
4. They asked for a land office at Edmonton, so that entries might be made and patents issued on the completion of their duties by the settlers.
5. They asked that persons who had settled in advance of survey should be protected in their rights as if they had settled after survey.
6. They asked for representation in the Parliament of Canada.
7. They asked for the abolition of timber dues.
8. They asked for the appointment of a registrar at Edmonton or its vicinity.
9. They asked that the road between Edmonton and St. Albert should be confirmed by a public highway.
10. They asked for scrip, as had been given to the half-breeds in Manitoba.

It will thus be seen that so far from Father Leduc and Mr. Maloney asking for survey, at Prince Albert or in the neighborhood of Prince Albert at St. Louis de Langevin, their prayer was

CONFIRMED ENTIRELY TO THE EDMONTON DISTRICT, and had no relation whatever to the parish of St. Louis de Langevin and to the applications which had been made for a re-survey of that parish. On the 12th of April of the same year (1883) the Minister caused a written reply to be sent to the representatives, as follows:—

1. The lands were promised to be surveyed into river lots as requested.
2. Patents were promised to be issued as soon as the field notes and plans of the survey were sent into the department.
3. The request of the people of St. Albert, Edmonton and Fort Saskatchewan to have their holdings surveyed into river lots and the right of pre-emption given to them, was promised.
4. A land agent was promised.
5. The time spent by settlers on lands in advance of survey if it was promised should apply in their application for patents as if spent after survey.
6. The question of the representation of the Territories in Parliament, it was said, would engage the attention of the Government.
7. The Government declined to abolish timber dues, holding that they were in the interests of the country, and necessary for the preservation of the timber.
8. It was promised that a registrar for the Edmonton District should be appointed.
9. The regulation of public highways being within the purview of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-council, it was promised that the attention of the Governor should be called to that paragraph of the memorial.

10. It was stated that the Government would consider the question of the claim of the half-breeds of the Northwest Territories to scrip.

#### SUBSTANTIALLY EVERY REQUEST GRANTED.

It will thus be seen that, substantially, every request made by Father Leduc and Mr. Maloney on behalf of the inhabitants of the Edmonton district was granted, excepting representation in Parliament, which of course was a matter of public policy; the abolition of timber dues, which applied to every part of the Territories; and the matters of scrip.

Mr. Laurier states that when Father Leduc returned to the Northwest he found that these promises had not been carried out. Father Leduc did write to the Government, saying that he learned that instructions had not been sent to the surveyor, as had been promised, but the answer of the department to that statement sufficiently meets that charge.

#### That answer was as follows:—

"DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OTTAWA, 31st Sept., 1883.  
"Sir—I have the honor, by the direction of the Minister of the Interior, to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 20th July last, and to request that you will be good enough to state in what respect, on your return to St. Albert, you found that the promises contained in the letter of the 31st April, 1883, which were the promises made verbally to Mr. Maloney and yourself when in Ottawa, had not been fulfilled by the Government. I am to call your attention to the fact that the only copy was Mr. Michael Deane instructed in regard to the survey, but a portion of his return of survey has already been received, and the present time being exercised with a view to confirmation by the Surveyor-General. I am also to inform you that until the survey has been completed and approved by the Minister, however, that no unnecessary time should be lost, and the required action has so far been taken with as much promptitude as possible.

"I have the honor to be, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
"Acting Secretary."

As a matter of fact the instructions had been sent to Mr. Michael Deane to proceed with these surveys as soon as information was received at Ottawa that the people of Edmonton were under a misapprehension concerning the action of the Government, and before the arrival in Ottawa of the Rev. Father Leduc and Mr. Maloney and more specific instructions were sent before the latter in reply to their memorandum was handed to them. Here is a telegram from the Surveyor-General, Mr. Deville, addressed to the Minister of the Interior at Ottawa, on this subject:

"OTTAWA, 21st December, 1886.

"To Hon. Thos. White:  
"Instructions to Michael Deane for survey of St. Albert settlement are 29th February 1883. He was further instructed on 6th April, 1883, to give this survey precedence over any other work."  
"E. DEVILLE,  
"Surveyor-General."

These surveys were promptly completed; a land agent was appointed, Mr. Gauvreau, a French-Canadian, being named to that position; a registrar was appointed, Mr. Roy, also a French-Canadian, being named the registrar, and the claims of the people have all been satisfactorily settled. It is worth while to state that the people, on whose behalf Father Leduc and Mr. Maloney visited Ottawa, so far from complaining, or taking part in the rebellion, enlisted as volunteers in the service of the Government during the rebellion to maintain the authority of the Crown.

#### HALF-BREED CLAIMS SETTLED.

A popular argument used by Mr. Laurier with the object of showing the number of half-breeds who were interested in the distribution of scrip is the statement that the Government settled with 2,000 of them. This statement is most misleading. The claims recognised covered the cases of children, of deceased persons represented by heirs, and of half-breeds who were formerly dealt with as Indians, but have now withdrawn from treaty. In the case of the latter, the annuities formerly paid to them as Indians will be no longer paid to them. The following is an analysis of the claims recognised by the commission during 1885 and 1886:—

	1885.	1886.	Total.
Treaty heads of families....	61	905	966
Orphan children.....	131	397	528
Deceased heads of families.....	895	78	973
Non-treaty children.....	760	313	1,073
Deceased non-treaty children.....	185	243	428
Deceased children.....	261	182	443
	1,888	1,150	3,038

So that the number of heads of families in the Northwest, who were at the time of the outbreak entitled to scrip, was 403, instead of two thousand as is usually stated, and of these, only about a score were in the disturbed district or took part in the outbreak.