

of the country they traversed ; and their own description of their sufferings is such as it is to be hoped would prevent Lord Selkirk, if he could hear it, from sending any more emigrants on the same destination.

The first settlers reached the proposed colony in the fall of 1812; and in the course of the following winter they would have perished for want of food, but for the assistance which they received from the North-West company's trading posts in their vicinity. Subsequent arrivals took place in the years 1813 and 1814; and the soil of the country being really fertile, as far as it is sheltered with woods, they might ultimately have succeeded in raising grain sufficient for their subsistence, but the measures of their leader began to involve them in quarrels with the natives of the country, especially the half-breed Indians, a daring and now a numerous race, sprung from the intercourse of the Canadian voyagers with the Indian women, and who consider themselves the possessors of the country and lords of the soil. Their principal leader, and Lord Selkirk's principal agent, was a Mr. Miles M'Donnell, formerly of this province, who on the 8th January 1814, issued a proclamation calling himself governor of Assiniboine, and assuming powers greater than those usually delegated to governors appointed by the crown.

He told the settlers and the Hudson's Bay company's servants, that the colony was erected into a separate and independent jurisdiction, the laws and government of which were both to be administered by himself. This could only have been looked upon as an empty boast; but that he proceeded upon the unprecedented authority thus assumed, and engaged his followers in acts of violence, for which he is now a prisoner, on his way to be tried in the courts of Lower Canada. The disorders excited in the country by these acts of violence, the disgust given to the settlers by the extensive disadvantages of the country, as well as the violence and tyranny of their leader, and the dread of the natives, Indian and mixed breed, all contributed to break up the colony. Some few of the settlers (about fourteen families) have returned to Hudson's Bay, and all the remainder threw themselves upon the compassion of the North-West company, to obtain the means of conveyance to Canada. Some of them state upon oath, that they left their homes in expectation of coming to Canada at once, and were only told of their actual destination at Stornaway, in the island of Lewis, from whence the embarkation took place; others state also upon oath, that they were informed the distance from Red River to Canada was short, and the communication easy, so that if they did not like that country, they might leave it, and join their friends in Upper Canada; and others, that they were to go to Canada by way of the Red River.

Under these circumstances, partly from compassion towards these poor people, and partly from a dread of the consequences of their remaining in the interior, (because in the event of the Indians attacking them, it was feared that the hatchet once raised, would not discriminate between a settler and a trader, but that all the white men in the country might become its victims,) the North-West company has afforded these settlers a conveyance to this province, and the means of subsistence, since they left the Red River. The number brought to Fort William (the company's chief post on the shore of Lake Superior) was about 140 souls, probably forty or fifty families (heads of families) and some single men, and the whole of them are now on their way to York, unless some may have obtained employment to their satisfaction about St. Mary's or St. Joseph's.

Hopes have certainly been held out to them of obtaining lands from the government of this country, and they are coming down with the hopes of being received as settlers, on the same footing as if they had come direct from Scotland; but this point rests entirely for the decision of government; the North-West company only promised these people a conveyance to Canada, and subsistence for the journey; this promise has been performed, and they are now left to the clemency and protection of government, who no doubt will extend to them a fostering hand.

(Signed) *W<sup>m</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gillivray.*

Kingston, }  
15th August 1815. }

(A true copy.)

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