

The rule of a man of sense and honour, like Prevost or Simcoe, responsible to authority at home, and checked by the free expression of opinion on the spot, is probably about as good a rule as the early settlers can have. But the choice lies between this and self-government, into a full measure of which the sooner the North-West enters the better for all concerned. The attempt to rule that vast region, charged as it is with the interests of prospective myriads, as a dependency and to use its administrative appointments as a party patronage fund, must soon come to an end; and the only question is whether its termination shall be amicable or violent. Representation in Parliament will have soon to be conceded to the Territories, the unfortunate sparseness of their population notwithstanding. The present representation of Manitoba would be wholly inadequate as a guardian of the special interests of the whole North-West even if it had retained its independence. As a matter of fact it has been almost entirely captured and gone into the pocket of the Minister. This is partly the misfortune of the people of Manitoba, partly it is their fault or at least the consequence of their error. It is difficult, no doubt in a new community, amidst unsettlement and booms, to light on men who are beyond the reach of temptation: but unless such men can be found representation is worse than a farce.

IN answer to an inquiry in the House of Commons, the Government replied that the expense of defraying the cost of sending home the bodies of volunteers who fell in battle would be borne by the public Treasury. Apart altogether from the question of expense, the sending of the bodies home for burial is a questionable policy. The soldier's way is to bury the dead on the field of battle, and it is the better way. The desire of friends to see the dead bodies of their relatives can be gratified only at the expense of destroying the illusion which it would be more pleasant to preserve, and the end is disappointment. It would be better if we all became resigned to the idea of having the dead buried where they fall. It is on the field of battle that they find their most honoured graves.

WHEN Riel is put on his trial a strong effort is likely to be made to prove that he is insane. A letter from a high dignitary (*une personne haut placée*) in the North-West, whose name has not been given, describes him as having been insane ever since he was confined in the Beauport Asylum. He declared himself the envoy of God whose mission was to save his people, and the fact is recalled that he recently signed his name as "Louis David Riel," believing himself to be King David. He spoke in parables and had recourse to mystic demonstrations by which the Métis were deluded. He set the savages against the priests, describing them as their worst enemies: the massacre of the Oblates followed. When he received General Middleton's proclamation, inviting the Métis to return to their homes, Riel replied: "Bring to me Dewdney, Lawrence, Clarke and Archbishop Taché, and I will cease hostilities." These statements are made to prove that Riel has been insane since the insurrection broke out. That he has been insane ever since he was in Beauport Asylum is very doubtful. Against this assumption is the fact that when he was brought back a year ago from Montana to champion the cause of the Half-breeds, he had been in a lay college kept by the Jesuits where he had been employed as teacher. The reality of his insanity, when he was in Beauport Asylum, will probably be established beyond doubt. When there he wrote, under inspiration of the Deity, as he pretended, prophecies in which he foretold the fate of the different nations, including France, Germany, Austria, Russia and England. There can be no doubt, if the document be genuine, that when this prophecy was composed Riel was a maniac, and that religion had a foremost place in his disordered mind. That this mania should have a tendency to reappear is probable, almost certain; but that he is now insane is not the general opinion of those who have recently come into contact with him. When he came back to Canada last year, he spoke rationally and even moderately, going so far as to say that he did not desire uselessly to embarrass the Government. For and against his alleged insanity much evidence will probably be produced. At present, it looks as if it would be hard to prove that he was insane from the time of the encounter at Duck Lake to the bayonet charge which cleared the rifle pits of Batoche and ended his career as insurgent leader.

A MEASURE of gratitude is due to any one who has the courage to breast the tide of popular feeling when he thinks that it is hurrying the nation to the commission of injustice, above all when he believes that the multitude is clamouring for innocent blood. Mr. Phillips Thompson is therefore to be commended for publishing his protest against the execution of Riel, even though the language in which his letter to the *World* is couched may not be of the kind best calculated to allay the wrath of the people. But we submit that he hardly states correctly the question

between Riel and the community. The people demand, not that Riel shall be put to death, but that he shall be brought to trial before a trustworthy tribunal, and that, if he is found guilty, political or ecclesiastical intervention shall not be allowed to snatch him, as it did before, from the penalty which he has deserved and which every one else found guilty of the same crime would undergo. That there is reason to apprehend political or ecclesiastical intervention Mr. Thompson himself admits when he rejoices that the French Canadians have a controlling influence in our affairs. Riel's case is essentially different from that of the other Half-breeds, who there is reason to believe had, or at least fully believed themselves to have, grievances for which they could not obtain redress, and who have paid the penalty of their insurrection, some by the loss of their lives, others by the wreck of their homesteads. But Riel was not an ill-used or neglected claimant of land. He was domiciled in the United States, and came over as an incendiary, for the purpose of getting up a rebellion. He had already got up one rebellion, had committed what the mass of the community regarded as the dastardly murder of a loyal citizen, and had been allowed to escape unpunished. Nor did he merely kindle rebellion among the Half-breeds. He did what was far worse: he scattered firebrands among the Indians, who, as no man knew better than he, were accustomed, when on the war-path, to perpetrate the most devilish atrocities on men, women and children who fell into their hands. The reason and the right feeling of mankind have drawn, it is true, a distinction between political offences committed in the pursuit, however mistaken, of the public good and offences committed for a mercenary or personal object, though those who take the sword ought to be prepared to perish by the sword when they are vanquished. But if the mere name of a political insurgent, which may be assumed by any brigand, or by any one who prefers incendiarism to honest trades, is to act as a charter, not only for disturbing at will the peace of the community, but for every sort of outrage, for blowing us up by the score or setting Indians to scalp and torture us, our normal condition is likely to be civil war. Once more, the nation desires that Riel shall have a fair trial; it wants justice and not blood; but it is resolved, if we rightly understand its attitude, that justice shall not be overborne by any "controlling influence" and that there shall be no repetition of a criminal farce.

TORONTO has been enjoying almost a cataract of American eloquence. Among other orators the Hon. John F. Finch, of Nebraska, has been delivering himself of a lengthy argument against paying any compensation to Canadian liquor-sellers for the abolition of their trade. We hope we are not guilty of any inhospitality or discourtesy toward this distinguished stranger in asking why he, as a foreigner, should feel called upon to interfere in a question of right between our Government and its citizens? He tells us that the case of Canada is quite different from that of the United States. In the United States, he says, the Constitution provides that private property shall not be taken without just compensation, but in Canada there is no such provision; here Parliament is absolute, and may despoil the citizen under legislative forms to any extent that it pleases. We beg leave to assure the Hon. John Finch that though the rules of natural justice may not be formally set out in the British North America Act, or in the Canadian Statute Book, they are not the less written on Canadian consciences, and that, if he thinks that in crossing the Line he has left behind all restraints on his philanthropic propensities, he never was more mistaken in his life. Of his invectives against those engaged in the liquor trade we can only say that, if a Christian church was the suitable theatre for their delivery, Christian churches in general, and those belonging to the communion of John Wesley in particular, must have undergone a great change of destination. Suppose the policy of the State requires that the calling of these men should be suppressed, and they should be deprived of their livelihood, is that a reason for overwhelming them with foul abuse, imputing to them crimes which are mere figments of a malignant fancy, and hunting them down like beasts? Is it not rather a reason for treating them, at all events, with scrupulous equity, if not for showing them some consideration and sympathy? Mr. Finch admits that not very long ago, and at the time when many of these men entered the trade, it was deemed by all persons, including clergymen, perfectly moral; and in order to make out that the liquor-sellers are nevertheless fit subjects of penal treatment, he affects to believe that they have broken faith with the community which, when it licensed them, was led to suppose that their trade would promote happiness and virtue. Does he mean to say that the community did not know that intoxicating liquors would intoxicate? The liquor-sellers have obeyed the laws passed from time to time for the regulation of their traffic. What more could they do? It is difficult to believe that any person in that congregation not beside