

the Woods to Fort Garry, under charge of a man named Snow, I suppose a civil engineer or surveyor. Amongst that party of Canadians there was, unfortunately, a poet. In fact, I believe this poet was his assistant, and had acquired some renown in the Canadian press as the author of verses of a some merit. Now, if that poet had confined himself to writing poems and reciting Shakespeare for his own amusement, no harm would have been done; but the very moment he set foot into the North-West Territories he began to write to his friends, and his letters were published in the *Globe*. Those letters gave a description of the country and of the people, which was simply a caricature, and was most unfair and unjust. The female part of the population got very angry at the reading of those letters. One lady pulled the nose of the poet, and another, in the store of her husband, used her hands rather freely about his ears. These facts show that when Canadians wrote about the features of the people and sought to caricature their mode of life and social institutions, the people became very sensitive, as they were justly proud of their condition. The uneasiness of that people assumed a different phase when, in February, 1868—and, mark you, that is a very important period in the history of the country—a disturbance occurred at Oak Point, in consequence of a report gaining credence among settlers in that locality that Canadians were purchasing from the Indians portions of land on which actual occupants had a pre-emption claim. In the lack of judgment displayed by those Canadian employees whom the Government sent there in 1868, we find the very seeds of discontent and hostility that afterwards matured in open revolt against the Canadian authorities. Of course, they were defending their own property, and these half-breeds, sensitive and proud, and feeling that Canadians were invaders of the Territory, felt the injustice of the proceedings. They knew very well that those people transacted business with the Indians in the Territory, which had been sold to Lord Selkirk, and upon which they had settled and made improvements and secured a pre-emptory claim. One of those parties was arrested and brought to Fort Garry, and the people submitted a prayer to the Governor that this man should be sent out of the Territory, because his presence was calculated to arouse misgivings and excitement among the people. In order to show what was the true state of the little party of Canadians and Americans who were then arousing opposition to existing institutions, the *Nor. Wester* published an article, in which it was stated that “while Sir George Cartier and William Macdougall were going to England, in order to unite the North-West to Canada, Senator Ramsay, of Minnesota, was submitting a series of resolutions at Washington, for the purpose of annexing the colony of Red River to the United States.” What was the patriotic winding up to that document? It was, that: “Whichever way the cat jumped the North-West was bound to be a great country.” It was not love of Canada that influenced them, but a feeling that they were bound to have some power, either political or in some other direction; and whether union occurred with the United States or Canada, it was a matter of indifference to them. I mean to state that matters connected with the remote causes of the present disturbances were beyond the control of any Government, whether Conservative or Liberal, and that in these the recent troubles had their rise and cause is quite evident. With respect to the influence of Canadians sent to the North-West, I will quote the testimony of a writer whose prejudices against the French-speaking half-breeds are well known:

“Had the Canadian party endeavored to lead the settlers to demand in a proper way annexation to Canada, without trying at the same time to blacken the character of the Hudson Bay Company, it is very probable that Canada would have found more friends than it did in Red River. There was no objection to a union with Canada amongst the people, but when men who represented themselves as champions of Canada defied the laws and endeavored to bring mob violence into existence, then the settlers took fright, and without waiting to judge properly, they

denounced all Canadians on account of the acts done by a few lawless men. The fact was, that the people of Red River felt that although the Hudson Bay Company government was weak and unsuitable to the wants of the country, still it was the only one in existence at the time in the North-West, and therefore the sole protection to life and property. They consequently had no desire to see it overthrown, until another and better one was substituted in its place. There was no anti-Canadian feeling dominant amongst the settlers; but there was a fear that if the generality of Canadians should prove to be like the party who put themselves forward as the representatives of Canada in Red River, they would not be a good or safe people to become allied to.”

Then, further on, the same author says:

“Other parties now commenced staking off land, until, at last the settlers finding out what was going on, interfered, and a great deal of ill-feeling was caused amongst the people on the subject. Indeed, this promiscuous claiming of land on the part of strangers did more to engender a feeling of discontent towards Canadian annexation than anything else. The idea became quite prevalent that the rights of settlers to their lands would not be respected, but that every Tom, Dick or Harry might come in and claim land wherever they found it. This selfish and unprincipled behavior on the part of such men did a great deal of harm, and sowed the seeds of future trouble in the settlement. In fact, it became generally believed amongst a large number of the settlers that they were to be ignored, and that strangers were to be allowed to come into the country and do as they pleased; and that Canada's whole aim in endeavoring to obtain possession of the country was to find a place of refuge for its surplus population, and that the interests of the Red River people were to suffer thereby. All this ignorance of the real intentions of the Canadian Government was caused by the actions of a few men.”

Now, Sir, you may well imagine with what feelings of uneasiness the arrival of Col. Dennis and his party of surveyors was welcomed in the summer of 1869, after the doings of the men under surveyor Snow, after their trying to buy lands from the Indians, without regard to the occupants of those lands. So great was that anxiety that when this officer commenced with his surveyors to survey some lands which had been occupied for a long time in the vicinity of St. Boniface, their work was put a stop to by the population. That was the commencement of open difficulties among the Red River people, a very important period in the history of that part of the Territory, in connection with Canadian doings. It is very important to make known the remote causes which led the population there to take fright at the attempt made by these people, the injudicious attempt, to survey lands which had been cultivated and improved for many years before.

Mr. TROW. The hon. gentleman will excuse me, but it is so excessively hot, and members are so uncomfortable from sitting so long, that I believe the House will be delighted if the hon. gentleman would hand in the balance of his speech to the *Hansard* reporters. It would answer just as well.

Mr. ROYAL. I have no objection to moving the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. TROW. The balance would be published in *Hansard*.

Mr. ROYAL. Not at all. My speech is not written.

Mr. DESJARDINS. I think we have shown a good deal of patience with other hon. gentlemen, and I think we might give the same courtesy to the hon. member for Provencher (Mr. Royal). Perhaps, if he was speaking in his own language, which he avoids out of courtesy to members who do not understand the French language, he might occupy less time.

Mr. ROYAL. I have no intention of wearying the House. It is not a source of pleasure to me to be obliged to speak in a foreign language. I do it, of course, as a matter of courtesy to this House, and to those who do not understand the French language. I would, no doubt, find great pleasure in addressing the House in French, but I do it in English with no little difficulty; and I know it must be very tiresome and unpleasant to some of the members here to listen to a member who addresses the House in a language which is not familiar to him. However, I believe the question is very important; but if the House is unanimous upon