

PRINCE ALBERT, N.W.T.,
14th December, 1885.

HON. THOMAS WHITE,
Minister of the Interior,
Ottawa, Ont.

SIR,—In accordance with instructions received from you during your late visit to the North-West, that I should, during my present visit to this District, collect all possible information regarding the alleged causes of the recent unfortunate outbreak in the North-West, I have the honor to report as follows. The six alleged causes are the following:—

1. That the Half-breed settlers did not receive patents for their lands, through delays, the fault solely of the Government, which rendered it impossible for them to obtain entry for the lands settled upon; a
2. That, owing to the system of surveys, these parties were unable to obtain the land they had settled on and improved prior to survey;
3. That they were entitled to the same rights as had been accorded to the Half-breeds of Manitoba;
4. That the lands on which they had for years resided had been sold over their heads to others, chiefly speculators;
5. That the timber dues have proved very onerous to them, and were a grave cause of dissatisfaction; and
6. That the dues for cutting hay on Government lands were also onerous, and a cause of great dissatisfaction.

The Half-breed outbreak has been confined wholly to those living on the south branch of the Saskatchewan River, above Range 26 west of 2nd Meridian, and those in the vicinity of and immediately west of that river, in the neighborhood of Duck Lake, as shown by the lists enclosed, prepared with great care and from the best information possible. Louis Marion, a very intelligent Half-breed, who has lived in the vicinity of Duck Lake since 1880; Louis Schmidt, a Half-breed, who lived from 1881 to 1884 in Township 45, Range 1, west 3rd; Baptiste Boyer, a Half-breed, who during the past ten years has lived in the vicinity of Batoche; and George Duck, lately Agent of Dominion Lands, Prince Albert, are my authorities for other information than that which has been obtained from the affidavits of the parties themselves, it being necessary to obtain information from other sources than the said affidavits, as many of the claimants have not come forward, although repeatedly requested to do so, and give evidence in support of their land claims. The lists include, I think, every Half-breed who is a settler on or claimant to land in that District, and who with their families constituted probably upwards of 95 per cent. of the Half-breeds who took an active part, as followers of Riel, in the late outbreak. The remainder were strangers who had no interest in the country or cause, but were attracted by the excitement and pillage incident to all such outbreaks; some few probably took part because their hearts were in it.

During my first visit to Prince Albert, in August, 1883, I instructed Mr. Gauvreau, then Assistant Agent, a French Canadian, to visit every French settler, Half-breed or otherwise, in the District, ascertain what particular quarter-section he was on, and urge him to make entry. This he did; but, although the Roman Catholic priest urged them in a like manner, for some reason or other they failed to do so. Some were deterred through ignorance, thinking that they would have to pay taxes; others have stated that they feared if they did so the Government might call upon them to bear arms, but against what foe does not appear to have been very clear to them. Like all ignorant people, a few designing, mischievous men who have their ear, can work on their ignorance and prejudices for the advancement of their own selfish ends. This is particularly noticeable in the case of those who settled subsequent to survey along the South Saskatchewan River. In spite of the fact that every Dominion Lands