

# Weekly Messenger

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## The Weekly Messenger

### THE NORTH-WEST REBELLION.

This subject has engrossed public attention throughout Canada and many portions of the United States during the past week. The area of the rebellion has extended. The rumor that the half-breeds had fired upon a flag of truce at Carlton during a parley with Major Crozier's party created considerable indignation. The rumor was afterwards denied. Archbishop Tache, of Manitoba, was suspected of giving countenance to the rebellion and helping Riel as he did during the previous trouble, but the Archbishop publicly denies all knowledge or connection with Riel or the Rebels.

The Mounted Police, finding it unsafe to continue to hold Fort Carlton, evacuated it on the 27th of March, burning the fort, stores and supplies, in case they should fall into the hands of the rebels. The detachment of Police proceeded to Prince Albert.

Indignation is expressed from one end of Canada to the other, that the Government, knowing the difficulty, and aware of the mutterings of the half-breeds and their natural discontent at treatment received, did not take proper measures and so arrange matters, that a rising might have been prevented. The Indians in places are said to have been preparing for months to rise in consequence of the Government turning a deaf ear to their complaints. In Eastern Canada, however, notwithstanding the belief that the Government had not done its duty, men of all parties have gallantly rallied to their country's assistance, and thousands of offers of assistance have been received.

Fenian rumors, of course, been rife. The Canadian Government received numbers of telegrams from United States cities, stating that great excitement prevailed in Fenian circles, and that in Buffalo nightly meetings were being held. Well-known Fenians were said to be in Montreal and other Canadian cities and the probabilities of an invasion from the United States of these "patriots" have been eagerly discussed. No invasion, or attempt at such, has occurred up to the present.

Alarming news reached the east from Battleford, on March 31st, to the effect that the place had been raided and that the Indians had obtained possession. The inhabitants escaped to the police barracks, where they will likely be safe until reinforcements arrive.

The settlement at Calgary telegraphed for troops on the same date, fearing an uprising of the Blackfeet. Armed citizens patrolled the streets, but upon a telegram being received from Father Lacombe, at the Indian reserve, stating that all was quiet, the fears of the Calgary people were allayed. The Blackfeet, it is said, have been on the verge of starvation during the past three months.

The Indians of Eagle Hills have killed their instructors, James Payne, and George E. Applegarth, and two settlers. Settlers moving towards Battleford have been robbed

of their horses, waggons and loads, and several more have been raided, and are in a destitute condition. Battleford, where the refugees are, is considered impregnable, being surrounded with a strong stockade, about two hundred yards square, built of poplar poles about twelve feet above the ground. There are no trees or shelter for attacking the fort, and, owing to the level prairie on every side, those in the fort could frustrate any assault. The present population of Battleford is about six-hundred, about one half of whom are white. Two hundred armed men are amongst this number.

Owing to the telegraph wires having been cut, news from Prince Albert and neighborhood, where Riel is, continues to be of the most meagre character.

The rebel plans are said to consist of securing all the forts on the Saskatchewan and appropriating the supplies. They will then retreat towards Edmonton, leading the volunteers into the heavily timbered country there, and then give battle. Under no circumstances, it is said, will they show fight on the open prairie.

The United States Government at Washington, have ordered two hundred men at Fort Pembina, five hundred at Fort Snelling, and six hundred in Montana, to prevent Fenians or Indians from crossing the boundary line.

In view of their probable need, the Canadian Government ordered 10,000 Martini-Henry rifles and 3,000,000 rounds of cartridges for the use of the forces in the North-West.

At latest reports Riel was said to have under his command some 1,200 half-breeds and 700 Indians.

Anxiety is beginning to be felt concerning the state of affairs at Prince Albert, owing to the failure of communication. The town contains with refugees and police about 1,400 persons. The stock in store is small. The barracks are, however, very strong, located on a tongue of land resembling an island, between the Battle and North Saskatchewan Rivers. The barracks are situated on the top of an inclined slope, two hundred feet above the level of the river. The buildings are surrounded by a solid stockade twenty-six feet high.

Several companies of militia from Eastern Canada have departed for the scene of action via the Canadian Pacific Railway, that is at present under construction. The various gaps in the iron road are being crossed by the volunteers on foot. The total distance from Quebec to Carlton is 2,421 miles. Upon the departure of the various troops to the front the inhabitants of the cities turned out in great numbers and the enthusiasm was immense. Men are being concentrated in the North-West under command of General Middleton, who will, as soon as sufficient reinforcements arrive, push forward and crush the rebellion.

At Winnipeg, being comparatively adjacent to the scene of the rebellion, the war excitement, ever since the troubles began, has been at fever heat. The whole place has been converted into a military camp, and volunteers from the country adjacent are reported pouring in continuously.

Delay, and that considerable, has been felt in getting the regiments moved to the front, owing to the want of sufficient means of transportation.

The latest reports from Battleford confirm the previous ones, viz., that all the white people are still safe and secure from attack. Indians continue in sight of the town, but are making little or no disturbance.

Sunday editions of newspapers were published in Toronto during the excitement. The proprietors of these journals will be tried for an offence against the Sunday law of Ontario. At Winnipeg, under the New Sunday Act there, areas of farriers for shoeing the horses of the troops have been made.

The route chosen for the troops although a more difficult one than that further south had the advantage to Canadians of its lying entirely through their own territory. At the time of the Red River Rebellion, some years ago, steamers carrying provisions for the troops were refused leave to pass through the American Canal at Sault Ste Marie, and to save a hitch of any kind this time it was resolved to proceed entirely over Canadian soil. Another reason was that to send the volunteers over American railways would have laid them open to the attacks of Fenians and Fenian sympathizers, which was far from being desirable. To send Canadian troops through United States territory would have made the Fenians wild.

Latest advices state that Riel is entrenched on the river bank, and it is thought intends making a determined resistance there. He has organized his force, appointed his officers, and expects to be able to muster some 3,000 men.

On the arrival of the "Queen's Own," a Toronto regiment, at Winnipeg, after their long journey north of Lake Superior, the men were all tanned and had severe blisters, owing to the hard work experienced marching over the gaps in the line. Shelter and food were found to be in insufficient quantities, only one meal was served them on one day, and bread was scarce. They had to pass one cold night on flat cars, with only blankets and overcoats as covering. The men, however, kept up their spirits amazingly well.

At a meeting of settlers, held at a farm eight miles from Calgary, on Sunday last, a settlers' rights association was formed and several resolutions passed. The preamble points out that a number of townships around Calgary are withheld from settlers, though many have been there for over three years and made more than sufficient improvements to entitle them to patents for their lands; that the settlers are oppressed under the lease system, and have no representatives at Ottawa. It is asked that leases where the conditions have not been complied with, where the land is fit for agricultural purposes, be thrown open for homestead entry. It is also asked that the half-breeds in the North West Territories be placed on an equal footing with those in Manitoba. This memorandum of grievances has re-

ceived two hundred signatures. The present discussed a resort to arms and the joining of the rebels, in case the demands were refused. The president stated that the settlers at present were in a worse state than wild beasts, being hunted at all times and seasons by police, Government officials and ranchmen.

Riel is said to be disappointed at the half breeds and Indians around the American frontier not having risen in his favor, and that although he will attempt a fight at Clarke's Crossing, he will fall back directly after, and beat a retreat across the north branch of the Saskatchewan entering the forest where he will doubtless get clear.

At Moose Jaw on the Canadian Pacific Railway about forty Cree Indians in full war paint entered the place, and after holding a war dance, helped themselves to whatever they wanted. The citizens, alarmed, fled to the Canadian Pacific Railway Station, and General Middleton ordered arms and ammunition for a home guard, that was formed.

The English press has thus far said very little on the trouble, being, doubtless, in almost entire ignorance of the cause of the grievance.

### THE PRESENT MAHDI.

The Mahdi was born at Dongola in the year 1843 of our era. His father was called Abdallah, and his mother Amina. He has on both cheeks three parallel scars. These details, though they have for us no value, are very significant for the Mussulmans, for one of the most ancient traditions attributed to Mahommed declares that the Mahdi will bear the same name as the Prophet, and that the father of the Mahdi will bear the same name as the Prophet's father. Now the Prophet was called Mahommed Ahmed; his father was called Abdallah, and his mother Amina. Forty years is the prophetic age among the Mussulmans, because it is the age at which the Prophet revealed himself, and the Mahdi's scars are the stamp of the prophet which marked Mahommed and which must mark every true prophet.

From his earliest childhood Mahommed showed signs of a decided vocation. At twelve years of age he knew the Koran by heart. His brothers, boat builders on the White Nile, gave him the means to study under two renowned professors near Khartoum. At twenty he went to the island of Aba, and there lived for fifteen years a retired life. When the year of prophecy arrived, the fortieth year, he revealed himself as the Mahdi, and the Baggaras proceeded without difficulty from veneration to adoration. He became the prophet in his own country.

THE EMPRESS OF AUSTRIA is touring *incognito* along the south coast of England. It is said she alternates between riding on the railways and tramping afoot. She is reported to be a good pedestrian able to cover eighteen miles a day. She is accompanied by a single attendant.