

# Weekly Messenger

AND TEMPERANCE WORKER.

VOL. IV. No. 19.

MONTREAL & NEW YORK, FOR THE WEEK ENDING, APRIL 4, 1885.

FIFTY CENTS A YEAR.

## The Weekly Messenger

### RIEL AND THE HALF BREEDS.

We publish this week a portrait of Louis Riel, leader of the rebellion of French half-breeds in the North West Territory. A history of the former rising, fifteen years ago, of which he was also the leader, will be of much interest at the present time.

In 1868, the land in the North West of British North America, over which the Hudson's Bay Company had authority, was sold to the Federal Government of Canada for \$1,500,000 in money, 50,000 acres around the company's trading posts, and one twentieth part of all lands in the fertile belt. The Dominion government appointed a Lieutenant-Governor and Council to make laws for the new acquisition. The half-breed inhabitants, some of whom derive their white blood from French ancestors, and some from Scotch, objected to their land system and other old institutions being overturned, and a flood of immigration being let in upon them. Declaring the territory had been sold without the inhabitants having ever been consulted, the half-breeds expressed their determination not to submit to be governed by any one except themselves, as they had done before. Having set up a provisional government of their own at Winnipeg, then called Fort Garry, with John Brouse as President and Louis Riel as Secretary, they refused entrance to the Lieutenant Governor, and imprisoned a party of loyalists who tried to upset the rebellion from within. After some loss of life—including that of a young man Scott, who was most barbarously murdered by Riel and his comrades—the better class of French Canadians withdrew from the movement. But it was not till Colonel (now Lord) Wolsley reached Fort Garry with a military force in the spring of 1870 that the rebels fled. The Dominion Government guaranteed the leaders a yearly income of \$1,000 each if they would leave the country, and they did so. Many concessions were made to the half-breeds as well as to the Roman Catholic authorities,—the church receiving 56 square miles of land just opposite Fort Garry on the Red River.

The rebellion which broke out a few days ago has been got up by the same agitator, who works upon the feelings of his countrymen for his own benefit. He returned to Canada months ago, but no steps were taken to prevent his doing mischief. The Dominion Government had notice that an outbreak was likely if attention was not paid to the new demands of the half-breeds. These demands were set forth in a "Bill of Rights" adopted by them in September last, at St. Laurent, and were as follows:

First—The subdivision of the Northwest territories into provinces; second, half-breeds to receive the same grants and other advantages as Manitoba half-breeds; third, patents to be issued at once to colonists in possession; fourth, the sale of half a million acres of Dominion lands, the proceeds to be applied to the establishment on the half-breed settlements of schools, hospitals

and such like institutions, and the equipment of the poorer half-breeds with seed, grain and implements; fifth, the reservation of a hundred townships of swamp land for distribution among the children of half-breeds during the next one hundred and twenty years; sixth, the grant of at least \$1,000 for the maintenance of an institution to be conducted by the nuns in each half-breed settlement; and, seventh, better provision for the support of the Indians.

Now that the horse is stolen, the stable door is going to be locked. A commission is to be appointed to investigate the grievances of the people. But the signs of the times,—among other things, the great unpopularity of Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney,—should have led to action of this sort before blood was shed.

proper. The Chinese drove the French back to Langson and recaptured the town. Gen. Negrier was grievously wounded, and the French casualties were very serious. The latest accounts represent the French troops to be in full retreat with the Chinese vigorously pursuing them. A vast quantity of commissary and other stores has been lost. Gen. Negrier received a gun shot in the chest. He was brought from the field, but his recovery is doubtful. The French loss is unknown. Gen. De Lisle telegraphs for assistance in an imploring tone, which leads the Parisians to expect further disasters. Intense excitement prevails wherever the bad news has become known in France.

Gen. De Lisle telegraphs from Hanoi: "Gen. Negrier has been severely wounded

defeat, have compelled the ministers to resign, and let others take revenge on the Chinese. Here is the account telegraphed from Paris showing what took place there on Monday:

Long before the hour set for convening the Chamber of Deputies, the streets in the vicinity were packed with excited crowds. It soon became evident that a double was brewing for the Government. A strong force of military was on duty to prevent riot and preserve order in the Chamber. The galleries were crowded with people, who showed their irritation over the defeat at Langson by keeping up a noisy discussion and hurling denunciatory epithets at members of the Cabinet and their supporters as they entered. When M. Ferry rose to announce the decision of the Cabinet Council this morning he was loudly hissed by those in the galleries. He had barely finished when a number of deputies of the Right (Conservatives) sprang to their feet yelling, "Down with the wretch!" Above the din could be heard the voice of M. Clemenceau, (Radical) as he fairly screamed "Traitors!" It was some time before order was restored, and had it not been for the presence of the troops there is hardly a doubt that violence would have been done. During this scene the crowd outside became a howling mob and made several unsuccessful attempts to pass the guards. At the opening of the Chamber M. Ferry presented the Government's request for a credit of forty million francs on account of the military operations in China, immediately moved for the appointment of a committee to examine and report upon the credit, and demanded that the motion be given priority. The motion was rejected by a vote of 308 to 361. M. Ferry immediately announced the resignation of the entire Ministry. President Grevy accepted the resignations.

RUSSIA AND THE SOUDAN.—The prospects, both in the Soudan and Afghanistan, are a good deal more peaceful. The British Government sent an ultimatum demanding that the Russian Commissioners, who were appointed to join the British Commissioners now waiting to fix a boundary between Afghan and Russian territory, should at once proceed to their work. The Czar, seeing that Britain was in earnest, and doubtless sorry he had provoked that country so much, has sent a reasonable reply. The British Government now has great hopes of peace, though every preparation is being made for the worst. In the Soudan, though Osman Digna was a few days ago reported to have 20,000 men at his back, a spy reports that he has really been deserted by nearly his whole force, and is now attended by only a hundred men. At any rate he has sent a messenger to the British camp at Suakim with a flag of truce, asking terms of peace. An inquiry has been ordered to find out whether General MacNeill was to blame for the recent event, when his camp was surprised and many of his men killed by the Arabs.

GENERAL GRANT is reported to be much worse.



LOUIS RIEL.

### A FRENCH DEFEAT.

The French army in Tonquin has been terribly defeated by the Chinese. Telegrams say that the Chinese forces defeated the French at Langson on Friday. They carried the key of the position and the entrenchments. The French retreated beyond Dong Dang, and are falling on to Long Koi. Their loss in men and guns is unknown. It is estimated that the Chinese were 50,000 strong.

Another account says the Chinese troops on the Tonquin frontier made a desperate attack upon the entrenched camp established by Gen. Negrier between Langson and Kilna, and from which Gen. Negrier had been making a reconnaissance beyond the frontier separating Tonquin from China

and has been obliged to evacuate Langson. The Chinese, in three large columns, made an impetuous attack upon the French position before Kilna. Col. Herbinger, in the face of a superior number of the enemy and exhausted ammunition, was obliged to retreat to Dong Dang and Thannoi. I am massing forces on the Chu and Kep roads. If the enemy still increases, I shall retire to the Song Koi. Whatever happens I hope to be able to defend the whole delta. Please send reinforcements as quickly as possible.

The French Government determined to immediately ask a vote of \$8,000,000 for war to the death against China, and to send 20,000 more troops forward to march on Peking. But the people, in fury at the Government, which is held responsible for the