

should not get their land patents for ten years, His Grace Archbishop Tache suggested that they should not get them for three generations. Now, gentlemen, what would have been the result of this? I venture to say and I will give you proof of it, that had the Government accepted the suggestions of the Northwest Council or of His Grace Archbishop Tache, it would not have satisfied the half-breeds of the Northwest Territory, and we would still have continuous trouble in connection with them. Then, gentlemen, as regards the

COMMISSION WHICH ISSUED THIS YEAR,

we are told that it was not issued until it was found the rebellion had broken out. Nothing could be farther from the truth than this statement. We learn from the testimony of Father Andre that the news that the commission had been appointed and the order-in-council passed had reached him on the 4th of March last, while the battle of Duck Lake did not occur until the end of March. It cannot, therefore, be said that the action of the Government in appointing the commission resulted in any way whatever from the actual outbreak of hostilities in that province. (Applause.) After the commission had been issued and while it was sitting at Qu'Appelle, a matter occurred which will show how far the suggestions of his Grace and of the Northwest Council would have met the demands of the half-breeds. Mr. Street, the chairman of the commission, telegraphed to Sir David Macpherson as follows:—

QU'APPELLE, 6th April.

"Important conference to-day with influential half-breed deputation; all difficulties removed excepting two. First—All children will refuse money scrip, demanding certificate for 240 acres land instead, like Manitoba; several bishops and priests support this demand. Second—Half-breeds having homes on small front unacceptable; to buy these at one dollar per acre and free grant 160 acres from nearest vacant lands additional to allowance to extinguish Indian title."

Both those demands were conceded to the half-breeds by Sir David Macpherson. I took the trouble to get a memorandum from the clerk of the commission and here is the result. At Qu'Appelle there was the statement that these people would take nothing but the land and that they would not take the scrip. Well, this is the result: "Out of 143 half-breed children residing in the Qu'Appelle valley, who had the option of receiving a certificate for scrip for

"either \$240 or 240 acres of land, only two have elected to take land, all the others preferred to take money scrip instead." So that while we are blamed for not adopting the suggestion of the Northwest council, which was that those people should only get 160 acres of land, (and we offered them 240,) only two took the land, the others took the scrip, sold it at a sacrifice to the brokers who were on hand, and bought gew-gaws and other things with the money. That was the result as regarded the half-breeds. (Cheers.) There is another important fact. You will see by the recommendation of the Northwest council, to which I have just referred, that the Government were asked to decide that those half-breeds who had been settled with in Manitoba should not receive any consideration in extinguishment of the Indian title, although now residing in the Northwest Territory. Now, gentlemen, what are the facts? The rebellion broke out on the Saskatchewan, and nearly all the people settled there were men who had had their half-breed title extinguished in Manitoba. (Laughter.) Out of all those engaged in the rebellion only twenty-three came before the commission to say they were entitled to any land in consideration of the Indian side of their character, and of those twenty-three all but one swore positively that they were not consenting parties to the rebellion, but, under terror and forced by Riel's armed men, they joined the rebels for fear they would be banished, have their property destroyed or their families rendered destitute. The localities in which the half-breeds had claims were not in rebellion at all. The place where the half-breeds rebelled was a place where the men had gone who had already had their land matters settled in Manitoba. And they had no claims on any account whatever. There are

TWO CLASSES OF HALF-BREEDS

in the Northwest. The one class are men who had moved from Manitoba to the Saskatchewan, and who before leaving received their scrip or their land, and the other class are the plain-hunters, and a few people who had gone from Manitoba to the N. W. Territory without having their title extinguished. But the men who rebelled were not the latter class. (Hear, hear.) A good deal has been said about all the petitions which came to the Government in relation to these land matters. An examination was made of one of those petitions, and it was