

About this time, also, the dissatisfaction among a certain class of the settlers, to which I have already referred, found vent, and brought about a revolution on a small scale. The excuse for this uprising was that the Canadian authorities, in purchasing the rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, had neglected to provide for representative institutions in the proposed new form of government. The leader of the revolutionary party was Louis Riel, and he was for a time pretty much of a dictator. A provisional government was formed, the Hudson's Bay Company was sent to the right-about, and certain laws were framed; but as a large portion of the English settlers did not agree with Riel and his ways, and so endeavoured to oppose him, continual hubbub reigned in the country for more than a year. About this time the Hon. Donald A. Smith (now one of the directors of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and also a director of the Hudson's Bay Company) arrived in the country, in the capacity of Commissioner on behalf of the Dominion Government. Having been on the spot, and closely watched the proceedings in connection with this uprising, I may be permitted to say that to Mr. Smith's cool-headed judgment and undaunted firmness, combined with a fine sense of fair play, is due the absence of any very serious scenes of bloodshed. The Dominion Government were soon led to see their mistake, and an Act was passed, giving to the people of Manitoba the same representative institutions as those of the other provinces of Canada. Riel abdicated on the near approach of Colonel (now General Lord) Wolseley and his troops, and from that day to this law and order have existed throughout the Canadian North-West.

Settlers now began to arrive in the country in large numbers; some came in waggons, others floated down the Red River in flat boats, the railway having then only reached St. Cloud, a town in Minnesota, a short distance beyond St. Paul. An immediate spread of settlement followed this influx, and to avoid disputes the Dominion Government found it necessary to take steps for the proper survey of the country. Provision was made in 1872 by the Dominion Lands Act for the division of the land into townships, each consisting of thirty-six square miles or sections. A Government Land Office was established, and settlers were allowed to take up free homesteads wherever they were to be found. In the meantime, the stage travelling on alternate days had given place to a daily coach, and in 1871 Mr. James J. Hill, now president of the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railway Company, placed the first regular passenger and freight steamer on the Red River between Moorhead in Minnesota and Winnipeg in Manitoba. On November 20 of the same year telegraphic communication between Manitoba and the outside world was completed, and on that day the first message (one of congratulation) passed over the wires between the Governor of the North-West, the Hon. Adam G. Archibald, and the Governor-General of Canada, Lord Lisgar.