

most assuredly the happiest that were known then to exist. With regard to some of the feelings that civilised people seem to have a monopoly of, patriotism, for instance—I do not say it is one that peculiarly characterises the present Opposition, but I must say patriotism was and is still a characteristic of that population. I will ask the forbearance of the House while I quote from one of the writers in the history of those people, Mr. Hargrave. In his book on the Red River, he says :

“Patriotism is a virtue popularly supposed to flourish in mountainous and old countries, whose majestic scenery and associations of old time foster and perpetuate the pride and allegiance which their children feel for them. The inhabitants of the plain country of Red River, however, most assuredly evince an affection for the land of their nativity, closely allied to, if not identical with the patriotic emotions of the denizens of other countries, nor is it only to the dead natural scenery that their feelings cling, but the existing under an improved exterior, the romantic life, the custom, mode of thought and language of the Indians, retain their hold on the affections of their descendants to successive generations.”

Now, it has been the custom, unfortunately, of writers and speakers upon the half-breed population of the Red River, to represent them as a semi-savage population, devoid of all the feelings which we, styling ourselves civilised communities, are so proud of; but, as I have stated, that population had the idea of political institutions, of representative institutions; they had more, perhaps, than our own people, accustomed, as they are, to representative institutions, the idea of submission to law and authority, and, as to feelings of patriotism, it is shown by this writer, who certainly has no prejudices in their favor, that patriotism flourished as well in their bosoms as it flourishes, I expect and hope, in the bosoms of the Canadian people. In the history of that strange country you will find many examples—and I have stated some—of chivalric ideas of valor and patriotism. Now, from the commencement of that settlement of the Red River, it may be well to ask whether that population had any intercourse with any other population in the world. They were isolated, but they kept up correspondence with the population of the older Provinces, through the missionaries sent to them, through the sisters of charity, through the ministers of the Gospel sent them; there was an uninterrupted intercourse maintained between that population and the population of the Eastern Provinces, and, when I have stated that the extension of the trade monopoly in 1858 was the signal for some merchants from Canada to go amongst that people, and try to enjoy the benefits and profits of that measure, I must say that this coincides with the first arrival amongst that people of Canadians. In 1859, a paper was established, the very first newspaper established in that portion of British America. It was the *Nor'-Wester*, and in the very first number of that paper the editors showed a spirit of opposition to the Government of the colony. In fact, from the first, the aim and ambition of the founders of the paper were in hostility to the existing institutions of the Red River. The first step publicly taken to effect such a change was when a petition was sent to England, asking for troops to protect the colony against the Sioux, who were just coming from Minnesota, after the massacre of 1862. The petition was signed by 1,183 settlers, a majority of whom were French-speaking half-breeds of that colony. The *Nor'-Wester* and the party upon whose support it existed sent a counter petition, and for the first time, and to the great scandal of the colony, that petition, while asking also for troops, commented disparagingly on the manner in which the Hudson Bay Company exercised its jurisdiction. In 1862 these parties, composed of Canadians as well as Americans, availing themselves of the weakness of the institutions in that country, liberated one prisoner—in fact, gaol was broken, in that circumstance, as well as in the year after, 1863. In 1866 the same party of foreigners assumed a more decided opposition to the existing institutions

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of the country. They made a request to the council that, instead of having the appointment of one councillor made by the Hudson Bay Company, in London, they should make that appointment. Of course, the petition was refused. The answer that came from the council stated that the appointment rested, not with the council, but with the committee of directors of the Hudson Bay Company, in London. The *Nor'-Wester* said: “The people of Winnipeg are openly discussing the propriety of taking the Government from its present hands into their own.” In 1867 an attempt was made to organise a republic in Portage la Prairie. Portage la Prairie was then a settlement lying outside of the limits of the settlement of Assiniboia. The constitution of Assiniboia was limited to a certain territory, outside of which it had no jurisdiction at all. In the meantime, the Scotch colonists had developed, and some few parishes west of Baie St. Paul, which was then the last parish of the settlement, were organised, and Poplar Point and Portage la Prairie and another parish were formed, and these people wanted to have some authority amongst them to maintain peace. So, in 1867, there was an attempt to organise a Republic amongst them. Thos. Spence was the elected president; he organised his council, made some laws, imposed some import and export duty, and then wrote to the British authorities to ascertain whether his Republic had any legal existence or not. Of course, he got an answer that he had no right to organise such a Government, and that was the end of it. However, it shows that the population was increasing fast, and that there was need of a Government to maintain peace and order. I will quote from the *Globe*, in reference to the establishment of that Government. The *Globe* seems always to have taken a very watchful interest in the welfare of the people of those Territories, but I do not hesitate to say that it has been the chief instrumentality in spreading discontent and dissatisfaction among the people, and hatred to the Government of Canada. This is what the *Globe* said :

“The *Nor'-Wester* is advised that, under the misgovernment of the Hudson Bay Company, the people of Red River had risen in revolt, under the leadership of Spence, and organised a Republic on British soil.”

The *Nor'-Wester* was the only medium of communication that then existed between that Territory and the eastern Provinces. To show that there was very little echo among the people, a counter petition to that above mentioned, made by Canadians and Americans respecting the electoral principle was signed by 804 people, asking that the institutions then existing should be continued to be maintained. The half-breed people, who formed the majority in the settlement of Assiniboia, had some political ideas of what the system of future movement for their country may be, I will read one of the clauses of the petition :

“Changes are anticipated in this country. We cannot foresee the result of the negotiations pending between the Imperial Government and your honorable body, but we are confident that you will not lose sight of our condition; and we humbly entreat your honors to take measures in the said transactions to secure the welfare of the natives and inhabitants of this settlement, and to guard them against the preponderating and undue influence of newcomers.”

This shows that the spirit of these people was fully awakened to the changes that were talked of as being about to take place in the Territories. Well, Sir, the *Nor'-Wester* refused to publish a counter petition, signed by the majority of the people of that settlement. The Canadians who came to that country in 1858 were naturally looked upon by the natives as being hostile to the institutions under which they had lived contented and happy. They looked upon the Canadians as a dangerous sort of men, who wanted to seize hold of the Government and to administer it to suit themselves; and to this fact we must attribute the commencement of the ill-feeling which the people of that country exhibited against the Canadians. In 1868 a party of Canadians was sent to construct a road from the Lake of