

to which I have alluded. But under the circumstances, and with the knowledge that Canada had at the moment no regular troops of her own, the removing them from Fort Garry before the Canadian Lieutenant-Governor had so much as set foot in the territory was an act of supreme folly and sure to be misinterpreted by the ignorant half-breed population into a declaration that the British Government cared nothing for what might happen.

REPORTER. You think that the presence of this force would have prevented a rising?

SIR RICHARD. I am absolutely certain that it would. Both half-breeds and Indians had an almost superstitious respect for the regular British soldiers and would never have attacked them or anybody whom they supported. Many years later, meeting Archbishop Taché, he assured me most positively that no outbreak would have occurred if the English garrison had remained. He also pointed out, and I think very fairly, that the half-breeds had entirely refused to listen to the overtures made them on the part of the Fenian organizations on the ground that these were avowed enemies of the British Government.

REPORTER. Could Mr. Macdougall have averted the trouble?

SIR RICHARD. He had very little chance. He had to approach Winnipeg through the territory of the United States and had no force of any kind at his disposal. Moreover, though a man of undoubted ability in many ways, he was both by training and temperament very ill-fitted to deal with such a situation. The half-breeds had their legitimate grievances, and it was eminently a case for negotiation and conciliation and not for standing on the strict legal rights of the case. Mr. Macdougall was essentially a parliamentarian and a debater and not of a very conciliatory disposition. Unluckily, too, he was not a *persona grata* to that very influential body, the Roman Catholic Church, who were perhaps the only persons who could have mediated successfully with the half-breeds at that moment. It was unfortunate, too,