

to post a notice of this in a prominent position. This was accordingly done, and may be said to be the beginning of the difficulties between the Government and the settlers in the Saskatchewan district. A false step was taken, which was not promptly retraced, although it was again and again brought under the attention of the Department. In May, 1880, a petition, signed by 102 of the settlers of Edmonton and Prince Albert, asking that steps might be taken to confirm titles to lands purchased from occupants of claims taken previously to the transfer of the Territories. On the 6th October, 1879, the *Saskatchewan Herald* says it is reported that Sir John Macdonald will not retain the post of Minister of the Interior. It approves of his retirement from the office, because it is believed that the individual attention of a Minister is required. The people are getting impatient. The surveys had been completed for more than a year. The agency was not yet formally opened. No entries could yet be made; and the regulations which the Department had adopted in July and in August were far from satisfactory. The *Herald* refers to the regulation forbidding any one to cut wood enough to build a camp fire, denounces it as absurd, and says it is more honored in its breach than in its observance. The Government were indifferent, but the progress of the country went forward. The *Saskatchewan Herald*, of the 7th June, says that the half-breeds have taken up locations—have fenced and planted gardens, and are taking the first steps towards establishing themselves as farmers. The *Herald*, of the 13th September, 1880, says the St. Albert mission is growing rapidly in population and importance. A continuous settlement, twelve or fourteen miles, extends along the river, both above and below the mission, and that 50,000 bushels of wheat will be harvested during the year within its limits. On the 31st October, 1880, an Order in Council was made, establishing a land board, consisting of a land commissioner and an inspector of agencies. The commissioner was to have general supervision of the business of the office. The inspector is to perform the duties indicated by his title. The Minister hoped that this would lead to a more speedy despatch of business and more correctness in decision. It is admitted that much inconvenience and delay had been experienced and much complaint had been made, and not unreasonably, by parties interested. Ministers altered the machinery of administration, but nothing was still done. The efforts of the Department of the Interior were like Mr. Bouncer's efforts at study. He shaved his head and did everything but apply himself to the work on hand. On the 31st January, 1881, the *Saskatchewan Herald* reports four new registration offices, one at Turtle Mountain, at the Little Saskatchewan, at Touchwood Hills, and at Prince Albert. Mr. Martin McDonald, of Nova Scotia, is appointed to the office at Turtle Mountain. G. A. Brisbois, of the Mounted Police, is appointed for the Little Saskatchewan, and Alexander Sproat, of Walkerton, Ontario, is appointed to the office at Prince Albert. The *Herald* says there are no lands to register at Touchwood Hills and none yet at Prince Albert, as no lands, up to that time, were yet opened for settlement. The correspondence in reference to the settlement began in 1878, with the inspection of Peter Hourie's claim. Hourie claimed several lots on the banks of the river. The Minister informed the agent that the lots would be surveyed ten chains wide and two miles deep, and the settlers would be entitled to one lot as a homestead and to a second as a pre-emption. On the 20th January, 1879, the Minister wrote to the agent at Prince Albert: "When your office is regularly established, and you have received the returns of the surveys, you will prepare to take entries." But it was not until the 2nd of August, 1881, that an Order was made to open the office, which was received by the agent on the 21st of September following. More than three years passed, from the

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time when the surveys were made and the agent appointed, before instructions were given for the opening of the office. In the meantime, the people had become greatly discontented. On the 7th June, 1881, Mr. Lawrence Clarke, who represented the district of Lorne in the North-West council presented a memorial to the Lieutenant Governor and the council, representing that the district was rapidly filling with settlers, many of whom have well-cultivated farms; that a large portion of the district had been surveyed in 1877 and 1878; that a land agent had been appointed in 1878; that the surveying of the lands and the appointment of an agent had hastened the progress of the country and encouraged the people to improve their holdings. That disputes had arisen between neighbors, and there were no means to secure a judicial settlement, and early action on the part of the Government was asked. The Lieutenant Governor transmitted this memorial, and the memorial of Father André, as to the land entries in this district, and he adds:

"I am aware that serious disputes are arising in the Prince Albert and Duck Lake settlements, regarding claims to land, and I would therefore respectfully urge that, in so far as it may be consistent with the policy of the Dominion Government, the prayer of the memorialists may receive early consideration."

The head office instructed the agent to open the office for homesteading, pre-emptions and sale of lands in surveyed townships, which was done, as I have already stated, on the 21st September. The *Saskatchewan Herald*, of the 3rd October, 1881, says that the land office is open, but the people are far from happy, as the new regulations mix things badly. The people do not know where they are. The regulations forbid them to homestead odd numbers; points out the great hardship which has arisen from applying new regulations to those who have settled upon a different understanding. Great dissatisfaction was produced by the action of the Government. The people were first exasperated by the long delay. They were now still more indignant on account of the regulations which had been made. Accordingly, on the 8th of October, a meeting was called at Prince Albert. The meeting adopted a series of resolutions. They protested against the reservation of odd-numbered sections after they had been occupied and improved by the settlers, and after the homestead duties had been performed upon them. They protested against the price of pre-emption being other than what it was fixed at by the Order in Council in force at the time of settlement. They said that many of the claims were taken up prior to the survey. When the survey was made, some of the settlers were found to be upon lands which, by the law, were reserved for schools or allotted to the Hudson Bay Company, and they requested that these occupants should be secured in their holdings. They said that many persons had been settled upon lands in the district for three years and more, and had performed the homestead duties required by law. That many persons had bought land from such settlers, depending upon the good faith of the Government for the security of their holdings, and they resolved that the Minister be requested to grant patents to such persons, with as little delay as possible. They resolved not to make entries unless they are accepted in accordance with the Order in Council existing at the time the lands were taken up—and they decide that Mr. Lawrence Clarke, who represents their district in the North-West council, shall present a copy of their resolutions to the Minister of the Interior and receive his reply. Mr. Clarke, accordingly, did so, and the Minister replied, on the 22nd of November. The Minister agreed that, upon proper evidence, they should have their lands at the price fixed at the time of settlement. He agreed that lands taken up before survey, which proved to be school lands, should be secured to the occupants. But he affirmed that the terms of the Order in Council of the 9th of July, 1879,