



CONSTITUTIONAL GROWTH of the NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

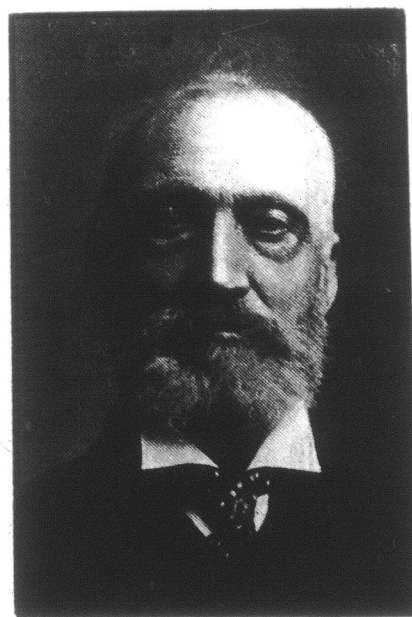
The subject of provincial autonomy for the Northwest Territories is now to the front. It may be of interest, therefore, to trace the origin and growth of the constitution that already obtains in that vast and important portion of the Dominion. In the British North America Act of 1867, by which the present Dominion of Canada was constituted, provision was made for the eventual admission into the Dominion of "Rupert's Land and the Northwest Territory," as the domain of the Hudson's Bay Company was called. Two years before the passing of the Act, the Hon. George Brown had visited England on a fruitless mission concerning the desired acquisition of these Territories. In 1868, however, Sir George E. Cartier and Mr. William McDougall were commissioned to proceed to London to arrange terms, and, in the succeeding year, the settlement was effected. The terms and conditions of the surrender were in brief, that the Cana-

posed of by the Government of Canada in communication with the Government of Great Britain.

RED RIVER REBELLION.

On the 29th of October, 1869, Mr. W. McDougall was appointed, Lieutenant-Governor of the domain obtained from the Hudson's Bay Company, and proceeded to take possession. The French half-breed population of the Red River, however, asserted the dissatisfaction they felt at the manner in which, without making any arrangements respecting the rights which they claimed were inherent in them as sons of the soil, the territory had been handed over to the Canadian Government. Mr. McDougall was met at the frontier, and, along with other officials who accompanied him, was compelled by the discontented half-breeds to quit the Hudson's Bay post in which he had temporarily taken up his quarters, and to retire to United States territory. This was the begin-

eral in Council to assist and advise him in passing Ordinances for the government of the Territory. On the 20th



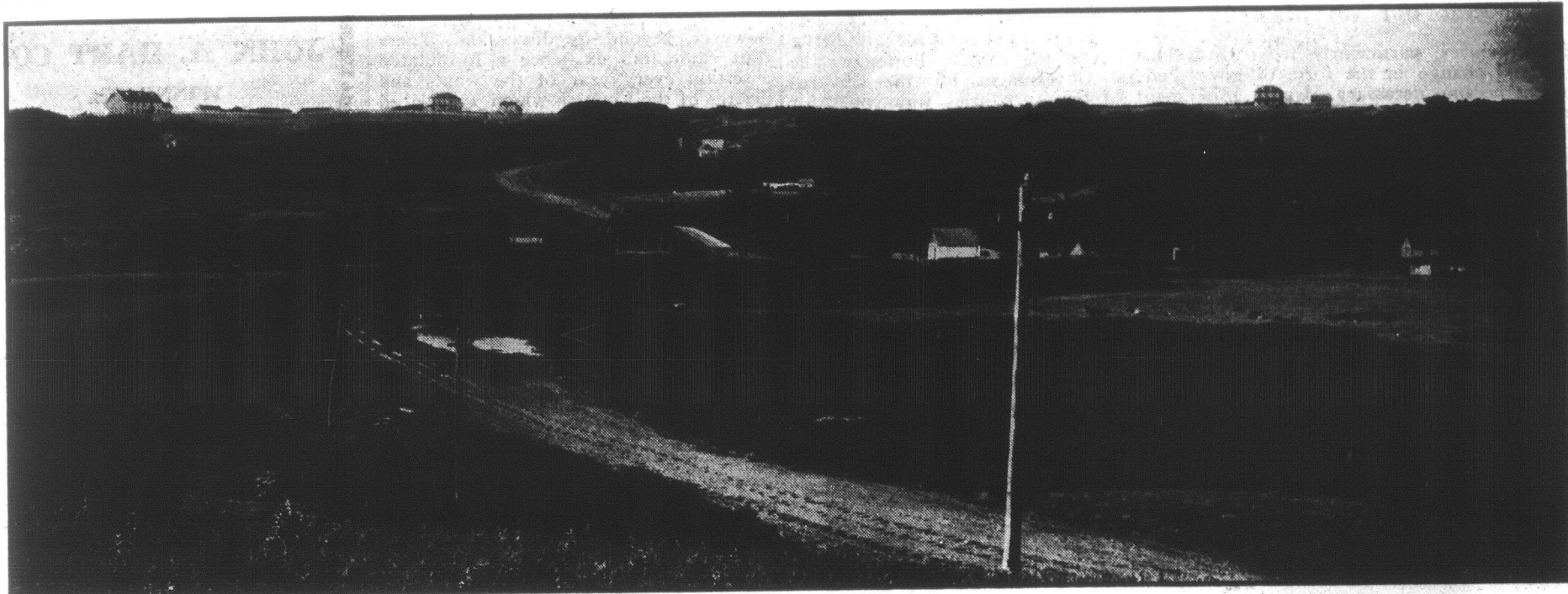
David Laird.

First Lieutenant Governor of the N.W.T., 1876-1881. Minister of the Interior in the Mackenzie Government; now Commissioner of Indian Affairs at Winnipeg.

and the Northwest Territories were restricted to the region west of Manitoba and Keewatin and east of the boundary of the newly constituted province. The chief condition of the entry of British Columbia into confederation was the immediate and rapid construction of a railway connecting the tide waters of the Pacific Ocean with the railway systems of Ontario and Quebec. This gigantic undertaking culminated in the Canadian Pacific Railway, whose history belongs to Canada as a whole rather than to the Northwest Territories alone. All that needs to be mentioned in this abridged history is that there were set apart for railway purposes a tract of one hundred and ten miles on each side of the line of railway west of the Red River. In these lands the even numbered sections were allotted for homesteads and pre-emptions and the odd-numbered sections were reserved for sale in behalf of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. The amount of this and subsidy was about fifty millions of acres. Of course these regulations did not and could not in any way affect the lands of the Hudson's Bay Company or the lands that were set apart as Public School Lands.

THE NORTHWEST COUNCIL.

Immigration to the new country set in with rapid flow, chiefly from the



OLD BATTLEFORD, Showing Dominion Government Buildings.

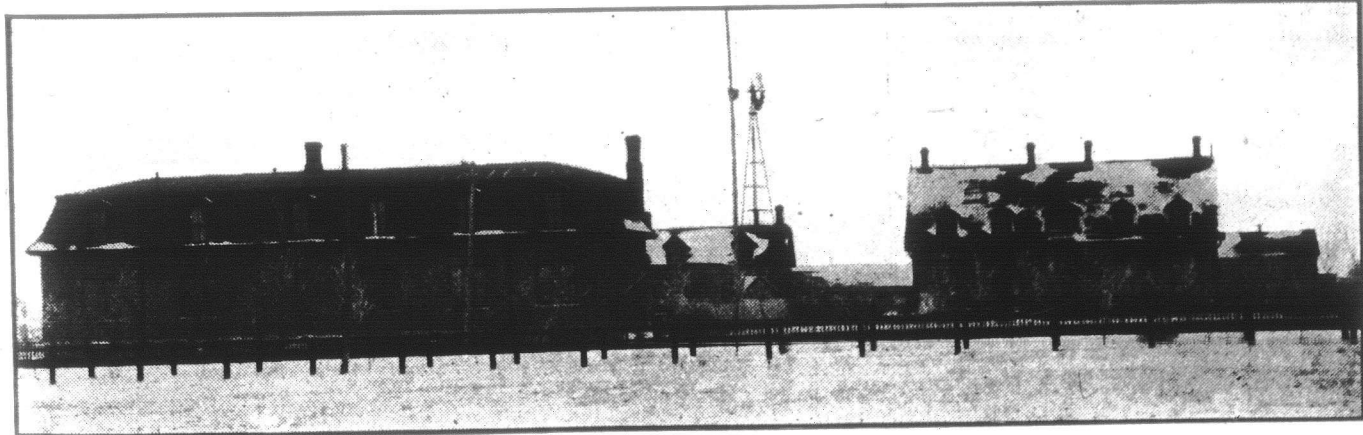
The building on the hill to the left is the first Government House, occupied by Mr. Laird, the first Lieutenant Governor. There was a large room in it at the end this way which was used as a council room. The building is still standing. It has been considerably enlarged and is now used as a boarding school for Indians. The second building was used as a residence by Registrar Scott, the small structure to the right being the Registry Office. Between Government House and Registrar Scott's there was another edifice, the residence of Judge Richardson; it was destroyed by fire during the rebellion. The buildings to the right of the cut, on the hill, are those occupied by Mr. Forget, secretary to the governor at that time and now Lieutenant Governor. The trail leading up the hill, over the bridge across the Battle river, is the old road, and the poles and wires are the Government telegraph. The town proper is now to the south on the Saskatchewan river.

dian Government should pay to the Company for its rights the sum of £300,000 sterling. Besides this money payment, the Company was to be permitted to retain all the trading posts or stations then in actual possession and occupation, with the blocks of land adjoining; and also, one-twentieth of all the lands in the Fertile Belt. The Fertile Belt was described as being bounded on the south by the United States boundary, on the west by the Rocky Mountains, on the north by the northern branch of the Saskatchewan river, and on the east by Lake Winnipeg, the Lake of the Woods, and the waters connecting therewith. The claims of the Indians of the Territories were to be dis-

ting of what is known as the Red River Rebellion, conducted under the leadership of Louis Riel. Mr. McDougall was obliged to abandon the attempt to take possession of the country and he returned to Ottawa in the month of December. The Canadian Government at once opened direct communication with the disaffected persons with the result that the Red River settlements were erected into the Province of Manitoba. It was further enacted that the remaining portion of the newly acquired country be erected into a separate Territory, of which the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba should, ex-officio, be Lieutenant Governor, and that an Executive Council be appointed by the Governor Gen-

May, 1870, Mr. G. Archibald, C.M.G., Q.C., was appointed Lieutenant Governor of the new Province and of the Northwest Territories.

On the 28th January, 1871, the first ministry of the Province of Manitoba was formed, whose jurisdiction, however, was limited to the Province, the Lieutenant Governor ruling the Territories, in the manner above indicated. Early in 1871 an event happened, of great importance to the Northwest by reason of the undertakings that were the result of its occurrence. Reference made to the entry of British Columbia into federation with the Dominion of Canada. With this event, British Columbia entered on a separate history



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