

February 16, 1871

it was for Her Majesty only, in her Imperial capacity and with the Imperial authority in the tribunals of Great Britain, to bring any offenders to justice. The moment that the Province became united with the Dominion it had a local Government of its own, and on that local Government, by the act of this Parliament, was thrown the obligation of punishing offenders. The people of Manitoba must be left as free people to manage their own institutions and protect their own people. He did not see that his hon. friend was at all justified in obtruding this discussion on the House during this debate. It was their duty, instead of trying to arouse man against man, and to keep alive such matters, to throw oil in the troubled waters and suppress hostile feelings, which were natural enough, but much to be deplored. He believed the laws would be fairly administered in Manitoba, and that life and property would be held just as sacred and safe there as they were in the older and larger province of Ontario.

His hon. friend had spoken of the Intercolonial Railway, and promised that at an early day he would bring up that subject. Having promised so much, he (Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald) would promise another. He would promise that his hon. friends' statements, whatever they might be, if they were against the action of the Government or any subordinate engaged on the line, that there would be a full, complete and satisfactory answer—if not satisfactory to his hon. friend, at least satisfactory to this House and to the country. (*Hear, hear.*)

He would make no reply to the remarks of his hon. friend, respecting the hon. member for Lanark. At the proper time, there would be a frank and free discussion of all that he had alluded to. He must protect against the course of the hon. member for Lambton with respect to a friend of his in this House. The hon. gentleman had mentioned a rumor reflecting on that gentleman. It was easy to get up a rumor. It might be done by inserting a paragraph in a newspaper, and many had been so created in order to give an hon. member an opportunity to say he saw such and such in a certain paper. There should be no quotation of rumors in this House, respecting the character or conduct of persons in public life. The British system should be followed—that no member of Parliament shall make statements that he cannot verify or does not honestly believe to be strictly true.

The House rose for recess at 6.10 p.m.

AFTER RECESS

The debate on the address was resumed.

Mr. BOWN said that the Government deserved censure for the manner in which affairs had been managed in Manitoba since the organization of that Province. Loyal men had been allowed to go unrewarded, while those who had imprisoned and shot loyal men had been appointed to places of honour and trust. The conciliation policy pursued by the Lieutenant Governor was favourable to men who had acted in opposition to law, and compassion to such men

was the greatest cruelty that could be inflicted on those who had stood up for Canada in her time of need. The Lieutenant-Governor had early shown where his sympathies lay by going to reside in the Hudson's Bay Company's fort and receiving hospitality there. It was evident from the manner in which he had acted in the matter of Scott's death and in other circumstances, that his mind had been biased in favour of the late rebel party.

Dr. Bown criticised the conduct of the authorities in Manitoba in the inquiry respecting the death of Depoti, which was held with closed doors, the principal object seeming to be to fasten his death on the Canadians. The arrest of Riel had not been effected though he had been in the territory after the arrival of the Lieutenant-Governor. There was some secret cause for this, and it was evident that the Lieutenant-Governor's mind had been biased. As to the elections which had been held in the new Province, seven or eight of the candidates who had been elected had been introduced from the Quebec Province. It might be said that Lieutenant-Governor Archibald had nothing to do with this, but, if so, why did he permit three of these men, not qualified by the Act, to take places in his cabinet? As to the murder of Mr. Scott, it would be far better to let it rest than that there should be a mere mockery of a trial. He hoped the Government would open up a way of communications to the North West without delay, for the present route would not be available for two years. He hoped the Government would make up the losses which loyal men had incurred in the new Province during the late rebellion.

Mr. MASSON (Terrebonne) agreed with the Hon. Premier that the Government had no jurisdiction in the matter of the murder of Mr. Scott. It should not be forgotten, however, that no less than six counties in Manitoba had offered to return Riel as their representative. Why did Mr. Bown attack the Government now, when he supported the Manitoba Bill last year?

Mr. BOWN said he did not know things would have turned out as they did.

Mr. MASSON (Terrebonne) said this was no excuse. As to Riel, it had been asserted that he had been in Manitoba since the entry of our troops, but he (Mr. Masson) had good authority for saying this was not a fact.

He referred to the relations existing between the Mother Country and the colonies, and said there was an uncertainty in the minds of the people, since the withdrawal of the troops, whether Britain proposed to sever the connection with Canada or not. Some even supposed that she would look to the colonies for help in time of trouble, instead of the latter looking to the former under circumstances of difficulty. We should learn from the Government whether the withdrawal of the troops indicates England's desire to get rid of us, and whether, since we have formed a confederation, we shall be expected to help her in the time of her need. The Minister of Militia ought to enlighten the House on this important subject before the Militia estimates are brought down. There was discussion going on about independence, but would it not be better to know at once the intention of the Imperial Government, or to adopt such a position as in plain language would only cause us to