

Canada's newly acquired western territories. And, perhaps most daunting of all, the House would have to deal with the prospect of expanding Canada to the Pacific. An address from the legislature of still-autonomous British Columbia "praying for admission into the union" had to be debated. Would Canada be a coast-to-coast nation? Under what terms?

Lisgar's speech reminded the returning legislators of another trauma of 1870. Since the 1860s, marauding members of the Fenian Brotherhood had harassed British North America from safe havens in the United States, eager to apply Irish nationalist pressure on the "British" fact wherever they encountered it. However militarily inept the raids proved, they caused high anxiety in Canada. Two raids into Quebec by "lawless bands" of Fenians had once again alarmed Canadians in 1870. Although Canadians had "rallied at the first call to arms with praiseworthy alacrity" and had shored up the border, the raids triggered a broader sense of external menace in the young Confederation. American covert support for the Fenians was symptomatic of deeper problems with Canada's southern neighbour. Thus Lisgar reminded the House that the unresolved issue of control of the east coast fishery hovered over Ottawa's head, as did a series of thorny legacies of the American Civil War, most notably Washington's claim that Britain compensate it with Canadian territory for the predations of British-built Confederate raiders. Such issues not only obliged Canadians to define their relations with the United States but also provoked a finer tuning of the young Canada's relationship with Mother Britain. Thus, the parliamentary session of 1871 would be a mirror to a young nation grappling with its internal cohesion and expansion while at the same time coming to grips with the world beyond its shores.

The Manitoba issue exposed the rawest nerve of the young Confederation. On the surface, the House heard that preparations were underway for a "special federal election" that would see four members of Parliament elected in the new province. When that election was held on 2 March, the House of Commons grew for the first time since Confederation. The new Manitoban members of Parliament were a politically and racially variegated group. They included John Christian Schultz, a prominent member of the "Canadian party" that had been so instrumental in provoking the Metis resistance of 1870. Schultz had in fact been taken prisoner by the provisional government. Manitoba also elected Donald Smith, a Scottish-born fur trader who had brokered the agreement with Riel and now came to Ottawa to sit with Macdonald's Conservatives. The new member from Provencher, Pierre Delorme, gave the House its first Metis member of Parliament. A fur trader and farmer, Delorme had been a member of the Metis provisional government – in fact participating in the arrest of Scott – but had broken with it over the propriety of executing such prisoners.

The appearance of members of Parliament from Canada's newest province was but one legacy of the bitter events of 1870. Throughout the session, the government was assailed by Ontario Liberals over its settlement of the Manitoba imbroglio. There were cries that justice be brought to those responsible for "the wicked, unprovoked, damnable murder"¹⁸ of Thomas Scott. Rumours of the whereabouts of the fugitive Riel further inflamed the debate. Perhaps most ardent on this front was William McDougall. A one-time Ontario Clear Grit, McDougall had joined the Conservatives at Confederation (hence his nickname "Wandering Willie") and had been despatched to the Red River as its putative Lieutenant Governor in 1869. His subsequent rebuffing by the Metis goaded him into paroxysms of Protestant Ontario indignation. As the member of Parliament for Lanark North, McDougall attacked the arrangements made for the new province as being too generous to the Catholic Metis. "They," he raged, "had the control of the

18. Edward Blake. 10 April 1871.