

the people; it is the "Bois Brûlés," the French-speaking half-breeds, who are "barring out" their Canadian governor, and pronouncing in this angry way against union with a Dominion largely inhabited by their own original fellow-countrymen. The British section, full and half-breeds, are said, on the other hand, to be favorable to the change, or to acquiesce in it. These things require explanation. It may be that the insurgents are simply the most ignorant and turbulent part of the settlers, and those most easily acted on by the instigation of malevolent intriguers. It so, there is every reason to hope that the disturbance of the peace will be transient only, and that the common sense of the more enlightened party will prevail. But it will perhaps be difficult for the Canadian government to maintain that system of special conciliation by which the quondam company were willing enough to purchase submission.

The matter, however, is one which would be calculated to excite but little interest in this country were it not for one circumstance, with which Canada will have to deal as best it may. We have said that the Red River is (practically) all but inaccessible from Canada. On the other hand, it is very accessible indeed from the contiguous part of the States, and existing railways alone would suffice to connect it, with but little expenditure of time and labor, with the whole of them. Enthusiastic people of the colonial party see no difficulty in all this; Canada has only, in their view, to make a railroad from Lake Superior to Red River, thence across the Rocky Mountains to the Fraser River, and the work is accomplished, and British America bound together with a girdle of iron. To such reasoners as these distance, climate, and physical obstacles present no embarrassments at all. Those who have reflected a little more on the subject know what speculative patriotism ignores; that there is no forcing colonization or commerce to follow artificial routes, by land or by sea, even if countless millions be devoted to making them. The natural lines must prevail; Minnesota will always be close to Red River, Canada far from it. Even now, if the Dominion were forced to employ military force against these rough people—a contingency which we conceive to be extremely improbable, but which must needs be borne in mind—Canada, it is said, would have to ask the States for permission to send that force through their territory. And this must be true, unless the two or three hundred roadless miles between Lake Superior and Red River traverse a much more penetrable region than it is commonly represented. It is of no use to shut our eyes to the unpleasant side of the questions like this, or to call those unpatriotic who present it to us. Admit the difficulty and try if courage and ingenuity will find a solution.

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What is the meaning of the rebellion at the Red River? Who are the rebels? What do they want; and against whom have they rebelled? These are questions which have been often asked within the last few weeks by persons not otherwise ill-informed, who have been puzzled by the telegrams, and by extracts from the American and the Canadian press, declaring that the rebellion was rapidly gaining in strength and tenacity. Some people, who would certainly run the risk of being plucked if they were undergoing a civil service examination, have even gone so far as to ask where the Red River is, thinking, perhaps, that it may run into the Red Sea. For the benefit of the geographically ignorant, let it be known that the Red River takes its rise in Minnesota, one of the States of the American Union, and that it runs into Lake Winnipeg, in British territory. This portion of British America was formerly known as Rupert's Land, and was governed under the sovereignty of Great Britain, by officials of the Hudson's Bay Company, holding from the Earl of Selkirk and others, to whom it was granted by charter of King Charles II. Little was heard or known about the Red River or about the vast districts of the Saskatchewan and Assiniboine, while those regions were still under the sleepy, though paternal, rule of the old Hudson's Bay Company. It was the policy of those wealthy traders, who were fur dealers, and not miners or agriculturists, to represent the whole region as a howling wilderness, fit only for the purposes of the hunter and the trapper. But the Americans in the conterminous State of Minnesota were much too acute to be deceived, and convinced themselves by ocular demonstration that the region was one that might be made to flow with milk and honey if opened up to emigration. Canada, whose own frontiers in that direction had never been clearly defined, looked with a longing eye toward the Red River, and in 1858 she sent out an exploring expedition to the northwest, under the charge of Professor Youle Hyde, who, in 1860, presented his report to the Canadian Parliament. That report, which was transmitted to England, and printed by order of the House of Commons, set forth in detail what was already known to the Minnesotians and to all the actual settlers—that the Red River territory was as well adapted for colonization as any other part of the continent, and that, although some districts to the north were fitter for the hunter than for the plowman, there was "a fertile belt" capable of profitable cultivation, and almost as large as England. Even at that comparatively early date the Canadians made up their minds to possess the country. In the year 1863, when the Hudson's Bay Company was revolutionized by a *coup de main*—we might almost call it