

"I have killed twenty Blackfeet." His bravado, true enough, perhaps, was so daring that it won the admiration instead of the natural vengeance of his enemies. If he planned the defence of Batoche he was not only a courageous but a skillful leader with a natural genius for engineering. To the members of Riel's Council that sage gave the title of *crovades*, which he explained with some little pride, probably, in his learning, to have been adapted from two Latin words *cro* "from," and *ovis* "a flock," (sic) and was meant to signify that none claimed any individual authority, and this word was signed to all official documents. Besides Dumont, they were F. Jackson, President's Secretary; Jean-Baptiste Boucher, Donald Ross, Pierre Henri, Moise Ouellette, Damase Carriere, David Tourand, Pierre Guardepuy, Albert Monkman, A. Jébin, Bonnet Blanc (White Cap), Chief of the Sioux; Beardy, Chief of the Crees; Chas. Trottier, Bass Bull, from Battle River; N. Delorme, B. Parenteau, E. Champagne; Phillipe Garnot, Secretary of the Council; H. Dumas; Octave Regnier, Assistant Secretary of the Council; Joseph Gondol, Lieutenant of Guards; Antoine Champagne, A. Turgeon, Captain of the Horse; J. Parenteau, replaced by M. Richelieu; N. Carrier, Alex. Lobeau, Barez, the Sioux interpreter, M. Gareau and Thos. Vermett, Messenger of the Council.



MAJOR L. N. F. CROZIER,
Superintendent of the North-West Mounted Police.

CHAPTER II.

THE DUCK LAKE FIGHT.

The Provisional Government acted with promptitude. On the 18th of March, Mr. Lash, the Indian agent at Duck Lake, and his interpreter were made prisoners, as well as other loyalists and freighters passing through to Prince Albert. At midnight the telegraph line was cut south of Duck Lake, the wire going wide in the middle of an important telegram about the state of affairs. All loyalists' stores in the settlements were taken over by Riel's Government, and on the evening of March 26th the Duck Lake Post was captured, with all the Indian and Government stores there. The reservation of Beardy, the half-

breed chief of a small band of about one hundred and sixty Indians, was just west of Duck Lake. He was known as one of the worst behaved of the chiefs, and one who had already given the Mounted Police much trouble. By promising him the opportunity to plunder, the support of his warriors was assured.

The officers of the Mounted Police knew that trouble was brewing among the half-breeds of St. Laurent, and Major Crozier with a force of seventy-five men had occupied Fort Carleton, an old Hudson's Bay post on the North Saskatchewan, about twelve miles west of Duck Lake, to watch the half-breeds. With a force of sixty Mounted Policemen and forty volunteers from Prince Albert, whom he had sent for, Major Crozier started on the morning of the 26th March to bring away the Government stores and other property which were at Duck Lake. Major Crozier, who had served on the force for twelve years, and had sniffed out two or three incipient Indian wars, had proved himself a brave, prompt, and resolute man. When near Beardy's reserve, and about two miles from Duck Lake, a number of armed men were discovered in a *coulée*, or ravine lightly fringed with poplars, through which the trail led. A white flag was flying, and while Major Crozier and his interpreter, Mackay, went forward to call upon the men to surrender their arms, the police and volunteers, who had been brought in sleighs, alighted and commenced extending in a skirmishing line. Crozier's demand was met by the question from Gabriel Dumont, who led the rebels: "Is it to be a fight?" Major Crozier believing that the rebels were about to fire upon his men, ordered his force to commence firing. The rebels had already occupied two houses, not visible from the road, and from these, as well as from the *coulée*, they fired upon the force. While the Mounted Police, with the aid of a seven-pound gun, were trying to dialogue the rebels in the *coulée*, the Prince Albert volunteers advanced, firing upon those in the house. The volunteers lost heavily and failed of their purpose. The fight went on at short range for half an hour, when the Mounted Police had expended all their ammunition, the gun having become useless after a few rounds. Seeing that the rebels were creeping around by the edges of the *coulée*, and that his men were in danger of being outflanked and hemmed in by a greater number, Major Crozier gave the order to retreat, which was carried out, the little force leaving their dead on the field but taking with them their useless gun and the wounded. In that engagement of half an hour, out of one hundred police and volunteers, fourteen were killed and nine severely wounded. Eleven of the killed were out of the forty Prince Albert volunteers. The names of the patriotic dead, the first on the death-roll of this war, were: Captain John Morton, Wm. Napier, James Blakely, Skeffington C. Elliot, Robert Middleton, D. McPhail, Charles Hewit, Joseph Anderson, D. Mackenzie, Chas. Page, and Alexander Fisher, civilians, and constables T. J. Gibson, Garretty and J. P. Arnold of the Mounted Police force. The class of settlers in the Canadian North-West may be guessed from the fact that of the eleven civilians killed one was the son of a Judge, and cousin of the leader of the Opposition in the Dominion Parliament, one was a nephew of Sir Francis Hincks, a former Canadian Premier and Governor of the Windward Isles, one was a son of Sir Charles Napier, and one a nephew of the celebrated Nova Scotian Statesman, the



BEARDY,
Chief of the Duck Lake Band.

Hon. Joseph Howe. On their way back to Fort Carleton Major Crozier and his decimated force were overtaken just at the gates of the stockade by Colonel Irvine, who had arrived from Qu'Appelle with the long looked for reinforcement of one hundred mounted policemen.

Fort Carleton was a fort only in name, having no fortification but a stockade, and being in a valley it was untenable. Besides it was supposed the whole force was needed to protect the town of Prince Albert and the settlers who had sought refuge there. It was decided to abandon the place, and while this was being done the wooden houses took fire and it was with difficulty the wounded men were saved. The train of sleighs filled with the frightened families of settlers, and the severely wounded men, and guarded by troops, some of whom were suffering acutely from a sense of defeat, turned north-eastward to traverse forty miles of country presumably awarming with victorious rebels. The news of the evacuation of the fort was received about two weeks before the news of their safe arrival at Prince Albert. The suspense during that interval was the most painful of many gloomy periods during the war. Prince Albert with three hundred armed men was safe from attack, but, with its greatly augmented population, fears were entertained of the provisions running out before it was relieved. At the Duck Lake engagement the rebel's force numbered two hundred, and their loss was six killed and three wounded. Beardy's Indians were not present, they being detached to guard against an attack by Colonel Irvine, who was known to be close at hand. On the 27th, Riel sent a prisoner to Fort Carleton with a message to Colonel Irvine to send wagons for his dead, which was done, two of the other prisoners being given leave to put the bodies in places where they would be safe. In the meantime Fort Carleton was occupied by Riel on the 31st March, but was evacuated hurriedly at midnight on the 2nd April; on the 4th April Duck Lake was evacuated after the buildings had been gutted and fired. The political portion of the Provisional Government had not been idle while the military section had been so busy. It