

of the half-breeds who took an active part, as followers of Riel, in the late outbreak. The remainder were strangers who had no interest in the country or cause, but were attracted by the excitement and pillage incident to all such outbreaks; some few probably took part because their hearts were in it. During my first visit to Prince Albert, in August, 1883, I instructed Mr. Gauvreau, then assistant agent, a French-Canadian, to visit every French settler, half-breed or otherwise, in the district, ascertain what particular quarter section he was on, and urge him to make entry. This he did; but, although the Roman Catholic priest urged them in a like manner, for some reason or other they failed to do so. Some were deterred through ignorance, thinking that they would have to pay taxes; others have stated that they feared if they did so the Government might call upon them to bear arms, but against what foe does not appear to have been very clear to them. Like all ignorant people,

A FEW DESIGNING, MICHIEVOUS MEN

who have their ear, can work on their ignorance and prejudices for the advancement of their own selfish ends. This is particularly noticeable in the case of those who settled subsequent to survey along the South Saskatchewan river. In spite of the fact that every Dominion Lands act which has ever been in force has contained a provision making it an illegal proceeding to settle on land subsequent to survey without first obtaining entry thereto, the necessity of which is obvious, many of them have done so, while others have squatted on odd sections, Hudson's Bay company and school lands, knowing that they were set apart and not open for homestead entry. It is said that they were urged to settle in this manner by certain parties who for some reason or another thought it advisable to concentrate settlement along the banks of the river as much as possible. While on this point it might be as well to direct your attention to the fact that the contention has always been for ten chain lots, and that many have preferred, and all would prefer if the same were available, claims of twenty chain lots; whereas many of the leaders in the movement have preferred claims and entered by quarter sections, thus by their own acts protesting against the ten chain contention. Another, and the strongest

point, is that except in the cases of the claimants to those portions of section 1, 2, 11 and 12, lying east of the Saskatchewan, in township 45, range 1, west 3rd, every other settler could practically obtain what he desired by taking legal sub-divisions or portions thereof, as has since been done. I explained this to the Rev. Pere Andre, in an interview which I had with him in the autumn of 1883, as I also did to the Rev. Pere Vegreville and Mr. Charles Nolin in an interview in January, 1884. In fact, whenever the question came up I urged these people to take their claims in this way if they insisted in settling in this manner, thus saving the expense of a resurvey and the delay incident to the same, stating also that the Government, having once surveyed the country, would not be justified in going to the expense of a resurvey merely to suit the ideas of those who settled subsequent to such survey, and further, that those who were there prior to the survey, would have strong grounds for insisting on entry being given as the law and system of survey required, viz., by quarter section. If the Government in these cases made a resurvey at the public expense, every other community and settlement throughout the whole country would have as good grounds for having surveys changed to suit their convenience; whims, or caprice. Other officials of the Government have also explained this to them. In all the interviews with these people they stated that they had been promised a river lot survey. They seem to have based this assertion on the promises made by the Minister of the Interior to the Rev. Pere Leduc and Mr. Maloney, of St. Albert, which was that when several had settled together prior to survey, and whose holdings could not be made to conform to the sectional system of such survey, in such cases

THE RIVER LOT SYSTEM OF SURVEY

would be adopted. Attention should be particularly directed to the fact that in all the petitions and letters presented by Pere Leduc and Mr. Maloney to the Minister of the Interior, not the slightest mention is made of the settlers on the South Saskatchewan desiring river lots. They represented the settlers at St. Albert, Edmonton and Fort Saskatchewan.