

the *Herald* itself, who would be but too proud to have employment under Mr. Riel. Mr. Laurie himself, so bending before the authorities, would have come quickly to cringe to him, even if only to obtain the modest position of deputy forest ranger. Now, as to Mr. Schmidt, personally, I do not suppose anybody imagines that in accepting an office from the Government he has renounced his title as a citizen and a half-breed. He will, no doubt, fulfil diligently and impartially his duties of public employé, but that will not oblige him to conceal his sympathies for those of his nation who have just rights to be recognised. The responsible persons, happily, do not see in the same light as the *Herald* the agitation which is going on in the North-West; and, if they see no ground to fear for the peace of the country, yet they know very well that the unanimous sentiments of a whole population must not be displayed."

Then follows the resolution of the North-West Council, of the 21st July, which I have just read. Meantime, Indian troubles were loomin g still larger and larger, and detailed reports as to Poundmaker, and other matters of that description, were published in the newspapers. And here I may be permitted to make a brief reference to the defensive and quasi military precautions which were taken by the Government, both as showing a sense of danger and because I believe that the Government is greatly to be blamed in these regards. I have already proved, as I think, the blame which is to be attached to them, with reference to the killing out of the local corps of the North-West, and I might add the great neglect they had shown, also, with reference to the local corps proposed in the Province of Manitoba. I do not touch upon these subjects now. As to the operations of the Mounted Police, the report is admittedly meagre. The hon. gentleman acknowledged that the other day. It is eminently unsatisfactory, in not giving fuller details of their operations; and as to the militia operations, we want, as I have more than once said, some more information than we have yet obtained. The *Winnipeg Sun*, of 25th July, 1884, says:

"Col. Houghton returned last night from a tour of inspection of arms in the Saskatchewan district. As to the corps organised throughout the Territories, they had ceased drilling some time ago. In consequence of the lapse of the three years, the Government, in view of the unsettled state of affairs in the Saskatchewan district, and the probability of an outbreak among the half-breeds at any time, deemed it wise to collect all the arms, as in the event of an uprising they might be used with great advantage against the whites. Corps had been organised at Battleford, Carlton, Prince Albert and Duck Lake, and the arms of each company were found at headquarters. They were taken possession of and handed over to the Mounted Police for safe keeping. Col. Houghton visited Battleford, Carlton and Prince Albert, and personally looked after the work, but he arranged with Capt. Hughes, of Duck Lake, to send in the arms of the company which was organised there.

"The arms were found to be in very good condition, and will doubtless do to distribute again, when other volunteer corps are organised throughout the Territories, which is the intention of the Government. Col. Houghton stated, however, that he had no definite information from the Government on the point. Being asked about the discontent among the half-breeds, the colonel stated they were really in a bad way. Consequently upon the great drought which prevailed all summer, the crops all along the half-breed settlement are almost an entire failure, and starvation stares the poor creatures in the face. Col. Houghton did not have very much conversation with the settlers, but those with whom he did speak informed him of the bad state of affairs existing. They have not been able to procure patents for their lands, and they have other grievances against the Government. Col. Houghton believes if they had their patents they would be appeased, to a certain extent, as by the sale of a portion of their land they could keep the wolf from the door. At the meetings which were held, the opinion was expressed that they should receive the same treatment as was afforded the half-breeds in Manitoba."

Then there is further reference to the grievances and it goes on:

"Col. Houghton being asked about the presence of Riel among the settlers, said he did not see the hero of the Red River rebellion, although he was among the natives when he passed down. He was camping on the south fork of the Saskatchewan, and the half-breeds are endeavoring to secure the co-operation of the Indians in the agitation. If they succeed in rousing the latter to action, and a coalition is formed, a serious uprising will be the result."

Now, Sir, I have already proved to this House, from the published report of the Minister of Militia, that Col. Houghton, under his own signature, did send in a special report upon this very mission on which he was interviewed, and upon which he gave this statement to the interviewer.

I charge that that officer reported then imminent danger, the holding of meetings, the urgency of the case, the necessity of taking precautions at once to prevent the outbreak; but his report has not been brought down. In fact, that report is suppressed. On the 26th of July, in an editorial, the *Winnipeg Sun* says:

"It is impossible to understand what the Dominion Government means by refusing to hearken to the complaints of the half-breeds in the Saskatchewan region, and then by sending up the Deputy Adjutant General to disarm them. Does the Government think these well-disposed people would revolt without cause or provocation? If not, why does it not at once set about redressing the grievances that are driving them to such desperation that they are no longer to be trusted with weapons? Col. Houghton, no doubt, discharged his duty in the kindest manner, and the arms were quietly surrendered. But what a commentary on the policy of the Interior Department, that a district containing some of the oldest and best settlers in the country should have to be 'proclaimed.'"

It is the whole North-West which is now proposed to be proclaimed by the Bill before the House. Then, Sir, on the 5th of August, Sergt. Brooks, of the Mounted Police, stationed at Prince Albert, writes as follows:—

"In reporting to you as to what is transpiring here at Prince Albert and vicinity, I would say that since I have been here I have found everything quiet. There is very little talk about Riel. The principal part of the people who seem to agree with him are people who are hard up, and think they must do something to cause a little excitement. I have heard of very few who are in any way well-to-do speak favorably of him. There is no doubt but what all the half-breeds swear by him, and whatever he says is law with them. As near as I can learn, he is advising them all very strongly to remain peaceful. Big Bear is still at Beady's reserve. Whether he intends to see Riel or not, I do not know."

The rest of the letter does not seem material. On the 8th of August Serg. Brooks telegraphed as follows:—

"Returned from Duck Lake last night. Big Bear in council with ten other chiefs. Riel has held several private meetings at the south branch, attended by leading half-breeds. He has not seen Big Bear."

On the 14th of August Serg. Brooks reported as follows:—

"Riel is across, the river opposite here, at Batoche's house. He addressed a meeting to-day, as the people were coming from church. From what I can learn, he must have got very excited. One thing he stated was that the Indians' rights should be protected as well as their own. He has not had a meeting with Big Bear, but I am afraid that he has some private way of communicating with him. He is to cross the river to-morrow, and I believe is to remain on this side about a week, as he has asked Tompkins, the Indian farm instructor, to meet him at Duck Lake, for what reason I do not know. There is a man of the name of Jackson here, who came from Prince Albert—he is a brother of the druggist—who seems to be a right-hand man of Riel's. He is with him at present, and has been for some time. He has a great deal to say, and I believe he does more harm than any breed among them. There are a great many people through the country who have what they call grievances, and seem to agree with Riel. Whether they really do or not, is hard to say. I have been speaking to a number of people at Prince Albert, and men who signed the petition for him to go there and speak, simply did it because they thought it would draw the attention of the Government to the place. There is no doubt but that everyone is hard up, and they thought they must do something to draw their attention."

The rest does not appear to be material. On the 21st of August Brooks reported further:

"Both Big Bear and Riel have been in town. The former arrived on the 15th and Riel on the Sunday following. Their being in town caused very little excitement, and people did not seem to pay much attention to them. Riel stayed at Jackson's, the druggist, and before he left he and Lepine held conference with Big Bear, the result of which I have not been able to learn. Riel, of course, claims that he will have nothing to do with the Indians, and Big Bear says he did not come here to see Riel. However, they were at Jackson's house and had a talk, Riel leaving the next day for the south branch, and Big Bear the day after for Battleford—at least, so he said. I have heard it stated on pretty good authority that Riel has given up the idea of going back to Montana, and intends to remain in the Territory, which I think is quite likely, although he has stated to different parties that he would leave for Montana about the 1st September. I will forward returns showing the number of half-breeds and Indians in the vicinity by mail which leaves Duck Lake on Monday next."

The Saskatoon telegraph operator, on the 7th of September, 1884, reported that:

"About 20 Indians, under Black Moon, armed with rifles and swords, rode about the settlement, demanding grub, and threatening to take it if it was not given."