

But the Nor'-Westers were not content. They had sworn the utter destruction of the colony, and they meant to keep their word. So one June day, three hundred half-breeds, fearfully bedaubed with paint, gay in savage splendour, rode down upon the settlement. The governor and about thirty men went out to meet them. They were quickly surrounded, and he and about twenty of his men were shot dead.

Those who were left fled back to the fort, where soon all was terror and confusion. Children cried out in fear, women wept for their dead, or, stricken and white, awaited they knew not what fate.

Two days later, robbed of all they possessed, the remaining colonists left their homes to the flames and the destroyer, and wandered forth again houseless and penniless.

But while the Nor'-Westers drank and sang, and rejoiced at the utter downfall of Red River, Lord Selkirk was on his way to avenge his people. With about a hundred men he arrived at Fort William, the chief post of the Nor'-Westers. Forcing the gate he took possession of the town, and the murderers were soon made prisoner and sent to Montreal to be tried.

Again the colonists returned to their ruined, forsaken homes, but the summer was gone, and the harvest poor. Famine stared them in the face, and after fearful sufferings and long endurance, they once more took refuge at Pembina.

In the spring, however, they came back again. This time all seemed to go well. In peace the fields were ploughed and sown. In peace the corn sprang up, grew and ripened. Then one summer afternoon the sky was darkened. The air was filled with the hum and buzz of insects, and a flight of locusts settled on the land.