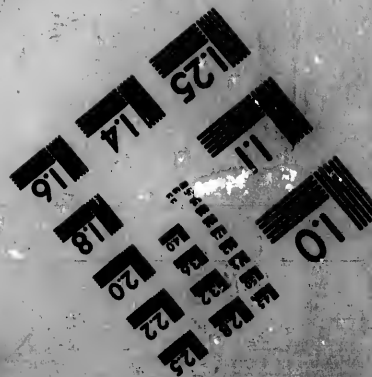
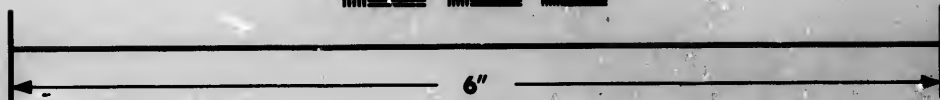
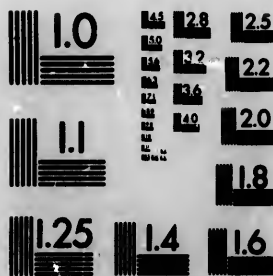


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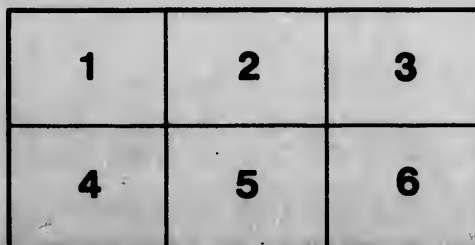
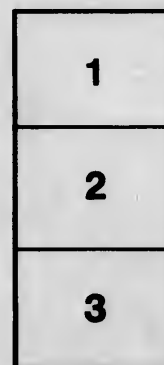
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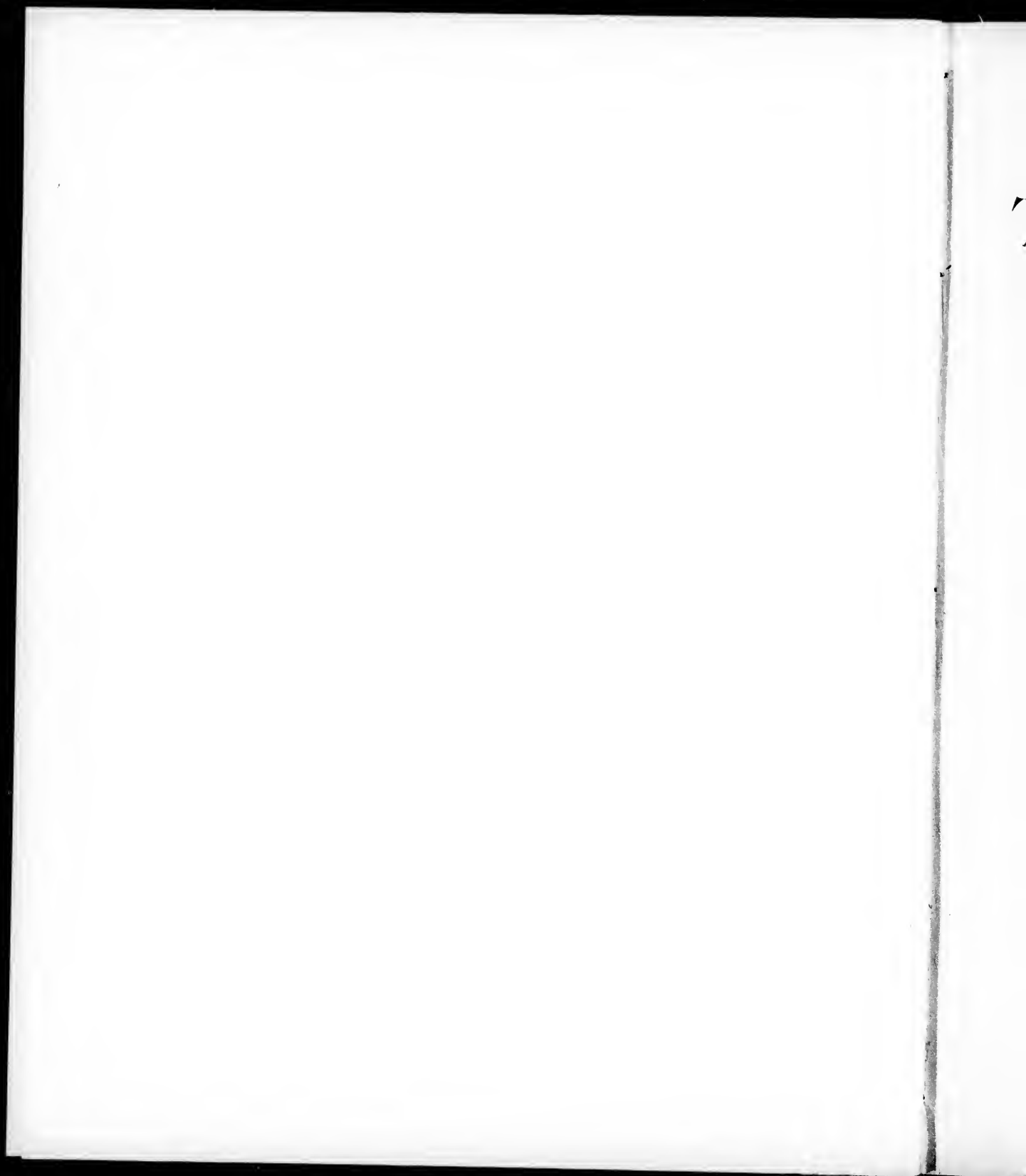
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The North-West Rebellion of 1885

By

LIEUT.-COLONEL JAMES MASON

Commanding the Royal Grenadiers.

A CONTRIBUTION

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THE NORTH-WEST REBELLION OF 1885

BY

LIEUT.-COLONEL JAMES MASON, Commanding *The Royal Grenadiers*.

IN the beginning of 1885 it was known at Ottawa that discontent existed amongst the Half-breeds settled on the Saskatchewan and in the district in the vicinity of Prince Albert, and that Louis Riel was living among them. No suspicion was felt that this would culminate in a rebellion; but about the middle of March some stores were raided and Government employes made prisoners. Major Crozier, who was stationed at Fort Carlton in command of a small body of the North-West Mounted Police, received this news on the 19th of March and at once sent over to Prince Albert, distant about forty miles, for re-enforcements. A meeting was held there and a force of forty volunteers arrived at Fort Carlton about 10 o'clock on the night of the 20th. Major Crozier had already received a letter from Riel demanding his surrender. A force of 100 men of the N.W.M.P. had been despatched in great haste from Regina under command of Lieut.-Colonel Irvine and their arrival was anxiously awaited. Colonel Irvine arrived at Prince Albert on the 24th of March, but in the meantime Major Crozier had decided to remove from Duck Lake, a small Half-breed settlement close to Fort Carlton, the provisions and forage which were there stored; and about four o'clock in the morning of the 26th he sent a small detachment with a dozen sleighs to remove these supplies.

The detachment was turned back by a party of Half-breeds headed by Gabriel Dumont, a noted hunter and Indian fighter, who became the military leader of the rebellion. Major Crozier himself then set out, his force amounting to about 100 men. On nearing Duck Lake a fight took place in which the Half-breeds were the victors, nine Prince Albert volunteers and three policemen being killed and the Government force com-

pelled to retire. Six of the rebels were killed. Colonel Irvine then considered it best to evacuate Fort Carlton and retire on Prince Albert and this was done on the 28th. A portion of Fort Carlton caught fire by accident and was burned, and the place was then taken possession of by Riel and his men. The Government at Ottawa, on learning that a disturbance had thus begun, determined to grapple vigorously with the trouble, for the danger that presented itself was not so much the Half-breed rising under Riel, which was confined to a certain locality, but the fear of an Indian rising throughout the whole country—that in the excitement of war, and at the instigation of Riel, the whole Indian population of the country might rise and bring death and desolation to the peaceful homes of the settlers. This was a formidable danger, as the Indians numbered some thirty thousand, and the effect of such a rising upon the North-West would be most disastrous and lasting.

Canada was most fortunate in having at this time at the head of its Militia an officer so well qualified for the duties that now devolved upon him as Major-General Middleton. That officer was at once dispatched to Winnipeg by the Minister of Militia, the Hon. (now Sir) Adolphe Caron. No specific instructions were given him, but he was to be governed by circumstances and take the field if necessary against the insurgents. The General went by way of Chicago, U.S., the Canadian Pacific Railway not being quite finished, and arrived at Winnipeg at 7 a.m. on the 27th, after travelling continuously for three days and three nights. On his arrival he learned of the fight at Duck Lake, and decided to at once proceed to the North-West and take with him the Winnipeg Militia, which had already been called out, and which consisted of a battery of

artillery of two 9 pounders (62 of all ranks) under command of Major E. W. Jarvis; a small troop of Cavalry, 35 strong, commanded by Captain Knight; and the 90th Battalion of Rifles, 314 strong, commanded by Major MacKeand. These troops were inspected and found in fairly good order and full of fight, and orders were given that the Rifles should be prepared to start that night for Qu'Appelle, whither a detachment of three officers and 30 men had already been sent; the remaining troops to follow next day with the exception of the Cavalry, which was to remain at Winnipeg. During his short stay in Winnipeg the General secured the services of Captain Bedson, then Warden of the Government Gaol near Winnipeg. To Captain Bedson was assigned the very important position of Chief Transport Officer, and he proved himself well worthy of the selection.

At 6 p.m. on the day of his arrival the General left Winnipeg, taking with him the 90th Battalion, and was accompanied by Lieut.-Colonel Houghton, the Deputy Adjutant-General of the District, Captain Bedson, and his own A.D.C., Captain H.E. Wise, of the Cameronians. He arrived next morning at Troy or Qu'Appelle Station, on the C. P.R., which place he made his primary base. He was here met by the Hon. Mr. Dewdney, Lieut.-Governor of the North-West Provinces. Mr. Dewdney was of opinion that affairs were in a very critical state, and that if the troops were defeated the consequences would be most disastrous to the country, as there would probably be a general rising of the Indians. After a long conference the General decided upon a plan of campaign, but as he had so few troops with him the carrying out of his plan would necessarily be deferred, although by this time a call upon the Militia had been made and troops would soon be hurrying up. He made up his mind to march at once on Batoche, a village on the Saskatchewan some 243 miles to the north and which Riel had made his head-quarters. On the next day, the 28th, arrangements were made for the immediate advance of the troops. A system of transport and commissariat was organized, and with the assistance of the Hudson's Bay Company, the difficulties attendant upon these important departments in such a country were finally surmounted. The medical arrangements

had also to be considered. The General had sufficient for his immediate wants and knew the Minister of Militia was organizing a Medical Staff Corps with the assistance of Dr. Bergin, M.P.

On the 2nd April a march was made to Fort Qu'Appelle, some eighteen miles to the north. Here the General was joined by a small body of Scouts, some thirty in number, under command of Captain John French, all well mounted on native horses and armed with repeating Winchester. This corps did excellent service. He



The Hon. Sir Adolphe Caron.

also heard from Ottawa that the following troops had left for the front :

| | Officers. | N. Co's. and Men. |
|--|-----------|----------------------|
| Royal Canadian Artillery, A and B Batteries (Permanent)..... | 13 | 213 |
| Infantry School Corps — "C" Company (Permanent)..... | 5 | 85 |
| 2nd Battalion (Queen's Own Rifles) | 18 | 257 |
| 10th Battalion (Royal Grenadiers)..... | 17 | 250 |

With the artillery were twenty-seven horses and four guns. The next two days were spent at Qu'Appelle, the weather being bitterly cold with heavy falls of snow. On the 1st April Lord Melgund, now Earl of Minto and (1898) Governor-General of Canada, arrived from the east. His Excellency, Lord Lausdowne, the Governor-General, whose Military Secretary Lord Melgund was, had kindly permitted him to come at the request of General Middleton, who at once appointed him his Chief of Staff. The relieving troops were coming up by the Canadian Pacific Railway, though there were still unfinished gaps in the line to the east of Port Arthur. But it was thought better as a matter of policy to use a Canadian route only, especially as the United States Government would not permit our troops to traverse American territory with their arms, although these gaps had to be crossed under great difficulties, both of ground and weather. An extract from a Report to the General by Lieut.-Colonel Montizambert, commanding the Artillery on this march, will give an idea of the difficulties and hardships which were so cheerfully borne by these citizen soldiers, both infantry and artillery:

"Here began the difficulties of passing the gaps on the unconstructed portion of the road. About 400 miles between the west end of the track and Red Rock or Nepigon—sixty-six miles from Port Arthur—had to be passed by a constantly varying process of embarking and disembarking guns and stores from flat cars to country team sleighs, and *vice versa*. There were sixteen operations of this nature in cold weather and deep snow. On starting from the west end of the track on the night of the 30th March the roads were found so bad that it took the guns seventeen hours to do the distance (thirty miles) to Magpie Camp. On from there to the east end of the track by team sleighs and marching twenty-three miles further on; on flat cars (uncovered and open) eighty miles, with the thermometer at 50 deg. below zero. Heron Bay, Port Munro, McKellar's Bay, Jackfish, Isbister, McKay's Harbour were passed by alternate flat cars on construction tracks; and, teaming in fearful weather round the north shore of Lake Superior, Nepigon or Red Rock was reached on the evening of the 3rd April. The men had had no sleep for four nights."

Lord Melgund, in an interesting account written by him of the events which came under

his own notice and published in the *Nineteenth Century* of August, 1885, says:

"The time of year was the most unpleasant for campaigning, the winter was just breaking up, snow was still on the ground, but was rapidly becoming slush, and we feared that with each succeeding day the trails would become more difficult. It was evident that we should draw no supplies from the country through which we had to march. We should pass no settlements of any importance, and, though the snow would soon be gone, there would as yet be no grass for our horses. We should have to carry everything—men's rations, hay and corn. Army transport did not exist, and the General was at once thrown upon his own resources as to the arrangements for feeding the troops about to take the field. Provisionally, there existed in the North-West a ready-made transport and supply office. The Hudson's Bay Company knew the country and its customs, and where to obtain what was required. The Company agreed to furnish transport and supplies, the detailed arrangements being left with the officers of the expedition selected by the General. To the Hudson's Bay Company, and to the untiring zeal and the organization of Captain Bedson, General Middleton's chief transport officer, a large share of the success of the expedition is due.

Our transport consisted of light four-wheeled waggons, carrying about one and a half tons with two horses—the horses, as a rule, being excellent. The Bell Farm (a farm of 60,000 acres, and one of the great agricultural speculations of the North-West) itself supplied sixty teams. At the commencement of the campaign we paid \$10 a day per team, but latterly the price was somewhat reduced. Towards the end of the campaign we had in General Middleton's line of communications 745 teams, working in perfect order, in connection with a system of depots. On the 2nd of April General Middleton left Qu'Appelle Station, and marched nineteen miles to Fort Qu'Appelle, a Hudson's Bay post. He halted there till the 6th, the time being fully occupied in rifle practice and general instruction of our small force, and in organization of transport.

On the 6th we commenced our march in earnest. The country is not difficult for troops. Rolling

prairie land covered here and there more or less thickly with poplar 'bluffs,* it resembles much an English park. Engineered roads there are none, but there are few bad gradients, and few watercourses; and luckily for us the frost was still deep enough in the ground to give good bottom to what might later in the season have proved awkward quagmires. Though the season was breaking, the cold was intense. Our tent-pegs froze fast in the ground, and we had to cut them out on striking camp. Our boots froze to the stirrup irons. There was a perpetual high wind, rain, and occasional 'blizzards.' But the troops trudged on constantly, doing twenty miles a day. At night we formed our waggons into a 'corrale,' after the American fashion, wheel to wheel and poles inwards, with the teamsters-tents and horses inside the circle—the camp outside the 'corrale.' Firewood and water were generally to be found in abundance. On the 13th we arrived at Humboldt. Halted the 14th, marched again the 15th. The General was anxious to secure Clarke's Crossing on the Saskatchewan as soon as possible. He hoped to be able to utilize the river as a line of communication, and the Crossing as an advanced post was therefore important. It was also on the telegraph line between Battleford and Humboldt. We had followed the wire since leaving Qu'Appelle, and by tapping it were generally in communication with Battleford and Ottawa.

We arrived at Clark's Crossing on the 17th, having marched 177 miles in twelve days, or nearly fifteen miles a day, including halts, and nearly eighteen miles a day exclusive of halts. We found there a small white settlement, capable of affording us a few supplies at extravagant prices, a telegraph station, and two ferry boats or 'scows.' The Saskatchewan is here about 300 yards across, a muddy, rapid river, with steep banks some 150 feet high, deep mud and shingle to the water's edge, strewn with huge masses of ice left there by the spring freshets. At the Crossing and on the march there we were overtaken by "A" Battery from Quebec, with two guns (9 pr. R.M.L.), the 10th Grenadiers from Toronto, and Boulton's Mounted Infantry."

*Note. A "bluff" is the North-West term for a wood. "Heavy bluff" means a thick wood.

Boulton's Mounted Infantry here referred to was a Corps of some 70 men recruited by Major C. A. Boulton, formerly of the 100th Regiment, from among the settlers in the district of Manitoba in which he resided. The Corps, which was organized in an incredibly short space of time, were dressed as Scouts, armed with repeating Winchesters and well mounted. They proved themselves of the greatest value to the General, and, under their indefatigable leader, were constantly on the move. The General in referring to this Corps and the Grenadiers says:

"I inspected Boulton's Scouts, who had joined the day before. They were armed with Winchester repeating rifles and were suitably clothed; being mounted on very serviceable horses, some of them having English saddles, and the men looked, as they proved to be, very fit. The 10th Regiment Royal Grenadiers, a Toronto city regiment, 250 strong, one of the best in the Canadian Militia, joined us during the day, the 18th April, having, with a few extra waggons to assist the men in marching, covered the distance from Qu'Appelle, 198 miles, over a wet and heavy trail, in nine days, including one day's halt. This was a highly creditable performance for men quite unaccustomed to long marching." This Regiment, it may be added, was commanded by Lieut.-Colonel Grasett, formerly Adjutant of the 100th Regiment. The force at Clarke's Crossing was now some 800 strong, and the General decided to divide it into two, sending one-half across the river, under command of Lieut.-Colonel Montizambert, with Lord Melgund as staff officer, to take the place he had intended for Colonel Otter's Column. The crossing was attended with many difficulties but was safely accomplished, and on the 23rd of April the divided Columns advanced along the banks of the river towards Batoche. The force as divided was as follows:

With the General on the south or east bank were:

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----|
| "A" Battery R.C.A.... | Captain J. Peters..... | 82 |
| Half "C" Co. J.S.C., | Major Henry Smith.. | 40 |
| 90th Battalion..... | Major McKeand..... | 268 |
| Detachment Boulton's | | |
| Scouts | | 50 |
| Total..... | | 440 |

On the other side of the River :

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 2 Guns Winnipeg F. | |
| Battery | Major Jarvis..... 50 |
| Detachment "A" Bat- | |
| tery..... | 23 |
| Royal Grenadiers..... | Lt.-Col. Grasett 260 |
| French's Scouts..... | 20 |
| Detachment Boulton's | |
| Scouts..... | 30 |
| Total..... | 353 |

After a march of eighteen miles the Column camped opposite each other and early next morning the march was resumed. The trail on the General's side led away from the bank of the river and his Column soon disappeared from sight of that on the other side. Some five or six miles ahead of the General's last camping ground the trail led through a deep and thickly wooded ravine, through which ran a stream called Fish Creek. The General was aware of this and, although Batoche was still some miles distant, the usual precautions were taken in approaching an enemy. That this was wisely done was proved in a most unmistakable manner, for after a march of some five miles a sudden and desperate attack was made by the Half-breeds and Indians under command of Gabriel Dumont. The mounted Scouts first came under fire and then the advance guard of the 90th. The General quickly brought up his main body with the artillery and after some sharp fighting the rebels returned to the *coulée* or ravine from which they had emerged. There a number of them made a stand in some rifle pits they had previously prepared, and, although the whole force of the General aided by troops brought from across the river fired upon them, they were not dislodged, and proved themselves to be brave and desperate fighters. An offer to charge the rebel position with his Company was made by an officer of the Grenadiers, but the General considered that the risk was too great, and that he had already lost too many of his citizen soldiers. The conduct of the troops was most satisfactory; although at first so suddenly attacked they had quickly got into the formations necessary to repel the attack and to follow up the retiring foe, and this in spite of heavy and severe losses.

The Column on the other side of the river had

soon become aware of the fact that the fighting had begun, and advanced rapidly along the bank until opposite the scene of the engagement, which was a mile or so inland. The rattle of musketry, the booming and bursting of shells, and the shouts and yells and war-whoops of the combatants were of course distinctly heard and the smoke of the burning prairie was seen, fired by the Indians so that they might creep down under its cover on their enemies. The eagerness of the troops to cross to the assistance of their hard-pressed comrades was naturally keen, and after some time the ferry scow that had been floated down from Clarke's Crossing was brought to the edge of the river and a Company of Grenadiers embarked. Lord Melgund crossed with this Company. Two other Companies of the Grenadiers followed, and the Winnipeg Field Battery brought over their guns, notwithstanding the apparent impossibility of the task. A Company of Grenadiers and French's Scouts did not cross, being in charge of stores, waggons, etc. The General in his Report refers to this crossing in the following manner :

"To fully appreciate the rapidity with which this was done in spite of the difficulties that existed the river must be seen. Wooded heights on each side, 100 feet high, at bottom large boulders encrusted in thick, sticky mud, a fringe of huge blocks of ice on each side, a wretched scow carrying about sixty men at most, pulled with oars made with an axe, and a rapid current of three or four miles an hour were the obstacles that were surmounted by dint of determination and anxiety to join with and aid their comrades."

The casualties at Fish Creek were extremely heavy considering the strength of the force that had borne the brunt of the fighting. The killed and those who died of wounds numbered ten, including Lieut. Swinford of the 90th; and the wounded, of whom many were seriously injured, numbered over forty, including Capt. Clarke of the 90th, and Capt. Gardiner of Boulton's Scouts. Both the General's Aides, Capt. Wise and Lieut. Doucet, were wounded; the General himself had a narrow escape, a bullet passing through his fur cap; and a number of the mounted officers had their horses shot under them. The losses of the rebels could not then be ascertained, but it was afterwards learned to be eleven killed, or died

from wounds, besides two Indians left dead on the field, and eighteen wounded; some fifty or sixty of their ponies were killed.

Night was coming on and promised to be, as it turned out, cold and intensely disagreeable; snow and sleet falling and adding to the discomfort of the tired troops and the suffering wounded. A zareba was formed near the scene of the engagement and the wounded cared for. Strong picquets were posted and mounted Scouts patrolled round the camp every hour. Meantime the rebels quietly decamped to Batoche. Next morning the dead were buried, the General reading the service, no clergyman being present, and preparations began for bringing over the supplies and transport from the other side. This occupied two days and was carried out satisfactorily by Captain Haig, R.E., A.Q.M.G. The steamer *Northcote* was daily expected with supplies and re-enforcements but had evidently been detained and it was therefore decided to send the wounded to Saskatoon, a small white settlement up the river some fourteen miles, the inhabitants of which had kindly and thoughtfully offered their houses and services for them. Boulton's Scouts formed the escort for this duty. The day following there arrived at Saskatoon Deputy Surgeon-General Roddick and an admirable staff and medical outfit, under whose care all the wounded recovered but two, who had been mortally hurt.

The time spent at Fish Creek Camp was utilized by the General in practising the men at field drill, skirmishing, etc., and in reconnoitering daily towards Batoche. On the 5th May the long expected steamer arrived, bringing in additional supplies of ammunition, oats, etc., and two Companies (about 80 men) of the Midland Battalion under command of Lieut.-Colonel Williams; a Gatling Gun under charge of a Captain Howard, late U.S. Army, and agent of the Gatling Co.; and Lieut.-Colonel Van Straubenzie, an old Crimean officer, who had retired and was serving in the Canadian Militia as a Deputy Adjutant-General. The Infantry were formed into a brigade and Lieut.-Colonel Van Straubenzie appointed Brigadier. The steamer *Northcote* was, under the direction of Captain Haig, made bullet proof, so far as it could be done, and a small force was placed on board to

assist on the attack on Batoche. The force consisted of about 30 rank and file of "C" Co. I.S.C. under command of Major Smith, and some sick and wounded officers were also placed on board.

A move was made on the 7th May, and in the evening the camp was pitched in Gabriel Dumont's Ferry, five or six miles from Batoche. Next day, instead of following the river trail, the march was across the prairie to the East, striking the main trail from Humboldt, and camp was formed some nine or ten miles from Batoche. That evening the General assembled in his tent the Commanding Officers of Corps and told them what he proposed doing. With every available fighting man Batoche was to be attacked the next morning, only non-combatants and disabled or sick men to be left in the camp or zareba, which was strongly made. The fighting was expected to be severe, as Batoche was the headquarters of the rebellion and its seat of government. It was known that the place had been strongly entrenched or fortified with rifle pits, and its defenders felt they were in the last ditch, with the possible consequences of their act staring them in the face. The attacking forces had no reserves and failure might mean serious disaster to the column and the country; so both sides were on their mettle. A mail came in that night and many sat late in their tents reading the news from home and writing what they felt might be, and for some of them was, their farewell message. An incident might be here related to show the spirit that animated the men. As already mentioned all sick or disabled men were to remain, and after the General's instructions to his Commanders the Surgeons were ordered to examine any men about whose condition there was any doubt. An officer of the Grenadiers in going about the Camp that evening heard his name called and on looking saw Surgeon Ryerson of his Regiment examining a private of the Corps whose foot had been badly and painfully frozen. The man could only wear on the foot a moccasin over a piece of blanket. The Surgeon had declared that the man was unfit to march, and, in his eager desire not to be left behind, the plucky fellow appealed to the officer. The decision was as he wished and he marched out the

next morning, but, unluckily for him, he was severely wounded and returned to his home with a permanently crippled shoulder. What makes this man's conduct more praiseworthy is that the General had arranged that the Grenadiers should have the post of honour and lead the attack, and this the man knew. Reveille sounded at four o'clock on the next morning, and in an hour or so later the Column marched out of the camp. The day was fine and warm and the spirit of the men was cheerful. The order of the march was as follows:

Boulton's Mounted Infantry extended and with supports.

Gatling Gun.

Royal Grenadiers, with an advanced Guard.
90th Battalion.

"A" Battery, two nine-pounders R.M.L. guns.
Two Companies Midland Battalion.

Winnipeg Field Battery, two nine-pounders
R.M.L. guns.

Ammunition waggons.

Ambulance.

French's Scouts.

About 8 a.m. the whistle of the *Northcote* was heard, soon followed by a sharp musketry fire. It was afterwards learned that the boat on approaching Batoche was fired upon from both banks of the river. This was returned. The firing became specially heavy as she passed Batoche, and a crash was heard. About two miles below that place the fire slackened and the boat came to anchor. It was then learned that the smoke-stack and steam whistle had been swept away by the Ferry cable and were lying on the deck. The explanation of this by the Master was that the firing being so heavy he could not manage the boat and he was upon the cable before he was aware of it. An attempt was made to get the boat up stream again but this could not be done in the condition in which she was, and she proceeded down stream, under fire, for several miles. After reaching a place of safety she was repaired and returned to Batoche, but too late to be of assistance. Several on board were wounded.

Very soon after the attack was made on the *Northcote* the advancing Column came into action. The artillery began the attack by two guns firing on some barricaded houses, from which men were seen issuing. Boulton's Scouts were fired upon from concealed rifle pits and they retired as

ordered. The Grenadiers now advanced in skirmishing order; the two guns were pushed forward and opened fire on the other side of the river, from which a nasty dropping fire was kept up all the day. Two more guns were advanced until they commanded the village and ferry, and then commenced shelling the position to protect the advance of the skirmishers and draw the enemies' fire from the steamboat. The Grenadiers advanced into the bush and were received by a hot fire from the concealed rifle pits. The guns which were shelling the village were ordered to change their positions, but just as they were being limbered up a war-whoop was heard and a body of Crees who had crept through the bushes poured in a volley and attempted to seize the guns. The Gatling now proved its usefulness and its rattling stream of bullets soon drove off the daring Indians.

The action became general, the wounded were carried into a small wooden church, where the priests and sisters, who with a number of women and children had taken refuge there, were of much assistance to the Surgeons, but the wounded had subsequently to be hastily removed, as the rebels had set fire to the bush, doubtless for the purpose of creeping up under cover of the smoke, and the flames threatened the building. It became evident that the rebels' position was a very strong one. It was growing late and although holding our own it was thought that it would not be advisable to risk an attempt to advance through the thick cover that surrounded the village now swarming with an enemy, re-enforced by the party that had been attacking the steamboat. The General now thought it wise to prepare for possibilities, and wrote orders to be sent by telegraph to Humboldt to close up the troops in the line of communication so as to be on hand if required. He also wrote a despatch to the Minister of Militia on the state of affairs which he determined to send by Lord Melgund. The latter was naturally averse to leaving the General at such a time, but the General's commands were paramount and Lord Melgund left during the afternoon on the understanding that he would be telegraphed to at Winnipeg if matters became worse and he would then return with any troops he might find there.

The question then arose as to whether the troops should camp where they were or retire to their standing camp of the night before. Having decided to remain, orders were given to bring up the waggons, tents and supplies, Major Boulton with his scouts forming the escort. The ground selected for the camp was a ploughed field in which there was a slough or pond of water—about a quarter of a mile from the church. A zareba was formed with the waggons but no tents were pitched excepting a marquee for the wounded. The troops gradually fell back followed up by the enemy, who maintained a hot fire which was kept up till dark, and, even all through the night shots were directed into the camp—some horses being killed and two men wounded. The hospital tent became a target, bullets passing through it and all lights having to be extinguished. A strong picket guard was mounted, and, after a hearty supper, the troops rested and slept under and about the waggons.

Early next morning the Infantry were ordered out and took up positions less advanced than those occupied the day before, as it was found that the enemy had pushed forward and held the high ground about the cemetery and the ground in front of the church. The day passed in the exchange of shots with more or less briskness. A body of mounted men, fifty in number, called the Land Surveyor's Scouts, or intelligence corps, under command of Captain Dennis, joined during the afternoon, and they proved a useful body and did good service. The casualties of this day among the troops were one killed and five wounded. On Monday, the third day, a reconnaissance was made by the General to the north-east of the village for the purpose of learning the exact situation of the enemy, and with a view to preparing for a final attack. The Infantry moved out as on the day before, but advanced further and kept up a constant fire. This practice was good for the men; they understood better the mode of fight followed by their adversaries and were much cooler. The retirement to the camp was, as usual, followed up by the enemy, the firing being, at times, quite warm. The casualties on this day were four wounded, including one officer.

The morning of Tuesday, the 12th of May, the fourth day, dawned bright and warm. The General made a demonstration in the direction of the ground reconnoitred by him the day before, taking with him all the mounted men, one gun of "A" Battery and the Gatling. On reaching his destination, he dismounted some of the men and firing began with all arms. The rifle pits at this point were found to be filled with the enemy and a heavy firing was kept up. During this firing a man was seen riding furiously towards the General waving a white flag; he proved to be one of Riel's white prisoners, and was the bearer of a note from Riel stating that if the women and children were killed he would massacre the prisoners. The answer was that if the location of the women and children was pointed out no shot or shell would be fired at it. Immediately following, another messenger, also a white prisoner, came up on foot with a duplicate letter. One of these men, a Mr. Astley, a Civil Surveyor, gallantly returned as he had promised to do; the other man did not return.

The General returned with a loss of one killed, an officer of the intelligence corps, and on arriving at the camp he learned that owing to a strong wind blowing the firing of his party had not been heard, thus defeating the purpose of his movement—it having been arranged that the attack by him which would have the effect of drawing the enemy from the rifle pits at the front was to be the signal for a general advance. After dinner the Infantry moved out, and it soon became apparent that the men were determined not to be held at bay any longer, for a general advance began almost simultaneously. The pace increased as they went on, and ended with a charge which carried the enemy's position; the prisoners were released, the enemy fled and the headquarters of the rebellion came into the hands of the victorious force. The troops behaved with the utmost dash and gallantry; each corps seeming to vie with the others in its eagerness to close with the rebels, and they proved their fitness for the arduous and trying duties that had been imposed upon them.

The casualties of this day were five killed, among whom were four officers, and twenty-five wounded, including two officers. A large number

of important papers and documents were also secured. The loss of the rebels during the four days' fighting was fifty-one killed and one hundred and seventy three wounded, of whom forty-seven were killed and one hundred and sixty-three wounded on the last day. Many prisoners were taken and for several days men were constantly coming in and surrendering their arms. A thorough search was made for Riel; and he, fearing to fall into the hands of the troopers who were in search of him, gave himself up. This was on the 15th of May. He had in his possession a letter from the General written the day Batoche was captured, guaranteeing his life if he surrendered, until he was handed over to the civil authorities. Riel was sent down under strong escort to Regina and there delivered up to the civil power. The wounded were sent by steamer to the Hospital at Saskatoon, and the column then crossed the Saskatchewan and moved on towards Prince Albert—situated near the junction of the north and south branches of the Saskatchewan. Prince Albert was reached on the 20th of May and the troops received a warm welcome from its inhabitants, who had been cut off for two months from all telegraphic and mail communication, and, although protected by a force of 200 Mounted Police, under command of Lieut.-Colonel Irvine, and a local corps, were in a constant state of anxiety and suspense. Although no attack had been made upon them a disaster to General Middleton's Column would probably have brought on them an overwhelming force of the rebels. After a delay of less than two days the Column moved towards Battleford, partly by steamer and partly by land, arriving there on May 24th.

The plan of campaign arranged by General Middleton had been as follows: to move the principal Column, under his own command, direct to Clark's Crossing, a telegraphic station and ferry on the South Saskatchewan, about forty miles by trail from Batoche; a second Column under Lieut.-Colonel Otter to start from Swift Current, a C. P. R. station some 150 miles to the westward of Troy, or Qu'Appelle Station, and a few miles from the south branch of the Saskatchewan—this Column to proceed along the west bank of the river and to meet that of

the General at Clark's Crossing. If the enemy was not found there, then both Columns were to proceed to Batoche, keeping the river between them. After Batoche had been captured, one Column might, if necessary, march to Prince Albert and the other push on to Battleford, to which place the General purposed sending, at the beginning, a re-enforcement of Mounted Police under command of Lieut.-Colonel Herchmer—the whole of the Mounted Police Force having been put under the General's command. A third Column was to be formed at Calgary under command of Major-General Strange, late R. A., who had placed his services at the disposal of the Government. This Column, after over-awing the Indians in the district, would move on to Edmonton and proceed down the North Saskatchewan to Fort Pitt, where it would be met by General Middleton, who would then proceed with it to follow up and dispose of Big Bear, and this, it was expected, would end the rebellion.

The Battleford Column. The Column under Colonel Otter, assembled at Swift Current, consisted of the following:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| N. W. Mounted Police (one gun) under | |
| Lieut.-Colonel Herchmer..... | 50 men. |
| "B" Battery R. C. A., Major Short | |
| (two guns)..... | 113 " |
| One-half "C" Company I.S.C., Lieut. | |
| Wadmore | 49 " |
| G.G. Foot Guards, Captain Todd..... | 51 " |
| "Queen's Own Rifles," Lieut.-Colonel | |
| Millar..... | 274 " |
| Scouts | 6 " |
| Total of all ranks | 543 " |

In consequence of the alarming reports from Inspector Morris, the officer in command of the N. W. M. P. at Battleford, as to the imminent and immediate danger that place was exposed to, the General felt it necessary to direct the Column under Lieut.-Colonel Otter to march straight to Battleford. Later on the General knew that the danger had been very greatly over-stated, and it was a subject of much regret to him that his original plan had not been carried out. The Battleford Column left Swift Current on the 13th April, but was prevented from crossing the Saskatchewan, some twenty-five miles distant, until

the evening of the 17th. The march was resumed on the 18th, and, without any event of importance occurring, on the evening of the 23rd, the Column halted within three miles of Battleford. The distance was accomplished expeditiously, the last part, from the Saskatchewan Ferry, 160 miles, being made in five days and a half. The country traversed was a vast and unoccupied prairie, covered in the summer season with luxuriant vegetation. The train was a long one, for, in addition to the twenty-five days' rations, twenty days' oats, ten days' hay and five days' wood, waggons were taken sufficient to carry the greater part of the Infantry. The waggon train (200) increased the strength to 745 officers and men, with 450 horses.

Battleford is situated on the Upper Saskatchewan, at its junction with Battle River, and some 200 miles north of Swift Current. The source of danger here was the proximity of Poundmaker's Indians. This Cree Chief was looked upon as one of the most astute of the Indians, and as not likely to commit himself to the rebellion unless well assured of success; although some of his band had been committing depredations. Several settlers had been killed, stock had been driven off and houses pillaged and destroyed. Word was sent to Battleford of the Column's arrival, but it had scarcely camped before it was found necessary to send out the N. W. M. P. and Scouts to drive off a party of Indians then engaged in destroying property near the town. Next day the camp was moved to near Government House, opposite the town, and the garrison taken over, which consisted of the following:

| | |
|--|---------|
| N. W. M. P., Inspector Dickens..... | 43 men. |
| Battleford Rifle Company, Captain Nash. | 45 " |
| Home Guards, Captains Wild and Scott..... | 134 " |
| — | — |
| Making a total of..... | 222 " |

Between three and four hundred of the inhabitants, who had been living within the barrack square, now returned to their homes as soon as the column had been moved across the river into the town on the 8th of May, one company being left in occupation of Government House. During the occupation by Colonel

Otter's Column, that officer having learned that a force of Cree and Stoney Indians, numbering about two hundred men, were camped near the reserve of the former tribe, some thirty-eight miles from Battleford, and having been informed that Poundmaker was hesitating between peace and war, the latter to result should he obtain assistance from Big Bear's tribe, felt it necessary to take such action as would compel Poundmaker to declare himself and so prevent a junction of the forces of the two chiefs. Accordingly a reconnaissance in force was determined on, and



Lieut -Colonel W. D. Otter.

on the 1st of May, at 2 p.m., he left Battleford with seventy-five Mounted Police, of whom fifty were mounted; eighty of "B" Battery, R.C.A.; forty-five "C" Company, I.S.C.; twenty Governor-General's Foot Guards; sixty Queen's Own Rifles (including the ambulance corps of the same regiment); forty-five of the Battleford Rifles; and one Gatling Gun, with two seven-pounders belonging to the Police—the latter selected as being more easy of transport than the nine-pounder guns of the R.C.A. A train of forty-

eight waggons was taken to carry the men, rations and stores.

The force halted at 8 p.m. for four hours, until the moon rose, and then pushed on through the night, reaching at day-break the Indian's camp which was seen on the higher of two hills, partially surrounded by a deep ravine with a large creek—now so well known as Cut Knife Creek—running through it. Crossing the creek the advanced guard of Scouts and Police were almost at the top of the lower hill before their presence was discovered and the general alarm sounded. The crest of the hill was hardly gained before firing began. The Police immediately extended on the brow; the guns were pushed forward (supported by "3" Battery men) into the same line, and opened fire with shrapnel upon the camp. The Indians, not expecting an attack, were evidently taken by surprise, but very quickly gathered themselves together. The fight then became general, and the troops behaved well when fairly settled down to their work. Early in the engagement the trail of one of the guns gave way, rendering it useless, and later a similar calamity befell the other one. At 11 o'clock, that is, six hours after the fight had begun, it was found that although the flanks and rear were clear the position was not tenable, both guns being practically useless, and the numerous wounded requiring attention. It was also believed that the Indians in camp had received the re-enforcements from Big Bear, as the number engaged appeared to be very much greater than was supposed. Colonel Otter concluded to withdraw and return at once to Battleford in case a counter attack might be made on that place. The wounded and dead, with the exception of a man of the G.G. Foot Guards, whose body had rolled into a deep ravine, were placed in the waggons, the creek was crossed in safety, and the various corps withdrew from their respective positions. The enemy did not follow, although had they done so much delay and loss of life might have resulted as the country was favourable to them. Battleford was reached about ten o'clock at night.

The casualties were eight killed and fourteen wounded. The movement which led to this engagement was made without orders from Gen-

eral Middleton. The force at Battleford, including the original garrison, was kept engaged in patrolling the district to keep open communication for supplies, and in searching for information regarding the enemy. A supply train of twenty ox and three horse teams were captured about fifteen miles from Battleford by the Indians, and a patrol of police was attacked by a superior force of Indians and obliged to retire with the loss of one killed and one wounded.

The Alberta Field Force. At the outbreak of the rebellion anxiety prevailed among the districts in this part of the country. Some of the most important of the Indian tribes, however, in the neighbourhood of Calgary proved loyal and this saved the Government from much embarrassment. The following letter, dated 11th April, 1895, from Crowfoot, Chief of the Blackfoot tribe, to the Government, was read in Parliament:

"On behalf of myself and people I send through you to the Great Mother the words I have given to the Governor at a council held, at which my minor chiefs and young men were present. We are agreed and determined to remain loyal to the Queen. Our young men will go to work on their reserves and will raise all the crops we can, and we hope the Government will help us to sell what we can't use. Continued reports and many lies are brought to us and we don't know what to believe, but, now that we have seen the Governor and heard him speak, we will shut our ears and only listen to and believe through the Governor. Should any Indians come to our reserves and ask us to join them in war we will send them away. I have sent messengers to the Bloods and Piegans who belong to our treaty to tell them what we are doing and what we intend to do about the trouble. I want Mr. Denny to be with us and all my men are of the same mind. The words I sent by Father LaCombe I again send: 'We will be loyal to the Queen whatever happens.' I have a copy of this and when the trouble is over will have pride to show it to the Queen's officers; and we leave our future in your hands. We have asked for nothing, but the Governor has given us a little present of tea and tobacco. We will tell you what other talk we had at our council. It is all good, not one bad word.

CROWFOOT."

But it was different in the vicinity of Edmonton, situated on the North Saskatchewan. Messages

imploing assistance had been received at Calgary; the Indians, having risen, destroyed farms, plundered all food supplies and at Frog Lake committed atrocious murders. This latter place, some thirty miles from Fort Pitt, contained a Hudson's Bay Post and a Roman Catholic mission, and was the headquarters of an Indian agency. It was surrounded by numerous tribes of Indians and among the most conspicuous of the chiefs was Big Bear. This Chief had before given trouble to the N. W. M. P. and he and his braves were the leaders of the rebellion at this point. When the news of the Duck Lake fight reached them they immediately went on the war-path—doubtless in accordance with the programme arranged by Big Bear on his visit to Riel a few months before. He and his band visited, at day-light on the morning of 2nd April, the Hudson's Bay store and demanded provisions; other stores were also visited and similar demands made. It was the day before Good Friday and the people were assembled in the church for early morning service. They were rudely disturbed by the Indians, who followed them out and shortly afterwards shot down and murdered nine men, including the two priests—the latter while ministering to dying men—besides carrying off a number of women and children, among whom were the families of some of the murdered victims.

A local force was at once organized at Calgary, and on 20th April the advance force left under the personal command of General Strange. It was composed of four companies, 65th Battalion, 160 strong, under command of Lieut.-Colonel Hughes, and a mounted detachment under command of Major Steele, with 20 N. W. Mounted Police and 40 Scouts. This small force had to guard a long line of 175 waggons and carts unavoidably extending at times a distance of one and one-half to two miles. Edmonton was reached on the 1st of May after a march of much hardship, snow-storms being encountered and rivers and morasses crossed. But in spite of these great difficulties the long march was finally accomplished in eleven days. On the 5th two companies of the 65th, with Major Steele's Cavalry, marched to Victoria, 74 miles down the North Saskatchewan River; and on the same

day there arrived the remainder of the right wing of the 65th (half a Company having been left at Red River) and a nine-pounder gun, with Major Perry and a party of twenty men of the N.W.M. P. One Company of the 65th was ordered to garrison Fort Edmonton, and one Company to garrison Fort Saskatchewan, distant some 20 miles down the River. On the 7th a Company of the 65th marched to Battle River and half a Company to Peace Hill Farm. On the 8th Lieut.-Colonel Hughes, with the remainder of the 65th, marched towards Victoria. The defences of Fort Edmonton were strengthened, food supplies provided and scows constructed, and on the 10th May there arrived the 91st Winnipeg Light Infantry under command of Lieut.-Colonel Osborne Smith, with the Alberta Mounted Rifles and a further convoy of stores.

The plan submitted by General Strange to General Middleton was that he (General Strange) should proceed eastward, and the Battleford Column westward until communication should be opened, and then attack from both sides either Poundmaker or Big Bear, or both united, as the case might be. On the 13th all stores were embarked, but, in consequence of a gale of wind, the troops did not go on board. The transport waggons and all horses, except the six horses for the gun team, were sent forward to Victoria under escort of a detachment of the N. W. M. P. On the next day, the 14th, a start was made; the General and staff, with the Winnipeg Light Infantry, and a nine-pounder gun with horses, in five scows; Scouts in canoes leading the advance. A ferry boat with wire rope, windlass and appurtenances accompanied the expedition, so that the forces could operate on either side of the River as might be found necessary. The land force moved by the north bank of the River and kept communication open by the Scout Cavalry. Fort Saskatchewan was reached on the 15th, and Victoria on the 16th; on the 20th the forces left Victoria, the 65th Battalion by river and the Winnipeg Light Infantry, Cavalry and Artillery, by land. They arrived at Frog Lake on the 24th, where the bodies of those murdered by the Indians were found, and hastily buried.

The force reached Fort Pitt the same evening

and found the place had been fired and was still burning. Fort Pitt, a Hudson Bay post, situated on the North Saskatchewan some 200 miles east of Edmonton, and nearly 100 miles west of Battleford, was, at the outbreak of the rebellion, garrisoned by a small force of 25 N.W.M.P., under command of Inspector Dickens (son of the celebrated novelist). After the Frog Lake massacre Big Bear and a party of his Indians, some 250 in number and mostly mounted, laid siege to the place and demanded that the Fort be evacuated and the arms given up. Three Scouts



Major-General Thomas Bland Strange.

who had gone out, in attempting to return, were fired upon near the Fort; one was killed, a second badly wounded and his horse killed, and the third escaped for a time by galloping off but was afterwards captured. Thinking the wounded man was dead, the squaws and boys were going to take his body but were fired upon by the Police, and he managed to get into the Fort. In this brush two Indians were killed. Finding it impossible to hold the place it was abandoned on the 15th April; the Hudson's Bay employés and

some others (22 in number) surrendered to Big Bear; the Police, escaping by means of a scow, reached Battleford on the 22nd after enduring great hardships and dangers from the ice running in the river and from the intense cold. Major Steele's command and some Scouts were sent out. The Scouts on their return reported traces of the Indians, and that a collision with Major Steele's forces had occurred in which one Indian was killed; and that there were evidences of the presence of a large body not far off. On the evening of the 27th, leaving a Company of the 65th to fortify and protect what remained of Fort Pitt and the camp and stores, the General marched out with a force consisting of 197 Infantry, rank and file, and 27 Cavalry and one 9-pounder gun. No tents were taken, and every effort was made to reach the enemy quickly, waggons being used and also the scows. On coming up with Major Steele's command the enemy was found occupying a very advantageous position and signalling for re-enforcements. An attack was made immediately and the enemy, driven from its position, was followed up. Darkness coming on, the troops bivouacked and at daybreak next morning moved forward, finding numerous traces of recent trails used by the Indian forces in every direction. At 7.30 a.m. the latter were found occupying a very strong position in the forks of the Red Deer and Little Red Deer Rivers, and were again attacked. Finding a direct attack in front impracticable an attempt was made to turn the enemy's right flank, but they were protected by an impassable morass, and it having been ascertained that the opposing force was at least 600 strong and was beginning to get into the rear of the attacking troops a retirement to more open ground was made. This was done with perfect deliberation, and Fort Pitt was reached in due time. The scene of this engagement is called Frenchman's Butte. Two men of the 65th and one policeman were wounded, the former seriously. On the 30th of May the camp was moved east and on the 2nd of June a number of relieved prisoners were brought in. On the following day General Middleton arrived in camp.

Meanwhile, General Middleton's Column had left Prince Albert by steamer and trail for Battle-

ford on the 22nd of May. On the 23rd, as the steamer *Northwest*, on board of which was the General, was proceeding up the North Saskatchewan River, a canoe came out from the bank and ran alongside and an Indian, accompanied by a white man, came on board. The Indian proved to be a messenger from Poundmaker; the white man a prisoner captured by the Indians who acted as interpreter. The Indian handed the General a letter written in English which read as follows:

"Eagle Hills, May 19th, 1885.

Sir: I am camped with my people at the east end of the Eagle Hills, where I am met by the news of the surrender of Riel. No letter came with the news so that I cannot tell how far it may be true. I send some of my men to you to learn the truth and the terms of peace, and hope you will deal kindly with them. I and my people wish you to send us the terms of peace in writing so that we may be under no misunderstanding, from which so much trouble arises. We have twenty-one prisoners, whom we have tried to treat well in every respect.

With greetings,
POUNDMAKER."

The following was the reply sent by the General:

"Poundmaker: I have utterly defeated the Half-breeds and Indians at Batoche, and made prisoners of Riel and most of his Council. I have made no terms with him, neither will I make terms with you. I have men enough to destroy you and your people, or at least to drive you away to starve and I will do so unless you bring in the teams you took, and yourself and councillors, with your arms, to meet me at Battleford on Monday the 25th. I am glad to hear you have treated the prisoners well and have released them.*

(Signed)

FRED. MIDDLETON, Major-General."

On the next day (Sunday), 24th May, the General arrived at Battleford and found Lieut.-Colonel Otter there with his Column, and Inspector Dickens, N. W. M. P., who had abandoned Fort Pitt and had taken over the command from Inspector Morris. On the following day, the 25th of May, there was a parade of all the

troops in celebration of the Queen's Birthday. Next day, the 26th, Poundmaker and his people came in and a "pow-wow" was held about one p.m. in front of the camp. The spectacle was an interesting one, the Indians, in war-paint and some fantastically dressed, to the number of about seventy, squatted themselves down in a semi-circle in front of the General, who was seated in a chair, having standing about him, also in a semi-circle, all his officers, the whole completely encircled by the men of the force. Poundmaker, who was a tall, fine looking Indian, opened the proceedings by a long oration in the Cree tongue, which was translated into English by the General's interpreter. The speech was of the usual Indian character, flowery and embellished with allegories. In substance he stated that he knew little of what was going on; and that he should be commended for his efforts in striving to keep his young braves quiet. He was followed by several of his braves who spoke in a rambling sort of way. A ludicrous incident here occurred. A squaw, old and dirty, came forward and wanted to make a speech. She was told that, like the Indians themselves, the white people did not admit women to their councils in war time. The crafty old woman replied that they, the whites, were ruled by a woman!

The General spoke briefly, and went on to say that Poundmaker and four of his braves would be arrested; that the others could return to their reserve, first giving up the men who had committed two deliberate murders of white men a short time before. Upon this, a brave wearing a European woman's straw hat, with ribbons, stepped out of the semi-circle, and sitting at the General's feet which he grasped with his two hands, confessed to one of the murders. Strangely enough this man's name, when translated, was "the man without blood." Another Indian then stepped out, and, stripping himself to his waist, confessed to having committed the other murder. This ended the affair and the prisoners were sent off to Regina.

The next day the rest of the Column arrived by steamer, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Van Straubenzie; and there also came in from Fort Pitt a small party of Mounted Police under the command of Major Perry, which

*NOTE. The interpreter informed the General that the teams had been released before he started.

had been sent out by General Strange for information respecting Big Bear. A steamer with supplies and a Company of the 90th was at once sent off to Fort Pitt, but when half-way there were met by a messenger from General Strange in a canoe, with an account of his fight with Big Bear. The steamer at once returned for further orders, first landing some North-West Mounted Police who were on board. The General was somewhat disappointed on receiving this information, as had General Strange waited for his arrival a decisive blow might have been struck. Orders were immediately issued for the whole of General Middleton's Column to leave next day (the 30th) for Fort Pitt by steamer, except the mounted part, which was to march by the trail on the south bank—Lieut.-Colonel Otter and his Column remaining at Battleford. Accordingly, next morning, the force started in three steamers and the day after, when within a few miles of Fort Pitt, Major Dale, General Strange's Brigade Major, came on board with the information that the Alberta Column had left Fort Pitt and was then camped some twelve miles off. Major Dale had with him a number of escaped prisoners who, during the confusion incident to the fight at Frenchman's Butte, had made off and had met him.* On the following day General Middleton landed, and with a small escort rode off to General Strange's camp; leaving orders for the troops to dis-embark and camp where they were. He found that General Strange had sent Major Steele to follow the trail of Big Bear; and another party by another trail. This latter detachment came across a party of Indians with some prisoners, among whom were the widows of two of the men murdered at Frog Lake who had been in captivity since the 2nd of April. It should be stated to the credit of the Indians that in no case had their white women prisoners been maltreated.

General Middleton returned to his own camp by the river; and next morning, having directed Lieut.-Colonel Van Straubenzie to move the camp to Fort Pitt, he started back to General Strange's camp with all his mounted men, viz.:

*NOTE. A subsequent visit to this place disclosed the fact that the Indians had left in great haste after the fight, as the gully below was full of broken and sound carts, harness, old bedding, blankets, cooking pots, flour, bacon, etc.

the N. W. M. P., Boulton's Scouts, the Surveyors, and Brittlebank's (late French's) Scouts; a party of 25 Artillerymen, one Gatling, and 150 Infantry, selected from the Royal Grenadiers, 90th Battalion, and Midlanders. Early next morning news came that Major Steele had caught up with Big Bear's party crossing a ford and had killed five of them—three of his own men being wounded. A determined pursuit of Big Bear was now instituted. The country to be traversed was of the very worst possible description, being made up of woods, streams, swamps and muskegs, thickly infested with musquitoes and "bull-dog" flies.

The pursuit continued for many days, during which time hundreds of miles were travelled. Other portions of the force, including the Battleford Column, were employed to assist in the same work, and rendered good service. It was early found necessary to leave the Infantry behind so as not to delay the mounted contingent. The chase was a warm one—camps recently occupied by Big Bear being found from time to time, and, so hasty was his flight that furs, coats, food and arms were left lying about and five partially buried bodies of his braves, killed or mortally wounded in the fight with General Strange, were seen. Traces of the white prisoners were also found; boxes, torn photographs, bits of coloured wools, twisted and tied to the bushes; and sometimes scraps of paper, stating that the prisoners were all right. On the 18th June the General received news that all the prisoners had been released, and were on their way to Fort Pitt, which place they reached on the 22nd June. A few days later the intelligence came that Big Bear's band had broken up; so that with Batoche captured, Riel and Pound-maker prisoners, Big Bear powerless and a fugitive, and all the prisoners released, General Middleton considered that his work was nearly done, and began to make arrangements for breaking up his Force.

By the 3rd of July the last of the troops at Fort Pitt had embarked in the steamers, excepting the Winnipeg Light Infantry, which was left behind to gather in arms and prisoners—perhaps Big Bear himself. On the way down the River the General had the satisfaction of receiving the

report that Big Bear had, on the 2nd July, given himself up at Fort Carlton to a small detachment of Mounted Police. This completed the perfect success of the campaign; but the joy was damped by the untimely death of Lieut.-Colonel Williams, M.P., commanding the Midland Battalion, who died on board one of the steamers from the effects of a chill and fever. The following is from the General Order issued by General Middleton, and with which he took leave of his Force:

"In thus completing the breaking up of the North-West Field Force, which has been under the immediate command of Major-General Middleton during the late campaign, he cannot let the officers and men comprising it separate without expressing his great satisfaction with them. During the whole time he has not had to assemble one court-martial; and in fact there has been an almost total absence of crime. The troops have had great hardships to undergo and real difficulties to overcome, and have borne and met them like men, with ready cheerfulness and without complaint. They, as untried volunteer-soldiers, have had to move in a country where an extraordinary scare existed, and against an enemy with whom it was openly prophesied they would be unable to cope unless with great superiority of numbers. The scare they disregarded, as shown by the fact that during the whole three months not more than two or three false alarms took place in camp; and the prophecy they falsified by beating back the enemy with a fighting line only equal, if not inferior, to him in numbers. Each regiment, corps or arm of the service has vied, one against the other, and each has equally well done its duty; not forgetting the Transport service which, under its two able officers, has so well aided our movements; the Medical department, which has been so efficiently directed; and the chaplains, who have so carefully and assiduously ministered to our spiritual comforts. The Major-General, in taking farewell of his old comrades, begs to wish them all happiness and success in their several walks in life, and to sincerely thank them, one and all, for having by their gallantry, good conduct and hard work enabled him to carry to a successful conclusion what will probably be his last campaign."

To those Corps who, through no fault of theirs, had not an opportunity of taking part in any engagement, equal credit with their more fortunate brethren is due for the alacrity with which they responded to the call to arms, and in their respective stations performed duties which,

though not so conspicuous, were none the less important. Lines of communication had to be kept open and supplies to be forwarded, and the very presence of these troops without doubt had a deterring influence on the Indians in whose vicinity they were stationed, and whose sympathies in many cases were with their brethren who were openly opposing the soldiers of the Queen. The following shows the forces at the disposal of General Middleton and their stations in the beginning of May. These were, in addition to the Corps that were then under the personal command of the General, and of the Column commanded by Lieut.-Colonel Otter:

MAJOR-GENERAL STRANGE'S COMMAND.

At and about Calgary and Edmonton.

| | Strength. |
|---|-----------|
| Winnipeg Light Infantry Battalion, Lieut.-Colonel Osborne Smith, C.M.G..... | 336 |
| 9th Battalion (French-Canadian, raised for the occasion), Lieut.-Colonel Amyot, M.P. | 250 |
| 65th Battalion (French-Canadian), Lieut.-Colonel Ouimet, M.P. | 340 |
| Stewart's Rangers (raised for the occasion), Major Stewart | 50 |
| Mounted Police, Major Steele. | 67 |

Swift Current.

| | |
|---|-----|
| 7th Battalion Fusiliers, Lieut.-Colonel W. Williams | 350 |
| Halifax Provisional Battalion, Lieut.-Colonel Bremner..... | 350 |
| Midland Provisional Battalion, Lieut.-Colonel A. T. H. Williams, M.P..... | 340 |
| Land Surveyor's Scouts (raised for the occasion), Captain Dennis..... | 50 |

Qu'Appelle (Troy).

| | |
|--|-----|
| 91st Battalion (newly raised), Lieut.-Colonel T. Scott, M.P..... | 252 |
|--|-----|

Fort Qu'Appelle.

| | |
|---|-----|
| York and Simcoe Provisional Battalion, Lieut.-Colonel O'Brien, M.P..... | 360 |
|---|-----|

Touchwood.

| | |
|--|----|
| Cavalry School Troop, Lieut.-Colonel F. Turnbull | 40 |
| Winnipeg Cavalry, Captain Knight | 40 |

Humboldt.

| | |
|--|-------|
| Governor-General's Body Guard, Lieut.-Colonel G. T. Denison..... | 70 |
| Total..... | 2,895 |

In addition to these the following were also on service :

- St. Albert Mounted Rifles, Capt. Samuel Cunningham (local).
- Montreal Garrison Artillery, Lieut.-Colonel W. R. Oswald, stationed at Regina.
- Moose Mountain Scouts, Captain G. W. R. White (local), stationed at Moose Mountain.
- Yorktown Militia Corps, Major T. Charles Watson, stationed at Moose Mountain.

The following is a list of the Officers who were killed and wounded :

KILLED OR DIED FROM WOUNDS.

Fish Creek.

Lieut. Charles Swinford.....90th Battalion.

Batoche.

- Capt. John French.....French's Scouts.
- Capt. E. L. Brown.....Boulton's Scouts.
- Lieut. W. C. Fitch.....Royal Grenadiers.
- Lieut. A. W. Kippen.....Intelligence Corps.

WOUNDED.

Duck Lake.

Capt. Moore.....Prince Albert Volunteers.

Fish Creek.

- Capt. W. Clarke.....90th Battalion.
- Capt. M. Gardiner.....Boulton's Scouts.
- Capt. H. E. Wise.....Staff.
- Lieut. A. E. Doucet.....Staff.

Cut Knife Hill.

Lieut. Oscar C. Pelletier.....9th Battalion.

Batoche.

- Major G. D. Dawson.....Royal Grenadiers.
- Capt. F. F. Manley....."
- Capt. James Mason....."
- Capt. G. L. Garden.....Intelligence Corps.

The military part of the Rebellion having now ended, public attention became centered on the trials of Riel and those of his associate Half-breeds and Indians who were confined in prison. Riel was tried at Regina for High Treason. The trial began on the 20th July, 1885, and

lasted some ten days. The prisoner was defended by able Counsel and he made several lengthy and eloquent appeals on his own behalf. The verdict was "Guilty" and he was sentenced to be hanged on the 18th September following. An unsuccessful appeal was made before the Court of Queen's Bench of Manitoba, and also to the Judicial Committee of the Imperial Privy Council. As a last effort, a petition for a medical commission to try the sanity of the prisoner was presented but produced no change, and the sentence was carried out on the 16th November in the same year. A number of Half-breeds received sentences for terms of imprisonment varying from one to seven years. Eight Indians were hanged for murder and a number imprisoned. Of these latter the case of Pound-maker excited the most interest. He was found guilty of being a party to acts of rebellion and plundering and sentenced to three years' imprisonment in the Manitoba Penitentiary. On being sentenced he said to the Judge: "I would rather prefer to be hung at once than to be in that place." He died in prison before his term had expired. A medal was issued by the Imperial Government to all the troops who took part in the suppression of the Rebellion with a clasp, "Saskatchewan," for those present at any of the engagements. The Minister of Militia, the Hon. Adolphe P. Caron, and Major-General Middleton received the Order of K.C.M.G., and the latter the thanks of the Dominion Parliament and a grant of \$20,000. This narrative of the Rebellion could not be more appropriately closed than by again quoting from Lord Melgund's account :

"The military experience gained will be valuable. When the campaign commenced the Militia Department knew nothing of the capabilities of its officers in the field; now, many reputations have been made, and it will know in future what commanders it can rely on. The faults of the Militia system have been brought into relief, and every good Canadian soldier must hope that the Department which has done so well will seize the opportunity of disallowing, once for all, the unmilitary outside influences, which, through custom, have so often prevailed in purely military questions. It has been General Middleton's lot to command the first volunteer or civilian soldiers who have been in action, and most gallantly have

men and officers done their work. The men of his force were almost universally of the same class as our English volunteers—clerks in offices, mechanics and tradesmen. They were not soldiers by trade. Excellent material, splendid marchers, apt to learn, possessed of much handiness and ingenuity, especially with the axe, but unaccustomed to the work required of them, and with no time allowed them to gain experience, they went straight from their homes into action. The risk of much loss of life in a force so composed is an exceptionally heavy risk for a commander to incur, and no man in General Middleton's Column is likely to forget their chief's generous solicitude for the safety of his troops. An unseen enemy is always a trying one especially for an inexperienced force.

As a military achievement the success of the campaign has been brilliant. The Hon. Mr. Caron, Minister of Militia, may justly be proud of the Department which between the 23rd of March and the 20th of May placed 4,419 men in the field, the whole of which force, with the exception of the Winnipeg Corps and the irregular mounted troops, were sent from Eastern Canada. A complete system of transport for three Columns marching at great distance from each other had to be organized; and, six weeks after General Middleton's departure from Fort Qu'Appelle, Riel had been brought a prisoner into his camp. From Ottawa to Qu'Appelle is 1,635 miles. From Qu'Appelle to Batoche is a march of 243 miles. Lord Wolseley left Toronto on the 21st May, 1870, and arrived at Fort Garry on the 24th August, three months. In 1885 the last troops ordered out left Montreal for the front on the 11th of May, and arrived at Winnipeg on the 20th of May, nine days. So much has fifteen years of civilization and a railway done for Canada."

General Middleton's plan of campaign, outlined in the foregoing narrative, appears from its success to have been well adapted for the emergency. The situation was certainly very grave, and one calling for more than ordinary ability. A glance at the map of the country at that period will show that the scattered settlements were more or less at the mercy of that worst of foes—an Indian fairly launched on an expedition of plunder, and of retaliation for wrongs, real or imaginary. The well-known weakness of the Red-man for joining in raids when success seems fairly certain was a factor in the situation that could not be lost sight of. The rebellion began suddenly, and had to be as promptly dealt with, while the means at the

disposal of the General seemed utterly inadequate—the nearest troops being in Winnipeg and not more than 500 all told. A long journey by rail of from 1,500 to 3,000 miles at the most inclement season of the year, in addition to the passage of unfinished gaps many miles in extent on the bleak north shore of Lake Superior, had to be taken by troops brought from the East. These Volunteer Militia, totally inexperienced in warfare, insufficiently equipped, and called without warning from their homes to embark on such a journey and for such a campaign had then to reach the enemy and bring succour to those in danger over hundreds of miles of prairie, with everything in the way of food and supplies to be carried, and with no transport or commissariat except such as could be improvised on the spot. All this had to be considered carefully, while prompt action was a vital necessity.

The scare was extraordinary, and all that was known of the horrors of Indian uprisings in the United States—fortunately without any parallel in Canada—stirred the minds of the people of the country, and those threatened, together with their friends beyond, were in a state of extreme anxiety. Appeals for aid and assistance were numberless, and it certainly required cool and calculating heads to control the result. The C.P.R. from Qu'Appelle, or Troy, to Calgary, a distance of 516 miles, was the base of operations. The country to the north was fringed and dotted with Indian Reservations, and between and among these lay the homes and towns of the white settlers. It was considered by many that a general rising of the Indians would result in the complete destruction of all these settlements, and then towns much nearer the Railway would be the objects of attack. The loss of life and loss of property, directly and indirectly, would be great, and for many years the Canadian North-West, if not shunned, would be very cautiously considered by intending immigrants and settlers.

Within twelve hours of his arrival in Winnipeg the General started with the small local force for the seat of the trouble; a great risk doubtless, for had Riel shown much military enterprise and hampered or seriously impeded the progress of this small and pioneer column, as he might have done, the difficulties would have become much

greater. But the boldness of the step seems to have been its success, and once the troops from the East were in the country Riel's chances of making headway were greatly diminished. It may be that he calculated on the impossibility of troops coming from the East so quickly or perhaps the outbreak began before he had intended. This latter may have been the case, for the Indians in the United States seldom took the war-path in their many raids on the white settlements until there was sufficient grass on the prairie for their ponies' subsistence. The Indian in winter is a comparatively harmless enemy, but in spring and summer, mounted on his tireless pony, with no commissariat or supply train to impede him, he becomes active and dangerous and hard to be dealt with.

The writer, while on his return from the North-West towards the close of the Rebellion, had an opportunity of learning the opinion held by some

officers of the United States Army on the Rebellion. These gentlemen were stationed near the Canadian frontier, some having had years of experience in fighting the Indian within their own borders, and they naturally took an interest in what was going on in our country. To them the signs indicated a serious outbreak and the distance from the sources of relief and assistance, with the other difficulties in the way, together with the extent and character of the country, all pointed to a long and arduous campaign, and more especially when it was learned that the troops to be employed in the suppression of the Rebellion were the Volunteer Militia alone. That the affair was so promptly put down, and with such comparatively small loss of life was, to them, a matter of great surprise, and a striking proof of the energy of the Canadian Government and of the skill and soldierly qualities of the troops engaged in the struggle.

