

THE
GIBBET OF REGINA

THE TRUTH ABOUT RIEL

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD AND HIS CABINET
BEFORE PUBLIC OPINION

BY
ONE WHO KNOWS



New York

THOMPSON & MOREAU, PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS

51 AND 53 MAIDEN LANE

1886

PREFACE.

NEW YORK, November 17th, 1885.

MY DEAR MR. THOMPSON :—

All is over !

Louis David Riel is no more !

Universal history counts in its pages a new bloody episode.

Henceforth the 16th day of November, 1885, will be for French Canadians the date of the basest insult ever inflicted upon their nationality, their race, their faith and their dignity.

Humanity and civilization have been laughed at and odiously outraged by Sir John A. MacDonal'd and his Cabinet. Justice has been baffled ! Orangeism has won the day. You were still doubting, few days ago that the fiendish hatred of the *mephistophelic* Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada would dare follow to the end his mortal designs against Riel. To-day, doubt is no longer possible ; Riel has paid with his head his ardent love for his country.

You have asked me to put down in writing some facts I mentioned to you in our last conversation.

Be it so !

You will find in the manuscript herewith, my frank and candid opinion on this painful affair, and the narration of facts I have witnessed during the five years I lived in Manitoba.

Use what I now send you to the best of your judgment, and whatever you do with it, rest assured that I am only too happy to join my voice to the general imprecation aroused by the brutal execution of the French Half-breed Louis David Riel.

Very respectfully,

ONE WHO KNOWS.

To the American public :

The above letter I received a few days after Riel's execution. Like a great number, I had hoped against hope, that what has taken place could, and would have

been avoided. But, it appears, that every friend of justice and humanity was fated to a sad disappointment; none could have anticipated that blind hatred would have prevailed against the unbiassed and unanimous opinion of the whole civilized world.

After a careful reading, I decided to publish, in the form of a book, the manuscript referred to, because it is based upon undeniable facts; because those facts and occurrences are vouchsafed for by men who have closely followed the transformation of the Canadian North-west into a conglomerant of the Dominion of Canada.

These pages, to be sure, are written with great vehemence of language; but, how could it be otherwise? The writer saw, felt and comprehended. Suavity of language could not adequately have painted criminality organized into a system.

Be that as it may, the American reader—conscientious, searching and logical by nature—will find, in these pages, matter to reflect upon.

On the one hand, he will find short-sighted policy, criminal indifference and cowardly animosity, all combined to crush vested rights, ignore solemn and oft-repeated pledges, and violate all those principles of humanity that are recognized and respected by all nations having any claim to be called civilized.

On the other hand, the American reader will find an isolated and circumscribed, but spirited race—the victim of unmitigated outrages and base misrepresentations—

fighting against large odds for the revendication of their rights and the protection of their homes and families.

Far from me the thought of making any invidious observation to the American public about the *prima facie* similitude between Washington and Riel's career.

Both were apostles of human rights! Both were arrayed against the same secular arbitrarism! Both fought the same implacable despotism!

But here the similitude ceases! And why?

Because Washington fought and conquered with the help of Frenchmen!

And because Riel succumbed, and was defeated by the help of an American Administration!

How consoling to be able to logically remark: That governments are invariably responsible to the people, but that the people are not invariably responsible for their government?

* * *

In the presence of a freshly sealed coffin, words of bitterness, to be sure, are out of place. But I beg to ask you, Americans, when you were struggling for existence; when, later on, piratical expeditions were organized and launched from the Canadian frontier (with the knowledge of Sir John A. MacDonald, who was then, as he is now, the Premier of the Canadian Cabinet) against peaceable American villages; when you called to arms, not alone your native-born citizens, but all mankind, in the defence

of the grandest political institutions known to ancient and modern times, who answered your cry of alarm ?

Assuredly not the men represented by the party in power at Ottawa, to whom President Cleveland has so courteously given the right of way on American soil, for the transportation of arms and ammunition, in order to enable the bitterest enemies of the United States to annihilate the Half-breeds who were following in the footsteps of your forefathers !

To one misguided Orangeman, or, better, to one strayed Tory disciple of Sir John A. MacDonald—who was omnipotent at Ottawa then as he is to-day—that fought for the preservation of this glorious Republic, thousands of sympathetic French Canadians can be named, who nobly and disinterestedly upheld the flag. The conflict made tombs in our nationality, and we are proud of it. Your final success threw dismay in the official circles at Ottawa, as well as in the ranks of Orangeism ; but an American Administration has just been found to assuage Toryism bitter disappointment by making amends for all that !

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* * *

What is all the trouble about ? Let us take a retrospective view of the matter.

The French Canadians discovered and settled the country they live in. Embroiled in a struggle not of their seeking, and over which they had no control, they

were shamefully abandoned and finally sacrificed to the sensual proclivities of a king who had more love for the gown of a courtesan than for the flag of France. Notwithstanding, they secured, first by treaty, and compelled, later on, through legislation, the granting of all those rights which Riel and his Half-breed brothers sought to revendicate, because they had been systematically trampled upon by the Ottawa Cabinet.

The Half-breeds are the descendants of those hardy French Canadian pioneers, whose love of travel and discovery, took them into the wild prairies of the Northwest, where they finally settled into a semi-hunting and semi-agricultural life—following, in this last occupation, the customs and the idiosyncracies of their ancestors, who had made a garden of both banks of the St. Lawrence.

These Half-breeds belong to that race of energetic men who were the first settlers of the Western States, at a time when colonizing in those wild prairies meant something more than breaking the ground and raising a crop for shipment to Eastern ports; moreover, they are the kindred of these courageous pioneers who have either christened or given their own names to the most important cities of the West.

They are acknowledged to be a hospitable, mild, peaceable and law-abiding people. Selfishness is unknown to their vocabulary; with them, faithfulness, providency and thrift are heirlooms which have never been bartered by the humblest of the race.

Like the French Canadians, they were settled upon a soil which their ancestors had discovered and fertilized with the sweat of their brows. Like yourselves, foreign to all sentiments of jealousy, they invited all men of goodwill to settle in their midst, with the moral and legislative guarantee that uprightness, irrespective of creed or nationality, was all that the State sought for; and, morally and constitutionally, the State has no business nor right to seek for anything else.

When we, French Canadians, sent out such a generous and untrammelled invitation, we did not expect, nor did we have in view, to borrow the prejudices, the intolerance and the rancors of past ages. This vast continent has no room for such cast-off clothes.

But, what did we get in return, for our broad and generous hospitality?

An arrogant and dictatorial oligarchy, bent on perverting the sacred aims of justice and legislation. And who, with the view of making itself omnipotent, transplanted to our virgin soil, hatred as repulsive as it was unnatural; excited, between co-existing races, national animosity; concocted intolerance of creeds, and finally, to crown its diabolical monument of infamy, exacted the head of a son of the soil who had had the temerity to protect, against oft-admitted unjustifiable spoliation, the roofs that sheltered his countrymen and his own family.

Those are the men to whom—when on the eve of receiving a well-merited castigation for all their misdeeds—an American Administration has given aid and comfort.

All fair minded people acknowledge that States, like individuals, owe each other a goodly amount of courtesy in their intercourse; but, I have yet to learn, that the footpad has any claim in his criminal undertaking, upon the assistance of the respectably disposed, or that a government that has put itself beyond the pale of civilization—as the Canadian Government did by luring and then defrauding the Half-breeds of their legitimate inheritance—has any claim in its nefarious and sanguinary policy upon the courtesy of a government or of a people which it has done its utmost to destroy at the most critical time in its history.

I am somewhat inclined to think that, in this instance, the good faith of the American Administration has been surprised; but it is as well that, in case of possible future emergencies, the situation should be elucidated, in order to avoid a repetition of any such intemperate awkwardness on the part of the Executive.

* * *

My American readers will readily understand why I have thought proper to publish *THE TRUTH ABOUT RIEL*. It will be a revelation to many, who could not, on account of the system of misrepresentations and calumnies inaugu-

rated by the Canadian Cabinet, and circulated broadcast by its paid agents, form a candid opinion upon the merit of the question at issue ;—I say at issue advisedly, because the question of the status of the Half-breeds in Manitoba and the Saskatchewan is far from being settled. So far, the only thing *settled*, as it were, is the future of Sir John A. MacDonald's Cabinet.

Be that as it may, I will consider myself amply repaid for all trouble, if through my instrumentality the truth is known about a race who has been unmercifully calumniated after having been mercilessly persecuted ; about a chivalrous leader who was immolated on the scaffold in order to satisfy the insatiable cravings for blood of an Order which has been, from its incipiency, a blot upon civilization and a putrefaction sore upon mankind—an immolation which was accomplished in spite of the indignant clamor of every being imbued with conscience, justice and uprightness.

* * *

To my Canadian friends of all origins :

A word of supplication !

An unjustifiable outrage has been committed upon a whole race. It behooves all good and well-thinking men, irrespective of origin or creed, to band together, and see that justice is done.

The disgrace bears equally upon all, hence the necessity of a combined effort to wipe out the stain.

Riel and the Half-breeds did not rebel against the established institutions of the country while those institutions were legally and justly administered. Goaded and famished, they rebelled against a set of unscrupulous jobbers and thieves, who were administering the country for their own personal benefit and for the benefit of their minions, with whom they divided the spoils.

Sir John's Cabinet and his satellites have done more by omission and commission to bring into contempt your institutions, than any well-regulated Orange lodge has ever done to break the peace in your very midst.

To wipe out the stain, to avert and put at naught all possibilities of direful complications, the ill-omened thirteen Ministers must be hurled from the responsible positions which they have betrayed so shamefully.

Your country is exceptionally situated. It cannot prosper and it cannot march onward in the path of progress, with men at its head, who, derelict to well-understood conservatism, single out a race and a creed, and offer it as a holocaust to its *sworn enemy!*

Such men have incapacitated themselves for any position of trust, or of responsibility, in a country situated and populated like yours.

They are a constant danger, an impending menace!

Already, two of them, realizing the depth of the abyss they had dug for all their future political aspira-

tions, have attempted extra-parliamentary explanations.

Mutism before, verbosity after, the deed!

Men of that calibre should not be kicked out, shoving is good enough for them.

But all honest men must see that it is done.

* * *

To the French Canadians :

What must be said of the three French Canadian Ministers who are named *Langevin, Caron, Chapleau*?

The two first wear the English livery, they were made baronets; and the last what a place in such a trio for the bearer of the French cross of the Legion of Honor!

What a touching spectacle, that of Chapleau, wearing the French cross of the Legion of Honor while signing the death-warrant of his countryman Riel — a death-warrant which was exacted from him by Orangemen, the deadly enemies of his race!

Decorated—alas! like too many others—through pure complacency, Chapleau inwardly felt the necessity of accomplishing some kind of remarkable deed in order to justify his sponsors for having put his name forward for the decoration.

How pleasant will be the surprise of those sponsors, on meeting their protégé, to find him wearing another

trinket at his buttonhole, a fringed piece of the rope that strangled his countryman Riel! There's luck in the hangman's rope! However, Chapleau can justify of this second decoration in more than one way: He was the signer of the death-warrant, and his brother was the executioner! This is rather too much honor for one single family!

If this was not already too disgusting, matters could still be flavored in that respect, by hoisting the elder Chapleau by one notch in the Legion of Honor, and by pinning a rosette to the lappel of the younger brother's coat!

Or, better still, Chapleau might be struck from the roll of the Legion of Honor, which was not founded, that I am aware, to reward and encourage French traitors!

But, this is not exactly the place nor the time for such recriminations. Therefore, I will leave to patriotic French journalists the task of requesting from the proper authority a categorical explanation about all this dirty linen. In so far as the French Canadians are concerned, if no better judgment is shown in the distribution of the distinctions of the French Legion of Honor in our country, we will be forced to the unavoidable conclusion that an attempt is on foot to make that Order a rival of the celebrated Rogues' Gallery of New York!

“Close-the-ranks,” must be your watch-word. In order to present a solid front, former political divisions must be set aside in the presence of your arrogant, persistent and unscrupulous foe.

The organisation of your forces must be thorough and permanent. Your enemies have declared already, with a contemptuous smile, that a pittance thrown to the Province of Quebec by the Ottawa Government, will smother your indignation.

Your programme must be—

First.—Constitutional agitation must not cease until you have relegated to oblivion the ministerial miscreants who are responsible for all the mischief.

Second.—The Half-breeds must be reinstated in the lands of which they have been despoiled, and indemnified just like the sufferers of 1837-38.

Third.—The Orange Order, which is a menace not only to your faith, your tongue and your nationality, but which is a menace to law and order, which is incompatible with the ordinary decency of any well governed community, must be made to understand that it has to stand back. Your only guarantee is to have laws enacted disqualifying its votaries from the franchise and from holding any official position under

- 1st. Your local government;
- 2d. Your municipal system, and
- 3d. In the Federal government.

Communities have the inherent right of enacting

laws for their protection. Dogs' ferocity is the subject of salutary enactments by all municipal bodies, why should not Orange madness be placed on the same plane?

If, through constitutional agitation, you cannot secure these safeguards or their full equivalent, you have no right to remain in the Federation of the Provinces.

Your enemies, emboldened by this fresh triumph, will not only continue their work of persecution, and make you lead a life of abjection, but they will, in the course of a very short time, legislate your race into insignificance and complete dependence.

Gratitude with them is an unknown quantity. Look at the treatment you have met at the hands of Sir John A. MacDonald, after more than thirty years of unstinted support from the French Conservative element of your population, to which he owes everything, even the opportunity of betraying you!

No, either through persuasiveness or compromise, you have nothing to expect from that quarter. The time of temporizing is past; that of exacting has come! And you must exact with firmness and dignity; but, be on your guard, because you are dealing with a cunning and cowardly foe.

* * *

If you show determination and firmness the perpetrators of the atrocities in Manitoba and the Saskatchewan; the builders of the Regina gibbet, will meet their

deserts; you will be considered; you will enjoy, unmolested, the reward of patriotism, the fruits of your labor, and transmit, to your children, unimpaired and unscathed, the inheritance left you by your valorous fathers: A free and liberty-loving country, where peace and happiness dwelleth.

You have not only the sympathies of the civilized world, *but potential civilizing elements side with you, and will give you comfort in your time of need.*

“Do your duty, and fear not!”

One of yours,

NAPOLÉON THOMPSON.

NEW YORK, January, 1886.

THE
TRUTH ABOUT RIEL.

THE TRUTH ABOUT RIEL.

I.

A great many people, imperfectly acquainted with what they were talking or writing about, have freely expressed opinions regarding Riel's fate.

It would be difficult, almost impossible indeed, for any one who has not been closely connected with what took place in the North-western territory, to see clearly into the intricate state of affairs that has convulsed that portion of British America since the Metis' outbreak; which had its prologue in 1869, and its epilogue in 1885, in the hanging of Riel, the recognized leader of the French Half-breeds.

In order to satisfy my readers that I have some right to express my opinion on this gloomy subject, I will remark that I have lived in the North-west from 1869 to 1874, and through the official position I then occupied in that country, under the Canadian Government, I was directly connected with almost everything that took place in Manitoba during that period of five years. I

go as far as to say that during that time I was often called upon to give, in an official capacity, my views on some very important administrative questions; and, as what follows is only an exact and impartial narration of facts, completely devoid of any personal preference or feeling, I think the honesty of purpose which prompts me to write this book will not be doubted.

I have heard and seen all I am about to relate. I have taken part in many of the events herein narrated, and I leave to the world the task of forming a judgment upon the course pursued by the Ministers of the Dominion Government in their policy regarding the French Half-breeds, and to decide if the Canadian Ministers are or are not responsible, not only for the unjust and barbarous execution of the Half-breed Louis David Riel, but also for the criminal inertness that has caused it.

CAN RIEL BE CHARGED WITH REBELLION ?

There cannot be the least doubt that Riel has been a continual source of annoyance and anxiety to the Dominion Cabinet, since 1869, but was he to blame for that? Was he an inveterate and systematic revolutionist, or a man who, conscious of his rights as a British subject and a free human being, would not allow himself and his countrymen to be unmercifully trampled upon by the iron heel of the Canadian rulers?

Was his death on the scaffold, erected by the order of

Sir John A. MacDonald and his Cabinet, a deserved and just expiation, or was it a crime coldly prepared and perpetrated to serve personal and political purposes?

Without pretending to impose my opinion about this lugubrious affair, nor expecting to change the face of things in Canada, the publication of what I know, will, nevertheless, I most sincerely hope, throw a different and a new light on the events that have taken place in Manitoba and in the Saskatchewan from 1868 to 1885.

* *HOW WERE THE METIS TREATED FOR YEARS?*

The Metis have indeed been an ill-fated race for many years. For a long time before the purchase, in 1869, of the territorial rights, by the Canadian Government, from the Company of Adventurers of England (better known as the Hudson Bay Company), they were the direct means of the making of that immense and incalculable fortune which placed the Hudson Bay Company at the head of the most powerful corporations in existence.

Hunting and trapping was their only resource. The stores of the numerous posts of the Company were at all times overflowing with valuable skins brought in by the Half-breeds. The rich furs of every description were bought by the Company's officers at ridiculously low prices; the trading scheme was carried on in a most lively manner: a bank-note, a few pounds of flour or salt pork, a small keg of gunpowder and shot, a common suit of clothes

or an incomplete outfit could secure a quantity of valuable skins worth one hundred times the trifling cost of the articles given in exchange, and the Hudson Bay Company was able to supply yearly all the European markets with immense quantities of furs thus bartered from the poor victimized Metis.

This, taken in a certain light, was, of course, very natural and nothing more nor less than a straight business transaction. But when that wide and rich country became exhausted, when the buffalo had almost completely disappeared, when the otter, marten, beaver, ermine and all the other fur-bearing animals of its regions were becoming scarcer every year, the Hudson Bay Company's authorities thought of ridding themselves of their no longer valuable possessions by selling their territorial rights to the Canadian Government, and the transfer was accomplished without the knowledge of the Metis.

They were only Half-breeds after all! Why should the Government or the Hudson Bay Company take the trouble of apprising them that they had been sold and bought like live-stock?

But this simple, inoffensive and peaceful people understood that no Government, no power on earth had the right to buy a population composed of Christians like a lot of living beasts! They instinctively saw danger for their homes, their wives and children in that arbitrary Canadian invasion; they perceived that their rights, as men living on free American soil, had been ignored

and violated. Riel, whose education and natural intelligence had placed him foremost among his fellow-countrymen, was chosen as their leader, and the entire Metis population took up arms to prevent the Canadian Government from entering the country.

Mr. McDougall, the first Lieutenant-Governor appointed by the Dominion Cabinet, was stopped with his staff at Pembina, and was obliged to retreat and return to Ottawa without even seeing the seat of his government.

Was Riel a rebel then? If so, it must be confessed that his rebellion had a noble and generous aim: that of defending the land of his birth against an unwarranted invasion; of protecting his countrymen, his sister and mother, nay his father's grave, against an arrogant enemy!

THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT.

A Provisional Government was formed by the Half-breeds and took its seat at Fort Garry. Riel was unanimously elected President. Resolutions were passed, engrossed and presented to the Canadian Cabinet. These Resolutions did not received the least attention.

THE RED RIVER EXPEDITION.

By this time the Cabinet of the Dominion plainly saw that something had to be done. An expedition

was decided upon, and four thousand men were soon ready to start for Manitoba.

The expeditionary corps was composed of a regiment of regulars, a battalion of Quebec rifles, a battalion of Ontario rifles, a sufficient number of engineers, and a complete commissariat.

Colonel Wolseley, afterwards Sir Garnet Wolseley, and now Lord Wolseley, was appointed Commander in Chief of that military *picnic*, which was called the Red River Expedition. After making a considerable number of *portages* and running numerous *rapides* he landed in Winnipeg with his troops at the end of August, 1870.

Riel and his followers had left Fort Garry and the British territory before the gallant Colonel's arrival, probably because they felt that their cause was a lost one, or, perhaps, because the young leader recoiled at the idea of exposing his country and his people to the horrors of a long and bloody civil war. However, Colonel Wolseley found that Fort Garry had been abandoned by the Metis, and the first thing he did after arriving in Manitoba was to issue a proclamation, apprising the population of the Province that he intended to deal unmercifully with the banditti (*sic*) who had dared to resist the authority of his Gracious Sovereign, the Queen of England.

And thus ended the Red River Expedition, which cost several millions of dollars to the Government that ordered it. But, of course, for the accomplishment of so glorious an undertaking money was no object! Were not

the good Canadians rich enough to pay, without murmuring, for what has since proved to be a sinister blunder? Taxes came in more regularly than ever. It was the people's money that was paying for the fun, and, most painful to say, French Canadians were made to help with their money a military expedition organized for the purpose of pitilessly oppressing their Half-breed brothers in Manitoba.

These heroic Half-breeds, these simple but honest sons of the wild prairies, who had formed a defensive alliance in order to protect their country, their wives and children, their own blood in fact, were called "banditti" by the representative of the very government that had bought them as the planters of yore bought a plantation with all the human flesh on it!

ON TO THEM! KILL THEM!

And here are the wonderful arguments put forward by Sir John A. MacDonald and his Cabinet:

These contemptible *half savages*, who knew nothing but to hunt, and whose too slavish hands had been for years the gigantic and inexhaustible cornucopia that filled the large and numberless coffers of a company of adventurers from England, had had the audacity to protest like *men* against the violation of their so-called rights!

These ignorant half Indians, these French Metis, as they called themselves, who could but fervently pray to

their God, tenderly love their families, and live without ever thinking of doing any harm to their neighbors, had dared to reject the protectorate of a government which, after their submission, would be only too willing to throw to them a small piece of land, like a bone to a famished dog!

They were only despicable human beings after all, and they had the impudence to reject this opportunity of being blessed by the contact of an iron-handed civilization!

What a monstrosity!

No pity for them!

Christ died for all and every man: what of it? They were made in the image of their Savior, it is true, but they were only ignorant beasts!

Bring them to submission, not by kind words or persuasion, but by force; they must bend or break!

On to them! Shoot them down like wild and ferocious animals! Kill them!

And after the bloody work of civilization is done, if some of the remaining miscreants dare to refuse homage to our benevolent Sovereign, a few planks, a rope, and the sheriff will do the rest!

A PAMPHLET.

A few months before the Red River Expedition was organized, a much to be regretted occurrence took place in the Province of Quebec.

The Right Reverend Alexander Taché, then Bishop of St. Boniface (Manitoba), and since elevated to the archbishopric, published a pamphlet in which he strongly advised the young French Canadians not to take any active part in the projected campaign: The soil of Manitoba was a poor one, offering but little chance for improvement, the rebellion had not a serious character, and all the trouble would soon end, etc., etc., etc.

This pamphlet, containing such or similar advice, emanating from a most and justly venerated prelate, was freely distributed among French Canadians, and mostly all of the Catholic priests, in the Province of Quebec, preached and recommended to their parishioners the advisability of following the worthy Bishop's counsel.

The effect of the pamphlet can easily be imagined. When the recruiting of the two battalions of volunteers began, a comparatively small number of French Canadians were enlisted. These battalions, each about 600 strong (1,200 in all), did not count in their ranks, when formed, over 150 French Canadians, that is to say, eighty-eight per cent. of the effective volunteer force were English Canadians, mostly from Ontario.

Each and every one of these men was to receive, as compensation, 160 acres of land, after the expiration of his military term, and ninety per cent. of them settled in Manitoba. Thus the British element dominated in the Province after its submission, and it has been so ever since 1870.



HIS GRACE MGR. ALEXANDRE ANTONIN TACHÉ.

It is not in the least probable that Archbishop Taché ever thought for an instant that his pamphlet would have such a lamentable effect against his own people, and far from me any idea of blame or reproach for the venerable Bishop's action. I sincerely believe it was dictated to him by a commendable conviction, but one thing is certain, indisputable: Manitoba and the Saskatchewan have been from the start, are yet, and will remain under the complete control of Canadians of English origin, and that portion of the Dominion is lost for ever to the French Canadian supremacy.

Here comes naturally two questions which would be very hard to answer, but offering, nevertheless, a wide field for reflection: Had the Province of Manitoba been ruled by a strong majority of the French Canadian element, would the last insurrection have taken place? And, if it had taken place, *would Riel have mounted the scaffold at Regina?*

I leave to the intelligence of the eminent and patriotic French Canadian politicians the care of meditating over these questions, and of finding a plausible solution to them.

THOMAS SCOTT.

The execution of Thomas Scott, ordered in 1869 by the Provisional Government of Manitoba, has been the chief accusation brought against Riel by Upper Canada.

Scott was an Orangeman, and his co-religionists have found in his execution inexhaustible food for their hatred against French Canadians, or anything that is Catholic. The merciless pressure they have exercised over Sir John A. MacDonald, previous to Riel's execution, is convincing evidence that the fanaticism and bigotry so bitterly reproached to Catholics in Canada, are far more intense among Orangemen, who have never as yet lost an occasion to manifest it loudly!

SELF-DEFENCE.

Thomas Scott was far from being the good natured sort of a fellow his Orange friends have tried to make believe. On the contrary, he was a rough character. He had threatened Riel's life on several occasions and he was certainly known as capable of carrying his threats into execution. I know as a positive fact that Riel himself was opposed to Scott's execution, even after the sentence had been pronounced. I know also that he tried his utmost to save him, but his intervention was accorded no attention by his followers.

All those who knew Scott well (and I have been brought into contact with many of them) agree in saying that Riel's life was in immediate danger so long as Scott was allowed to go free around the country.

This case was one of self-defence, nothing else.

The probabilities are that I will never go back to Canada. I expect no favor whatever from any party or parties. I have no more preference for the French Canadians than for English Canadians. I shall certainly never ask for anything from a Canadian source. My religious sentiments are of no consequence in this matter. I am not writing this in order to win or obtain the good will of certain people. I care not if my opinion is shared or endorsed by ten men or ten thousand men. A bloody deed has been accomplished. I know all or nearly all the parties that have been directly or indirectly connected with it, and what comes from my pen is dictated to me by my own conscience, and by my own conscience only. I write all I know and express the opinion I have formed after having heard and seen.

Public opinion, humanity and the Christian world will judge which of the two men is the greatest murderer, the vilest criminal—Sir John A. MacDonald, K.C.B., a member of Her Majesty's Privy Council, Premier and President of the Council for the Dominion of Canada, the modern Machiavelli and Supreme Ruler of one of Queen Victoria's colonies, the old, decrepit and unscrupulous statesman who has already one foot in the grave, or Louis David Riel, the young, energetic and heroic Half-breed who, at the age of twenty-six, took up arms for the defense and protection of his native land, and who, sixteen years after died bravely for its cause, without even cursing the name of the man who had plotted and ordered his death ?

THE TROOPS IN MANITOBA.

After the arrival of the Canadian troops in Manitoba, August, 1870, the country soon quieted down and the establishment of the Canadian Government went on steadily under the able direction of Mr. Archibald, the first Lieutenant-Governor of the Province.

The first battalion Ontario Rifles, composed almost exclusively of English Canadians and Orangemen, was quartered at Fort Garry, that is to say, in the midst of the French Half-breed settlement; and the second battalion Quebec Rifles, in whose ranks were the 150 French Canadian Volunteers, was sent to the Stone Fort, twenty-two miles distant, and surrounded by the English population of the Province.

Was this arrangement a wise one? I hardly think so, and the numberless scenes of horror that soon followed prove that the contrary would have been far better! But, the Commander in Chief, Colonel Wolseley, the same who almost commenced his military career in Manitoba, and who recently ended it *so gloriously* in the Soudan, had ordered that it should be so, and so it was!

Here, a very strong and very peculiar analogy strikes me as being worthy of remark: Wolseley was sent to Manitoba with positive instructions (no doubt) to hang Riel, and he could not accomplish his mission, *he arrived too late!* Fifteen years later he was dispatched to the Soudan at the head of a strong and imposing army, with

orders to rescue General Gordon, and there again *he arrived too late!*

He had only a small army when he went to Manitoba, and, save myriads of mosquitoes, found nobody or nothing to fight with; he went back to England a great victor, and he was made a General and a Sir. Later on he was made a Lord!

When he went to the Soudan, he had the command of a large army, and there at last he found a chance to fight. But this time the enemy proved a trifle tougher than mosquitoes, and the result was (notwithstanding the assertions to the contrary published at the time by the English press) defeat after defeat, and a double-quick retreat.

The worse of it all, is that poor gallant General Gordon never saw the radiant face of his would-be rescuer—and who can tell that it was not Wolseley's incapacity and slow action that caused Gordon's death?

Victorious when he had nobody to battle with, Wolseley was thrashed ignominiously when he met the soldiers of the Mahdi. He was successful in Manitoba with a small body of troops without firing a single shot, and he called his invisible enemy, "banditti." In the Soudan, when commanding thousands of well armed men, he was most shamefully beaten. Nevertheless, he returned to England, and was received with cheers. His next reward (?) will be a Duke's title, and he will change his name from LORD MOSQUITO WOLSELEY to that of DUKE KARTOON TOOLATE!

And, of course, he will duly modify and improve his ducal escutcheon, and place prominently on it the livid and bloody head of brave General Gordon!

***ATROCITIES COMMITTED BY THE ONTARIO
VOLUNTEERS.***

The Red River Expeditionary Corps was three months on its way to Manitoba, from Collingwood to Winnipeg. The soldiers, regulars and volunteers, did not receive a penny during the journey. Five or six days after their arrival, they were paid in full, giving each man an average of twenty dollars.

It was then that the lugubrious fun commenced. Those men who were supposed to be kept under the rules of strict military discipline, went around Winnipeg and vicinity, infuriated and drunk, yelling, swearing, cursing and threatening. They were looking and searching for the murderers of Scott. They unmercifully insulted and assaulted the Half-breeds who had been imprudent enough to come to town in order to attend to business. As yet there was no police force organized. Those soldiers, clad in the uniform of Her Most Gracious Majesty, became intoxicated and delirious brutes. They insulted women and children, beating most cruelly every Metis unfortunate enough to cross their path. They often entered isolated houses where they found defenceless women and children. The outrages they commit-

ted on many occasions are too revolting and too horrid to be put down in writing. All this was perpetrated in the name of their God and King William of Orange, and remained utterly unnoticed by the superior officer commanding at Fort Garry, Colonel Jarvis. He smiled complacently and indifferently at all these atrocities, more worthy of cannibals than of soldiers whose duty was to keep the peace and show moderation and good example. Who knows but good Colonel Jarvis regretted perhaps keenly, and *in petto*, that he was too old to take his share in the sanguinary sport.

And, in the evening, after entering their barracks, (if they were not too drunk to breathe) these fearless and defiant warriors recounted with delight and touching pride their prowess of the day.

However, the defaulters were never brought up to the orderly room to receive the punishment of their repulsive exploits.

And why should they be punished? Pshaw! Nonsense! The men they had left half dead on the ground, the women and young girls they had cowardly outraged, the children they had so cruelly beaten were only French Half-breeds, nothing but French Half-breeds!

REFERENCES.

If my readers, whomsoever they may be, think I am exaggerating facts, I will humbly ask them to inquire into

the veracity of my statements from such men as Governor Archibald, A. M. Brown, Dr. O'Donnell, Premier John Norquay, Dr. Bird, Honorable J. H. Clarke, Governor Donald A. Smith, Honorable Capt. Thomas Howard, Honorable Judge Dubuc, John McTavish, etc., etc. All of these gentlemen (except Mr. Archibald) are still living in Manitoba, and I beg to observe that the majority of them were hostile and opposed to Riel and his party.

COLONEL WOLSELEY'S BLUNDER.

While all these violences were perpetrated in Winnipeg by the members of the 1st Batallion of Ontario *spadassins*, the 2d Batallion of Quebec, under the command of Colonel A. Casault, was peacefully barracked in the Stone Fort, and but a few cases of insubordination were ever brought to the attention of Governor Archibald.

Now, let us suppose for a moment that Colonel Wolseley had detailed the 1st Batallion for duty at the Stone Fort and the 2d Batallion at Fort Garry, what would have been the result of such disposition ?

Any honest, sensible and impartial mind can readily answer the question. If English-speaking soldiers had done duty among English-speaking settlers, they would undoubtedly have pulled together most admirably ; and if French-speaking volunteers had been quartered in the midst of the French-speaking population, none of the

ferocious deeds above related would have taken place.

But, perhaps Colonel Wolseley had received instructions to act as he did, and Sir John A. MacDonald had reasons of his own in giving such orders.

A SIMPLE QUESTION.

And now, let me ask who were the “banditti” in all this: The oppressed people who started a rebellion through pure patriotism, or the salaried vandals, wearing the British uniform, who had been sent to subdue it and make the English name honored and respected?

The former had been almost starved while fighting for their rights; the latter were paid by the government to plunder and to kill.

The opinion of the civilized world and posterity will answer.

HALF-BREEDS DISPOSSESSED BY ONTARIO SPECULATORS.

A few months later, the Dominion Government succeeded in quieting the Half-breeds by a grant of 240 acres of land to each one of them living in Manitoba, as a compensation for disturbing the old river frontage system.

Here commences a period of hidden and calculated persecution and base speculation of another order.

As soon as the decision of the government was known through the Province, speculators started their work of monopoly. They commenced by making friends with the Metis; they attracted them and watched their presence in town. The tigers and the lambs of the day before met in the bar-room and drank together. The scheming speculators purposely treated their intended victims generously. Many of the Half-breeds, unsuspecting of what was going on under hand, fell into the snare, and very often, when under the influence of liquor, sold their claims for a mock remuneration. I have known intimately well-established citizens of Winnipeg, who succeeded in buying Half-breed's titles (240 acres) for twenty, twenty-five and thirty dollars. Some of those speculators canvassed the country from Portage La Prairie to Pointe du Chêne, and by some means or another came back from their trip the lawful possessors of large and extensive tracks of land.

I am far from blaming those who were shrewd and adroit enough to acquire wealth in so short a time. It was a *legal transaction*. Nor shall I blame the Metis who foolishly and thoughtlessly sold their land for a morsel of bread. This is certainly no business of mine. But what I find tricky and dishonorable, is the way in which nine out of ten of these transactions were made.

Supposing I know that such and such a man is inclined to drink, and that after the first glass of liquor he is liable to lose control of himself, would I be acting the part of an honest man by seeking him, in the very midst

of his family, and through convincing and persuasive talk decide him to make the first step? After his third or fourth glass, the man will readily sign a deed by which he will find himself, on the morrow, without a home. And all this will have been accomplished for a trivial sum of money. I may be wealthier after the bargain is concluded, but I fail to see if I will be as respectable, or still deserving to be called honest. Unfortunately, in the eyes of many people, in every country of the world, this is only a trifling consideration, even if the man thus victimized is left without a roof to shelter himself and his family.

But, what will Half-breeds think of us, civilized people, when they realize their first experience of civilization?

***RIEL OFFERS HIS SERVICES TO THE GOVERNMENT.—
THEY ARE ACCEPTED.***

In 1871, during the Fenian invasion headed by O'Donahue, Riel, strongly prompted by Archbishop Taché, offered his services to the Government to help repulse the invaders. Governor Archibald crossed the Red River and met the banished leader in front of the cathedral of St. Boniface. Riel's offer was accepted, and on the same day he went scouting around the country with two hundred of his men,

The invasion amounted to nothing anyway, and order was soon restored throughout the country.

RIEL ELECTED AT PROVENCHER.

Shortly afterwards, Riel was unanimously elected a member of the House of Commons for the District of Provencher.

He went to Ottawa, and was regularly sworn into office by the Clerk of the House. Hearing of his presence in the city, infuriated Orangemen swore to slay the ex-rebel leader. Riel was then advised to leave Ottawa, and the day after his departure, his seat was declared vacant.

This is a striking instance of the weakness or bad will of the government. Here is a man who had been lawfully and unanimously elected a representative of the people, and who was prevented from taking his seat after being duly sworn into office. Not because his election was declared fraudulent, but because a mob of fanatic Orangemen threatened his life if he dared to resume his duties as a member of the House of Commons. The Government of the Dominion, instead of protecting him as a Deputy, weakened before the threats, and yielded to the vociferations of a blood-thirsty oligarchy.

THE GOVERNMENT'S COWARDICE.

All of this has taken place in the nineteenth century, in a country belonging to the British Empire, and whos

Constitution is under the protection of the English flag!

Ah! if Riel had been an Orangeman, Sir John A. MacDonald would have called out the whole strength of the Canadian Militia.

If, instead of being a poor and simple Half-breed, Riel had been the dictatorial and wealthy representative of an Orange county, he would have taken his seat, even at the cost of twenty, fifty or one hundred lives and in spite of all the protestations of the whole Catholic Canada. But he was only a modest and uninfluential Metis, who had dared to resist the autocratic commands of the mighty Prime Minister, and his life would not have been safe, even on the floor of the House of Commons, where the majesty and greatness of Great Britain is so pompously represented by the most unscrupulous and most omnipotent statesmen of the Dominion.

FIFTEEN YEARS

OF

PERSECUTION.

FIFTEEN YEARS OF PERSECUTION.

II.

THE REAL CAUSES OF THE REBELLIONS OF 1869 AND OF 1885.

Let us recapitulate the principal facts that took place in Manitoba since 1869, and see if the Metis had sufficient reasons to protest against the acts of the Government which had treated them with such unwarranted contempt.

1869.

On the 29th of July, after hearing of the transaction that had taken place between the Canadian Government and the Hudson Bay Company, the French Half-breeds held their first meeting at St. Boniface.

Resolutions were passed and a Committee was appointed to inquire of the Hudson Bay Company's officials what the population of Manitoba was to expect from the sale of the country to the Canadian Government. The

members of the Committee were laughed at by the Company's officers.

These people were only asking what would become of them and their families, when under the control of their purchasers. Their humble and just request was scorned with disdain.

On the 19th of October, Honorable Wm. McDougall, the Lieutenant Governor appointed by the Ottawa Cabinet, was on his way to Winnipeg; he was forbidden the entry of the Province by the Half-breeds, who insisted upon knowing what would be their lot, before allowing the Canadian Government's representative to enter the country. Mr. McDougall thought it advisable to retreat, and he returned to Ottawa.

On November 3d, the rebels (?) took possession of Fort Garry, the most important post of the Hudson Bay Company, and on the 8th of December, the Provisional Government was organized and Riel elected President.

Was there anything wrong in these actions of the Metis? I should certainly think not. Had the Canadian Ministers let these people know what their intentions were, the rebellion would not have taken place. Had the Hudson Bay Company used a little more discretion in its dealing with the Half-breeds, the outbreak would never have occurred.

1870.

On the 7th of January, seeing that things were getting

serious, and that the Metis, so long ignored, were not disposed to allow themselves to be swallowed up without protesting most energetically, the Canadian Government asked the mediation of Bishop Taché who was known to have great influence over his people.

The Right Reverend Bishop kindly consented to act as mediator between the Government and the rebels (?) and on the 16th of February, Sir John A. MacDonald officially authorized Bishop Taché to proclaim, in the Cabinet's name, a full and general amnesty, and to promise the Metis the entire and energetic protection of the Government.

While this was taking place, and at the time when the whole difficulty was about being settled, Major Boulton, pretending to be an authorized representative of the Government of Canada, endeavored, with about 200 men, to take Riel prisoner. Riel rightly saw in this occurrence a direct and outrageous violation of the amnesty that had just been proclaimed, and decided to accord no more confidence to the promises of Sir John A. MacDonald, until further consideration.

It was shortly after—March 4th—that Thomas Scott was executed. I have already said, and I now repeat, that Scott deserved his fate, and I defy any living man, who has positively known what sort of a desperate character Scott was, to conscientiously put forward the argument that his death was not a measure of public safety; and I will go further, in saying, that only those who have

an object in calling that execution a cold-blooded murder, can deny the fact that this deed was on Riel's part, as I said before, absolutely and exclusively a case of

SELF-DEFENCE.

After his arrest and before his trial, Scott was asked several times to leave the country, he persistently refused, and he said openly on several occasions that he should remain in Manitoba until he had put a bullet through the brains of that — — — of a French Half-breed Riel.

He was advised by his own friends to keep quiet and wait patiently, like the other people of the Province, for the re-establishment of peace and order. No, he insisted upon "having that bastard's life."

Liquor had made of Scott a mad and dangerous being; and in Manitoba as well as anywhere else, when one meets a venomous snake, the best thing he can do is to crush its head.

The Orange press has said, again and again, that Riel's government was not legal, that the court that had tried and sentenced Scott had no jurisdiction or authority, and that consequently his execution was a murder.

But let us see :

Had that government *de facto* been organized and formed by the people ?

Unquestionably yes !

Had Riel the right to appoint a court of justice to try a felon ?

Undeniably yes !

And had that court of justice the right to pronounce a sentence ?

Undoubtedly yes !

I know full well, that what preceeds will create an uproar among a certain class of people—the red-hot apostles of William of Orange, for instance—but I shall, nevertheless, insist upon this point : Scott was deserving a severe and exemplary punishment, and in supposing that Riel and the members of his government took a great responsibility upon themselves in allowing him to be put to death, the following puts an end to all arguments about this charge :

On the 24th of June, 1873, Lord Kimberly, Secretary for the Colonies, in answer to an official request, signed by Lord Dufferin, then Governor General of Canada, notified the Dominion Cabinet that the Imperial Government had granted a full amnesty in favor of Riel and his followers.

What can remain to be said now ? If in reality Riel had committed manslaughter in 1869, which hypothesis is very questionable, he was fully pardoned in 1873 by the Imperial Government of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain.

On the 9th of March, 1870, Bishop Taché returned from

Ottawa, and in the name of the Imperial and Dominion governments promised a complete amnesty to all the insurgents in general, and to Riel and Lépine in particular, and a full pardon for ALL OFFENCES committed during the insurrection, *including the execution of Scott.*

AN INFAMOUS TREACHERY.

On the 24th of the same month, Father Ritchot, Judge Blake and Mr. A. Scott were sent to Ottawa as delegates for the Metis, and they came back to Manitoba on the 17th of June, reporting that Lord Dufferin and Sir Clinton Murdoch had given the assurance, in the name of Her Majesty, that the amnesty would be *pleine et entière!*

On the 12th of July, Bishop Taché received a letter from Sir George E. Cartier, Minister of Militia, corroborating and confirming the statement of the delegates with reference to the entirety of the amnesty.

On the 24th of August, the troops, under command of Colonel Wolseley, arrived at Fort Garry, and in spite of all the peaceful and solemn assurances of the Ottawa Government, the Commander in Chief issued the proclamation spoken of previously, calling "banditti" the men who had received, five months previous, the assurance of a full pardon by the Imperial Government.

Who was guilty of this abominable treachery? The Imperial Government? The Dominion Cabinet? or Colonel Wolseley?

I know not, but I know who were the too numerous victims of this infamous and unprecedented snare, of this vile and base perfidy. With the arrival of the troops commenced the fearful reign of terror I have already and rapidly described.

1871.

On the 3d of October, Lieutenant-Governor Archibald issued a proclamation asking for volunteers to repulse the Fenian invasion. Forgetting how cruelly they had been wronged, Riel offered his services and those of his followers to the Government.

Mr. Archibald accepted his offer and reviewed the Metis volunteers at St. Boniface. Riel immediately started with two hundred men.

In an official letter addressed to Sir John A. MacDonald, Mr. Archibald frankly stated that the loyalty shown by the entire population of the Province, and the success he had met in protecting it against the Fenian invasion, was entirely due to the policy of moderation he had adopted toward the Metis. His letter contained the following passage, which we shall leave to the appreciation of impartial and well-thinking people: "Had the French
"Metis been pushed to extremities, O'Donahue, the
"Fenian leader, who had been a member of Riel's govern-
"ment, and who had many friends among the Half-breeds,
"would have been joined by the whole population of the

“country situated between Pembina and the Assiniboine River, the English portion of the Province would have been plundered, and the English settlers massacred to the last.”

Were Riel and his followers confirmed and irrepressible rebels after all?

Did not their loyal course in this predicament prove that, had the members of Sir John A. MacDonald's Cabinet understood better the people they had so long and so grossly wronged, they could have had in them the most faithful and reliable subjects in the Dominion.

Fair and proper treatment would have forever made them staunch and true to the British crown.

But they never got such treatment at the hands of the Canadian Government, and the last blow they have received in the execution of Riel has irrevocably severed any possible and amicable tie with his executioners.

On the 27th of December of the same year (1871) after a full and complete amnesty had been proclaimed, after Riel and his Metis had proved that they were willing to redeem the past, Sir John A. MacDonald found a new way to cowardly insult the leader of the Metis. In a confidential letter addressed to Bishop Taché, he apprised him that he had adopted a new and friendly policy regarding Riel.

In that letter was a check for \$1000 to be given to Riel on condition that he would leave the country, and go to the United States.

I need not say that the check was refused.

This new and bitter insult was bravely swallowed by the Metis chief, and the next humiliation was patiently looked for.

1872.

The beginning of that year was full of sad and tumultuous events for Riel.

The Orange element, stationed at Fort Garry, commenced their nightly excursions towards St. Vital, the parish where Riel lived with his family.

The young Metis leader had been pardoned by the Imperial and Dominion governments, but not by the worthy companions of Scott.

They frequently visited the house inhabited by Riel's mother, and insulted most unmercifully that old and defenceless woman. They tried to obtain from her, by force, the name of the place where her son was living. They threatened to fire the house; they even went so far as to beat her.

I have now a revelation to make which will explain why some of these Ontario cut-throats were so anxious to meet Riel.

What I am about to expose is so horrid and repulsive that my readers will probably doubt it, but I will nevertheless go on with what I have to say.

I have not been told about this fact. I have wit-

nessed it, and I most solemnly declare that I am now writing the truth, as revolting as it may appear. A man (?) named Frank Cornish, a lawyer by profession, came to Manitoba towards the end of 1871, and opened an office in Winnipeg.

He was originally from London (Ontario), and had been Mayor of that town.

A most scandalous affair which made quite a noise at the time all through the country, obliged him to leave Upper Canada.

He came to Manitoba, well knowing that there was a field for one of his stamp and calibre. He was a fervent Orangeman, and soon was known by all his co-religionists.

One week or so after his arrival in Winnipeg I met him in a court room for the first time. I shall remember, as long as I live, the first impression he produced on me.

He was rather heavily built. The expression of his face had something of the wolf and fox mixed together. His eyes, fearfully crooked, like his conscience, had a look of cruelty difficult to describe.

He was an astute and shrewd politician, a fluent but violent speaker.

Soon after his arrival in Manitoba, I heard that, although professing to be an irreconcilable enemy of Sir John A. MacDonald, he was staunchly devoted to him, and always ready to do the dirty work of the Prime Minister. He soon became very popular among the

enemies and persecutors of Riel—and later on he was elected Mayor of Winnipeg.

One evening, I was going on foot from one of the hotels in the town to the house of a friend, who was residing on the bank of the Red River.

It was about nine o'clock, snow had fallen heavily during the day, and I could not hear my own footsteps.

In turning a corner of the road, the sound of several voices reached my ear, and I distinctly heard the name of Riel.

I naturally stopped and listened without seeing the parties who were speaking, they were hidden from me by the corner of a demolished stone fence.

While listening attentively, I recognized the voice of Frank Cornish, and the following is the exact report of the conversation which was going on :

Cornish was speaking : “ Riel must now be in his house, I tell you. I know that he came to-day from Pembina and that he will be with his mother until to-morrow morning. Now is the time to catch him.”

“ Who guarantees that the money will be paid us after the thing is done ? ”

“ I do, there are two thousand dollars to be divided between the four of you.”

“ Yes,” said another voice, “ and you keep three thousand dollars for yourself. We are to do the job and run all the risks, and we four won't get as much as you who are doing nothing.”

“Never mind what I keep for myself,” said Cornish, “there are no risks any how. Riel is a damned rebel after all. Sir John A. MacDonald will be only too glad to get rid of him. He won’t prosecute anybody. Now, is it understood?”

“Well! we’ll start right now; but remember, if we get into trouble, you’ll get us out of it.”

“Don’t fret, and don’t forget this: I don’t want his body, his head will do. You have your bag and your masks. You are well armed, now go on, I shall wait the whole night for you in my office.”

A few moments after, I saw four men crossing the Assiniboine, just opposite Fort Garry, and going in the direction of St. Vital.

The conversation did not end there; Cornish and another man were still speaking.

“Are you sure that the check will be paid?” asked the man.

“I am; all the man who came from Toronto wants, is Riel’s head. He’ll cash the check on delivery!”

Here I heard a laugh.

“But let us go,” continued Cornish, “it is too cold for me here; there is a good fire in the office and some good whiskey, come along.”

And the voices grew weaker and more and more indistinct. The two men were going towards the town.

I resolved then and there to baffle this infamous conspiracy. I was well acquainted with the Deputy Chief

of the Mounted Police, Richard Power, a young man who has since met his death in the performance of his duty. It did not take me fifteen minutes to go to his office.

Fortunately I found him in. "Power," said I, "you and I can prevent a great calamity, will you come with me and do what I say? I shall explain everything on our way."

He knew that such words, coming from me, were not uttered without a serious cause. Ten minutes after, he had put his best horse to his cutter, and each of us armed with a good Smith & Wesson revolver and a Snyder carbine, started like the wind for the parish of St. Vital.

While on our way I told him all I had heard. The brave fellow and I soon decided upon a plan of action. There were only two things to be done: to reach Riel's house in time to warn him of the danger that was threatening him, or, if we arrived too late, see that the assassins could not accomplish their bloody scheme.

Riel's house at St. Vital was seven miles from Fort Garry. About midway we saw the four men, who had stopped on the right handside of the road, they were smoking and drinking. In passing by them we held on our horse in order to try if we could not hear some of their conversation.

Being completely wrapped in furs there was no danger that we would be recognized.

One of the men addressed us, and we stopped:

“Hello! travelers, are you going far?”

“As far as Pembina,” answered I. “And you?”

“Oh!” said the man, laughing, “we are only on a pleasure trip. Won’t you take a drink with us?”

“No, thanks! we have our own flasks.”

“Well, good-bye, strangers; hope you’ll arrive safe in Pembina.”

“So long, and good luck to you; hope you will enjoy your pleasure trip.”

“You bet we will,” said one of the men. “Good-by.”

We whipped up the horse and left the four ruffians behind.

“Good!” said I to Power, “the roads are covered with snow, those men will not reach St. Vital before an hour or so. All is well; we have plenty of time before us, but let us get there as quickly as possible.”

The trip from Fort Garry to St. Vital did not take us over eighteen or twenty minutes. When we arrived at Riel’s house we saw a light through the windows. The bells of our horse had been heard by the people inside.

A man, a Metis, came to the door and asked us in French, who we were and what we wanted. I answered in the same language, and told him that we were friends, and that we had some serious news to communicate.

“If you are friends, come in, and be welcome.”

We jumped out of our sleigh, and on entering the house we saw three French Half-breeds sitting around the fire-place. Riel was one of them.

His mother and another Half-breed woman were in another part of the room.

I had met Riel several times before. When they saw us, the Half-breeds got up from their chairs, and the movements they made with their hands—as if to search in their pockets—showed that they were prepared for any emergency.

It had been decided between Power and myself that it was he who would be the speaker. I did not care, at the time, to be recognized by the young Metis leader.

“Mr. Riel,” said my companion, “we have come to you this evening as friends, and when you know the cause of our visit, you will see that you have nothing to fear from us.”

“I fear nothing and nobody,” answered Riel, “but speak! what has brought you here?”

“If in ten minutes you have not left this house,” continued Power, “your life will be in serious danger.”

And then he told him all about the four men who were at that very moment on their way to the house, and what their intentions were.

“Let them come,” spoke up one of Riel’s friends, “we are ready for them, and if it comes to the worst we will show those men that Riel’s head is still solid upon his shoulders.”

Riel motioned his friend to keep quiet. “I thank you most heartily, gentlemen, for what you have done for me, but,” said he, “I am getting tired of this cowardly

persecution ; why should I leave my own house and fly like a poltroon ? Four assassins are looking for me, did you say ; very well, let them cross the threshold of this door, they'll find me here. I am waiting."

Here I interfered, and made him understand that we had come to prevent a crime, if possible ; that we did not doubt his courage, but that every moment was precious, and the presence of his mother alone ought to determine him that fighting was completely out of time and place at present.

"Yes," added Power, "if you persist in your decision to wait for these men, you will not only aggravate your position but very likely compromise us, who have come, moved by a friendly feeling, to tell you of the danger that was threatening your life."

Riel understood the strength of this argument ; he shook hands with us, and in five minutes, his friends, his mother and himself left the house, and went towards Rivière Sale, five miles distant. I afterwards heard that they spent the night in Father Ritchot's house at St. Norbert.

After their departure, my companion and I decided to see what was coming next. We drove the horse and sleigh behind a barn about thirty yards from the house and, carbine in hand, we waited for the arrival of the four blackguards.

We had not been in waiting ten minutes, when we saw

four shadows coming from the main road and creeping like snakes towards the house.

Seeing no light inside, they went all around the small building, and when they met in front of the door, they loudly manifested their disappointment.

“I am sure there is nobody in there,” said a voice, “the fire in the chimney lights the room, and you can see through the windows at the back of the house, that there is not a living soul in it.”

“Perhaps they are sleeping,” said another one.

“No!” answered the first one, “I saw the beds, they are empty.”

“We’d better wait then, perhaps he will come.”

“Wait! I’ll be damned if I do. Riel won’t come to-night.”

“Suppose we set the house afire,” went on another.

“Good idea,” joined in the one who had not yet spoken, “let us have some fun.”

The scene was lit by a beautiful moon whose reflection on the snow made it almost as bright as day.

I said to my friend Power: “If these devils try to burn the house, what do you think we had better do.”

“Shoot them down as if they were wolves,” was his answer.

“All right!” you take the two on the left, and leave the others to me. But, let us keep cool, and whatever happens, wait until you hear my first shot, and then go

for them.” He did not answer, but I heard him cocking his Snyder, and I followed suit.

Meanwhile, the conversation was going on in the opposite camp, and we heard distinctly the one who seemed to be the leader, saying: “No nonsense, we had better go back to Winnipeg, and leave no traces here, nobody will suspect that we have come, we will return some other time, and will have better luck.”

A few moments after, they had disappeared.

I never could find out who these four men were, and I do not know how they felt over their fiasco, but what I do know most positively is that never before in their lives had they been in such deadly danger as on that evening. Had they only fired a match to light their pipes, they were certainly four dead men.

Frank Cornish started on a big spree the day after, and was not seen sober for a month afterwards.

Now, who was the man from Ontario, who came to Winnipeg in order to get Riel’s head? And who was ready to pay five thousand dollars for it? I need not say that Orangemen from Toronto, or, who knows, perhaps Sir John A. MacDonald himself could answer these questions better than I could.

And if there is justice in heaven, those who were implicated in that savage conspiracy, will have to render a terrible account for their infamy.

In the beginning of February of the same year (1872), Riel’s friends decided that he and Lepine should leave

the Province until further orders, and on the 14th of that month they started under the protection of a platoon of police, detailed by Captain Louis F. de Plainval, who was then in command of the Provincial Mounted Police force.

The general elections of 1872 throughout Canada were in a great many respects a surprise to the political world of the Dominion.

Sir George Etienne Cartier, was defeated in Montreal East, which he had represented so long in the House of Commons.

Mr. Jetté, his opponent, won the election.

Sir George E. Cartier found himself without a seat in Parliament, and the Cabinet of which he was the most prominent member with Sir John A. MacDonald was, by that fact placed in a very critical position.

Riel had been nominated in the county of Provencher, Manitoba. Hearing of Sir George's defeat in Montreal, he generously resigned in his favor, and thanks to that act of self-sacrifice, Sir George E. Cartier—upon whose following rested the existence of Sir John A. MacDonald's administration—found a seat, without which he could not continue to be a Member of the Ministry.

I really fail to see if such conduct was that of an inveterate rebel, and Sir John A. MacDonald ought to have remembered it before placing the rope in the hands of the sheriff at Regina,

THOSE ORANGE LAMBS !

The elections in Manitoba were the occasion of the most revolting scenes of savagery and cruelty ever witnessed in a civilized country.

Orangemen of Winnipeg turned out in full force.

Before casting their votes, they had, according to a time-immemorial custom, been generously supplied with liquor.

Armed to the teeth they went around the town preventing the Half-breeds from voting.

Frank Cornish was their leader.

Capt. Louis Frasse de Plainval, Chief of the Provincial Mounted Police, the representative of Her Majesty's authority, was overpowered by them and came very near losing his life while performing his duty.

He received, in less than two minutes, six ugly and very dangerous wounds, and was left for dead on the ground. He lingered between life and death for over two weeks, and it was fully a month before he was declared out of danger. After their commander had fallen, several policemen were also dangerously wounded.

During the evening and the day after, the town was absolutely in the power of the Orange mob.

The office of the *Manitoban*, a paper then hostile to the Orange party, was ransacked and set on fire.

The office of the *Métis*, the organ of the French population, was also destroyed.

Private houses were entered and plundered, and all this took place while a garrison of two hundred and fifty men were tranquilly awaiting orders in Fort Garry.

As usual, Orange rioters were not troubled; the Government was positively afraid to act.

I find here room for a little episode which will give an idea of the love and respect of Orangemen for established institutions and laws.

Dr. Bird, an honorable citizen of the City of Winnipeg, was elected to the local Parliament and chosen Speaker of that body. Dr. Bird had a large practice and was, indeed, much esteemed by the people. At about one o'clock of the night, the Doctor was called upon for a sick man, residing about two miles outside the city limits. He called his servant to harness his horse to a sleigh, and shortly after left alone on his professional errand. The man who had called upon him had left after giving the address of the patient. About one mile from the city, the Doctor was stopped by six masked men, who violently pulled him out of his sleigh, undressed him, then covered him with tar and feathers, and, after unmercifully beating him, left the Doctor half dead and lying in the snow. Fortunately, the Doctor was a man powerfully constituted and of strong vital powers, he succeeded in getting into his sleigh again, and was able to drive back home.

The day after, the devotees of William of Orange openly bragged that they were the authors of this cow-

ardly act, which was committed as a revenge upon Dr. Bird, because, as Speaker of Parliament, he had, in the exercise of his legislative prerogative, given his casting vote against an arbitrary measure which had been proposed by the Orange members of the same local Parliament.

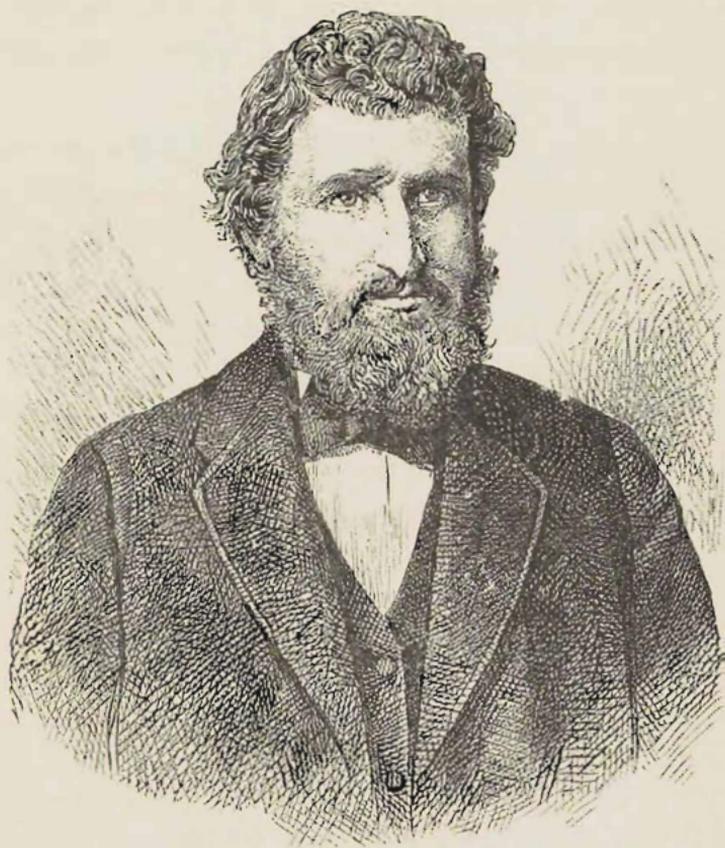
Honest and respectable citizens will see in the above, of how much fairness, of how much constitutional uprightness the disciples of Orangeism are capable. Here again, the Government crawled in his accustomed manner before the breakers of the law, the prevaricators of constitutional rights—who had outraged, not only a private and peaceful citizen, but a dignitary who was the chosen of the people for the discharge of one of the most important offices known to the British crown.

After the death of the much regretted Sir George E. Cartier, Riel was again re-elected by acclamation for the same county of Provencher, but, as I have mentioned before, he could not take his seat, simply because Orangemen were opposed to his presence in the House of Commons, and the Government was too cowardly to sustain him in his rights.

ARBITRARY JUDICIAL DECISION.

On the 15th of October, without the slightest motive or reason, Riel was declared an outlaw by the Court of Queen's Bench of Manitoba.

I defy any living man to bring forward any argu-



JOSEPH NORBERT ALFRED PROVENCHER.

ment that can justify such a severe step on the part of justice.

Yes, there was one reason for that unqualified decision of the Court—only one: Riel was a French Half-breed.

ANOTHER AMNESTY, BUT CONDITIONED ON EXILE.

On the 12th of February, 1875, another amnesty was issued in favor of Riel and Lépine, on condition that they would leave the Province of Manitoba for five years.

After residing for a while in the Province of Quebec, Riel traveled in the United States, and he finally settled in Montana in 1879, where he succeeded in finding a position as teacher in an industrial school.

In 1881, Riel married Miss Marguerite Bellehumeur, the daughter of a French Metis living near Fort Elliot. The four years that followed his marriage were undisturbed years of happiness for the Metis patriot, who, although quite young, had already experienced man's bitter cruelty and persecution.

Loved and respected by all those who approached him, or lived near him, he soon succeeded in gaining great popularity among his new neighbors. They knew of his agitated and tormented life, and they had an opportunity to see—notwithstanding all the hatred he had been subjected to—that he was really worthy of the deepest sympathy and respect.

They saw in the man who had been treated like the

vilest criminal, a model son, a loving and devoted husband, and, later on, a fond and affectionate father. They had heard that Riel was an excitable and hot-headed revolutionist, but since he had joined their community he had always shown the greatest obedience to the established laws and a strong liking for peace and order.

They knew that this man had been banished from his native country like a despicable renegade, but from the day of his arrival in their midst, he had proved to be possessed of the soundest and purest religious principles.

The years 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884 and the beginning of 1885 formed the happiest epoch of Riel's life.

Far from all outside influences, he devoted all his time and attention to his family, and to the duties imposed upon him by his position as a teacher.

WHAT LED TO THE REBELLION OF 1885.

From 1875 to 1884 a great number of French Half-breeds, dispossessed of their lands by the speculators who had infested Manitoba during these nine years, left the Province for the Saskatchewan, and established themselves in that new territory.

There, the persecution they had experienced in Manitoba continued more lively than ever. Those of the Metis who had taken a homestead wherein to place their families, were driven out by people who pretended they

had regularly purchased the same properties from the authorities in Ottawa or Winnipeg.

Half-breeds were pursued and chased from place to place, and they were soon obliged to live wherever they could, under tents or wigwams.

Poverty and starvation soon overtook the oppressed population, while speculators were getting wealthy, and building comfortable houses and opulent establishments. These poor victims of rapacity and extortion were living with their wives and children as well as they could.

It has often been said in the United States that one of the blackest spots in American history is the way in which Indians were treated through the cupidity of venal Indian agents.

The extortions perpetrated openly in the Saskatchewan by Upper Canadians and Englishmen, will leave upon their name an indelible stigma of abject knavery and sharp practice. The Ottawa Government was often informed through reliable sources of all that was going on in the North-west, but never paid the slightest attention to the warnings.

Prominent people, conscious that a threatening storm was fast approaching, implored the Ottawa Cabinet to take immediate measures for the relief of the much abused and starved population of that part of the Dominion.

The guilty indifference shown by Sir John A. Macdonald and his Cabinet towards Manitoba and the Sas-

katchewan since 1878, had often aroused the indignation not only of the French Half-breeds, but of the entire population of the two Provinces as well. The Provincial governments were often called upon, to remonstrate with the Canadian Ministers for their unqualified neglect concerning the affairs of the North-west territories.

Deputations were often sent to Ottawa and returned pacified with promises.

But these promises were forgotten as soon as made. No longer than one year ago, the agitation in Manitoba became somewhat alarming.

Indignation meetings were held in which the question of annexation to the United States was seriously discussed. The Honorable John Norquay, Prime Minister for the Province of Manitoba, was sent to Ottawa with an ultimatum addressed to the Cabinet, and came back partly satisfied that Sir John A. MacDonal'd would at last do something.

As yet I fail to see what has been done, but as the last rebellion has absorbed the whole Dominion, since its beginning (March, 1885) the local governments of the two North-western Provinces seem to have forgotten their griefs, for the time being.

In January, 1884, I met two gentlemen who had just returned from Regina and Winnipeg. They assured me that no pen could describe the state of things in the North-west. The suffering and misery of the Half-breed population were beyond description.

People were actually in a starving condition and at the mercy of the Mounted Police force and the mercantile element. Provisions and supplies of all kinds were sold at exorbitant prices, and the treatment of the French Metis, at the hands of the authorities, was something atrocious.

They condemned most bitterly the criminal indifference of the Government officials and prophesied an imminent and terrible outbreak.

These gentlemen were sincere in their statements; Europeans by birth, and free from all partisanship, the impartiality of their judgment cannot be questioned.

RIEL'S HAPPY HOME IN MONTANA.

In 1884, Riel was living happily in the midst of his family, in Montana. For three years he had carefully kept himself aloof from political circles. God had blessed his marriage and had made him the father of two beautiful children.

The love he bestowed upon his wife, his son and his daughter won the admiration of all who knew him. The man whose heart had been convulsed by an agitated life was gradually recuperating under the unbounded attachment and devotion of the young wife who had made him twice a father.

He had forgotten his past sufferings and the persecutions he had endured for the sake of his country and the

welfare of his people. Between the love of his wife and the smiles of his infant children, he allowed himself to hope that at last the stormy days were over for him, and his soul was filled with an infinite confidence in the mercy and protection of heaven.

RIEL'S PERSECUTED COUNTRYMEN BEG FOR HIS AID.

In June, 1884, Riel was visited by some influential Metis: Gabriel Dumont, Moïse Ouellette and two or three others. These men had travelled nearly fifteen hundred miles to see him.

They told him of the poverty and misery of his Half-breed brothers in the Saskatchewan; of their treatment at the hands of the Government employees; of their starving condition; of the insolence and cruelty of the Ontario speculators, who had wrongly and unlawfully dispossessed of their lands a great number of Metis.

They warmly appealed to his patriotism, to his well-known love for his race.

Riel listened to them. He deeply sympathized with all they said, but he spoke of his determination not to take any further part in politics. His past experience had been too severe a lesson for him.

Gabriel Dumont told him that their suffering brothers had no one else but him (Riel) to place at their head and to insist upon the Government redressing their wrongs.

He appealed to his well-known nobleness of heart : “ Our families are without bread,” said Dumont to Riel. “ The Mounted Police, instead of protecting us against the rapacity of Ontario immigrants, have joined the conspiracy against our tranquility. Our wives and our daughters are daily insulted.

“ There is only one voice that can gather our dispersed population, and that voice is yours.

“ There is only one man among us who can force the Government to listen to our just claims, that man is you.

“ You cannot refuse to join us ; your intelligence, your energy, your influence belong to our unfortunate race. To abandon us at this moment would be a cowardly act.”

THE VOICE OF PATRIOTISM.

Riel reflected a long time, and yielding at last to his friend's entreaties, he decided to join his people and to battle once more for their rights.

Finally, this noble and disinterested man had in his patriotic heart the heroic courage to part from a beloved wife ; and, the day following the visit of his supplicating countrymen, he tore himself from the caresses of his children and the home where he had been so happy.

It has been said that Riel was insane ; if so, his insanity was certainly of a sublime nature !

AN HISTORICAL COMPARISON.

His self-abnegation was most stoical, and of the same exalted kind as that which made of George Washington the father of his country.

The despotism and oppression inflicted by the English Government upon the American colonies, before 1770, were the chief motives of that gigantic uprising which made of the United States of America the sacred land of liberty and one of the greatest countries on earth. It was also the persecution and tyranny of England's hirelings towards French Half-breeds, that started the insurrections of 1869 in Manitoba and of 1885 in the Saskatchewan.

Had Washington failed to accomplish his noble and laudable object, and had he fallen into the hands of the British authorities, he would have mounted the scaffold as Riel did at Regina.

Had Riel succeeded—as at one time he came so near—in forcing the Dominion Government to come to terms, and respect the rights of the Half-breeds, he would have been called the Liberator of his country.

Washington was a successful hero, and the founder of the American Nation ; honor to his memory !

But, as the name of Washington will live forever in history as the father of the great American people, that of Louis David Riel will exist eternally in French Cana-

dian hearts as that of the heroic martyr who fell bravely and nobly for the sacred cause of his country!

***CONSTITUTIONAL AGITATION AND THE RIGHT OF
PETITION MET BY MUSKETS.***

From July, 1884, to March, 1885, Riel travelled all over the country, and often addressed the French Half-breeds at public meetings.

He then realized that the reports he had heard about the sad state of affairs among his people had not been exaggerated.

Petitions were sent to the Canadian Cabinet, and were treated with the same disdain and insulting indifference as those sent in 1869.

The Government answered by increasing the strength of the Mounted Police force.

On the 20th of March, a private dispatch came from Prince Albert, and announced that the insurrection was inevitable.

The Government denied the fact.

On the 23d of March, another dispatch came from the same source stating that the rebellion had commenced. Again the Government organs published an official denial; but troops were immediately sent from Winnipeg to Prince Albert.

THE INSURRECTION OF 1885.

This last rebellion may be summed up as follows :

In March, Major Crozier, of the Mounted Police force, went to Duke Lake, accompanied by his artillery, and secured by force, from the Metis, a large quantity of oats, this commenced the hostilities.

On the 2d of April, the massacre by Indians, at Frog Lake, occurred ; from April 24th to May 8th, serious engagements took place, and on May 11th, the last battle was fought at Batoche.

On the 15th of May, Riel surrendered himself, and eight days after, he was imprisoned at Regina.

On the 20th of July, Riel was tried by Judge Richardson, and pronounced guilty by a jury of six Englishmen.

On August 1st, he was sentenced to death, the execution to take place on the 18th of September.

His appeal was rejected on the 10th of the same month by the Court of the Queens Bench of Manitoba.

And finally, after four reprieves, the sentence was executed on the

16th of November, 1885,
at 8.23 A. M.

Sheriff Chapleau superintending the execution.

I shall not attempt to express my personal feelings about this execution, which has met with the protestations of millions of Christians, I will simply publish the opinion of the press on this mournful affair.

The extracts of newspapers that follow, *are only a few among thousands* that have energetically condemned the conduct of Sir John A. MacDonald and his Cabinet.

The few commentaries I reproduce will speak for themselves, and will prove to my readers that the execution of Riel has aroused universal indignation.

OPINION OF THE PRESS.

OPINION OF THE PRESS.

Before the Execution.

III.

OBSTINACY IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR HONOR.

That Riel's people had much to complain about is clear. They had been cheated, just as we have cheated our Indians time and again. They were happy and prosperous before the railroad was projected. Then came a train of persecutions, of wrongs, of misrepresentations, until the Indian found that he was not wanted. He was sore, restless, angry, revengeful. He felt for his knife; he took down his gun. His petitions went into the waste basket. He was nothing but an Indian. Then he showed that an exasperated Indian knows how to kill his enemy. The white man's persistent injustice was the cause of the uprising. Of that there is no doubt.

The first duty of the government is to face this fact. It is puerile to condemn Riel, then to respite him, and

then to respite him again, and now to respite him a third time. That is cruelty not to be endured by a civilized community. Sir John is in a bad predicament; but if he has the courage of his convictions he will not hang Riel. Obstinacy is no substitute for honor in these times.—
N. Y. Herald.

THE AMERICAN VIEW OF THE RIEL CASE.

The *Central Law Journal*, of St. Louis, very pertinently asks, says the *N. Y. Herald*: “What would an American lawyer think of trying a citizen for the crime of murder or treason before a court composed of two justices of the peace and a jury of six men, without any indictment by a grand jury, but on a mere ‘charge’ made not even under oath?” This question put by a representative law periodical carries its own answer. To an American lawyer or an American citizen the trial of Riel stands out as a mockery of justice and his sentence as a grievous wrong.

It may further be asked: What will be said of Sir John MacDonald if he sends Riel to the gallows after such a pretence of a trial, in the face of the jury’s recommendation to mercy, and in spite of the fact that the prisoner is mentally irresponsible? He cannot do this without committing an irretrievable political blunder and sanctioning an act of gross injustice.

The sentiment and opinion of this country are against

the hanging of Riel because he has not had such a trial as every accused person is entitled to; because the jury recommended him to mercy; because, being of unsound mind, he is not criminally responsible, and because it was only by a violent stretch of the law that he could be tried for treason. The view taken in the United States is unbiassed and disinterested. Sir John may well adopt it as a safe guide of action.

RIEL'S BLOOD WILL BE ON SIR JOHN'S HANDS.

We think that Sir John wishes to save the neck of Riel. He knows that he is a crank. He knows that a million and a quarter of Frenchmen believe this and are pleading for mercy. Why, then, does he not at once commute his sentence? Because the Orangemen of Ontario are determined that Riel shall be hanged. They hate Riel's French blood; they hate Riel's Catholic religion. They are bound to compel Sir John to execute him, and threaten the loss of their political influence if he refuses. Popular feeling in the Provinces is therefore running high. The people are becoming dangerously explosive in their expressions of opinion. A perfect cyclone of excitement, according to our Montreal correspondent, is gathering, which Sir John will be powerless to control.

If Sir John is a large man and a brave man and a just man, Riel will not be hanged on Monday. If he is

hanged his blood will be on Sir John's hands....—
N. Y. Herald.

And, later on, we read in the same paper :

The Province of Quebec is wild with excitement. It is better to allay than to still further rouse that excitement. Not to hang Riel, who can be imprisoned for life, is more judicious than to kindle the hostility of a million and a quarter of the Queen's subjects by hanging him. Riel is nothing; the welfare of the Dominion is everything.

We learn by Mackay-Bennett cable this morning that an attempt is being made to petition the Queen in Riel's behalf. A petition has also been sent to Lord Lansdowne. Such succor comes, however, too late. Still, it confirms the position of the *Herald*—that Riel's crime should be classed as a political offence, and is not punishable by death.

If Sir John hangs Riel he will deserve the contempt of the civilized world.

NOTHING GAINED BY HANGING.

The Canadian Government will accomplish nothing by hanging Riel. Treason may be made odious, but clemency is the best agent that can be used against the rebellious. Queen Victoria might exercise the royal prerogative to good purpose and cable a pardon. It is

not Riel, but the cause he espoused, that appeals for consideration.—*Baltimore Times*.

“ I WISH TO GOD I COULD CATCH HIM ! ”

To-morrow we shall know whether Sir John Mac-Donald is a statesman or a mere politician ; whether he has concluded to execute Riel in order to purchase popularity with the Orangemen, or to do right though the heavens fall.

Sir John, it will be remembered, said some time ago of Riel : “ I wish to God I could catch him ! ” This, however, is not the time for a great man to take revenge on a poor crazy Half-breed. The question of life or death ought to be settled by the verdict of the jury, and that contained a recommendation to mercy. Sir John should not forget this fact.—*N. Y. Herald*.

CANADA STATESMANSHIP AT FAULT.

It is impossible to regard Riel as an ordinary criminal, as merely a malefactor who is about to pay with his life his offences against the criminal law of the land. He was the representative and leader of a great number of men who felt and believed that they had just cause of complaint, and that Riel was doing no more than any other man suffering under bad laws, and bad practices under bad laws would have done under like circumstances. To

hang Riel will be to make a martyr of him, and now is not the time to hold any one up to view in the Dominion as an innocent sufferer for political offences. It does not require a very high order of statesmanship to see that the execution of Riel will be a political blunder of the first class, and yet the same blunder may be committed, because Canadian statesmanship is not able to treat with common-sense the plainest of questions.—*Washington Post.*

**WILL CANADIANS SUBMIT TO SUCH AN ATROCIOUS
USE OF INFLUENCE ?**

The Canadians are not made of the stuff we think they are if they tamely submit to such an atrocious use of influence. Two things are perfectly clear—that the jury's recommendation to mercy should take precedence of Sir John's private interests, and that Sir John himself should be held to a direct responsibility for the outrages in the North-west. When the case of Riel has been disposed of Sir John's case should come up for investigation.

JUDGMENT OF CIVILIZED MANKIND IF RIEL IS HANGED.

If it is indeed true that Sir John Macdonald and his colleagues insist on sacrifice without mercy, they may make the name of Louis Riel what those of Louis-Joseph Papineau and William Lyon Mackenzie but

barely failed of being—a name for the foes of British rule in Canada to “conjure with” forever.

SIR JOHN RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL.

Riel should have his sentence commuted, and Sir John, as the prime cause of the rebellion, should be requested to resign at once. Sir John may be obstinate, but he has been in the wrong for years; he is in the wrong to-day, and if he hangs Riel he will hang him for crimes for which he is personally responsible.—*New York Herald*.

MUCH IN EXTENUATION.

There is much of extenuation for the rebellion in the condition of the Half-breeds and the treatment they were subjected to by the Canadian government. This ought to weigh with the ministry to prevent them from committing *a crime greater than Riel's*. The example of the United States at the close of the war, too, of which leading republicans are especially proud, ought not to be lost upon the Canadians, particularly when, if followed, it will allay the race prejudice now manifesting itself so passionately.—*Memphis Appeal*.

A COSTLY BLUNDER THREATENED.

Sir John A. MacDonald will make one of the most

costly mistakes of the century if he hangs Riel.—*Washington Republican*.

HE WILL DIE A MARTYR.

He will die a martyr and his memory will ever be cherished by the poor Half-breeds whose cause he espoused, not successfully it is true, but with the conviction that right was on their side.—*Hartford Post*.

DEFIANCE OF CIVILIZED SENTIMENT.

If his sentence is carried into effect, if Sir John A. MacDonald persists in sending Riel to the scaffold, it will be in defiance of the sentiment of Americans and Englishmen.—*Boston Transcript*.

SHORT-SIGHTED POLICY.

England will show short-sighted policy if she hangs Riel, and it is to be hoped that a wise discretion will finally decide to commute his punishment to imprisonment alone.—*Austin Statesman* (Texas).

A SOLEMN PREDICTION.

Riel is a poor creature who will not be missed from earth, but the day of his execution will be one that the

Canadian government will long have occasion to remember as one of the most unfortunate events of its history. *Mark the prediction.*—*St. Paul Globe.*

After the Execution.

THE REVIVAL OF RACE ANTIPATHY IN CANADA.

The circumstances of Riel's execution, as they are described in our special despatches, says the *New York Herald*, were in harmony with the course the Canadian authorities had pursued toward him from the moment of his capture. He was hanged in a loft lighted by one small window, through which the early sunshine struggled dimly, and by some flickering candles in the hands of the ministering priests. One of them chanted the Lord's Prayer aloud, and the drop fell between the words "Lead us not into temptation" and "Deliver us from evil." No friend was suffered to attend the victim. But though he was solitary among

enemies he did not falter in the presence of death. He kept the promise that had been seduced from him to make no "dying speech." Whatever he was before those final moments, in them he was brave and faithful. Can as much be said of the Sheriff, if the report be true, that he accepted the services of a man to spring the trap who solicited that base office to gratify a personal malice? Or can as much be said of one of the priests present on the scaffold, if the report be true, that he was a secret agent of Sir John A. MacDonald to shut Riel's mouth?

Well, the deed is done, and the merciless government of the Marquis of Lansdowne invites the judgment of the world on its wisdom. Our prediction is that few years will roll by before those who have done it will comprehend and confess that by converting Riel from a lunatic to a martyr they have long retarded the reconciliation of races and the fusion of the Canadians into one harmonious people. Nor is the probability to be ignored that the hanging of Riel will impress the present generation of Canadians of French descent with an unconquerable conviction that reconciliation and fusion can never be accomplished so long as Canada remains a British possession.

What can the Marquis of Lansdowne say of his achievements toward harmonizing and fusing the Canadians, French and English? In answer to this question see the flags at half-mast and the emblems of mourning for Riel, whose display is described in our special despatches from

the principal cities of the Dominion ; and read the substantially unanimous opinion of the million and a half Canadians of French descent, well and concisely expressed in *L'Etendard*, of Montreal :—

“ Riel should not have been hanged. Because he was
“ not responsible for his acts. Because he had not a fair
“ trial. Because the verdict of the jury did not justify
“ the government in signing the warrant for the execution.
“ And because his crime was a political offence.”

**AN EXECUTION WHICH WILL TEND TO STRENGTHEN
THE MOVEMENT FOR SEPARATION.**

DUBLIN, Nov. 17, 1885.—The news of Riel execution, cabled to Dublin, Ireland, has naturally excited great feeling against the English authorities. Mr. Gray, M. P., in his newspaper, the *Freeman's Journal*, says :—
“ Everything was done to exasperate the sympathisers of Riel. His trial was a judicial mockery of which any free nation ought to be ashamed. It was not denounced, as under any other circumstances it certainly would have been, because few had any doubt that the capital sentence would be commuted. We cannot pretend to guess at the policy which guided Sir John A. MacDonald in hunting Riel to death in face of French Canadian opinion against that course, and we are mistaken if it does not indirectly tend to strengthen the movement for separation which

influential papers like the *Montreal Daily Post* so strenuously advocate.”

ALMOST A SACRED PERSON.

The London evening press is not so bloodthirsty about Riel as the morning papers. The *Pall Mall Gazette* says:—The execution of political prisoners is, as all true statesmen have taught us, worse than a blunder. The life of Riel is in itself neither more nor less valuable than the single life of any of the hundreds who died at his bidding, but a leader who embodies the hopes and convictions of thousands becomes almost a sacred person, and the hangman’s touch revolts the feelings of his followers as sacrilege does the feelings of the religious.”

LOVE FOR HIS COUNTRY.

The *London Echo*, edited by a member of Parliament, concludes: “Riel was a weak and not a very courageous man, but, misguided as he was, we believe him to have been, like his father before him—moved to play the part he did by love for his country. The government of the Dominion would have stood better in the eyes of the world to-day had it spared his life.”

A NATIONAL DISGRACE.

The *Toronto Globe* says editorially:

“Another act of the terrible tragedy closed on Mon-

day morning, and on the 27th, it is said, eight Indians will be hanged. All those horrors might have been avoided if Sir John A. MacDonald had done his duty as Minister of the Interior and as a Premier of Canada. There would have been no rebellion, and Canada would have been spared all this dreadful loss of life, which is a national disgrace, and which appears to be a national judgment.”

THE PRESS OF THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.

STRONG DENUNCIATION OF THE ACTION OF THE GOVERNMENT—A POLITICAL BLUNDER.

That the hanging of Riel was received with grave dissatisfaction by the majority of the inhabitants of the city of Quebec is undoubted. The press and the most trusty public men condemn the execution as being both a political blunder and a cruel crime. *Le Canadien* of Quebec voices the sentiment of thousands of people in the Province in the following editorial :

“The blood shed on the scaffold at Regina is a bad cement, and if the confederation has no other to keep it together, then the gale which will tumble the whole fabric to pieces is not far distant. As a young country, too, we have set to the world the bad example of punish-

“ing with death that class of offences known as political, which all other civilized communities condone; a country, also, in which the power of life or death is swayed by factions is not likely to be regarded as a safe or desirable one to live in. We are asked on all hands: ‘What are the French Canadian Ministers doing?’ Our reply is short. Sir Hector Langevin and Mr. Chapleau have been vanquished, but they have not deemed it opportune to resign. Whatever line of conduct they followed their responsibility was immense. They have chosen the line mentioned. Their position is exceptionally painful and difficult. Let us not repudiate them without hearing their explanations.”

L'Événement, also of Quebec, in its editorial comments, says :

“We counsel calmness in the terrible crisis which we are traversing. Calmness has an imposing power when it is accompanied by the determination to obtain justice, to avenge an outrage on the first favorable opportunity. The future waited for coolly, patiently, is always pregnant with such opportunities. The scaffold at Regina is an outrage upon the renown of the British Empire. Riel has been executed against the law of nations, in obedience to Orangeism, which puts in peril to-day one of the richest jewels of the British crown.”

La Presse of Montreal says of Riel:—

“He will pass into the ranks of martyrs and become
“an object of veneration and an example to others eager
“to imitate his career. If he had merely been kept in
“confinement he would have passed in a few months into
“obscurity.”

The *Presse* reminds its readers of the monuments erected to the victims of 1837, while of those who escaped, some became high public functionaries, members of Parliament, ministers of the Crown, and even received English baronetcies, as Sir L. H. Lafontaine and Sir Geo. E. Cartier, for instance, who were principals in the revolutions of 1837–38.

The *Monde*, the organ of Sir Hector Langevin, the Minister of Public Works, who was too cowardly to resign his seat in the Cabinet, citing the judgment of Mgr. Grandin—“Free, Riel is dangerous; hanged, his name would be a danger”—says:—

“These words seem to strike the right note. We are
“not of those who consider Riel a national hero or a pure
“and disinterested patriot. To our eyes the *auréole* of
“the martyr and apostle does not radiate from his brow.
“But whatever may be our conviction as to the rôle and
“character of Louis Riel, we are strongly inclined to ad-
“here to the opinion of Mgr. Grandin, that it would have
“been alike dangerous to hang him and to set him at
“liberty.”

L'Etendard of Montreal says :

“ On November 16, 1869, was the burial of Guibord
“ in the Catholic Cemetery, and on November 16, 1885,
“ the hanging of Louis Riel at Regina. It is suggested
“ here that a monument be erected to Riel, and that the
“ Quebec Legislature vote a sum for the maintenance of
“ his widow and children.”

L'Electeur, the organ of the Quebec French liberals,
has the following :

“ This is for us a day of national sorrow ; for, this
“ morning's murder, signifies the triumph of Orangemen
“ over French Canadians and Catholics.”

HIGHLY IMPOLITIC.

The *London Daily News* says : “ As a general rule
executions for high treason seem to us highly impolitic.
They invest the victim with the halo of martyrdom and
often revive animosities which would otherwise die
out.”

THE TRIBUTE OF A PAID TOOL.

The *Quebec Chronicle*, a paid organ of the Ottawa
Cabinet, mildly approves of Riel's execution as the fitting
termination of a fair and open trial and a just desert of
repeated deeds of murder, bloodshed, revolt and rapine.

THE PARIS PRESS.

LOUIS RIEL DEAD MORE DANGEROUS THAN LOUIS RIEL ALIVE.

The Paris correspondent of the *N. Y. Herald*, telegraphed, on the 17th of November, as follows :

“I find that a strong anti-English feeling exists this evening in all the political parties here respecting the execution of Riel. M. Rochefort says :

“In assassinating judicially the heroic chief of the Canadian Metis, England has not only committed a political fault but *une infâmie*. She will discover too late that Louis Riel dead is infinitely more dangerous than Louis Riel living.”

THE HOUR OF VENGEANCE.

The *Figaro* has the longest comments on the case. Its editorial concludes :

“It is hardly probable that Lord Lansdowne, who either could not or would not pardon Riel, can understand the effect that will be produced by the odious act that he has sanctioned. The French Canadians form an important group in the Parliament at Ottawa, and his accounting with them must come sooner or later. As to the Metis and Indian tribes, they can, when the occasion arises, undertake cruel reprisals. The savages know how to await the hour of vengeance, and they



MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE,
GOVERNOR GENERAL OF THE DOMINION OF CANADA.

“will never forget what occurred this morning at Regina.”

**THE WEDGE OF DISCORD DRIVEN DEEPLY INTO
THE BODY POLITIC.**

The *Telegraph* expresses the opinions of a large section of moderate minds in the community as follows:

“Thus ends the last chapter in a checkered and stormy life. On its last page the hangman has written his ignominious *finis*, and human justice is supposed to be satisfied. It would be well for the Dominion if the volume really closed here and could be put away ever out of sight and out of mind. But we fear that this is an impossibility. In the eyes of thousands—nay, millions—not alone of his fellow countrymen, but of men of all races and climes, Riel, the unsuccessful rebel, has crowned a career of patriotic struggle for the rights of men with the aureole of the martyr. In their estimation he has died the victim of a train of circumstances begotten of misgovernment, religious bigotry, national prejudices and revenge, while to make matters worse in their opinion he has been forced to the scaffold without the use of those senses which could alone justify the infliction of the death penalty upon even the most hardened criminal, thus adding a further and still more indelible disgrace to the Canadian name. It will readily

“be seen that the prevalence of such a current of sympathetic feeling with the unfortunate man who suffered to-day is not the best guarantee in the world for the continuance of those harmonious relations between the different elements and Provinces of the Confederation which are so essential to its peace and prosperity. The wedge of discord has been, so to speak, driven deeply into the quivering flesh of the body politic, and heaven only knows where the trouble will end. The execution of Riel marks the starting point on a very perilous path, with one portion of the Canadian population regarding the tragic event as the fit conclusion to a turbulent, murderous and rebellious career, and the other portion viewing it as the martyrdom of a hero and a patriot, whose only crime was to have been of their blood, and to have loved his poor, down-trodden fellow countrymen in the North-west too well. It will be admitted, we think, that the outlook for the future is not encouraging. A wound has been sustained that will rankle and fester for years to come, but let us hope that calmness, judgment and discretion may prevail with every one, and that we may say, as President Lincoln said in his memorable speech at Gettysburg, that ‘this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth.’”

SIR JOHN'S MOTIVES.

The editor of the *Courrier des Etats-Unis*, of New York, denounces Sir John's conduct in unsparing terms. "The circumstances surrounding this political drama have no precedent in history," he said to a *Herald* reporter. "I cannot recall an instance in which a sentence of death has been carried out in the face of so many and so powerful protests. It is hardly necessary to say that this execution was not a punishment for crime, as crimes of that sort are not punished by death nowadays, but a political speculation. And the latest revelations seem to prove that it was an act of obedience to an irresistible secret power, and that Sir John was bound to execute Riel in order to please the Orange faction. If this hypothesis be true—and it seems to be so—the act is even a blacker one than it otherwise would have been. It would make Sir John not only the representative of an implacable hatred between the races, but an instrument of secular fanaticism. It can be readily seen, however, that Sir John would be deceived in his calculations, and would not receive as much support as he expected. Not only the French Canadians, but the Irish Catholics, will be opposed to him. Another remarkable fact is that not only was the government very strongly importuned to change the death sentence, but the sentence itself was not justified by Riel's acts. The jury saw that and recommended him to mercy. How

many examples are there in history of men who have taken up arms against the established government and received either a pardon or a nominal punishment? Look at Jefferson Davis, Bazaine, Arabi Pacha or Cetewayo. It was reserved for the Canadian government to revive this barbarous custom, which has been condemned by modern civilization.

“That history will reveal Sir John’s motives is very certain. It will then be seen that not only political, but personal reasons constrained him to act in this manner. It will be said that he felt his power lessening, and found it necessary to strike a decisive blow in order to assure the British government of his devotion, and with the ultimate object of obtaining the government of the Indies, a peerage and a place among the counsellors of the Crown.”

WILL THERE BE ANOTHER INSURRECTION ?

If the Canadian government could hang the land speculators who furnished the misguided followers of Riel with their guns and ammunition, they would do a good thing. It looks as though the execution of Riel might furnish an opportunity for speculators to get up another insurrection before long, and they may be more fortunate in their choice of a general.—*New Haven Register.*

A LEGAL MURDER.

Every French Canadian will feel that a legal murder has been done, and the execution will therefore tend to increase the hostility which exists between this class of the people and the other subjects of the Queen in Canada. There were real grievances behind the uprising which Riel headed, and England could well afford to show a little humanity to the unfortunate Half-breed leader.—*Hartford Post.*

THE EXECUTION OF RIEL.

Riel met his fate bravely, without showing either timidity or bravado. His demeanor will doubtless increase the resentment which his sentence has inspired not only among the Half-breeds of the North-west, but among the whole French population of Lower Canada.

The appeal to Executive clemency in Riel's case owed all its force to the consideration that the Government had oppressed and outraged the people whose leader Riel became. The rebellion came very near being justified when the Government, in consequence of it, took steps to inquire into and redress the grievances of the settlers, which it had not taken before the rebellion broke out, and which there is no reason to believe it would ever have taken but for the rebellion. With this admission made, the question for the Canadian Government became

the twofold question whether Riel was so dangerous a character that it would not do to leave him alive, and whether the enmity to the Government which his execution would excite was so trifling that it could safely be disregarded.

The execution of Riel, followed by the excitement attending the outbreak of smallpox in Lower Canada, has embittered the French population against the English more than any other event of recent years. The establishment of friendly or even of tolerant relations between the two races will now be extremely difficult, and without such relations the lot of the Ministry, of whatever party, will be one of endless perplexities.—*New York Times*.

THE EXECUTION OF RIEL.

Louis Riel, the leader of the Canadian Half-breed rebellion, was hanged yesterday at Regina, North-west Territory. He had been convicted of high treason, and for that offense sentenced to death. During the weeks that have elapsed since sentence was passed upon him the Canadian people have been divided into two factions, one clamoring for his blood and the other protesting against his execution.

An appeal in Riel's behalf was made to the English government, but the Ministry refused to interfere, and there has been a similar division of opinion in England. In this country less interest has been felt in the case

than the excitement over it manifested by some of our newspapers would lead one to believe. Nevertheless, the general feeling has been one of sympathy with the condemned man.

This is due to no conviction that Riel was right, or that his rebellion was justified, but to an aversion on the part of Americans generally to the infliction of the death penalty for political offenses. This man, who headed an insurrection in a distant Canadian Province, which at no time threatened the peace and safety of the Dominion, is tried and hanged as a traitor. Contrast this with the conduct of our own government which, at the close of a great rebellion that threatened its very existence, made no attempt to punish any of those who had taken up arms against it.

The result in our case has been a gradual disappearance of the passions of the civil war, and the turning of ninety-nine hundredths of the government's recent enemies into stanch and loyal supporters. The opposite course in Canada will make Riel a martyr, and perpetuate and widen the breach caused by his trial and conviction.

We fear that the Canadian government not only lacks magnanimity, but political sagacity.—*New York Star.*

THE CANADIAN HANGING.

The Canadian Government has executed Riel on the gallows. It ought not to have done so for two reasons.

First, the Government, by its offer to settle with the "rebels" in the North-west Territory after the latter had taken up arms, and by its admission that the Half-breed residents had been wronged and were entitled to redress, precluded itself from exacting the extreme penalty of the law for the offense and made the hanging of the leader an act of cruelty and tyranny. Next, because the mind of the prisoner was evidently unhinged and no proper examination was made to ascertain if he was morally responsible for his acts.

The execution was as impolitic as it was brutal. There is every reason to suppose that the Government feared the political resentment of that portion of the population which clamored for Riel's blood. Perhaps it was thought that the "English" sentiment at home would be offended if mercy should be shown to the victim. But the anger of the French portion of the Canadian population is much more likely to be dangerous than the bluster of those who would be satisfied with nothing less than the poor creature's death. It will be surprising if the Government is not made in the end to see the folly of its course and to pay heavily for its blunder.

Riel's crime was of course one of a serious character, against which a nation has the right to protect itself by severe penalties. But a Government's hands must be clear of injustice and the offense be without justification to warrant extreme measures in such a case. If it had not been admitted that the Half-breeds are serious and

cruel wrong to complain of, and if Riel had been a man of sound mind and vigorous intellect, the execution would have been justifiable. As it is, it was a brutal and revengeful act and an indication of cowardice and weakness instead of an exhibition of firmness on the part of the Government.—*New York World*.

CANADA REPUDIATES THE CRIME.

[*The Montreal Post*, the representative organ of the Irish element in the Province of Quebec, edited by Mr. H. J. Cloran, whose talent is only surpassed by his enlightened patriotism, has untiringly worked in the good cause, and written, both before and after Riel's execution, some very remarkable articles, extracts from which we should have liked to make more extensive if our space was not necessarily limited.]

“Louis Riel, the leader of two rebellions raised in the interest of justice and right, and on behalf of the oppressed Half-breeds and pioneer settlers of the Canadian North-west, was hanged this morning at Regina. He bowed his head to the murderous manipulation of the hangman with as much grace and fortitude as Sir John and his colleagues submitted with cowardice and pusillanimity to the blood-thirsty dictation of the Orange demon, which has been seeking to destroy the chief of the Metis during the past fifteen years. To the scandal of the civilized world, and to the injury of the Canadian