

LOUIS RIEL

PATRIOT OR REBEL?

G. F. G. STANLEY

Canadian Historical Association

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BY

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LOUIS RIEL: PATRIOT OR REBEL?

THE ESSENCE OF THE RIEL QUESTION

Few characters in Canadian history have aroused such depth and bitterness of feeling as that of the métis chieftain, Louis "David" Riel. The mere mention of his name bares those latent religious and racial animosities which seem to lie so close to the surface of Canadian politics. Despite the fact that he identified himself, not with the French Canadians of Quebec, but with the mixed-blood population of the western plains, Louis Riel became, for a few years, the symbol of the national aspirations of French Canada and the storm-centre of political Orangeism. French-speaking Canadians elevated him to the pedestal of martyrdom; English-speaking Canadians damned him as a rebel. In Riel the people of Quebec professed to see another Papineau, a heroic patriot defending on the far away prairies the cause of Canadians living in the valley of the St. Lawrence; the people of Ontario saw in him only the dastard murderer of an Ontario Protestant. Even today the racial controversies which emerged from Riel's actions in Manitoba in 1869-70, and the political turmoils stirred up by his trial and execution in Saskatchewan fifteen years later, make it difficult to assess fairly the contribution of this strange and rather pathetic creature, whose remains now lie but a few steps from those of his grandparents, in the peaceful cathedral yard of St. Boniface.

In essence the troubles associated with the name of Louis Riel were the manifestation, not of the traditional rivalries of French Catholic Quebec and English Protestant Ontario, but of the traditional problems of cultural conflict, of the clash between primitive and civilized peoples. In all parts of the world, in South Africa, New Zealand and North America, the penetration of white settlement into territories inhabited by native peoples has led to friction and war; Canadian expansion into the North-West led to a similar result. Both in Manitoba and in Saskatchewan the métis had their own primitive society and their own primitive economy. They hunted the buffalo, they trafficked in furs, they freighted goods for the Hudson's Bay Company, and they indifferently cultivated their long narrow farms along the banks of the rivers. Few of them were equipped by education or experience to compete with the whites, or to share with them the political responsibilities of citizenship. When faced with the invasion of civilization they drew together; they did not want to be civilized; they wanted only to survive. Their fears and bewilderment drove them into resistance which, when reduced to armed conflict, held small chance of success.

Fundamentally there was little difference between the métis and the Indian problems. Even less than the mixed-bloods were the native Indians prepared to take a place in the highly competitive civilization of the white men. To the Indian and métis alike, civilization meant the destruction of their culture, with assimilation or extinction as their ultimate fate. The Riel risings were not, as the politicians said and believed, a war between French and English, but between plough and prairie. But these facts were hidden from the Canadian public by the timidity and prejudices of politicians; and the visionary defender of an obsolete cultural epoch in Western Canadian history became the martyr of a race.

The dates of the two risings associated with the name of Louis Riel are not without significance. The first, 1869-70, coincided with the passing of the Hudson's Bay Company as the governing power of the North-West. The second, 1885, coincided with the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, an event which definitely marked the end of the old order in the North-West. With the suppression of the last effort on the part of Canada's primitive peoples to withstand the inexorable march of civilization, and the execution of Riel, the domination of the white man was forever assured. Henceforth the history of Western Canada was to be that of the white man, not that of the red man or of the half-breed.

Simple as are the conflicts of 1869 and 1885 when viewed as episodes in the history of the cultural frontier, they have always been complicated by the enigmatic personality of their leader. A man with a real popular appeal and considerable organizing ability, Riel was able to give unity and corporate courage to his followers. In him the self-assertive tendencies of the métis were liberated; to him they owed that self-confidence which they had never previously possessed and were never to possess again. Whether Riel was mad will ever remain a matter of debate. Medical opinion inclines to the view that his grandiose visions, his obsessional neurosis, his intense egotism, his intolerance of opposition, were all symptoms of a paranoid condition. It must be remembered that primitive aggressiveness and hostility lurk deep in the minds of all of us. Unless these tendencies can get adequate sublimation they reveal themselves in strong self-assertion, ruthless desire for power, delusions of persecution, irrational fixations and megalomania. That Louis Riel fits into this pattern there seems little real doubt. Perhaps the psychologist has the final answer to the problem of Riel's personality when he suggests that a repressed primitive aggressiveness explains, in part at least, Riel's behaviour in 1869 and in 1885.

THE BASIC CAUSE OF THE RED RIVER RISING

The half-breeds of the Hudson's Bay Company Territories were a remarkable people. Children of the fur traders and the Indian women of the plains, they combined many of the best qualities of

both races. Physically they excited the admiration of visitors. They were as much at home on the prairie as any Indian tribesmen and in their elaborate organization for the buffalo hunt they had a self-made military organization as efficient for its own purpose as the Boer Commando. Despite their semi-nomadic life and their mixed blood they were not savages. They were religious and reasonably honest; and in the golden days of the Red River Settlement serious crime was unknown. The authority of the Hudson's Bay Company was almost entirely moral; and when left to themselves the métis got on well with the Indians, with each other and with their rulers.

The serpent in this Eden was progress. For a long time the menace came from the south. American settlement proceeded faster than Canadian, and while there was still an empty wilderness between Fort Garry and Western Ontario there were fast growing settlements in the United States. Developments south of the frontier made it difficult if not impossible to enforce the fur monopoly; and developments south of the frontier meant the end of the buffalo and the demoralization of the Indians.

The newly created federation of Canada, fearful — and with ample justification — of American expansion northwards and of the intrigues of Senator Alexander Ramsey and the Minnesota party, finally concluded an agreement with the Hudson's Bay Company for the transfer of the Company's territories to Canada. To Canada and to the Canadians the acquisition of the North-West was a logical and necessary corollary to confederation; but to the people of Red River it meant their transfer to a "foreign" government whose interests were very different from their own. Evidence of these differences was soon afforded by the arrival in Red River of a party of Canadian surveyors who proceeded to lay out the land in a symmetrical pattern, taking little or no heed of the irregularities of the métis holdings, and precursing, in any event, close settlement, the destruction of the buffalo and the end of the wandering life of the prairie. The sons of Isaac were advancing on the lands of the sons of Ishmael. A clash was inevitable.

LOUIS RIEL ORGANIZES THE METIS

Louis Riel, the man who organized the resistance of the Red River métis, was born in St. Boniface, October 22nd, 1844. His mother, Julie Lagimodière, was the daughter of the first white woman in the North-West, and his father, a métis, had been the leader of the "free trade in furs" movement in the forties. A serious, somewhat introspective boy, Louis Riel was selected by Bishop Taché of St. Boniface with several other métis boys, to be educated in Eastern Canada. As a scholar at the Collège de Montréal his studies were satisfactory, particularly in rhetoric, although his lack of humility in the eyes of his ecclesiastical tutors unfitted him for a religious vocation. He remained, as he always was, aloof, egotistical, without real friends among his comrades. These were years of intense political activity in

the Canadas, years of constitutional deadlock, of "Rep by Pop", "No Popery", "Double Majority", and "Confederation". Riel's patrons, the Masson family, were well known in Canadian political circles and it is not surprising that young Louis Riel should have shown a greater interest in politics than in religion. He worked for a brief time as a student-at-law; then in 1867 he went back to the west, to St. Paul, where he remained until his return to Red River a year later.

Riel did not stir up the métis to the insurrection that occurred in 1869. He only assumed the leadership of an already existing discontent, moulded it, and gave it form according to his judgment or his impulse. His education, his eloquence, his knowledge both of the English and French languages, and his genuine belief in the justice of the métis cause marked him out at once as the obvious leader of his people, and to him the frightened, confused métis turned. Their obvious need for leadership gave young Louis confidence, and he was able, in turn, to inspire them with a sense of national destiny. Small secret meetings developed into large political gatherings, and when news reached the Settlement that a Canadian Lieutenant-Governor, William McDougall, with a ready-made government and several cases of rifles, was approaching Red River by way of Pembina, the aroused métis met at the house of the abbé Ritchot in St. Norbert determined to organize their resistance. John Bruce, a man of little consequence, was elected president of the métis "National Committee"; Louis Riel, the real leader, was named secretary. A barricade was then erected across the road and on October 21st a warning was sent to McDougall not to attempt to enter the country without the express permission of the "National Committee". Having taken the first step towards armed resistance, the second came easily enough. The Hudson's Bay Governor, William McTavish, mortally ill, had virtually abdicated all authority and Riel's organization was able not only to cut McDougall off from the small but noisy group in Winnipeg favouring annexation to Canada, but to intercept all mails and parties entering the Settlement.

The day of decision for Riel was November 2nd. On that day he and a band of armed métis occupied Fort Garry without opposition. It was a daring and decisive act. Situated at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, with ample stores of food and munitions, and defended by stone walls, Fort Garry was both the geographical and strategic centre of the Red River Settlement. Whoever controlled the fort controlled the colony.

Meanwhile McDougall, much to the delight of the Americans who continually poked unkind fun at him in their newspapers, fretted and fumed at Pembina. He had been told to proceed with all convenient speed to Fort Garry and there to make arrangements for the completion of the transfer which had been fixed for December 1st, 1869. His line of duty to him was clear. Unaware of the fact that the Canadian government had at the last moment postponed the date of transfer, McDougall issued, on December 1st, in the name of Queen Victoria, a

proclamation announcing the transfer of the North-West to Canada with his own appointment as Lieutenant-Governor, and he commissioned Colonel J. S. Dennis to raise a force to deal with the insurgents.

To proclaim a transfer which had not been effected was meaningless; but to propose to overcome by armed force the people whom he expected to govern, was dangerous both for McDougall and for the country he represented. It was fortunate that the response to McDougall's appeal fell far short of what he had hoped for. Henry Prince and a few Saulteaux Indians turned out, ready to fight the métis or anyone else, and the Canadians who had settled in the vicinity of Winnipeg displayed a genuine eagerness to enlist; but the great body of settlers, both mixed-blood and white, held back. Dennis soon realized the folly of any attempt to overthrow the Riel movement by force of arms and told McDougall so. But the enlisted Canadians, forty-five of them, led by Dr. John Schultz, believed themselves stronger than they were, and ignoring Dennis's advice they occupied a fortified house in Winnipeg. When, however, they found themselves faced with the muskets of six hundred métis even Schultz could see the force of the argument; they therefore emerged from "Fort Schultz" and dragged themselves between the files of Riel's ragged soldiery towards the cells of Fort Garry.

THE FIRST CONVENTION, NOVEMBER 1869

Meanwhile Louis Riel had been seeking to broaden the basis of his support. Hitherto his movement had been limited to the French-speaking métis. Almost equal in number to the métis were the English-speaking half-breeds, whose interests, while differing in detail, were ultimately the same as those of their French-speaking kindred. It was thus Riel's aim, not to fight Canada, but to unite the whole body of mixed-blood settlers who formed over eighty per cent of the population of Red River, in a demand that Canada negotiate with them the terms of their entry into the Canadian federation. It was with this end in view that he invited the several parishes of the colony to send representatives to meet in convention at Fort Garry on November 16th.

From Riel's standpoint the convention was only a partial success. He had prepared no agenda; his supporters, most of them unschooled buffalo hunters, lacked any real knowledge of parliamentary procedure, and the English-speaking half-breeds to whom he was appealing, had no clear cut ideas as to what their role should be. Much time was wasted in fruitless disagreement over the question of forming a "Provisional Government" to take over the authority previously exercised by the Hudson's Bay Company. The English half-breeds were inclined to suspect the nature of Riel's motives although the continued presence of the Union Jack above the walls of Fort Garry and the moderation which characterized the "List of Rights" which Riel submitted for discussion, did much to minimize the disagreements between the two half-breed groups. However, McDougall's proclama-

tion renewed the doubts of the English-speaking members of the convention, and, intolerant of any further delay, Riel, on December 8th, issued a "Declaration of the People of Rupert's Land and the North West" to the effect that, since the Hudson's Bay Company had, without the consent of the settlers, sold the country to a "foreign power", the people of Red River were, in the absence of any legal authority, free to establish their own government "and hold it to be the only and lawful authority now in existence in Rupert's Land and the North-West, which claims the obedience and respect of the people". In other words, the métis National Committee was the only "lawful" as well as the only "effective" government in Red River. The Declaration continued, however, by expressing the willingness of the people to "enter into such negotiations with the Canadian government as may be favourable for the good government and prosperity of this people". On December 23rd, John Bruce resigned and Louis Riel became the titular president of the National Committee. He was now complete master of the Red River Settlement.

THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS TO PLACATE THE METIS

Five days previously McDougall had quitted the inhospitable village of Pembina. In Ottawa the Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, wrote to one of his colleagues. "McDougall is now at St. Paul's and leaves this morning for Ottawa. He has the redoubtable Stoughton Dennis with him. The two together have done their utmost to destroy our chance of an amicable settlement with these wild people." Sir John A. Macdonald and the others completely misunderstood the real nature of the métis grievances. They viewed the troubles in Red River primarily as an expression of French-Canadian particularism, and so they sent as peace messengers to Red River a French-Canadian priest and a French-Canadian soldier from Eastern Canada. Neither Grand Vicar Thibault nor Colonel de Salaberry accomplished anything. Riel quickly found that the Canadian emissaries possessed no real authority to treat with the National Committee, and he would not, therefore, permit them to carry out their intended role of spreading propaganda on behalf of Canada.

Of far greater significance was the appearance in the Settlement towards the end of December 1869 of Donald A. Smith, the chief representative of the Hudson's Bay Company in Canada. Smith had offered his services to the Canadian Government in November, and his offer had been accepted. Smith was a man of drive, ambition and resource, a cold and unemotional master of business. He had distinguished himself as administrator of the Company's Labrador District and was, at this time, manager of the Montreal District. Although fifty years of age, he was just crossing the threshold of that remarkable career which saw him enter parliament, make possible the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, receive a peerage, and become High Commissioner for Canada in London. He had never before visited the

North-West, but he had married a Red River girl and his name was well known to Company servants and métis alike.

As representative of the Company, Smith found little difficulty in entering the Settlement. Although his freedom of movement was circumscribed by a suspicious Riel, he had frequent visits from "some of the most influential and most reliable men in the Settlement", who not only made known to the people generally "the liberal intentions of the Canadian Government", but who helped Smith distribute no less than £500 among the French métis in those quarters where it would be most to the advantage of Canada. He had taken care to leave his official papers at Pembina in order to prevent their seizure, and by spreading word of their existence and implying that he possessed the power to negotiate, Smith finally compelled Riel to call a general meeting of the inhabitants of Red River to hear a public statement of Canada's position.

THE SECOND CONVENTION AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1870

Despite the cold — the temperature was near to twenty degrees below zero — upwards of a thousand men, French métis, English half-breeds and Scotch settlers, assembled in the snow — packed square of Fort Garry on January 19th and 20th. The chairman of the meetings was Thomas Bunn, an English half-breed who was nominated for the position by Louis Riel. Riel himself acted as interpreter. At first it seemed as though the mature, experienced Scot had gained the upper hand, but by the second day it became clear that the young and inexperienced métis still retained his ascendancy over the people of Red River. His proposal that another convention should meet at Fort Garry to consider "the subject of Mr. Smith's commission and to decide what would be best for the welfare of the country" was seconded by A. G. B. Bannatyne, a white settler, and carried unanimously. The unity which Riel had sought before Christmas without achieving it now appeared to be on the point of realization; and the métis leader's suggestion that the proposed convention should include both French and English in equal numbers was a popular one. The fact is that on fundamental problems the mixed-blood population thought alike. Despite the failure of the first convention there had been no real difference of opinion over the proposed "List of Rights". The only real division was between the half-breeds and the "Canadians", who were cordially disliked by the old settlers of Red River, both French and English-speaking.

The convention met on January 25th. For seventeen days the representatives discussed the "rights" which they should claim from Canada. On several occasions Riel's proposals were rejected, much to his indignation and annoyance. In the end a new "List of Rights" was drawn up, delegates were appointed to carry it to Ottawa, and a

Provisional Government was established under the presidency of Louis Riel. Towards midnight on February 9th the cannon of Fort Garry belched forth a salute and fireworks, which the Canadians had purchased to celebrate the arrival of McDougall, were exploded in honour of Riel and his associates. The métis leader's star was at its zenith.

THE EXECUTION OF THOMAS SCOTT, MARCH 1870

There was, however, a cloud upon the horizon. Even while the members of the convention were still sitting at Fort Garry, the Canadians at Portage la Prairie had started a second counter-Riel movement. It was largely the work of one Thomas Scott, a Canadian who had been taken prisoner in December and who had succeeded in escaping from Fort Garry. A small band of these Canadians marched towards Kildonan where Dr. Schultz, who had likewise escaped from Riel's hands, was doing his best to enlist the sympathies and persons of the Scottish settlers; but they decided against armed resistance. Unfortunately the métis, believing an attack to be imminent, began to round up the Canadians as they were marching back to Portage la Prairie. The latter quietly submitted to being taken to the Fort and thrust into the prison rooms from which the first group of prisoners had only recently been freed.

The outcome of the Canadian action — which Macdonald called both "foolish" and "criminal" — was the trial and execution of Thomas Scott. The métis court martial which condemned him was no judicial tribunal; and the execution was both senseless and cruel. "Consider the circumstances. Let the motives be weighed," pleaded Riel at a later date. The métis leader justified the execution of Scott by declaring that he had been guilty of disorderly conduct the previous autumn, that he had twice been involved in offensive actions against the Provisional Government, and that he had been abusive to his guards and incited the other prisoners to insubordination; but these were hardly offences calling for the death penalty. A more honest explanation may be found in Riel's words to Donald A. Smith: "We must make Canada respect us". Both Riel and the métis, despite their swagger and apparent self-assurance, felt inadequate to the situation in which they found themselves. Fundamentally they were suffering from an inferiority complex and from it they sought to escape by a deliberate act of self-assertion.

THE DESPATCH OF DELEGATES TO OTTAWA, MARCH 1870

Five days after the death of Scott, on March 9th, Bishop Taché, who had been absent during this critical period in the history of the North-West while attending the Oecumenical Council at Rome, arrived back in the Settlement. He had answered the urgent appeal of the Canadian government to lend his influence towards restoring peace

and order to the country. There was little, however, at this point, that Taché could do. The death of Scott had occasioned but small excitement in the colony, and both English-speaking half-breeds and French-speaking métis continued to work together in the Convention and in the Provisional Government. Final discussions on the demands to be sent to Ottawa and preparations for the despatch of the delegates to Canada occupied the energies of the Convention. The last — minute addition of a demand for separate schools to the already familiar requests for provincial status, a general amnesty, the protection of local customs, the equality of French and English languages, treaties with the native Indian tribes and federal financial concessions, was, however, doubtless the Bishop's work.

THE MANITOBA ACT, MAY 1870

On March 23rd, the delegates set out. On May 2nd, 1870, a bill called the Manitoba Bill, incorporating most of the features of the métis "List of Rights", was introduced into the Canadian House of Commons by Sir John A. Macdonald. Ten days later, it received the royal assent. When the news reached Fort Garry, a twenty-one gun salute was fired, and a special session of the Provisional Legislature, upon the motion of the métis Louis Schmidt, unanimously agreed to accept the terms of entry of Red River into the Dominion of Canada. With the troubles now virtually at an end the completion of the transfer could be effected, and on July 15th, 1870, the North-West territories formally became part of Canada, with that small portion of which Red River was the centre being admitted as the fifth province of the Canadian federation.

Were this the whole story, the question whether Riel may be looked upon as a patriot or a rebel would be a simple one. Unfortunately, however, as the excitement in Red River waned, that in Canada waxed increasing great. The execution of Thomas Scott had ramifications beyond anything anticipated by Louis Riel and his colleagues. Admittedly Scott was not a popular figure, even among the Canadians in Red River. He was hot-headed and aggressive. Donald A. Smith called him a "rash, thoughtless young man whom none cared to have anything to do with". But he was from Ontario; and he was an Orangeman. As the news of his death became known in Ontario, the latent hatreds of race and religion burst forth. A storm of indignation swept over the province. Schultz and other "refugees" from Red River, screamed for "justice" for Scott; the Orange lodges loudly demanded that no truck be had with the "rebels", no treaty with the "traitors", and no negotiations with the "murderers". Riel's delegates had no sooner arrived in Ontario than they were arrested for complicity in the "murder" of Scott on a warrant sworn out by Scott's brother, but lacking evidence to support the charge they had been discharged. The negotiations had gone ahead to a successful conclusion, but the rancour remained.

WOLSELEY'S RED RIVER EXPEDITION, MAY-AUGUST 1870

Partly to satisfy public opinion in Ontario and partly to provide armed support for the new Canadian administration, which was to be set up under the new Lieutenant-Governor, A. G. Archibald, the Canadian government decided to send a military force to Red River. Early in May this force, under the command of Sir Garnet Wolseley, and comprising two battalions of Canadian militia in addition to a force of British regulars, set out over the rocky waterways which led from Lake Superior to Fort Garry. On August 24th, Wolseley and the troops entered the Fort. Despite the assurances of pacific intent upon the part of the federal authorities, Louis Riel had been warned that the troops, particularly the militia, were hostile, and together with several companions he fled across the river. Thus, when Wolseley's soldiers, who had spent ninety-six gruelling days forcing their way through a wilderness of forests, rivers, lakes and portages, entered the stone gate of Fort Garry, they were greeted, not by armed métis but only by "a half-naked Indian, very drunk" who stood by to watch the rain-drenched British regulars form up on the empty square. Not far away Riel muttered bitterly, "he who ruled in Fort Garry only yesterday is now a homeless wanderer with nothing to eat but two dried fishes."

LOUIS RIEL'S ACHIEVEMENT IN RED RIVER

But for the execution of Scott, Louis Riel today would probably be looked upon by English and French, white and métis, as the father of the province of Manitoba. The "rebellion" would have passed for a patriotic demonstration in arms of the unwillingness of the people of Red River to be sold like a piece of landed property.

Wherever our sympathies lie, we cannot with justice deny the achievement of the métis leader. That Manitoba should have achieved provincial status and responsible government in 1870 — for good or for ill — was the work of Louis Riel. A glance over the subsequent history of the North-West Territories is enough to set aside any fond belief that the federal government would willingly have conceded provincial status to the infant half-breed colony at the time of the transfer of the territories to Canada, had it not been for Riel's protest.

Even more important was the part played by Louis Riel in preserving the western plains for Canada. The northern states were keenly interested in the acquisition of that area, and in 1868 the Minnesota legislature protested formally against the proposed transfer of the Hudson's Bay Company territories to the new Dominion. In 1869, J. W. Taylor, who had inspired this protest, was appointed by the State Department as United States Secret Agent in the Red River Settlement. From the outset the small but aggressive American party within the colony did everything it could to direct the Riel movement

towards annexation. H. N. Robinson, in the pro-Riel newspaper, the *New Nation*, at Fort Garry, wrote vigorously in favour of "independence" and full union with the United States; Oscar Malmros, the American consul at Winnipeg, asked the State Department to give financial support to the métis resistance to Canada — a demand which was backed up by Senator Ramsey's appeal to President Grant. The Fenian, W. B. O'Donoghue, who was one of Riel's councillors, consistently intrigued for annexation. At first Riel was disposed to welcome American support. Encouragement from every source was grist to the métis mill: but with the strengthening of the métis position and the appointment of delegates to Ottawa, Riel's attitude towards the United States underwent a change. The *New Nation* dropped its pro-American tone, and under the editorship of a Canadian, became very British. On April 23rd the Union Jack was raised over Fort Garry on Riel's orders. When O'Donoghue endeavoured to tear it down, a métis guard was stationed beneath the flag with strict orders to shoot anyone who should endeavour to remove it. There is little doubt that, for several months, the fate of Red River hung precariously in the balance. Weaker men than Riel would, under the circumstances, the provocations and irritations, have yielded to the blandishments and intrigues of the Americans and become the tool rather than the master of the Yankee wirepullers at Fort Garry, Pembina and St. Paul.

THE POLITICAL AFTERMATH, 1870-1875

One of the terms of the métis 'List of Rights' had been a general amnesty to all who had participated in the troublous events of 1869-70. No statement with regard to an amnesty had been inserted in the Manitoba Act, but verbal assurances of an amnesty had been given both to Bishop Taché, while in Ottawa on his way back to Red River, and to the métis delegates who had been sent to negotiate the terms of federation in 1870. That undertakings committing the government to secure an amnesty were actually given there seems little doubt, after a review of the evidence which was subsequently made public in 1874 by the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the causes of the Riel insurrection: that the Canadian government could not, in view of the intensity of public opinion in Ontario, give immediate effect to these undertakings is equally clear. Therein is to be found the dilemma of the next five years.

As the rumours of an amnesty began to circulate through the country, the anti-Riel agitation grew more and more violent. Ontario was ablaze with fury and Liberal party politicians welcomed what to them was a heaven-sent opportunity to turn the popular indignation to political account and capture the normally Conservative Orange vote. As the anti-French, anti-Catholic, agitation developed in Ontario, so too did an anti-English, anti-Orange agitation develop in Quebec. The attacks upon the métis "rebels" were interpreted as an attack upon French Canada and Roman Catholicism. What Ontario regarded as

a criminal act, Quebec began to look upon as a patriotic deed. The virulence of the Ontario press was matched by that of the Quebec press, and Sir John found himself between the upper and nether millstone of racial and religious conflict. For promising an amnesty he was denounced in Ontario; for neglecting to proclaim it he was denounced in Quebec.

But Macdonald had ridden out political storms before and reasoned that no action at all was often better than one which might permanently impair the future of the new political union which he had done so much to bring about. Yet Riel seemed to be an ever-present nemesis for past sins of omission and commission in the North-West. In the autumn of 1871 he opened old wounds by returning to Red River and offering the services of himself and several companies of métis horsemen to defend the province against a filibustering raid inspired by the ex-Fenian, ex-Provisional Government treasurer, ex-American agent, O'Donoghue. It was embarrassing to Macdonald that the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba should publicly have thanked Riel for this offer. It was even more embarrassing when the Liberal government in Ontario proceeded to offer \$5,000 reward for the apprehension of the métis leader. To avoid the crisis which an arrest would bring, Macdonald forwarded secret service funds to Bishop Taché to induce Riel to go to the United States; and then, to appease a wrathful Ontario, he righteously said, "Where is Riel? God knows: I wish I could lay my hands on him!"

Had Riel been content to remain quietly in the United States, at least until the political storm had blown itself out, it is possible that the problem might have yielded to Macdonald's solution. He had, however, developed within himself a strong sense of grievance at the continued postponement of the promised amnesty. He returned to Manitoba to stand for the constituency of Provencher, but on receiving assurances regarding the promulgation of his amnesty he temporarily withdrew in favour of Sir George Cartier. Following the latter's sudden death he came forward again and was elected both in the by-election of 1873 and in the general election of 1874. Then, once more, he was forced to flee across the border when an ambitious lawyer, Henry J. Clarke, anxious to cultivate the growing Orange vote in the province, obtained a warrant for his arrest.

In March 1874 Riel went to Ottawa, where he succeeded in signing the members' register, thus qualifying to take his seat. After a heated debate in the House of Commons, however, a motion for his expulsion was carried by a majority of 56 votes on a division along racial and not party lines.

Twelve months later, in 1875, five years after the Red River troubles, a general amnesty was proclaimed by the Governor-General entirely upon his own authority. It was a qualified amnesty, one hedged in with the condition that Riel remain in exile for five years.

RIEL'S PERIOD OF EXILE, 1875-1884

Always introspective by nature, Louis Riel brooded over the events of 1869-70 and the years of persecution, as he viewed them, which followed. It was a period of strong religious feeling, this period of the struggle between Catholic liberalism and resurgent Ultramontanism, and Riel in his moments of heightened religious experience began to dream of a vast new Catholic state on the prairies with Bishop Ignace Bourget of Montreal as the Pope of the New World. The idea of a religious mission, casually mentioned by Mgr. Bourget in a letter, became an obsession or mental fixation with Riel. He adopted the name of "David", and, in the eyes of his French-speaking friends in the United States, he became more and more irrational both in his actions and in his views. As a result, he was committed, early in 1876, to the St. Jean de Dieu asylum at Longue Pointe, and several months later to the asylum at Beauport near Quebec under fictitious names.

In January 1878 Riel was discharged from Beauport and certified as cured, but he was warned to avoid excitement. For several months he followed this advice. He lived quietly at Keeseville, N.Y., where he became engaged to marry one Evelina Barnabé; but there was nothing there for him to do. Thus it was that he turned his eyes once more towards the west, where alone he was at home.

From St. Paul he went to St. Joseph near Pembina and then to the métis country in the upper Missouri. He tried his hand at trading, at interpreting for Indians and whites, and, according to the North-West Mounted Police, at selling liquor to the Indians. He lived with and like the métis. Within a few years his name became well-known in the territory of Montana. He threw in his lot with the Republicans and sought to deliver the métis vote for that party. He forgot his British allegiance — after all what had it done for him? — and became a United States citizen. He even forgot Evelina and married a métisse. One thing he could not forget; it was always somewhere in the background of his mind, the idea of his "mission".

In 1883 Riel paid a brief visit to Manitoba. Here he learned from the disconsolate and distressed métis the full story of their failure to adapt themselves to the new civilization which had descended upon Red River in the wake of the Manitoba Act. Then came appeals to the old days of the Provisional Government, to his patriotism, and to his egotism. He returned to Montana and met the old Fenian leader, J. J. Donnelly. There was talk of freeing the métis from the baneful yoke of Ottawa, of petitions, and of arms. Then on June 4th, 1884, four men rode into the little settlement in Sun River County where Riel was teaching at the Jesuit mission school. They were Gabriel Dumont, Michel Dumas, Moïse Ouellette and James Isbister. They had ridden over 600 miles and with them they carried an urgent invitation to the former president of the Provisional Government to

return to the North-West to lead another protest movement against the government of Canada.

DISCONTENT IN SASKATCHEWAN, 1870-1884

Although Riel had achieved many of his objectives during the Manitoba rising, the sad fact was that no legislative safeguards or grants of scrip for lands could really enable the métis to compete with the new settlers who poured into Manitoba after the formation of the province. Within a few years the métis were outnumbered and their homeland remade into something alien to their culture and to their inclination. Sullen, suspicious, embittered over the failure to adapt themselves and estranged from the civilization of the new settlers, many métis sold their scrip for a small portion of its value and sought new homes. Westward they moved, like the buffalo; and in the valley of the Saskatchewan they founded new settlements: St. Laurent, St. Louis and St. Antoine (Batoche). Here, once more, they were able to live for a few short years the old life of the plains, the semi-primitive existence which they had enjoyed before the arrival of the Canadians in Red River.

But the civilization they feared was close upon their heels. As early as 1873, only three years after the transfer of the North-West to Canada, a bill was introduced into the Canadian House of Commons to found a semi-military police force called the North-West Mounted Police. In 1874 three hundred policemen in scarlet tunics and pill box caps set out across the plains towards the hilly country of what was to become southern Alberta. They were the forerunners of civilization, with its surveyors, its colonization companies and its railway. Civilization meant the end, both for the Indians and the métis, of the old way of life in the North-West: it meant the end of the hunt and the chase, and the end of the buffalo; it meant the establishment of Indian reserves; it meant the filling up of the country with immigrants.

There may have been excuses for Sir John A. Macdonald in 1869; there could be none in 1885. For the problem which faced the Prime Minister was the same one which had faced him earlier; the problem of conflicting cultures, of reconciling a small primitive population with a new complex civilization. But Sir John had other things upon his mind — he was building the Canadian Pacific Railway — and the Ministry of the Interior, Sir John's own ministry, starved the Indian services and failed to allay the fears and suspicions of the métis that they would lose their rights as the original holders of the soil. And to add to the bewilderment of the native peoples came the subtle suggestions of those white settlers, who, beggared by early frosts, poor crops and low prices for grain, were prepared to use the métis grievances as a means of belabouring an apparently indifferent government. Thus it was that the settlers of the North Saskatchewan, mixed-blood and white, English and French-speaking, joined together to

invite Louis Riel to take charge of their campaign for the redress of western grievances.

RIEL'S AGITATION IN SASKATCHEWAN, 1884-5

Riel was nervous when he began his agitation in the North Saskatchewan valley in the summer of 1884. He felt unsure of himself when addressing white settlers and the recollections of his past relations with Canadians were not very happy. But as the weeks passed he acquired more confidence. His programme was a moderate one. It was directed towards the white settlers as well as to the half-breeds, and his secretary, Henry Jackson, was Ontario-born. Under Riel's direction a petition was drafted; on December 16th it was sent to Ottawa. This petition embodied the grievances of all the elements then supporting Riel. It demanded more liberal treatment for the Indians, scrip and land patents for the half-breeds; responsible government, representation at Ottawa, reduction in the tariff, modification of the homestead laws and construction of a railway to Hudson's Bay for the white settlers. It also contained a lengthy statement of Riel's personal grievances against Ottawa. Receipt of the petition was acknowledged and in January it was announced that a commission would be appointed to investigate and report upon western problems.

It would be an error to suppose that Riel's agitation was carried on with the whole-hearted support of all western people. The Riel movement began to acquire a definite party colour with the support of such well-known Liberals as the Jacksons; and the adherents of Macdonald, even those who, like the editor of the *Prince Albert Times*, had formerly expressed their sympathies with the métis, condemned Riel's leadership in no uncertain terms. The old feelings engendered by the execution of Scott in 1870 had never subsided and there were many who disliked and distrusted Riel for no other reason. From the clergy, however, came the greatest opposition. They were suspicious of the métis leader and feared that the North-West reform movement, under his leadership, might well get out of control. Riel's eccentricities troubled them and they doubted whether on matters of faith and politics he was really quite sane.

That a serious situation was developing in the North-West was by no means unknown to the Canadian government. Police, government officials and private individuals appealed unceasingly to Ottawa. Admittedly the appointment of a commission to look into the complaints from the North-West had been promised, but Macdonald's delays were notorious and the mere promise of a commission of inquiry seemed to hold out but small hope of early redress. In any event it was not until March 30th that the government finally decided to name the members. By that time it was too late.

Originally Riel had not intended to stay long in Canada, but as his enthusiasm for the political agitation waxed, his desire to return

to Montana waned. Late in February 1885 he went as far as to propose that, should his supporters desire it, he should turn the leadership over to someone else; but it is doubtful whether he really expected or desired that his offer of resignation should be accepted. He turned towards a more active and more dangerous course of action. Ordinary constitutional methods were too slow, too ineffective. Bold action, the policy of 1869-70, would arouse the government out of its lethargy. Riel therefore decided to follow the same formula which had been successful on the previous occasion. He would form a Provisional Government, put his supporters under arms, and compel the federal authorities to negotiate a revision of the terms which had brought the North-West into Confederation. It was the scheme of a mad man. The methods which had succeeded, in part at least, in Manitoba could never succeed again. There was now a military force in the country to support the government where formerly there had been none in 1869 to assist the Hudson's Bay Company; there was now a railway to bring men and arms from Eastern Canada. Riel ignored the changed conditions and embarked upon the desperate gamble which was to take him to the scaffold.

FROM AGITATION TO REBELLION, MARCH 1885

The decisive day was March 19th, the feast of St. Joseph, the patron saint of the métis, and it was to be celebrated by the baptism of Henry Jackson. Métis from nearby settlements flocked into Batoche, carrying their rifles with them. The moment was opportune and Riel took advantage of it. With all the fire and spirit which he could command in his speech, he told the assembled gathering that the Mounted Police were preparing to attack them and suppress their movement. Alarm spread like panic and preparations were made for defence. A Provisional Government was immediately proclaimed, Riel nominating the members and the métis signifying their approval. Pierre Parenteau was elected president; but the real leaders were Gabriel Dumont, who was appointed "adjutant-general", and Louis Riel himself. With a group of excited followers Riel rushed towards the church, thrust aside the protesting priest and took possession of the building as his headquarters. "Rome has fallen," cried Riel. The rebellion had begun.

Riel was in no way disturbed by the alienation of the clergy—he had, after all, his own ideas of a religious organization for the métis—but he was disturbed by his failure to retain the support of the English half-breeds. The whites may have been willing to use him for their own purposes, and the English half-breeds to support him in a constitutional agitation, but they would not follow him as far as taking up arms or forming a Provisional Government. Several times he appealed to their old loyalties. "Gentlemen, please do not remain neutral. For the love of God help us to save the Saskatchewan," he wrote. "A strong union between the French and English half-breeds is the only guarantee that there will be no bloodshed." His appeals

met with no response. Riel would have to go on alone — except perhaps for the Indians.

The Indians had found themselves in an even more desperate condition than the métis as a result of the white immigration, and many of them were in an ugly mood owing to the indifference displayed by the government towards their appeals for help. The summer of 1884 had almost seen an Indian outbreak, and during the autumn of that year a number of Indians turned to Louis Riel for advice and leadership. At first he restrained them but as his temper changed so too did theirs. From them at least he might hope for support in arms.

THE MILITARY EVENTS, MARCH-JUNE 1885

The fighting began on March 26th at Duck Lake. Here Gabriel Dumont and the métis ambushed a force of Mounted Police, compelling them to abandon Fort Carlton and to retire to the principal settlement of Prince Albert. Further west Cree Indians from the Poundmaker and Little Pine Reserves broke into and pillaged the Hudson's Bay Company store and other buildings in the town of Battleford. They do not appear to have had in mind an attack upon the town, probably nothing more than a demonstration in force to obtain concessions and supplies; but the Stonies from the Eagle Hills, who joined them, murdered their Farm Instructor and a white settler and set up a "soldiers' lodge". Even the Stonies, however, did not propose to attack a fortified position and the Indians contended themselves, during the next few weeks, with prowling around the neighbourhood while the police and settlers watched with anxious eyes from the barricaded Mounted Police barracks. Further up the Saskatchewan the Crees of Big Bear murdered several men at Frog Lake, including the Indian agent and two missionaries, then descending the Saskatchewan river they terrified the inhabitants of Fort Pitt into surrender.

Thus the situation stood at the end of April. Everywhere the métis and Indians had met with surprising success. They had defeated the white men in pitched battle. Fort Carlton and Fort Pitt had fallen without even a fight. The white men had been driven into the narrow confines of Prince Albert and Battleford. These successes had not been the result of any concerted plan; they were entirely spontaneous and fortuitous. The métis were in no position to carry on a long war. They lacked numbers, supplies and wholehearted support. The Indians, held together by no strong principle of cooperation and with no central authority to combine their strength, were likewise incapable of sustained effort. Moreover, by far the greater number of Indian nations were prepared to wait and watch, while accepting and enjoying the gifts so freely handed out by the Indian Department to ensure their neutrality.

Meanwhile the Canadian government had taken prompt action. A military force numbering nearly 8000 men was mobilized and despatched to the North-West under the command of General Frederick

Middleton. Three columns of troops were sent against the three principal centres of disaffection. The first, under the command of Middleton himself, was directed against Riel's capital at Batoche. It fought an indecisive action with the métis at Fish Creek on April 24th and was held up there for two weeks. The second, under the impetuous Colonel Otter, speedily relieved Battleford. The third, under Major-General Strange, moved against Big Bear marching from Calgary by way of Edmonton and the North Saskatchewan river. In none of these operations did the commanding officers distinguish themselves. Middleton's movements in particular were slow and his dispositions questionable. Little use was made of cavalry in a country made to order for mounted warfare. Much of the responsibility for the ponderous conduct of the campaign must rest upon the shoulders of an uninspired commander-in-chief; but part, too, must be attributed to the lack of training on the part of the troops and their inexperience in warfare.

In the face of these developments Riel made desperate efforts to concentrate all his forces. He had been disappointed that the Indians of Alberta, in particular the associated Blackfoot tribes, had yielded to the persuasions of Father Lacombe, and sought anxiously to persuade Big Bear and Poundmaker to join the métis at Batoche without delay. But the Indians could not arrive at a rapid decision, and before any concentration was achieved both Poundmaker and Big Bear were attacked separately by Otter and by Strange. Marching at night from Battleford Otter almost caught the Indians unawares. As the troops rushed to seize the high ground known as Cut Knife Hill the Indians spread out through the coulees surrounding it, taking full advantage of the only cover available. All day militia and Indians fought at full rifle range, until Otter, realizing that his unprotected situation would be particularly precarious when night should fall, cleared his line of retreat with a charge and made his way back to Battleford. His retirement might have become a rout had not Poundmaker held back his warriors and prevented them from cutting the retreating column to pieces.

Meanwhile, on May 7th, Middleton began to move from Fish Creek towards Riel's capital. He had with him about 850 men; his opponents could probably muster at the most about 350. On May 9th the attack began. An attempt to use the steamer *Northcote* as an armed vessel to attack simultaneously with the land troops proved to be a fiasco, and the land attack was halted by the métis riflemen in trenches which Dumont had constructed in the reverse slope leading down to Batoche. Middleton himself declared, on inspecting the field after the action was over, "I was astonished at the strength of the position and at the ingenuity and care displayed in the construction of the rifle pits". These pits or trenches were Dumont's work; for Riel was no military leader. He had not been present at Fish Creek, and at Duck Lake he had watched the fighting armed only with a crucifix.

For three days the fighting at Batoche continued. By May 12 the métis, supplies of ammunition were almost exhausted; so too was the patience of Middleton's troops who, exasperated at the general's cautious tactics, took matters into their own hands and charged the enemy. With gathering momentum the Canadian militia dashed through the métis lines and down the hill towards Batoche. The métis fled to the woods. On May 15th Riel gave himself up. Dumont and several others fled on horseback towards the United States.

There still remained the Indians. Poundmaker surrendered to Middleton on May 23rd, after learning of Riel's defeat; but Big Bear was at large up the North Saskatchewan with his mixed force of Plains and Wood Crees. His band was split on the issue of continued resistance, and it was while the chiefs were endeavouring to heal the rupture that they were attacked by General Strange at Frenchman's Butte, on May 28th. After offering stout opposition the Indians finally fled from the field, just as Strange called off the attack. The heavy guns had taken the edge off their fighting enthusiasm. With their prisoners and their loot they began a disorderly retirement northwards through the woods.

Strange made no real effort to follow his retreating foe. He had no intention, as he often said, of "committing Custer", and it was not until the arrival of Middleton that the troops were once more sent into action. Steele's mounted scouts had proved their worth in keeping in touch with the Indians, but Middleton continued to rely upon his infantry. He ignored offers of assistance from the Mounted Police and set out with his wagons and his soldiers through a country which even light-burdened Indians found difficult to traverse. On June 9th the commander abandoned the pursuit. The Indians, however, did not continue together as a fighting force. They released their prisoners and broke up into small bands. On July 2nd Big Bear himself surrendered to a surprised police sergeant at Fort Carlton. The rebellion was at an end.

The sequel was a bitter one. The métis were not only defeated, as a politically cohesive group they were practically destroyed. Their homes were burned and their property looted or destroyed. Those who had taken part in the Provisional Government were sentenced to terms of imprisonment. A number of métis were compelled to seek entrance to the Indian treaties by virtue of their Indian blood; others moved westwards, towards Northern Alberta, to escape the merciless pressure of civilization. Those who did not join the rebellion received the scrip and patents which Louis Riel had demanded — tacit admission of the justice of the métis grievances. But just as the Manitoba half-breeds had done so too the Saskatchewan métis disposed of their scrip to eager and unscrupulous buyers. They lived only for the present and forgot about the future. What did it hold for them? Destitute and disillusioned, unable to compete with the white men either as traders

or farmers, they gradually sank further and further in the social scale, their life, society and spirit crushed and destroyed.

The Indians suffered less from the rebellion than did the métis. Of the leaders some went to the gallows, others, including Big Bear and Poundmaker, went to prison. The rebels were deprived of their annuities until the destruction wrought by the rising had been made good and their horses and rifles were taken from them. However, in 1886 a general amnesty was declared for all who were not actually under sentence, and in the following year Big Bear and Poundmaker were released from prison. Several years later negotiations were undertaken with the United States for the return to Canada of those Indians who had sought refuge in Montana after the collapse of the rebellion.

THE TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF LOUIS RIEL

On July 6th, 1885, a formal charge of treason was laid against Louis Riel, then in gaol at Regina. This was the beginning of that trial which was to have such drastic consequences, not only for Riel himself, but for the whole of Canada. The jury was entirely Anglo-Saxon and Protestant, the defendant French and, by training at least, Catholic. Here were the old familiar elements of discord. And into the little courtroom stalked the ghost of Tom Scott, whose memory his Orange brethren had never permitted to rest. As the howl for vengeance grew louder in Orange Ontario so too did the cry for clemency in Catholic Quebec. A madman, a heretic, a métis he might be, to the people of Quebec Louis Riel was nevertheless a French Canadian, a victim of Anglo-Saxon persecution. Even while shots were still being fired at Canadian soldiers on the plains, Quebeckers had expressed admiration for Riel's heroic battle for the rights of his people, and when he surrendered they sprang to his defence and provided him with eminent counsel.

The argument adopted by the defence lawyers was that Riel was insane. It was pointed out that he had twice been in asylums, that he had committed the folly of attacking the church, that he had planned the establishment of a Canadian Pope and spent valuable time during the actual rising changing the names of the days of the week. But Riel would not accept this defence. He repudiated the plea of insanity. "I cannot abandon my dignity!" he cried. "Here I have to defend myself against the accusation of high treason, or I have to consent to the animal life of an asylum. I don't care much about animal life if I am not allowed to carry with it the moral existence of an intellectual being . . ." Twice he addressed the court in long rambling speeches; but the jury was only bored, and after one hour and twenty minutes deliberation they declared him guilty. Henry Jackson, despite similar denials of insanity and an expressed desire to share the fate of his leader, was acquitted within a few minutes. To an English-speaking jury the English-speaking Jackson must

obviously have been insane to have taken part in the rebellion. There was much truth in the statement made by one of the jurors fifty years later: "We tried Riel for treason, and he was hanged for the murder of Scott."

As the date set for Riel's execution approached feelings throughout Canada became more and more intense. Efforts to save the métis leader were redoubled in Quebec; efforts to ensure his death never slackened in Ontario. The Prime Minister temporized. He was uncertain what course to follow. The execution was postponed, and then put off again while a medical commission examined the question of Riel's sanity. But the terms of reference of the commission limited it to a determination of Riel's capacity to distinguish right from wrong and did not allow an investigation of his delusions; and when the report of the commission was published it was published in a truncated form. Throughout the autumn months petitions and letters from all parts of the world poured into Ottawa. Sir John had not a jot of sympathy for Riel, but he had to balance the political consequences of death or reprieve. There was danger of political disaster if Riel were hanged, but perhaps Sir John could trust to the loyalty of his French Canadian colleagues, Hector Langevin, Adolphe Caron and Adolphe Chapleau, and to the support of a Catholic hierarchy offended at Riel's apostacy. There might be still greater danger of political disaster if Riel were not hanged with every Orangeman in Ontario baying for his death. So Riel was hanged. On November 16th, once more a son of the church, the métis, Louis Riel, mounted the gibbet of Regina. The madman became a martyr.

THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF RIEL'S DEATH

It is hard to escape the conclusion that Riel's execution, to some extent at least, was determined by political expediency, that, in the final analysis, it represented the careful assessment by the Canadian government of the relative voting strengths and political loyalties of the two racial groups in Canada. If this were so then, for the moment, Macdonald's choice was not unsound. Admittedly the "nationalists" in Quebec, led by Honoré Mercier, succeeded in 1886 in overthrowing the provincial Conservative government in an election fought largely on the Riel issue; but in the federal election of 1887 Macdonald, with the support of his French Canadian ministers, still retained a sufficient number of Quebec seats to keep in power.

Yet he had lost ground. And even if he did not recognize it, the election results were an ominous warning of the fate which awaited the Conservative party in Quebec. In the long run the trial and execution of Louis Riel and the racial bitterness which it engendered led to a profound revolution in Canadian politics. As a result of the crisis of 1885 the most conservative province in Canada swung over to the Liberal party, a change in political allegiance which was cemented by the selection of a French Canadian, Wilfrid Laurier, as

leader of that party. This shift in the political weight in Quebec, not as the result of any fundamental change in political outlook, but under the stress of a racial emotion, brought about a new orientation in Liberal policy. The old radical tradition of Clear Gritism and Rougeism was swamped by a basic rural conservatism; and for over seventy years the paradox endured of the backbone of the Liberal party being provided by rural Quebec.

CONCLUSION

Louis Riel was not a great man; he was not even what Carlyle would call a near great. Nevertheless he became, in death, one of the decisive figures of our history. By historical accident rather than by design he became the symbol of divisions as old as the Franco-British struggle for the control of northern North America. It is this historical accident which has obscured the fundamental character of the two risings which bear Riel's name; for the Riel "rebellions" were not what the politicians argued and what the people believed, a continuation on the banks of the Red and the Saskatchewan of the traditional hostilities of old Canada. They were, instead, the typical, even inevitable results of the advance of the frontier, the last organized attempts on the part of Canada's primitive peoples to withstand what, for want of a better word, may be termed progress, and to preserve their culture and their identity against the encroachments of civilization. To present — day Canadians Riel appears, no longer as the wilful "rebel" or "murderer" of Thomas Scott, but as a sad, pathetic, unstable man, who led his followers in a suicidal crusade and whose brief glory rests upon a distortion of history. To the métis, the people whom he loved, he will always be, mad or sane, the voice of an inarticulate race and the prophet of a doomed cause.

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