

C. C. J. Bond

PUTSCH ON THE RED RIVER

THE YEAR 1869 OPENED ON momentous times in Canada. The fledgling confederation of provinces grouped about the St. Lawrence system and its approaches was on the verge of extending its hegemony westward to the Rockies in one leap. North American expansionism, which had been active earlier in the south, was now reaching for the Pacific from north of the 49th parallel.

The British North America Act had envisaged the taking over of the Northwest. All that now remained to be done was the granting to Canada by the Hudson's Bay Company of the title to Rupert's Land (lands draining into Hudson Bay, lying north of the U.S.-Canada border). Negotiations were completed in April, and the transfer was finally arranged to take place on December 1. Parliament at Ottawa passed an Act for the Temporary Government of Rupert's Land that provided for a lieutenant-governor and a council of from seven to fifteen persons. It is of the eastern appointees to that government and their moves in the taking over of power that this article will deal. In this instance Canada behaved as an imperial power, and the story is one of a nineteenth-century search for *lebensraum*.¹

Rupert's Land, with its focal point at Fort Garry had, until 1853, made its contacts with the outside world through York Factory and Fort William. With the spread of settlement to Minnesota and the extension of the railroad west to St. Paul and beyond, approach routes moved to the southward. By 1868, Red River carts had for some time been furrowing the four hundred miles of prairie and upland between Fort Garry and the head of steel at St. Cloud. From the railhead, telegraphic communication with Ottawa was possible. There were settlements at Fort Abercrombie and Georgetown, and a few lone houses were scattered here and there *en route*. Passengers were carried by a stage service from St. Cloud to Fort Abercrombie.²

The population of the colony was about 12,000, settled in the valley of the

Red River and its tributaries; the Métis numbered about half.³ These descendants of unions between French or Anglo-Saxon traders with the Indians, of whom their leader later said

[un] peuple neanmoins paisible
Mais les sangs qu'il a sont guerriers⁴

were, in the sociologist's terms, a semi-primitive society, living under the aegis of a religion that was conditioned to fear-responses and prepared to resist the least sign of danger. The fervours of Roman Catholic ultramontanism were at their height. In addition, a militant quality in Canadian Protestantism had been clearly enough indicated by such events as the Gavazzi affair in Quebec and Montreal in 1853, and the Orangemen's actions during the Prince of Wales' visit in 1860,⁵ reasons enough for the Métis' priestly advisers to have kept their flocks alert in 1869. Danger to their faith and property was personified in John Christian Schultz, leader of the "Canadian" party. This clever doctor, trader, storekeeper, and newspaper publisher, described by one contemporary as "a scoundrel manufactured out of material meant by Nature for a gentleman", had shown himself to be a threat to the Métis' aims and not averse to acting beyond the law; and the law had been unable wholly to restrain him. This bearded giant was a symbol of danger to the men who later selected Riel to lead them and also, no doubt, to the priests.⁸

In 1868 the economy of the colony had suffered a series of blows: the buffalo moved off, grasshoppers arrived, fish and game were scarce. There was real hardship. Aid was needed and soon came from the Company, the Council of Assiniboia, from Canada and from the United States. What was probably the Dominion's first unemployment relief project began with the arrival in the colony, in early November, of John A. Snow to supervise the building of a road toward Fort William.⁷

There had been previous visitations, official or demi-official, from the east before. British Army officers led the way. Lieutenant Lefroy had gone northwest to Fort Good Hope in 1843; two years later Lieutenants Warre and Vavasour had passed through to Oregon. Hind and Dawson later led exploring parties, in 1857 and 1858. In 1866, one Schwieger explored the possibilities of steamboat travel on the Saskatchewan.⁸ The road-building party, however, was a direct intervention in the colony's internal affairs, undertaken by the Federal Department of Public Works and, incidentally, without securing the approval of the Company in London.

At Fort Garry, during the interregnum that resulted from the waning influence of the Company and the illness of Governor McTavish, and while the Hon. William McDougall, Minister of Public Works, was despatching the surveyor Snow,

two explosive groups were watching each other, the suspicious Métis and Schultz's "Canadian" Party. Snow was soon associated with Schultz in supplying foodstuffs to the workers, and there arose difficulty over prices. Land was bartered for and staked out.⁹ Charles Mair, an intimate of McDougall, sent letters east that added fuel to the flames. The poet had gone with Snow as personal representative of the Minister of Public Works. An early Ottawa "braintruster", he had shortly before been directed by McDougall to make constitutional studies of the boundaries of the North-west and the political agreements related to them. Schultz was soon an intimate of Mair, the friendship being based at first on literary and gastronomical grounds, though "Canada First" was to become its main basis.¹⁰ Schultz went down to Montreal in late February, 1869, to buy supplies. On the way back he reported to Mair from St. Cloud that "Some Canadian emigrants are already on the road between here and Abercrombie with horses, wagons, seed grain and provisions ready to commence at once. They report very many more ready to come and others fully determined to come with their families." Another correspondent of Mair's, an enthusiastic Toronto cavalryman and exponent of Canada First, George T. Denison, offered to send to him his "manual of outposts with instructions for the defence of detached houses & c."¹¹ Jingoism seems to have been in the air. Meanwhile, disturbed by the appearance of intrigue in the Canadian intrusion and exacerbated by Mair's off-hand and rather scurrilous descriptions of Fort Garry life in the *Globe*, the Métis were aroused. The gadfly Mair could be ignored—indeed a Fort Garry woman publicly returned his "insults" with a horsewhip—but Schultz was a man to watch.

By his appointment of the Hon. William A. McDougall to the lieutenant-governorship of the new North-west, an appointment that was accepted grudgingly and with reservations on June 26, Sir John A. Macdonald cut the Liberal representation in his Cabinet and rid himself of a headstrong and tiresome colleague. McDougall was a man of vigour, of commanding presence and oratorical ability. He was handy with a Latin phrase and later, as Canadian colonization agent in Europe, he was to write some slim books of mildly satirical verse or doggerel. But he had no tact. He seems to have been a man who brooked no opposition and who gave way to great fits of anger.¹² "Old Tomorrow" was looking rather far ahead, ignoring warnings of trouble and trusting that the onward march of settlement would "altogether swamp . . . the present residents" within a year. Political considerations dictated action; McDougall was delegated to what Macdonald called privately "his dreary sovereignty", and the government settled down to wait for December 1.¹³

In July, Mair wrote McDougall from Red River that Schultz was on his way to Canada (for the second time that year, a significant journey that is ignored by

historians) with a present of Indian garments and a letter of introduction to the governor-elect. The poet wrote "You will find the Doctor to be what he really is, a thorough Canadian and a man, who, in the very face of his own interest, was the first Canadian to oppose the Hudson's Bay Company and advocate our interest here." Mair was in charge of the road party in the summer, Snow having temporarily returned to Ottawa where he had sired a child and bought a property.¹⁴ Denison wrote Mair enthusiastically from Toronto: "I got a glimpse of Dr. Schultz on his way to Montreal . . . When I meet a damn good 'Kanuck' like him I like to see more of him—for that is the side I am on."¹⁵ Schultz must have had an important motive to make the arduous journey to the east twice in one year. Was it to plot a *coup* with the governor-elect that would ensure the efficient taking over of power?

In any event, relative peace reigned in the Colony while Schultz was absent. After a slow progression westward from Montreal—he had left there in 1866—Louis Riel moved up to St. Boniface on July 29 from St. Joseph's in Minnesota. Soon, under his leadership, actual if not in name, the Métis began to organize.¹⁶

McDougall took along with him as members of his council, A. N. Richards, a Liberal lawyer from Brockville, Ontario, and J. A. N. Provencher, a Montreal editor. The Maritimes were represented by Captain D. R. Cameron, Royal Artillery, an appointee of the Prime Minister.¹⁷ The intelligent young Gunner officer had recently married Charles Tupper's only daughter, and in May the father had asked for his son-in-law the Chairmanship of the Board of Directors of the Penitentiaries. Macdonald eventually made the counter-proposition that Cameron become "a member of the council of the North-west Territories, and to take charge of one of the departments for the administration of public affairs, probably the one connected with the maintenance of peace and good order in the interior and on the frontier, with a superintendance of the Indian tribes." Tupper and Howe were parties to this proposal, but McDougall said later that he had not been informed.¹⁸

McDougall also took steps to commence the land survey of the West, preparatory to settlement. To undertake this work he had chosen an Ontario soldier-surveyor, Lieutenant-Colonel John Stoughton Dennis.¹⁹ This militia officer had attained notoriety in June, 1866, in the engagement with the Fenians, when he misdirected a Toronto regiment into the unfortunate engagement at Ridgeway and then brought a smaller group of militia into a clash with the main body of the enemy, extricating himself by hiding. Next day he was recognized stealing into the Canadian lines, in workman's clothes and shorn of his distinguishing dundrearies. Denison the cavalryman, in a study on the Fenian raids published in 1866, judged Dennis on this series of fiascos, rating him a good administrator but "possessed of

an exceedingly sanguine and enthusiastic temperament, . . . He is not deficient in pluck, but has not that sound, cautious judgment which is absolutely necessary in a man holding a responsible command in the field." Dennis was tried for cowardice and exonerated.²⁰ Macdonald must have known this officer's character; he was in touch with the man in 1868, and in 1869 he wrote "He is a very good surveyor and all that but he has got no head and is exceedingly fussy."²¹ This is the man that McDougall selected for the ticklish job of laying out townships and lots in a region where Canadian sovereignty did not yet exist and where one large segment of the community resented its coming. This man with the bad record in tactics was to be the leader of the clumsy year's-end quasi-official military operations against the Métis that had so ignominious an outcome.

In any event, Dennis quickly showed his lack of judgment by arriving at Fort Garry on August 20 in the company of Schultz. It is possible or even likely that he travelled out from Canada with the doctor, for his letters mention five men (other than the surveyors) who joined his party in Toronto.²² Dennis quickly explained his mission to Father Lestanc and to Riel, and appeared to satisfy each of them. Yet on the following Sunday, Riel aroused the people on the church steps against the surveys. This change of face can be explained by assuming that his arrival with Schultz had been concealed, possibly under cover of night, and news of it had come later from the Americans at Pembina, who were one of the intelligence "tentacles" of the Métis.²³ A quick council between Fathers Ritchot, Lestanc, and Dugas with Riel and his lieutenants would certainly have followed such a revelation, leading to the arousing of the whole Métis community.

Relative peace nonetheless continued in the colony, and there was no outward manifestation when news came of the appointment of McDougall. But feelings were running high. Bishop Taché wrote later

*L'arrivée des arpenteurs inquiéta les habitants. Leur opiniâtreté à tirer des lignes malgré les colons dans les endroits où ceux-ci s'y opposaient, . . . la conduite insolente et malhonnête de certains mirmidons arrivés depuis peu du Haut Canada, la communication intime de ces derniers avec les employés du Canada, les injures lancées contre la nation par certains journaux, le mépris manifesté par les aventuriers furent autant de causes propres à convaincre la population que tous ces nouveaux arrivés n'étaient autre chose qu'un parti organisé pour s'emparer du pays au détriment de la nation.*²⁴

The Métis' fears expressed in the conclusion to this warning by Bishop Taché would have been increased had they known that McDougall was bringing a large shipment of weapons with him. A recommendation from the doughty Dennis "to

send arms and ammunition for the equipment of two or three companies of volunteers" had been "brought under the notice of all the members of the Government who took any interest in the subject and resulted in my being authorized by the Minister of Militia, to take with me 350 breech-loading rifles, with 30,000 rounds of ammunition."²⁵

While the governor-elect gathered his party at Toronto in late September, Joseph Howe, once active in Nova Scotia politics, now the new President of the Privy Council, was on his way to Red River. He went to acquaint himself with the region that would be under his charge shortly when he took up the duties of a fresh post as Secretary of State for the Provinces.²⁶ After arriving in Fort Garry on October 9, Howe met prominent citizens. Allegations were made later by McDougall's military adviser, Major James Wallace, to his chief, that Howe spoke privately while in Fort Garry, approving the Métis resistance and offering assurances that he, Howe, together with the Lower Canadians, would fight against the Upper Canadians in Parliament to prevent the use of coercion in settling the new West. It was also stated that the Nova Scotian had spoken out against the choice of McDougall as governor. These charges make up part of a polemic against Howe and should be considered in that light. While he was in the colony, the new Secretary made no official announcement of what Canada's policy was to be, and he did little to allay the fears of the Métis.²⁸

Howe left for the homeward journey on October 18 (the barriers across the Pembina road that McDougall encountered later must have been put up almost as Howe passed), and he met the incoming governor-elect on the 24th, half a day's journey south of Georgetown. He warned McDougall that "the feelings of a certain section of the population had been excited and that delicate handling would be necessary." (Webb's survey party had been stopped on the 11th.) Howe promised to write sending further information from Fort Abercrombie, only twenty-five miles farther on, but did not do so until he reached St. Paul, four days later, and eight days or so from Pembina. In any event, all he did was to warn McDougall against Schultz, who he said had been "posing as the representative and confidential agent of the Canadian government." Schultz, after his dealings with Dennis and an interview with McDougall in Canada, may well have considered himself such a representative and agent; the warning would have been wasted on the governor-elect.²⁹ The stakes were high; McDougall, with weapons and ammunition, was close. Schultz dared to be indiscreet.

McDougall pushed on, and in the evening, after the meeting with Howe, reached Georgetown, about 110 miles from Pembina. Somehow, plans had gone

awry. It had been learned "at Abercrombie [or nearby, one presumes, possibly from someone escorting Howe] . . . that the opposition at Fort Garry had acquired such power as to put it out of the power of the supporters of Government to give Mr. McDougall the hearty reception previously planned" [Italics supplied]. Forestalled by Riel, Dennis and Schultz were powerless to act in face of the already mobilized action wing of the Métis, the buffalo-hunters and canoe men, directed by the "Comité national des Métis".³⁰ There could be no Canadian putsch now. McDougall could not risk advancing with such a tactically important load of weapons, with a party as weak as his was. He abandoned the rifles and ammunition, leaving them at the Hudson's Bay Post in Georgetown and bravely went on.³¹ His once secure position was now in jeopardy.

McDougall reached Pembina on the 30th, and on November 2 he was pushed back over the border. His furniture, however, including a chair of state, or throne, made especially in Toronto for ceremonial use, went into the hands of the "enemy". His judgment in leaving the rifles at Georgetown was justified. In that mocking poem called *Chanson des tribulations d'un roi malheureux* that Alexander Begg noted in Fort Garry in early December, the Métis' view of the situation is sardonically told:

Suivons notre monarque
 Entouré de sa cour
 Ce bon roi Dagobert
 Traversant le désert
 ses plans
 Déjà tous culbutés.³²

United States territory was now to constitute a secure base for McDougall; being neutral ground, it protected him, yet allowed him to remain near his objective in a threatening position where he could manipulate his "*mirmidons*" within the colony.

Another quatrain of the poem mentioned above shows the extent of the Métis' intelligence services, casting, as it does, some light on conditions in the McDougall party during the voyage:

Il paraît que l'orage
 Dans son gouvernement
 Durant tout le voyage
 Eclata fort souvent.

These conditions, these "storms that burst out quite often", are adumbrated in a letter of Captain Cameron that describes the arrival at the colony's border:

Arriving at Pembina at sunset, Mr. McDougall went on to occupy the Hudson's Bay Company post on the frontier, informing Captain Cameron . . . that he did not know there would be room there, and that Captain Cameron had better get lodgings in Pembina [where there was only an unfurnished room in the Customs House]. In the meantime, unknown to Captain Cameron, Mr. McDougall had been served by the insurgents with notice not to enter the territory.

[Cameron now informed McDougall of an intention to go to Fort Garry.] Mr. McDougall gave Captain Cameron to understand that there was no objection on public grounds to his going on as Mr. McDougall did not consider him connected with the public service, but he considered there would be personal risk. [On Cameron's proposing to go on, McDougall handed him a letter which contained the statement that he knew of no position in the government for Cameron. He showed the young officer a commission] in which his name was coupled with Governor McTavish's and Mr. Black's as to be applied to administer oaths, stating that Captain Cameron's name was so included only to provide for the death of either of the others.³³

His promised appointment snatched away, the confidence of his chief—if he had ever had it—lost, the need for shelter for his pregnant wife and, no doubt, his own courage and curiosity pushing him, Cameron drove northward, only to be turned back at St. Norbert. On his return there ensued a bitter quarrel with McDougall, in which the latter's testiness became apparent. Cameron obtained a house apart, and the dichotomous official party settled down to wait for December 1, when the transfer was scheduled to take place.³⁴

With his supporters in the colony helpless, his now useless weapons far behind and undefended, his superfluous ceremonial chair captured³⁵ and the already rented house in Winnipeg lying empty, a "Macdonald man" in his own camp and his sovereignty disputed by a wild group of hated and feared "half-breeds", McDougall was bitter. Bitterness now led to indiscretion.

Macdonald had invited Cameron to write to him privately, and the officer on November 3 sent the first of a series of politico-military reports (first quoted above). He did not mention the break with McDougall, merely stating that he had not yet gained the Governor's confidence. He had learned from one "Roulotte" that the presence of women in the party (Mrs. Cameron, a doctor's wife, and Mrs. Cameron's maid) had saved McDougall from real violence. The Métis, it appears, had a reasonably civilized code of warfare.³⁶ Cameron wrote about every two weeks to the Prime Minister. On December 1, he finally reported that his position with McDougall had become "very painful" and that the latter now seemed to have "learnt of my writing to you". No secret was long safe in that gossip-ridden border post. Although the officer had been told that his commission to administer oaths was effective only in the event of the death of McTavish or Black, he had nonethe-

less been approached by Richards to swear in McDougall on his ill-considered assumption of office as lieutenant-governor on December 1. Cameron refused, pointing out that the whole course of action was impolitic and illegal. Although it was not known in Pembina at that time, the Macdonald government had hastily postponed the date of takeover.³⁷

After holding his futile, empty—and unsanctioned—ceremony, McDougall lurked on the border, like a sulking spider, spinning out intrigues involving Dennis, Schultz, and the evil “Shaman”, emissary to the Sioux. On December 8, the same day that Riel and the Métis captured Schultz and other guardians of some government pork hidden in the Doctor’s store, Snow finally stopped work on the road. In Pembina, meanwhile, an Ottawa civil servant named, coincidentally enough, Alexander Begg, who had been sent along with the gubernatorial party as “Collector of Customs and Inspector of Inland Revenue”, spent his days in the Customs House studying the application of the Canadian tariff to imports—“this on top of the high U. S. prices,” as the Métis angrily told Stutsman, who informed Cameron. Fiscal action, however, in comparison to the military actions that McDougall hatched, was only pinprick-strong as a goad to the Métis. As winter settled in, their patience was growing thin.

Shortly after this, Cameron tried his own good offices, attempting pourparlers through Stutsman in an endeavour to find someone in the Canadian party at Pembina who might be acceptable to the Métis to negotiate on behalf of the Canadian government. Richards was rejected out of hand, for he had approved McDougall’s attempt to use the Indians. Provencher’s name was considered, but there was no eagerness to accept him; he had obviously not made a favourable impression on a visit to the colony in November.³⁸ These pourparlers were the last act of the McDougall group. The utterly defeated ex-cabinet minister and rejected governor turned tail and departed on the 18th with his henchmen Richards, Provencher, Dennis, and Snow, leaving the Camerons. Schultz, who finally escaped, came out via Lake of the Woods, and Mair went south from Portage la Prairie in late February, 1870.³⁹

In Ottawa, where loose improvisation had been the rule before, all was sharp decision by now. Thibault and De Salaberry were despatched on December 4, and Donald Smith followed on the 10th. Sir Charles Tupper had left Halifax by the 3rd, off on a very long journey to rescue his daughter. Macdonald wrote McDougall a fruitless letter destined to pass the unhappy man on his way home, advising him to meet Tupper cordially so that the Nova Scotian would later help to explain failure in the West to the House.⁴⁰

History repeated itself. Inbound, McDougall had met a member of the Cabinet from Nova Scotia who had been to Fort Garry on a private mission; outbound, he encountered another of the same, Tupper, on the same kind of errand. The meeting was, if anything, more glum than the first. As the end of the year approached, so did a rapprochement between Ottawa and the Métis. The period of government bungling was over for the moment; tempers could cool and perhaps wounds could heal. But, meanwhile, a military force was being prepared.

In the circumstances detailed above, it is difficult to see how the Métis could have done other than they did. Riel did no more than effect a counter-coup, nipping a putsch in the bud. But the passions aroused in the struggle left their evil mark on Manitoba. Riel's opinion, expressed in a poem written in South Dakota in 1879 (a diatribe directed against Macdonald, badly written and vitriolic) sums up the relations between the Scot and the Métis:

Au lieu de la paix qu'il me doit,
 Au lieu de respecter d'une manière exacte
 Notre Pacte
 Et mon droit
 Depuis bientôt dix ans, Sir John me fait la guerre,
 Un homme sans parole est un homme vulgaire.

O Dieu Puissant! Daignez protéger les Metis,
 Que déjà les Anglais ont presqu[e]' anéantis.⁴²

Macdonald's preference for men at whom history must at least look askance was not to end with the passing of the tale just told. John Stoughton Dennis shortly was appointed Surveyor-General of Dominion Lands and held the post throughout the life of the Mackenzie government. When Macdonald came back to power in 1878, he quickly swept away those senior civil servants he distrusted, and Dennis was made Deputy Minister of Public Works, in which post he remained until 1883. He must therefore have had some responsibility for the administrative laxity that was shown in later dealings with the Métis. Schultz shortly began making demands that suggest blackmail, asking Cartier for a senatorship in 1870. He got the appointment finally in 1882 and in 1888 obtained a rich reward in the appointment to the Lieutenant-Governorship of Manitoba. It was Schultz who read out in the House at Winnipeg the formula of Royal assent to the Greenway government's bills that wiped out the separate schools and the use of the French language, won as rights in 1870.⁴³ The pendulum of violent action set swinging in 1869 had lurched once more. Damages still remain to be repaired.

NOTES

1. G. F. G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada* (London, 1936; Toronto, 1960), pp. 39-42; J. S. Galbraith, *The Hudson's Bay Company as an Imperial Factor* (Berkeley, Cal., 1957), p. 425; L. H. Thomas, *The Struggle for Responsible Government in the North-West Territories* (Toronto, 1956), p. 18.
2. J. J. Hargrave, *Red River* (Montreal, 1871), 100, 503; Sir C. Tupper, *Recollections of Sixty Years in Canada* (London, 1914), 104.
3. A. G. Morice, *A Critical History of the Red River Insurrection after official documents and non-Catholic sources* (Winnipeg, 1935), 34.
4. PAC, Riel papers, Vol. 2, poems dated St-Joseph, Dakota, aout 1879, *Ode: Le peuple Métis-Canadien Français*.
5. E. E. Kreutzweiser, *The Red River Insurrection: Its Causes and Events* (Gardenvale, Que., 1936), 20; *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, Septembre 1959, septembre 1960; R. J. Cartwright, *Reminiscences* (Toronto, 1912), 29.
6. W. L. Morton, *Manitoba: a History* (Toronto, 1957), 110. The role of the priests as advisers can be seen in Père Lestanc's letter to Riel on January 26, 1870 (PAC, MG 27, I, F. 3, Vol. 1) counselling vigilance and sobriety in the fort.
7. Hargrave, *op. cit.*, 447; Stanley, *op. cit.*, 53; Canada Sessional Papers (C.S.P.), Vol. 5, Section 42.
8. G. F. G. Stanley, *In Search of the Magnetic North* (Toronto, 1955); PAC, W.O. 1/552; Hargrave, *op. cit.*, 141-2, 396.
9. W. L. Morton, *Alexander Begg's Red River Journal* (Toronto, 1956), 18-21; Hargrave, *op. cit.*, 427.
10. Mair papers, Queen's University: Memorandum for Mr. Mair, July 2, 1868, by W. McDougall; Schultz to Mair, Jan. 12, 1869. Mair's collection, *Dreamland*, had recently been published and critical notice of it had spread as far as the Maritimes and England, stimulating interest. The poet's convivial nature made him attractive to Schultz. There was another bond: Schultz's niece, Elizabeth Louise Mackenney, whom Mair married in Winnipeg on September 8 (J. W. Garvin, ed., *Canadian Poets* [Toronto, 1926], 14).
11. Mair papers: Schultz to Mair, March 6, April 1, 1869; Denison to Mair, March 29, 1869.
12. Parliamentary Debates (PAC, from newspapers of the time), May 28, 1869; PAC, Macdonald papers, Vol. 234, McDougall to Macdonald, Feb. 20 and Nov. 19, 1868, March 6, June 26, 1869. In the last letter he wrote prophetically, "I may, as many men do, overestimate my own powers, but I have never failed to make something *break* when I have exerted them heretofore." Some delay in making the appointment may well have been caused by the fact that McDougall's wife had died in early June (Mair Papers, McDougall to Mair, June 13, 1869). Some of McDougall's poetical works are to be found in the Reference Room of the Toronto Public Library.
13. L. H. Thomas, *op. cit.*, 17; Sir J. Pope, *Correspondence of Sir John Macdonald* (Toronto, 1921), Macdonald to Rose, November 16, 1869; PAC, Macdonald Letter

- Book No. 13, Macdonald to J. Y. Bown, October 14, 1869; Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada*, p. 66.
14. C.S.P., 1870, Vol. 5 Sec. 12: Return to an address dated February 24, 1870, for *Reports* [on] . . . *Roads*, etc., Mair to McDougall, July 3, 1869. Schultz had returned from his first trip in May. See W. L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History*, 118; Mair Papers, Snow to Muir, Hull, Que., April 3, 1869; R. L. Shaw, *Century Old Homestead* . . . , in the *Ottawa Journal*, October 1, 1960, p. 35.
 15. Mair Papers, Denison to Mair, August 11, 1869.
 16. W. L. Morton, *Alexander Begg's Journal*, 33-36.
 17. *Ibid.*, 43.
 18. PAC, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 282, Tupper to Macdonald, May 19, 1869; *Ibid.*, Vol. 102, Memorandum by Captain D. R. Cameron, January 24, 1870; A. S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West* (Toronto, 1939), 873.
 19. C.S.P., Vol. 5, No. 12, *Return to an address of the House of Commons dated 23 February 1870 for copies of Instructions to Surveyors sent to North West Territory*, McDougall to Dennis, July 10, 1869.
 20. B. Cumberland, *The Fenian Raid of 1866 and events on the Frontier*, in *Proceedings and Transactions*, Royal Society of Canada, 1910; G. T. Denison, *The Fenian Raid on Fort Erie* (Toronto, 1866), 22ff; *Parliamentary Debates*, November 21, 1867. The Prime Minister was not above interfering in the proper sphere of the Adjutant-General of Militia (See Pope, *op. cit.*, 36, Macdonald to Colonel P. Macdougall, September 17, 1866. This letter contains the intriguing phrase, suggesting both the sardonic and the military, "There seems to be a cross fire of authority somewhere.").
 21. PAC, Macdonald Letter Book No. 11, to J. S. Dennis, May 22, 1868; Letter Book No. 13, to McDougall, November 20, 1869.
 22. C.S.P., 1870, Vol. 5, No. 12, *Return* . . . [re] . . . *Surveyors sent to North-West* Dennis to McDougall, August 6 and 21, 1869; W. L. Morton, *Alexander Begg's Journal*, 39.
 23. *Ibid.*, 176.
 24. PAC, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 102. Bishop Taché, 30 mai, 1870, *Notes sur les événements du Nord Ouest, 1869, 1870*.
 25. Hon. W. McDougall, *The Red River Rebellion: Eight Letters to the Hon. Joseph Howe* (Toronto, 1870), 38.
 26. PAC, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 282, Tupper to Macdonald, September 27, 1869; W. L. Morton, *Begg's Journal*, 44.
 27. Hon. W. McDougall, *The Red River Rebellion*, 30n; W. L. Morton, *Begg's Journal*, 44.
 28. E. E. Kreutzweiser, *op. cit.*, 28-29.
 29. C.S.P., Vol. 5, No. 12: Macdonald to Secretary of State, October 31, 1869; W. L. Morton, *Begg's Journal*, 45.
 30. PAC, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 102, Cameron to Macdonald, November 3, 1869. Kreutzweiser, *op. cit.*, 35, produces evidence corroborating the fact that military action was envisaged, indicating that the unsubtle mind of Dennis was at least partly responsible for the plan.

31. C.S.P., 1870, Vol. 5, No. 12, Howe to McDougall, November 22, December 10.
32. W. L. Morton, *Begg's Journal*, 54, 199ff. The poem is a bit of a mystery. It has been attributed to the Métis bard Pierre Falcon, but the classical and historical allusions, together with biting personal and political shafts it contains are surely from a more tutored pen than that of the folk-singer; the work resembles the poetic attack on Macdonald that Riel wrote in 1879 (see below, note 42). The Métis leader probably wrote this song; Falcon may have sung it.
33. PAC, Macdonald papers, Vol. 102. Memorandum by Captain D. R. Cameron, January 24, 1870. See also C.S.P., 1870, Vol. 5, No. 12, Office of Secretary of State for the Provinces, October 11, 1869, re Oaths of Allegiance. Also Macdonald Papers, Letter Book 13, Macdonald to McDougall, December 12, 1869.
34. PAC, Cameron's Memorandum cited above.
35. The *Chanson des tribulations* . . . refers to "sa trône percée"; the buffalo-hunters must have cut a hole in the seat, a supremely derisive act.
36. PAC, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 102, Cameron to Macdonald, November 3, 1869; "Roulotte" was Joseph Rolette, a Métis who lived in Pembina. See Morton, *Begg's Journal*, 9.
37. C.S.P., 1870, Vol. 5, Sec. 12, McDougall to Howe, November 5, 1869; PAC, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 102, Cameron to Macdonald, November 13, December 1 and 15.
38. W. L. Morton, *Begg's Journal*, 72, 73; C.S.P., 1870, Vol. 5, Sec. 12, *Return on Roads*, Snow to Minister of Public Works, December 18.
39. W. L. Morton, *Begg's Journal*, 75; Tupper, *op. cit.*, 107; PAC, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 102, Schultz to McDougall, undated; Mair Papers, Diary of a journey, 1870.
40. C.S.P., 1870, Vol. 5, Sec. 12, Howe to Thibault, December 4; Howe to Smith, December 10; Tupper, *op. cit.*, 103; PAC, Macdonald Papers, Letter Book No. 13, Macdonald to McDougall, December 12, 1869.
41. Tupper, *op. cit.*, 104-105.
42. PAC, Riel Papers, Vol. 2. A poem in manuscript inscribed "à St. Joseph, Dakota, aout 1879" and signed, Louis "David" Riel. (The nickname "David" is a biblical allusion.)
43. W. S. Wallace, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto, 1945); *Ottawa Free Press*, January 3, 1882, p. 1 (article on Dennis' retirement); PAC, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 103, Schultz to Cartier, May 20, June 7, 1870 (These letters bear a threatening character); W. L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History*, 249-50.

TRANSLATIONS

Note 4. A peaceful people, nonetheless. But warrior strains mingle in their blood.

24. The arrival of the surveyors disturbed the inhabitants. Their stubborn running of their lines despite the colonists' wishes, through places where the latter were opposed to this . . . the insolent and dishonest conduct of certain skulkers but recently arrived from Upper Canada, the intimate relationship between these last-named and the Canadian officials, insults hurled against the Nation

by certain newspapers, the scorn shown by the soldiers of fortune, were so many certain causes convincing the population that all these new arrivals were nothing else than a group organized to take over the country, to the detriment of the Nation.

32. Let's follow our monarch
 Surrounded by courtiers—
 This good King Dagobert
 Crossing the desert
 his plans
 Already all upset.

It seems that storms
 Burst out quite often
 In his councils
 Throughout the trip.

42. Instead of the peace he owes me,
 Instead of respecting in an exact way,
 Our Pact
 And my rights
 For what will soon be ten years, Sir
 John has waged war with me.
 A man who doesn't keep his word is
 A low man.

.
 O all-powerful God! Deign to protect the Métis,
 Whom the English have already almost annihilated.

