

overcome; illnesses and accidents innumerable to be treated; weddings and funerals to be arranged; mails to be carried; insane persons to be taken in; lost travellers to be found; stolen stock to be returned to rightful owners; cattle- and horse-thieves, gamblers, murderers—all who participated in major crimes—to be run down; and, as settlement spread, mining, lumber and railroad construction camps to be kept under strict observation.

In 1879, Fort Walsh became the headquarters of the Force and no more picturesque pages appear in western history than those which, for the following few years, portray the change from the old order to the new in and about the Cypress Hills. By no means the least onerous duty at Fort Walsh was to see that Sitting Bull's Sioux did not use Canada as a base of operations against a friendly country, but one in which an almost continuous condition of Indian warfare prevailed.

In 1881, through the efforts of the Police and, not the least, by the sagacity of a prominent French-Canadian trader in the Wood Mountain country, the Sioux were prevailed upon to surrender to the United States authorities. The border posts of Macleod and Walsh gradually became less important and it devolved upon the Force to move the various Indian tribes to allotted reserves well away from the Boundary. Late in 1882 a new headquarters post was constructed near Pile of Bones Creek on the Canadian Pacific Railway at a point henceforth to be called Regina, and soon afterwards the personnel at Fort Walsh were transferred northward to Maple Creek also on the transcontinental track. The strength of the Force was increased from 300 to 500 and, an important innovation, a training depot for recruits was established at Winnipeg (later transferred to Regina).

The Railway Building Period.—When British Columbia entered Confederation in 1871, the Dominion Government guaranteed to construct a railway linking east and west. The work was begun in 1875 but the line through to the Pacific Coast was not completed until 1885. The building of this railway across the plains created many problems. The coming of some 4,000 labourers, many of them rough characters, created much ill-feeling among the Indians. There were strikes among railway labourers to be settled but, to the credit of the Force, general order prevailed. The red-coated police were even called upon to act as railway mail-clerks. New-comers were met by a strong, efficient and helpful administration. At Macleod, Calgary, Edmonton, Maple Creek, Battleford, Regina and other points, villages and towns were developing and the need for enforcement of law and order became greater and more difficult.

The North-West Rebellion.—After the once-dominant Blackfoot Confederacy had accepted the white man's mode of life things moved smoothly for a time though, with the disappearance of their means of livelihood, the transition from the untrammelled life of the buffalo pastures to the distasteful restrictions of the settlements and reservations was hard on Indians and half-breeds. Famine at times stalked among the native camps, attended by rampant theft and cattle-killing, but rations of beef and flour served to stay many a warlike outbreak. To the north, Crees and Assiniboines became restive. Half-breeds on the Saskatchewan, as on a former occasion on the Red River, resented the invasion of their territory by easterners. Soon there were rumblings of an approaching storm.

In the early summer of 1884 the Police detachment at Battleford first gave warning that the half-breeds of the district were demanding redress of alleged grievances. Later it was reported that Louis Riel, the leader of earlier Red River troubles, had appeared on the scene and that meetings had been held in the