

duty of its paid servants." I then faced the Indians and repeated my words in Cree.

McKay again insisted but I just as promptly refused.

Mista-wa-sis turned to me and in an undertone asked me if I thought that I was capable of interpreting.

"Certainly I can, or else I would not be here. Let their own men talk first and then you will understand why I refuse to do their bidding."

Big Child and Star Blanket on each side of me nodded their agreement. The former rose to his feet. There was considerable stir among the Indians at the delay. Voices were noticeable from those seated furthest away from the stand. As soon as Big Child stood up there was immediate silence. He was a commanding figure of a man, not tall, but he stood straight and his wide shoulders spoke of strength. He didn't say a word until there was complete silence. Showing his closed fist with index finger protruding, he spoke, "This is number one," indicating "one" with the raising of his hand for all to see. "Already you have broken your word on what you have agreed."

I stood beside him and interpreted word for word as he spoke.

All the Indians rose to their feet and crowded forward behind their chiefs. The Police were kept busy keeping them away from the table. They were like a forest as a gathering storm of words rolled forward. I was thoroughly angered at the manner in which the Governor had been inveigled into this situation.

I had expected neither the strong reaction from the Indians nor McKay's determination to have his own way. I knew that Peter Ballenden had not the education or practice to interpret, and his voice had no carrying quality to make himself heard before all this large assembly. The Rev. McKay had learned his Cree among the Swampy and Saulteaux. While there was a similarity in some words, and I had learned both languages, the Prairie Crees would not understand his Cree. Further, the Prairie Crees looked down on the Swampy and Saulteaux as an inferior race. They would be intolerant at being addressed in Swampy or Saulteaux words. I knew that McKay was not sufficiently versed in the Prairie Cree to confine his interpretations to their own language.

The Rev. Mr. McDougall was busy trying to calm Bear Skin, the most irate and the loudest of any of the crowd.¹ Both leading chiefs stood without saying a word while all the fuss went on. Finally Big Child was satisfied that the Government party had been sufficiently chastised. He waved to those