In 1873 the danger of war with the Indians was the subject of important correspondence between Lieutenant-Governor Morris and the Ottawa authorities, and the records of the old North West Council contain various evidences of the gravity of the situation as viewed by the members of that body. The Honorable Mr. Norquay, a prominent English Halfbreed, who subsequently became Prime Minister of Manitoba, the Honorable James MacKay, another Metis, who was also a prominent member of early Manitoba cabinets and subsequently speaker of the Legislative Council of that Province, and the Honorable Mr. Breland, a prominent French-Canadian, were appointed to investigate the situation and to extend promises of an early settlement of Indian grievances by satisfactory treaties. Mr. Breland's services in this connection were of special importance, as is indicated in/p.182/ the following extract from an official report written by the Lieutenant-Governor:

"I have the honor to imform you that I have arranged for Mr. Breland's immediate departure to Fort Ellice. I have authorized him to tell the Indians in the neighborhood of Fort Ellice that the Commissioner will visit them in the summer. I am much pleased with the spirit displayed by Mr. Breland when he accepted this important and somewhat difficult mission. He was on the point of starting on a visit to his old home in the Province of Quebec, after an absence of thirty years."

The Commissioner of the Government amply corroborated the reports of the general anxiety which was indeed all too justifiable. Indeed, Mr. Norquay organized the people of Palestine settlement for the purpose of self-defense, and in various localities the settlers prepared themselves for a life and death struggle with the red men. For the fact that no such calamity occurred, Canada owes undying gratitude to the North West Mounted Police and to Messrs. Archibald, Morris, Laird and others who will be mentioned in the following chapter.

Though the topic belongs specially to the period covered in a later