

CARLTON AGENCY—TREATY No. 6,
CARLTON, N.W.T., 11th August, 1884.

The Right Honorable
The Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs,
Ottawa.

SIR,—I have the honor to state that, in pursuance of instructions received from the Honorable the Indian Commissioner, I left Edmonton last October for this place, arriving on the 9th of November. The work of transferring stores was at once entered into, in order that Mr. Gairdner, who was being relieved, might not be delayed in entering upon the duties of his new office at Battleford.

In submitting to you a general report of the affairs of this district, extending over the past year, permission is asked to indicate that for such information as relates to that portion of it which elapsed before the date of my assumption of the charge of this office, dependence is necessarily placed on other sources than that of personal knowledge.

It will not be out of place if, in commenting on the condition of my Indians, a passing tribute is paid to my predecessor, Mr. Rae, for their desire to improve, their good sense and industry must have been developed in great measure, by the firm, just and kindly treatment that seems to have been extended to them by that gentleman, under whose superintendence such long and rapid strides in improvement were made.

The supplies which the Hudson's Bay Company contracted to deliver were of good quality, and after having been submitted to the test of use, give satisfaction. In estimating the amount of bacon required for annuity payments, and for the destitute, as well as in calculating the quantity of tea wanted for the Farm Instructors, some oversight most probably occurred, as they were both insufficient. Owing to the close economy practised by Mr. Rae in the conduct of agricultural operations, the Indians had, during the year 1883, no more implements than were indispensable for the required purposes. As their cultivated land had last autumn largely increased in area, and many of their implements and tools had become useless and beyond repair, the spring found us in a somewhat unenviable condition to cope with the work that had necessarily to be performed. Loss, however, was fortunately avoided by the willing spirit of the Indians, which caused them to engage in their work, despite the difficulties to be contended with, and by the energy of our instructors, who spared themselves no pains in fostering this spirit and helping them in their work.

For some time previous to my arrival here, owing to lack of means for travelling, and from other causes, it had not been possible to give much attention to those bands which have reserves at a distance from the agency. An endeavor has been made to give a fresh progressive impetus to these, the result of which it is hoped will soon be seen.

Of the various arrangements made for the benefit of the Indians during the winter, under sanction of your Department, those for the milling and purchase of Indian grain are most worthy of notice. The action of the Department in purchasing the surplus crops at market prices, and directing the expenditure of the amounts paid therefor, secured great benefit to the Indians. An almost entire control of the crop was kept; any unfair dealings in grain transactions were guarded against, and goods were obtained for the Indians on most advantageous terms, this latter being a great consideration, where goods are so high priced as in the Saskatchewan district.

The individual custom of those selling grain would not be worthy of the competition of traders; but in the aggregate, when they have vouchers or cash to expend, it is such as any merchant might desire to have; and thus, by adopting such measures as render it possible to control and direct the trade, the same advantage is obtained for them as a co-operative society would enjoy.

This principle has also been extended to milling, and may, perhaps, be advantageously carried into other Indian affairs. An arrangement was made with the