

their clothing, who rarely come to any forts for trade, because their country has nothing valuable.

Lieut.-Colonel
J. H. Lefroy, R.A.

341. Do all the tribes between Canada and the Pacific occasionally visit the forts for trade and communication?—I can only speak of the west side from hearsay; the Indians there have a great resource in the salmon, which abounds, and, I believe, do not all come to the forts; on the east they all come to the forts.

23 February 1857.

342. Mr. Gurney.] With reference to the river between the Lake of the Woods and the Rainy Lake, does the river at that part form the boundary between the United States territory and the British territory?—I think it does; the boundary starts at the parallel of forty-nine degrees, I think, to the northward of that river.

343. Then one bank of the river is American and the other bank British?—Yes.

344. Is there any marked difference as to the degree of settlement on the two banks?—There is none on either.

345. Although both are sufficiently fertile to allow of some settlement there?—I think there might be some settlement there.

346. Mr. Bell.] Are you aware of any settlement in the Hudson's Bay territory besides the Red River where any attempt has been made to civilize the Indians?—Such an attempt was made near Norway House, at the head of Lake Winnipeg, where there was a village of Cree Indians in a tolerable state of civilization when I visited it.

347. Do you think they were diminishing or increasing?—The experiment had been so recently tried that I think it was impossible to say.

348. That is the only case you know of?—That is the only case I know, of an attempt to collect the Indians and to settle them in a village. Since that time a small settlement has been formed at the Pas, at the Basquiau River. It was occasioned by the bequest of a private benevolent person, who left a sum of money to be laid out for that purpose, and it has been so done.

349. You have visited most of the establishments of the Hudson's Bay Company?—Yes.

350. And that is the only instance?—That is the only one that I can think of at this moment.

351. Mr. Roebuck.] Speaking generally, have not all attempts to civilize the Indians in North America failed?—They die out in the process; some progress has been made.

352. They disappear?—Yes.

353. Mr. Adderley.] You stated the population of the Red River Settlement at 5,000?—Yes.

354. What time were you speaking of?—Of 1843 and 1844.

355. Do you know at all what the population now is?—I do not.

356. In your opinion, how have the Company generally treated the Indians?—It is necessary, in answering that question, to draw a distinction between the Company in its corporate capacity as a body of non-resident shareholders, and the Company as a body of resident traders, its servants. The traders, almost without exception, as far as my observation went, treated the Indians with signal kindness and humanity. Many instances of their relieving them in their distress, and taking great pains to do so, came to my knowledge. But then their means of doing so are in some degree contingent upon the financial arrangements of the Company at large, over which they have no control, or but little.

357. Drawing that distinction, what do you think is the effect upon the Indians of such arrangements made by the absentee proprietors?—I think the Indians sometimes suffer, because I think that the supplies of goods sent by the Company are sometimes inadequate. The traders can only do the best with the goods which they have; they have nothing to do with what are sent in.

358. Is the want of supplies the only arrangement which you think defective?—The principal one.

359. Chairman.] What is the general character of the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company; as far as you could observe, were they respectable men?—Very generally so; I never mingled with a body of men whose general qualities seemed to me more entitled to respect. They are men of simple