

of 1898. The coming winter is going to be a very trying one for the poor at Big River, White Fish Lake and Stoney Lake, who live entirely by the hunt. I have always to feed these people everytime I visit them, and it is a great draw on my resources. I often wonder what would an eastern clergyman think, if before holding service with his congregation, he had to feed that congregation, and again, what would he think if he had to take with him hay and other provender sufficient to keep a team of horses for five days, when making a pastoral visit to the far end of his parish. This is what I have to do when visiting at Stoney Lake and Big River. But what does such a visit to these poor people mean? It means feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, medicine to the sick and hearing the glad tidings of a Saviour's love. I have tried very hard since coming here to put things on a better footing. I have urged upon the Government of Canada the importance of bringing these northern Indians nearer here and giving them a reservation of land, and also a good man for farm instructor to teach them to live in houses, to sleep in beds, to eat at tables, to get off from the ground and how to raise grain, cattle and vegetables. A reserve has been promised, but great bodies, they say, move slowly. The Reserve is not yet laid off, and consequently it looks as if another winter would go by and our poor Indians will still be left at those miserable places, where they are at the door of starvation all the time. We want the Government to send us good conscientious men who will do their duty by the Indian, who will teach them the proper way to work, attend to their wants, break up their old tribal habits and customs, and be proper examples to them in temporal and spiritual matters. What a help such men would be in raising the Indian! It is a great mistake to appoint Indian Agents and Farm Instructors who are incapable in every way. On this Reserve we have Indians who are slowly advancing, but we have others who, after 20 years of reservation life, are still living in tents most of their time, in fact, the majority of our Indians have lived in tents all summer. The novelty of living in a tent is very well, but by allowing the Indians to live that way, it takes them back to their heathen habits, it makes them indolent and dirty, it destroys all regard for the ways of home life, they become careless of their houses, gardens, farms and their cattle, and the result is neglect and decay of everything all round. Now, I am working with a view to put an end to all this. I want to see progress, both spiritual and temporal in this place, but I cannot reconcile talking progress with real progress, while our Church and Mission House are going into decay before the eyes of our people. I am sure you will appreciate the great importance it would be, to have a building in which I could gather my people together at times to discuss and to teach secular as well as spiritual things; such a building would be of very great benefit to our Indians.

Yours sincerely, JAMES TAYLOR.