

and is considered well acquainted with western life. He receives \$10 a day.

Mr. FOSTER. On what principle do you take a salaried officer of the department and give him the pay of a commissioner in addition to his regular pay? Is not his whole time at the disposal of the department? There has been instances this year in which officials have been placed on commissions and simply paid their salaries, with of course, their expenses. What is the reason a different plan is adopted in this case from what is adopted in other departments?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. I think it has been customary, in taking officials from a department for duties for which they are particularly well qualified, to give them an extra allowance.

Mr. FOSTER. No, they have been given their extra expenses.

Mr. SUTHERLAND. I am not prepared to dispute the hon. gentleman's statement in regard to any particular case; but in my experience as a member of this House we have repeatedly voted to different officers extra allowances for extra duties. It was thought that in this case an officer of the department ought to be one of the commissioners, that his knowledge of the official working of matters in the department would enable him to protect the government very much. One would naturally suppose that local commissioners might be influenced by the surroundings and the people more than an officer of the department. I am inclined to think that parliament would be quite willing to allow an officer with the qualifications for such an important and responsible duty, where thousands of dollars are involved, a small allowance in addition to his salary.

Mr. FOSTER. What salary does he get?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. \$1,400.

The PRIME MINISTER. Mr. Coté, one of the officials of this commission last year and this year, was also one of the officials of the commission which settled the half-breed claims in 1885, and I think he was treated then just as Mr. McKenna is treated to-day.

Mr. FOSTER. Is Mr. McKenna a private secretary as well?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. He also acts as private secretary of the Indian Department, I think. I must have been mistaken in stating that he received \$6 a day, for the estimate is made up at the rate of \$5 a day.

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. McKenna is receiving his salary of \$1,400 as clerk, his allowance of \$600 as private secretary, and in addition this extra amount of \$5 or \$6 a day as commissioner?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. Yes.

Mr. FOSTER. He is paid as private secretary without doing the work, he is paid his salary for his work as a clerk, none of which he is doing, and outside of that he is paid \$5 or \$6 a day, and all his expenses on this commission. I think that is a very fat little office for Mr. McKenna. An officer of the department who is as well paid as he is might very well do this outside work for the department for his pay and extra expenses. Will the hon. gentleman now give us a general idea of what these men have to do?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. Applications are made by the half-breeds for scrip. The commissioners have to investigate their claims and take evidence whether they are entitled to scrip or not, and their duties are very important.

Mr. CLANCY. How many claims are there supposed to be?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. I have answered that question in the House before, and I forget now the number but it is up in the thousands.

Mr. FOSTER. Over what territory are they travelling?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. I think the principal number of the half-breeds are in Saskatchewan and Assiniboia. There are some at a very long distance. I remember in a conversation with Mr. Côté, before the commission went away, he said it was doubtful whether they could reach some of the outlying points before the winter season.

Mr. FOSTER. Who is doing the work of these clerks while these men are away?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. The other officers of the department.

Mr. FOSTER. There is plenty to do the work when they are gone?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. The work may accumulate, but at any rate there have been no complaints so far.

Mr. FOSTER. They give this scrip to the half-breeds, as they arrange the claims, while on their travels.

Mr. SUTHERLAND. They give certificates on the spot, and each certificate entitles the bearer to an issue of scrip.

Mr. FOSTER. How do they get the scrip?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. The certificates are sent on through the banks or post offices or storekeepers or other people in whom the parties have confidence. A great many of these certificates are transferred to others.

Mr. FOSTER. I find in a Toronto paper that this scrip is offered for sale at 80 cents on the dollar.