

to interfere with the ways of the Great Spirit by growing plants, seems something that they cannot comprehend—they say they cannot do it—they will not grow potatoes. I have known Indians to enquire of neighboring Indians before they would believe that it was possible to grow potatoes. After giving them a lecture on this subject one time, they told me that they had no seed. I said: "I will give you some of the beans that I eat with my pork, and if you keep them until next spring you can use them for seed." They took them and promised to keep them for seed, but the very same evening they boiled the whole of them and ate them.

*By the Honorable Mr. Macdonald:*

Q. Are they as fond of spirits as the Indians of the British Columbia coast? A. They are extremely fond of spirits. The bush and plain Indians are the same in that respect—they will sell anything they have for whiskey. They will pray to you as to a god, to give it to them. An Indian who has drunk whiskey is looked upon as a great man amongst them. I had an Indian from Collingwood, who travelled with me through the wooded North-West. We came to a band of Indians who had never seen a pure-blooded white man before—who had never seen any human beings but Indians and half-breeds. The Collingwood Indian told them wonderful stories of civilized men. They said: "Although you are an Indian you may have tasted whiskey." He said, "I have been drunk many a time." They looked upon him as a great Indian after that.

*By the Honorable Mr. Girard:*

Q. They thought he had made the acquaintance of a great spirit? A. No; they supposed that he had experienced a new sensation.

Q. Are there not instructors appointed and paid by the Government to teach agriculture to the Indians in that country? A. Yes.

Q. Have you been able to ascertain what they have done in the interest of the Indians? A. As far as I have seen them they have been doing a good work. I visited their places principally in the North Saskatchewan country, and the example they were setting of industry to the Indians was good as far as I could see.

*By the Honorable Mr. Allan:*

Q. Did you see the Indian school at Qu'Appelle and the Indian farm there at the furthest end of the lake? A. I have been at their places in the Touchwood Hills—at Muskowequan's reserve and at Poor-man's. This farm is under the auspices of the Government and there is a large number of Indian boys upon it. When I was there they were digging potatoes like white children of similar age and seemed to take to the work very well. The only way we shall succeed in doing anything with them is to catch them young.

*By the Honorable Mr. Bolduc:*

Q. Do they seem inclined to work? A. The young people when they see white men working will probably fall into it. Until this present generation, they have never seen white men cultivating the ground. They cannot believe such a thing is possible until they see it tried.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Among the food supplies you have mentioned, you give prominence to geese and ducks of this northern region that Mr. Girard has referred to. Do you know any means by which these immense flocks of geese could be preserved and transported for supplies to less favored districts? A. They are palatable food when salted. At the Hudson's Bay Company's posts around James Bay and Hudson's Bay they salt them in casks, just as we would pork or beef.

Q. How long did they expect them to keep in that way? A. Generally one year. They generally eat one year's supply before another comes in, but I should think they would, if well cured, keep for two years.

Q. Could these geese be caught in large numbers at points where they could be shipped to other places where they could be utilized? A. They can be shipped easily enough by sea from James' Bay and Hudson's Bay. They are very abundant on both shores, and could be shipped from these points, and they are very abundant on the great lakes of the North-West, as Lake Athabasca for example.