

inefficiency of seed available for planting, through their own improvidence in not saving any from the former year's production.

The Sturgeon Lake Indians have not yet received their quota of cattle, neither have they any of their own. In 1879 nothing was raised in their gardens but a couple of bushels of turnips. They complained of not receiving any potatoes for planting, and of being unable to cultivate their gardens for want of implements.

The Lac la Croix Indians complained of not receiving their seed grain, potatoes and implements on their reserves, but were obliged to go to Savanne for them, and carry them home in the canoes. The Seine River Indians prepared hay, every year, for the cattle promised them, and request the Government to supply them during the winter. The chief and others assert that "Chiwanigan," No. 29, on pay-sheet, has not received the annuity for himself and family last year, having been absent at Fort Francis during payments at Savanne, whereas he is represented on a copy of the pay-sheets, in my possession, as having been paid twenty-five dollars to self.

THE AGENCY OF MR. PITHER.

The business of this agency is apparently transacted accurately; the books and pay-sheets are neatly and correctly kept; the supplies in the storehouse and the distributions made are properly accounted for, and the payments of annuities are carefully and satisfactorily made. The agent represents that, owing to instructions received from the Department, strictly limiting the issue of provisions to aged, infirm or sick Indians having no relations or friends to provide for them, he has ceased altogether to make any distributions of that nature, as no individuals answering that description can be found, consequently nearly all the supplies in the storehouse, two year ago, are still remaining there. The Indians are dissatisfied with this restriction, and request that assistance in provisions be given all the sick and infirm Indians among them. The system adopted in this and Mr. McPherson's agency differs from that in others, and prevents any arrears from accumulating, for if Indians or their representatives are not present to receive their annuities, the amounts due them are enclosed in envelopes which are either kept by the agents themselves or handed to the respective chiefs until those parties return home, when these moneys are given them. This practice, it appears to me, is liable to be abused, for it frequently happens that it is impossible to determine the numbers in families of absentees, inasmuch as they may have increased or diminished by births, deaths or marriages, since the previous payment, and the amounts to which they are entitled may, therefore, be materially affected thereby. Of the fourteen bands comprised within this agency, about one-half of them are making some advancement in agriculture, especially on Rainy River, but none whatever in education. Chief Mawintopinesso was most importunate in his entreaties, that the Government would build school-houses on the reserves and educate the children of his people whose poverty and ignorance, even with the assistance offered, prevented their doing so themselves. He begged that pity may be taken on his deformed and helpless daughter, and that provisions be given her from the supplies at the agency. Kilcheasuchnabe, formerly a member of Pawawasis Band, in Mr. McPherson's Agency, but latterly belonging to that of Mawintopinesso, in this agency, received his annuities with the former band, as follows, viz.: in 1876, for a family of five; in 1877, for seven; in 1878, for four; and in 1879, for eight; whereas he also drew payments with the latter, for one in 1876, for five in 1877, for six in 1878, for seven in 1879, and for eight in 1880. I informed Mr. Acting Superintendent Graham of the fraudulent imposition perpetrated by this Indian, and requested him to instruct the agents to report on this irregularity, and upon subsequent payments being made to retain his annuities until the whole amount overpaid is fully refunded.