

and an application has been made on behalf of a similar school at Assissippi, on Ahtahacoop's reserve, near Carlton, and of one at Eagle Hills reserve, near Battleford, which I trust will receive favorable consideration. The Canadian Methodists have also some good Indian schools, but if they are now in receipt of Government aid it is not forwarded through this office."

I may say, however, that it is was not without due representation coming from very high authorities in the North-West, if the late Administration paid so little attention to teaching the Indians. Amongst the papers which came into my hands only yesterday, I find a letter from His Lordship the Bishop of St. Albert, Monseigneur Grandin, to Lieutenant Governor Laird, dated 5th April, 1875. I will not quote the whole letter, but only extracts of it. His Lordship, in the course of his remarks, says:

"BISHOPRIC, ST. ALBERT,  
"5th April, 1875.

"SIR,—You will perhaps be surprised, that without having the advantage of knowing you, or of being known by you, I venture to address Your Honor personally.

"I would not have ventured on this boldness if the worthy Colonel Jarvis had not apprised me of your indulgence, and your great desire to render any service.

"Assured of your goodness, I will write to you at length, hoping you will have the patience to read and take into consideration what I shall tell you.

"The little news we receive from Manitoba had made us suppose that the Government at Ottawa was a good deal occupied about our country. However, until the arrival of the troops, we had not received the slightest mark of interest from that Government.

"Permit me, Sir, to tell you frankly that it appears to me, while encouraging emigration into the North-West Territories, the Government should consider the benefit of the present inhabitants of the North-West. Apart from the sending of the soldiers nothing has been done, at least, of which we are aware, and this single benefit is far from being known and appreciated by all.

"But they will say, 'the Métis are good for nothing—a people idle and without economy.'

"If they were a hundredfold worse, if you will, those who have such advantages over them should not forget that the Métis are generally descended from the servants of the Hudson Bay Company; that these servants, almost exclusively engaged in voyaging, did nothing, or nearly nothing, during their long winters, and could not consequently give their children a liking for work—not seeing its utility. Who was there to teach them notions of order and economy? The mothers had not the faintest idea. Besides, receiving each day the food necessary for the whole family, what was the good of managing? 'The company profits, and the company is rich,' says a proverb well known in the country.

"If they left the service the buffaloes, then very numerous, supplied them with abundance of food with little labor. The surplus of provisions and the furs and skins, also very abundant, procured them the necessary clothing.

"But they do not even manage their money. How can they? Many of them never saw money, and have not the least idea of its value. Why deprive themselves of anything during the year? The only advantage they will acquire will be to learn, on the return of the courier (postman), that the books of York Factory contain many Louis to their credit.

"Others who have spent all their wages in fine clothes for themselves and their families have a pile of pleasant and useful little things. In this they behold a fortune. Money nor an account book is of any consideration.

"I ask Your Honor's pardon for such details; but I do not consider them altogether useless.

"Whatever draws attention to the chain of circumstances in which the Métis are born, is important, and which, being multiplied, cannot but excuse them for faults with which they are reproached nor be surprised that they are even as they are.

"I could cite more than one tourist who, by their writings, have contributed to make them be regarded in Canada and other places as a barbarous and savage people, incapable of culture or civilisation, and who have left among the Métis and the Indians themselves a very sad idea of the morality of civilised people.

"No, Sir, the Métis are not such as they would wish to make them appear—a barbarous people, incapable of culture. I think, on the contrary, that they merit all the sympathy of a good Government. Let it give them some encouragement and it will see if there is nothing to hope from them.

"I therefore venture, Sir, to pray you to take in hand the cause of these poor Métis, and that the Government will be good enough to do something to encourage farming among them, at least, to those who exhibit such a willingness. Everything is scarce and so difficult to get in this country that not only the Métis, but strangers themselves can only vegetate.

"We have boasted of our Territory being called the garden of the north, and the fertile belt. This does not prevent those who inhabit it from suffering, and those who will come from suffering still more.

"To encourage agriculture, it is not only necessary to procure farming implements at a low rate, but as soon as possible to have easy ways of transport for the actual necessities of life.

"In June, 1873, taking advantage of a trip to Europe, I passed through Ottawa, and had the honor of an interview with the right hon. John Macdonald and H. Langevin on the affairs of our country. In the month of September following I addressed a letter directly to His Excellency the Governor General of Canada. On my return from Europe I found at St. Albert a letter, which His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, of Manitoba had caused to be written to me. According to that letter I had every reason to hope that my requests would be complied with.

"To advance civilisation of our population, all Métis and Indians, everyone is aware that schools are of the last importance. I was convinced that, under the Government of Canada, the encouragement of schools would be one of its first boons—till now I have hoped in vain.

"Besides the schools, we have also orphan asylums. I have the advantage of having three in my diocese, where fifty children have been brought up, both Métis and Indian.

"They speak of civilising the Indians by making them cultivate. It may arise that the missionaries, by working with them, ploughing and making them plough their lands, may, in the course of time, reach some results; but they will be slow and unappreciable. Fifteen years' experience does not allow me doubt that we can succeed in bringing up the little children. Many, doubtless, will not be able to receive a thorough education; but at least they can speak their Indian tongue; and getting accustomed to work, their savage life will be no longer possible. They can rank and mix with the Métis, with whom we marry them without much difficulty; and they will end, I doubt not, in forming good families, who will have no traces of the Indian but the blood. If, then, instead of three asylums for orphans, I had a certain number wherein I could admit all the little Indians they would give me, we would advance civilisation.

"As regards those who are Indians, if the Government will make reserves in their favor, I venture to beg that Your Honor will ensure that these reserves be composed of cultivable lands and situated near fishing lakes. In this way, besides cultivation, which will not amount to much, they will have two other means of living—hunting and fishing.

"I ask pardon, Sir, for abusing your patience so long, but I still rest on what the brave Col. Jarvis told me of your indulgence.

"I have shown you my mode of procedure to elevate the position of the inhabitants of this country. More than twenty years of experience among them makes me believe that my plans are not bad.

"I venture then, Sir, to reiterate my requests, and to earnestly pray Your Honor to use all your influence to procure them for me:

"1st. Before all, I ask some encouragement for the settlers. The Catholic missionaries have done almost impossible things in this direction. They have at different places three mills. For the third time we have tried to erect one in the colony of St. Albert—behold more than £900 stg. which we have sacrificed for it; and we are still uncertain whether we shall succeed. That the Government may, on their part, deign to do something to encourage agriculture.

"2nd. Aid for a hospital—at least to construct it, and put it in a condition to receive the sick.

"3rd. Aid for schools. The Government makes large outlay for education in all Canada. Is our North-West to be alone withheld assistance? It cannot be said that we require help less than other parts of the country.

"4th. Aid for our orphan asylums, that we may increase these establishments, so as to be able to take in a greater number of little savages.

"5th. Concession of land for each orphan asylum or model farm.

"6th. Reserve, of land for the children thus brought up, and aid to help them on to a little farm once they are married.

"7th. And lastly, that the reserves to be made over to the Indians be of arable land, and situated near fishing lakes.

"I am really ashamed, Sir, of the length of my letter, which I have been obliged to write in haste, because I was sure of the opportunity which offered of its reaching you.

"I wrote the lines close, and tried to economise my paper, so as to conceal my prattling.

"I have only succeeded in making it more apparent.

"Your Honor knows what babblers the Indians are—it is not surprising if I should resemble them, after living twenty-one years amongst them.

"This letter, coming to you, as it were, from a poor Indian, will, such as it is, be received and read by you indulgently. You will also, I am sure, take it into consideration, and constitute yourself our advocate.

"Receive, in advance, the assurance of my consideration, and be good enough to believe me,

"Sir, Your Honor's humble and respectful servant,

"(Signed) + VITAL, J.,

"Bishop of St. Albert, O.M.I.

"To His Honor

"The Very Honorable D. LAIRD,  
"Minister of the Interior, Ottawa."

Here is the answer of the Minister of Interior:

"To the Right Reverend J. VITAL GRANDIN,  
Bishop of St. Albert, North-West Territory.

OTTAWA, 31st July, 1875.

"MY LORD,—I have the honor, by the desire of the Superintendent General, to acknowledge the receipt of Your Lordship's letter of the 5th of April last, calling his attention to the condition of the settlers in your diocese in the North-West.