

THE AGENCY OF MR. MUCKLE.

St. Peter's.

After returning to Winnipeg from my eastern tour of inspection, and attending to the official correspondence which accumulated during my absence, I started for this reserve accompanied by four voyageurs on the 8th of August, and arrived at the Colville Landing on the same evening. Five schools, under the patronage of the Episcopal and Roman Catholic Missions, but all excepting one principally supported by the Government are in operation on this reserve, but the only one re-opened there since the holidays was Mr. Cochrane's, which I examined the following day, and found twenty six pupils in attendance, who manifested in their different interesting recitations the most gratifying intellectual developement since my previous annual inspection of it. I visited the agency at Clandeboye, and found that Mr. Muckle attends most carefully and faithfully to his official duties. He has one desk, four chairs, one table and a stove in his office. The supply of provisions for destitute Indians was nearly exhausted, he having only twenty-eight pounds of tea on hand. In his storehouse were one sail, one tent, one pair scales, sixty-eight pounds trace chains, five clovises and nineteen whiffletrees belonging to the Department. He wants a letter-book, a day-book and ledger. He informed me that only two cheques for salaries of school teachers had been forwarded to them through his office since his appointment, having generally been sent to the teachers direct from the Indian Office at Winnipeg, so that he was unable to determine whether their representations regarding irregularities in receiving their salaries were correct, or not. Upon making enquiry relative to this matter, I am informed that all correspondence pertaining to this agency is forwarded to him excepting some cheques banded to Mr. Cochrane in Winnipeg and others sent direct to the teachers at Fort Alexander, but in future I have directed that Mr. Muckles wishes may be complied with in this respect. He informs me that the chief and councillors, upon the verbal authority of the late Indian Superintendent, illegally granted permits, last summer, to a number of non-treaty men to cut hay within the reserve, and that consequently he seized about 200 tons of it, under the 27 h section of the Indian Act I consider that no permits should be granted for cutting hay, but that the agent should be authorized to give liberty to Indians, to dispose of the surplus secured over and above what they require for their own stock. The Agent keeps a record of all the cattle received by the different bands within his agency, as well as with their issue, and also of the agricultural implements received by them, as well as the Indians who have those cattle or implements in their possession. This system should be adopted also by the other agents, as it would enable them not only to keep trace of Government property but also to control it for the benefit of the Indians themselves. As the Indian constables formerly engaged were absolutely incompetent to prevent the sale of intoxicating liquors during the payments of annuities here, Provincial constables from St. Boniface were, in accordance with your instructions, employed, and consequently the drunkenness and dissipation of other years were greatly lessened. Two men for having liquor in their possession were each fined \$50 or three months in jail. They paid the fine. Another man for giving liquor to an Indian woman was fined \$50, but in default of payment was sent to jail for three months. A fourth man paid a fine of \$25 for having a quantity of beer for sale. An Indian paid a fine of \$3 for being drunk, and two other men paid \$75 and \$200 respectively for selling liquor to Indians. Owing to the late and early frosts of last season the crops were below the average of former years, but generally the Indians have sufficient for their own use, having raised this year about 2,500 bushels of wheat, 600 bushels of oats, 500 bushels of barley, 40 bushels of corn, and 3,500 bushels of potatoes. They secured about 1,400 tons of hay. They did not catch as many white fish this fall as last year, on account of stormy weather, but the number of sturgeon, goldeye, catfish, pickerel and jackfish caught was unprecedented. They have twenty-five acres of new land broken, about 560 acres under cultivation, 90 ploughs, 85