

my observations, and of conversations I have had with a priest that has been living there for years. If I had made such a statement with regard to the Indian women as the hon. member for West Huron has made, and it became known on the Crowfoot reserve, and I were to visit them, I would be in danger of losing my scalp. The hon. member for West Huron, in his long speech, gave one specific instance of absolute starvation, and that was the Moosejaw case. I think I have heard of that case. It was a case of an isolated family who, for some reason, had left their band and gone out of the reach of supply. The Indians, like the white men, do not always live in harmony together, sometimes they quarrel and drive the bad ones away. I was frequently cautioned among the Blackfeet and Sarcees, to have nothing to do with certain Indians because they were bad Indians and not to be trusted. In this Moosejaw case I have no doubt the man had wandered from the reserve, or had been driven away, there may have been such a case, and it might occur, even under the most careful supervision of the Government. I only got up to reply to some of the specific statements made by the hon. gentleman; the general charge of incompetency, extravagance and all that sort of thing, it is possible for any man to answer, and impossible to deny except by denying the whole thing, as the Minister of Public Works did. I am attempting to answer some of the specific charges. I was going to say something about the disease, and touching the amount of criminality which the hon. gentleman says exists among the Mounted Police and white men in that country. I think that is a most ungenerous, and, I believe, a most unwarrantable charge. I am satisfied of that; I am satisfied from the character of the men who are there, and I am satisfied from the character of the women with whom the men come in contact, that such a sweeping state of corruption as he represented, is practically impossible. I was tempted a little while ago, when the hon. member for Brant (Mr. Paterson) was speaking to say, "Call in the members." The hon. member knows that sometimes when an hon. member is speaking, although he may think that what he is saying is very important, it is possible to be nevertheless dull to those who have to listen to it. I only mentioned that as a joke more than anything else. As for the disease existing among the policemen themselves, to which the hon. gentleman referred in unmistakable terms, I may say that the disease of the character to which the hon. gentleman in unmistakable terms alluded is an incident of the human family in semi-civilised communities and one which you will find all over the face of the earth. Instead of that having been brought in, developed and spread by white men, by the Mounted Police and by officers of the Government, I know from the evidences I saw on grey-haired men and women, wrinkled men and women I saw, that that disease had existed in the country long before the policemen ever went there, and long before officers in connection with the Indian Department were established in the country. And so universal is that condition with the Indians, not so much from a state of immorality in the sense pointed out by the hon. gentleman, but as inherited, transmitted, and propagated by their filthy personal habits, at least 25 per cent. of the grown Indians have impaired and imperfect eyesight. Those observations I made on the ground, I made at the time in the country, and I think they cover all the specific charges which the hon. gentleman has made against the Department. A few words as to the cost of implements. The hon. gentleman made a comparison between the cost of implements in Ontario and the North-West. A large number of those implements in the North-West to which reference has been made were taken in the country before there was a railway and were transported by cart 500, 600 or 700 miles. No doubt some of them fell into the hands of unskilful men and became damaged; and there being no means of repairing them, the only

course open was to substitute new ploughs or harrows. Owing to the condition of affairs a large supply had to be kept on hand and furnished, and the expenditure cannot be fairly judged by simply taking an equal amount of farm cultivation in Ontario.

Mr. O'BRIEN. The hon. member for West Huron (Mr. Cameron), who moved this resolution has indulged on former occasions, as well as on the present, in such wild extravagance of statement and such violence of language as to place himself beyond the pale of that consideration which is due from one gentleman to another. In regard to the hon. member for Brant (Mr. Paterson) the case was very different. His remarks were such as could be listened to with patience and temper, and answered in the spirit in which they were made. Last year I had an opportunity of observing some of the matters to which the hon. member who last addressed the House referred, and in general terms I can most strongly confirm everything he has said with respect to the conduct of the Indian officials, and with respect to those particulars to which he has alluded. As to the statement that Indians wandered around and eat garbage I may say that when we were encamped at Qu'Appelle for several weeks our camp was always surrounded by women and children who remained there day and night to pick up food. But those were wandering Sioux, not treaty Indians, and not entitled to any food and had no share in our country whatever. But supposing they were Crees, and were from the File Hills or other parts of the country, their conduct arose from the circumstances to which the hon. gentleman has mentioned. You never saw grown men, men able to earn a living, about the camp; but you did see aged and decrepit women and children. At the very time those women and children were around the camp the bands of Indians to which they belonged were most lavishly fed; they were well fed at that time if they never were before. A missionary or stranger seeing those poor creatures, who were most pitiful objects, waiting from hour to hour about the camp would have formed unquestionably a most unfavorable impression as to the condition of the Indians, and would very probably have gone away with the idea that all the race was in a starving condition. But hon. gentlemen who have spoken on the other side of the House have not touched the real evil existing in regard to this matter. The hon. member for West Huron charged the Government with wrong-doing, while the real evil exists not with the Government but with this House, which alone can remedy it. The fact is, so far as I can form an opinion from my own observation, and what I ascertained from enquiries made among people of every condition, lawyers, traders, settlers and others, in regard to the treatment of Indians, that the fault is not extravagance on the part of the Government, but that Parliament has never consented to place in the hands of the Government sufficient means to treat the Indians as they should be treated. There have been cases in which the Indians have suffered. I know one case, and it is familiar to the Department, and that is a most glaring case. It is the case of the band at Crooked Lakes. They were really suffering from want of food. It arose partly from the fact, I believe, that the Indian authorities, acting with perfect honesty and good faith but yet anxious to make a good showing in the books of the Department at Ottawa, failed to give the Indians sufficient rations to enable them to live in health and comfort. The hon. gentleman has talked about starving Indians, as if it was the easiest thing in the world to feed them. Nothing is more difficult than to apportion rations to Indians. The point is to treat them sufficiently well, that is not to have them feel the pangs of hunger or they will not work; you must give the Indian sufficient food to keep him exactly in a state in which he is driven from sheer necessity to exert himself. Nothing is