

fit them for removal for the north, the conditions of life would be entirely different from what they are in the plains. He must be aware that the plain or prairie Indians are horsemen, who never dream of walking even a mile when they can ride that distance, and have lived by the chase of the buffalo as far back as we have any knowledge of the country, while the wood Crees and other Indians living in the more northern parts, necessarily use the snowshoe, only during the winter, the country there being entirely unfit for the use of horses, and a change to a fish diet, even were it possible to obtain a sufficient quantity of this latter food, they would not willingly be brought to adopt. But we have the best means of knowing that scarcity of food is felt quite as much, or even more, in the district so highly spoken of by the hon. member, as in that at present occupied by the Indians he proposes to remove; and the only reason that this does not come so markedly before the public is, that the natives in the Athabaska and adjoining districts are, comparatively, few in number, and have the benefit of being very largely assisted by the Hudson's Bay Company. And yet, notwithstanding this, and all the aid the Hudson's Bay Company can give them, we know that many cases of death by starvation occur year after year, and this, unfortunately, has been the case during the past winter to a far greater extent than hon. members have any idea of. Starvation throughout the whole of the Saskatchewan is no new experience, as the Hudson's Bay Company, for many years back, have, from time to time, been obliged to give largely for the support of the Indians; and in that particular district of country, instead of realising a profit from their trade, they have frequently, during one year, sustained an actual loss of from \$50,000 to \$80,000. It is, therefore, to be hoped that the Government will not attempt to carry out the recommendation of the hon. member, as, even could the change be made, the result would not be otherwise than disastrous in the extreme. It is not desirable that the Indians should be collected in large numbers in any one place, for the purpose of being paid their annuities, as these payments can be made more conveniently and at much less expense on the several

reserves, and the agents can have no difficulty in carrying this out. The question of paying these annuities in small bills of one and two dollars may, perhaps, be an improvement, as the smaller notes would be found more convenient for both Indians and traders; but when the hon. member for Lisgar says that the Indians would as readily give a four or five dollar bill as a one or two dollar note for an article of small value, he certainly does not give them due credit for that amount of shrewdness and intelligence which he and all others who have had any dealings with them know them to possess. Still the small bills are good enough in their way, and the trial will do no harm, although it will hardly have the effect of adding greatly to their means of supporting themselves.

Vote agreed to.

171 Triennial supply of clothing for chiefs and headmen, Treaties 4 and 7.....	\$2,806
172 Salaries of school teachers and cost of school buildings.....	11,000

In reply to Mr. MILLS,

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD said the same policy, in reference to the subject matter of this vote, was in practice, as under the late Administration.

MR. MILLS said he understood that the Inspectorship over the Agencies had been done away with altogether, Mr. McColl being the superintendent.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD said Mr. McColl was still the Inspector, besides having assumed the general superintendence. Things were otherwise kept exactly as they were under the late Administration, and would continue so until a better organisation could be put in operation.

MR. MILLS said that, under the system of the late Government, the inspector's duty was not to make any purchases, but simply to inspect or supervise what was done by the superintendents or agents, and make his Report accordingly, showing what supplies were forwarded and the condition in which they were received; and it was considered that, having nothing to do with the purchases himself, he would be in a position to exercise a proper supervision, because he would have no possible motive or interest in mitigating any mistake committed by any of the officers purchasing the supplies. Mr.