

Sir, why should they work on an empty stomach. The Parliament of Canada has dealt liberally by the Indians. We have voted over a \$1,000,000 a year for the purpose of supplying them with the necessaries of life. That was more than enough to keep them in comfort if these supplies had honestly reached their destination; but they have not; there is the clearest possible proof that the middlemen and agents in the North-West have defrauded and cheated the Indians without a word of complaint from the Government of this Dominion. The First Minister, in his report for 1883, says:

"The Indians in the Edmonton district are dissatisfied, because an error was committed in not furnishing them with the necessary number of implements and cattle."

Who committed the error? Why was the error committed? Why should these wild men of the plain, who are entitled to every consideration at our hands, and whom we are bound to protect, be deprived of the supplies to which they are entitled under the treaties we have made with them? The First Minister further reports respecting the Cree Band at Bird Tail Creek:

"This band has shown an indisposition to work, and have become violent."

L. W. Herchmer, an Indian agent, in his report for 1883, speaking of Way-way-se, Cappo and Gamble's Bands, says:

"They have become particularly independent, and have undertaken to compel me to give them what they require. Gambler's Band was also very independent. However, both these bands can get work if they require it; and a little starvation will do them good."

Such is the report of the hon. gentleman's agent—these ignorant, uncivilised, untamed barbarians of the plains, with whom we have broken faith, and whom we have allowed to be robbed, will improve by starvation. This is the treatment the agents of this Government mete out to the Indians, and the treatment the Agent General of Indian Affairs thinks the proper treatment, and with such treatment we expect the Indians to submit to us and respect us. W. Anderson, Indian agent at Edmonton, speaking in his report for 1883, of the Indians in that locality, says:

"As a general rule, the Indians of this locality have been quiet and soberly, although I perceived a feeling of discontent at different times."

W. Pocklington, Indian sub-agent at Blackfoot Crossing, in his report for 1883, says:

"Nearly all last winter they gave me constant trouble, by interfering with white men, and wounding horses. Bulls Head and his band are again in trouble. The Sarcee Indians are the most troublesome in my district."

J. A. McRae, Indian agent, says of John Smith's Band:

"They are in a chronic state of discontent."

I find that the Calgary *Herald*, speaking of the Indians, makes use of the following words:—

"In regard to the Indians, it cannot be supposed that agrarian troubles agitate them much, nor is it probable that a desire for territorial acquisition is a very powerful motive for casting in their lot with the half-breeds. It may seem a paltry reason, but if the agitating cause amongst the breeds is the approximation of "hard times," it will not be considered surprising by those who know anything about the Indians, if a lack of Government tobacco and tea were not the agitating cause with them."

Then, if you refer to the Report of the Mounted Police, you will find the following condition of affairs reported. Col. Macleod says, in 1879:

"In March complaints were made to me by cattle drivers that the Indians were killing their cattle; from that time until the annual payments, in October, similar reports and complaints were almost daily coming in."

Again, Mr. Macleod reports:

"During the year many sensational reports were in circulation of intended risings of the Indians in rebellion."

Again, he says:

"The Sioux, who numbered about 200 lodges, were at first quite excited, and a few of them purposed to attack the fort."

Superintendent Walker says, in his report of 1879:

"In February last I received intelligence that Chief Beardy of Duck Lake and his band of Indians had threatened several times to break into Stobar, Eden & Co.'s store, and help themselves to the Indian stores there."

Commissioner Irvine, in his report for 1880, says:

"This Indian population, too, will, irrespective of the aid received from Government, be a starving race, a dangerous class, requiring nerve as well as care in handling."

This report was made in 1880. I am not aware that the Government took the first step to see that those Indians who were said to be in a starving condition, and required most careful supervision were properly looked after. Again, Superintendent Walker says, speaking of the Indians at Battleford and the Saskatchewan:

"This district embraces a vast section of country, which, in some places, is becoming settled; and is inhabited by say, 2,000 Indians of different tribes, many of whom have, at various times, given much trouble and been the cause of great anxiety."

And again, speaking of the Sarcees, he says:

"During the past month some difficulty was experienced with the Sarcee Indians at Fort Calgary. It appears that they threatened to help themselves to Government rations."

Superintendent Winder, in his report for 1880, says of the Blackfeet:

"About the middle of June, Patterson, the man in charge of the Indians at Blackfoot Crossing, reported to Mr. McLeod, the agent, that he was having considerable difficulty with them."

Commissioner Irvine, in his report for 1881, says:

"Considerable difficulty was experienced in inducing the Indians at Fort Walsh to accept their treaty survey. They conducted themselves in a disorderly manner."

Again, in 1881, he says:

"You will have learnt that during the present winter considerable trouble was experienced on the Blackfeet reservation at the Blackfoot Crossing."

Again, in 1882, he says, speaking of Wood Mountain Indians and some disputes they had with one Legarrie:

"During the night, Mr. Legarrie heard the Indians in council arranging to kill him. But the arrangements were changed and it was decided to allow Legarrie and his party to eat once more before killing them. Legarrie expected every moment to be killed. The noise was fearful, some crying for the scalps of the whole party, others only wishing to kill the Teton Sioux."

Commissioner Irvine, in his report for 1883, says:

"In the month of July, the Indian Agent at Edmonton communicated with the officer commanding our post in that district, informing him of the exorbitant demands made by the Indians in a most overbearing manner."

Again, in 1883, the same commissioner reports:

"Reports had reached His Honor to the effect that the Indians on the reserves in that vicinity (Fort Pitt) were likely to give serious trouble."

Such was the condition of the Indians in the North-West Territories for the last four or five years—robbed, swindled, half-starved, frozen, although enough money had been voted by Parliament to keep them in comparative ease and comfort, had the supplies only honestly reached them. I say the Indian has been deprived of his rights, has not been properly treated, and that the Government is responsible for not having taken steps to see that he was properly treated. Under these circumstances is it to be wondered at that the Indian became rebellious? Another ground for complaint is the class of officials sent by the Government to administer the affairs of this country in the North-West Territories. Until the advent of the present Commissioner of Indian Affairs, there were no complaints of wrong-doing, of cheating, and of fraud; there were no complaints of middle men capturing the supplies voted for the Indian, before they reached the Indians. The supplies voted by Parliament, I believe, honestly reached the Indian, and there were no complaints. But there is a different story to tell now. The Indians have no faith in the Commissioner of Indian Affairs; he has broken faith with them too often. He is domineering, arrogant, tyrannical, brusque in his manner towards them. His reputation is such that it has become proverbial in the North-West Territories, where he is known among the Indians as "the man with four tongues," as "the old to-morrow of the North-West." His unpopularity can be easily understood, when one considers his mode of dealing with the Indians. In 1882, commissioner had a conference with Pie-a-pot and his band, and at that conference, an extraordinary state of affairs was exhibited, in so far as