

But recently, an application has been made for military protection at Portage La-prairie, about 100 miles west of Winnipeg based upon a Minute of the Provincial Council, in pursuance of a report of the special commissioners ordered to inquire into the murder of a Sioux Indian by one of his tribe.

Many of the Sioux Indians have pitched their lodges in various parts of the country, having Portage La-prairie as a centre. They are considered a treacherous tribe and sought refuge on British soil after committing diabolical atrocities in Minnesota some few years ago, when numbers of persons were massacred. I don't therefore, doubt that an armed force, whether civil or military, would be very acceptable to the scattered settlers in that locality, which is about 90 miles from the nearest Mounted Police station at Shoal Lake.

I am not prepared to recommend that any military force should be placed there consisting of less than 50 men in a defensible post. The reduced corps at Winnipeg cannot now spare men for any detachment and the wood cutting party alluded to in the memorial no longer exists.

The proper arm for the objects in view is in my opinion a police force which can always enforce the law upon any emergency, while troops cannot interfere except on the requisition of a Magistrate, nor proceed to extremity without his personal orders.

Should any armed force be established, I consider Totogen a preferable position to Portage La-prairie, as more readily commanding a large sweep of sparsely settled country from White Mud River to the open plateau near Poplar Point, being respectively about 90 and 42 miles from Fort Garry, having also the advantage of water communication with the proposed line of the Canada Pacific Railway by Lake Manitoba. A police force there and another at Fort Francis west of Rainy Lake on the new line of railway, are much required for the security of the province.

My official route from Manitoba now led me 3000 miles to the remote west, along the spacious and beautiful prairies, in so many places rich with loamy alluvial soil, across deep and navigable rivers, over the rugged Rocky Mountains and through the dark glades of dense primeval forests, abounding with huge old giant monoliths of woods as yet untouched by the hand of man.

I eventually passed by British Columbia to Vancouver's Island.

At Kootenay Village and Joseph's Prairie lying west of Rocky Mountains I was specially solicited to intercede for some protective force. Their population amounts to 75 white permanent residents besides about 50 miners, packers and others who make their living in the district, together with about 80 Chinese and 500 Indians.

The whites and Chinese are chiefly engaged in gold mining, while the Indians attempt farming on a very limited scale, no reservations having been yet set apart for the Kootenay Indians by the local Government. Their pursuits and manner of existence at present consist in hunting buffalo on the prairies of the North West Territory, as well as cariboo, elk, bear, deer, &c., and trapping fur bearing animals in the woods and valleys adjacent. There are also some branches of Kootenay Indians located on American Territory and about the Tobacco plains on the border, numbering about 250 souls, as well as some of the Shushwab tribe at the Columbia Lakes, in the aggregate about 800 aborigines, all imbued with a common feeling whether for peace or war. The people of Kootenay District which comprise about

32,000 square miles, have on more than one occasion passed through a dangerous crisis in their relations with the Indians, who in the event of actual strife would sweep them off the earth.

Geographically, I think Kootenay at present one of the most isolated portions of the British Empire, on all sides enclosed by mountains, rivers and forests; and the scattered location of a sparse population in close proximity to 800 Indians whose number could be largely increased, renders it truly one of the most unprotected. It receives only six mails in the year from the capital of the province, 600 miles away.

The resources of Kootenay are ample, abounding in only partially developed gold mines and other precious metals in great quantity, which would fully remunerate industry; a healthy climate and soil in all the valleys and plains which are of excellent alluvial quality, capable of producing all the roots, fruits, vegetables and grain of a temperate climate in quantity and of good description; protection alone is wanted to ensure the presence of a large population. Militia is at present out of the question; but a police force of 50 men, whose presence and power would overawe the increasing insolence of the aborigines, would give security to the settlers, the remnants of the original pioneers of the country, who prefer to run desperate hazards rather than abandon the fruits of their industry.

Communication should also be opened through a known easy defile of the Rocky Mountains by the Elk River, by which means the produce of this productive soil would supply the N. W. Mounted Police more cheaply than at present, thus giving an impetus to the settlement and industry of the District, and through the consequent increase of the population, yield a revenue more than commensurate with the outlay.

BRITISH COLUMBIA AND VANCOUVER'S ISLAND.

At Victoria and Nanaimo there are two Companies of Infantry clothed and equipped as Rifles, and in a very efficient state for any service. At New Westminster, on the Fraser River, there is a good Company of Infantry and also a Battery of Artillery. The latter I did not have the opportunity of inspecting as their clothing had been only just received; the Rifle Company is in an efficient condition in every respect.

It is suggested that a battery be mounted at McCaulay's Point on the promontory which projects between the harbours of Victoria and Esquimalt. In the absence of a ship of war which occasionally occurs, there is not a gun nor any kind of protection for the costly Naval Stores in the dockyards on the one side, nor for the City of Victoria on the other. A piratical cruiser of small force, entering by the straits of Fuca, could destroy the whole place.

On going over the dockyard, I found 27-inch and 40 pounder breechloading rifled guns about to be sent back to England as obsolete for Naval service. I requested these might be detained together with their shell and equipments, and have made application for their transfer to the Dominion Government for the purpose of arming the earthwork I propose, for McCaulay's Point.

This can be constructed at a trifling outlay for earth parapets and wooden platform.

It is suggested an Artillery Company should be enrolled at Victoria to man this battery. There are plenty of efficient men for the purpose, and an officer late of the Royal Artillery.

There are two bronze 24 pounder howitzers on travelling carriages in position at New

Westminster in charge of the Artillery, as well as a quantity of shot and shell. The gun carriages require painting. I suggest that the usual ammunition for practice be allowed the Seymour Artillery, the cost of which has heretofore been defrayed by the commanding officer.

There is a first class rifle range of 600 yards, which cost \$75 advanced out of the private funds of the Rifle Corps. Additional \$75 are necessary to complete the range to 800 yards with the view to competition for Wimbledon. I submit that an appropriation of \$150 is advisable in order that the range may become the property of the Dominion Government.

The drill shed as built by the Provincial Government in 1866, for the Volunteers, at a cost of \$1,400, and subsequently improved by private contribution of citizens of New Westminster. It requires a new foundation, the original being rotten and unsafe. The estimate cost of this is \$200. An armoury properly fitted for the arms, clothing and stores is also much required; this will cost about \$200; the men, several of whom served in the Royal Engineers, have expressed their willingness to contribute labour and money from the Corps fund.

There is also a Magazine here originally constructed by Royal Engineers upon the best principles, stone and brick with copper doors; the flooring is, however, rotten and the doorway dilapidated. \$100 are required to repair this.

The drill shed at Victoria is a very excellent one in good repair, but nearly useless from having no gas light which can be introduced for \$100. All drill in the shed being at night, the necessity for gas light is obvious. On the occasion of my inspection there were 24 candles and 10 coal oil lamps burning, and yet the place was incomparative obscurity. One of the spare rooms should also be fitted up at a cost of \$25, as an armoury and clothing room.

There is a first class rifle range here rented by the Rifle Association for 7 years at \$25 per annum. They have spent \$250 on it from private funds, which are not affluent. It is suggested this range should be taken over for the Militia as they have no other place of practice.

There is a store keeper, and a man employed as caretaker, but not paid. I suggest this man should receive pay as armourer, caretaker and drill instructor combined, which would make up a suitable salary for him.

At Nanaimo there is no drill shed; the Company has constructed the rifle range of 600 yards at a private cost \$100. The Vancouver's Coal Company will give a site for the former, if \$1,000 were forthcoming from public funds to erect the building, including armoury, &c.

Drill Instructors are much needed, and the aptitude for drill shown by these Companies deserves encouragement. An Instructor from the Royal Marines at Esquimalt would cost about \$60 a month while so employed.

There are at present upwards of 700 stand of arms of obsolete pattern, Enfield and Brunswick, which were passed over to the Dominion Government at Confederation; also a large quantity of ammunition adapted for those arms in the Naval Magazine at Esquimalt. The Admiral has applied for the immediate removal of the latter, to give room for powder expected from England. I ordered a board upon it and suggest it be broken up and the powder used for practice or salutes, the arms should be sold, I am informed the Indians would readily purchase them for shooting large game. The proceeds