

were freezing to death and starving to death; and yet, my statements to the House are characterized as untrue, when what I said was extracted from the blue-books of the department. Will the Minister of the Interior take the trouble to bring his great mind down to the level of reading his own reports. At page 43 of his report for 1882, he will find the following language made use of by Agent McKay:—

"While I was making the payments this year I was informed by the Indians that they experienced great hardships for want of food during the last winter and spring." Further in the same report it is stated:

"This was greatly caused by the want of proper medicines and necessary food. They represented that there was great suffering for want of supplies for the destitute of the land."

In the report for 1883, at page 78, Agent Anderson made use of the following language:—

"The majority of deaths during the year have been from consumption, which appears to prevail amongst them. This is owing in a great extent to their want of clothing, which is really lamentable, many of the children going naked, and some adults being barefooted in dead of winter."

Agent McKay in his report for 1885, at page 97, says:

"No supplies of any kind, nor means to procure any for the destitute, sick and aged Indians, have been provided for this treaty since 1880."

Inspector Wadsworth, one of the inspectors of the Indian agencies in the North-West Territories, at page 95 of his report for 1884, states:

"The band number eighty, and bitterly complained of starvation, attributing the sixteen deaths which occurred last year to this cause."

I then pointed out that the gross mismanagement and neglect that characterized the administration of Indian affairs in the North-West were so great that with over a million voted every year for Indians, they were allowed to freeze and starve to death, and to contract such diseases that thirteen in one band died. I further said that Indian Agent McKay stated that with regard to the Indians of the Che-ma-wa-win reserve:

"The harrows and ploughs were lying partly buried in mud and weeds in different places. Some of them have never been used or put together yet, and are spoiling for want of care."

The Government, in reply to my charge, makes use of the following language:—

"The agent does not say that 'the supplies were dumped off in the mud and filth and left there to rot.' That is Mr. Cameron's invention."

Now, I quoted from the Government's own report, and their reply is that the charge is Mr. Cameron's own invention. Let us see whether it is Mr. Cameron's own invention, or the invention of the Minister of the Interior, or an employé of the Minister of the Interior. The hon. gentleman will find at page 46 of the report for 1882 the following language:—

"I arrived here on the night of Saturday, the 12th August, and made the payments on Monday, the 14th. No improvements have been made at this place during the past year. It is a poor reserve for planting purposes, and the Indians take very little interest in doing anything in that line. In going over the reserve on the 11th September, I noticed that no attempt was made to care for the implements which had been supplied to them. The harrows and ploughs were lying partly buried in mud and weeds in different places. Some of them have never been used or put together yet, and are spoiling for want of care."

Mr. CAMERON (Huron).

The charge I made against the Government in that connection was this: I said: Here you have an army of officials in the North-West Territories, who extract from the funds which we vote for the Indians about one-fifth in salaries, travelling expenses, &c.; and yet you dump off at the wigwams or reserves of these ignorant, illiterate pagans, valuable agricultural implements, which the taxpayers of Canada are paying for, and you leave them there in the mud and filth and dirt to rot year in and year out; and I am answered by the Department of the Interior with the assertion that that is one of Mr. Cameron's inventions. Now, Sir, my charges against the administration of Indian affairs are based largely upon such acts of gross misconduct. I stated further in that speech that Superintendent Walsh, in his report for 1880, at pages 26 and 27 made use of the following language:

"In some cases persons became so reduced as to render them unable to assist themselves, and I was forced to make small issues of food to save their lives. Following this want of food, and the eating of diseased horses, an epidemic appeared which marked its results by the many graves now to be seen in Wood Mountain."

I pointed out, Sir, what a terrible picture was here drawn by the Government's own agents. I pointed out that the callous misconduct and neglect of the Department of Indian Affairs could be traced by the graves of the Indians on the side of Wood Mountain; and in answer I am told that those things are Mr. Cameron's invention. Mr. Cameron made sixty of these charges, and fifty-nine of them, the Minister says, are based on deliberate falsehood. I have proved out of the Government's own books that every charge I made is literally true. If I were disposed to pursue the enquiry further, I could quote what Major Walsh and other agents of the department said on this subject. If my memory serves me rightly, the report of the medical man was one of those that spoke so clearly and loudly of the misconduct and maladministration of the department that hon. gentlemen opposite had not the hardihood to make it part of their annual report, and suppressed it until, in the session of 1886, it was resurrected and submitted to Parliament. Dr. Edwards in that report, after specifying several types of diseases from which the Indians were suffering, added:

"And starvation, if the last can be recorded as a disease. I find that in the last three months thirteen deaths have taken place on each reserve, in all twenty-six, a very heavy death-rate; and from all I can gather, death has been accelerated, if not immediately caused, by the scant supply of food sent out to these Indians."

Again he says:

"I saw several children in the Assiniboine camp worn and wasted, and, unless properly fed, must die in a few days."

Also:

"It may not come within my province to report this condition of starvation, but I am well satisfied that if they were sufficiently fed there would be less tendency to illness among them."

Also:

"I may also add that, from the way they have been allowed to starve, a firm determination was expressed by both Piapot and Jack that as soon as they could travel they would forsake the reserve and go west again."

Let me now point out another matter that did not come under my cognizance then. It was in one of the reports suppressed, and which was only submitted to Parliament after I had levelled my charges against the Administration. On the 23rd