

March Mr. Acting Indian Agent Lash wrote from Carlton: "I have the honor to state I visited Duck Lake yesterday, and remained over night in that neighborhood, and am pleased to report the Indians all quiet, and not interfering with the half-breed movement. The latter are still a little uneasy, but I trust the precautions taken by the police have cooled their ardor, as they are starting on freighting trips, and I am inclined to think their excitement will blow over."

As will be observed from the same officer's annual report, which will be found with the appendices attached to this report, on the 18th of March, only three days after the date of his letter above quoted, being apparently the next occasion of his visiting the above locality, which he did in consequence of a rumor having reached him that the half-breeds were tampering with the Indians, he "was surrounded by an armed mob of about forty half-breeds, commanded by Riel, who gave orders to make him and his interpreter prisoners. This," he adds, "was done and I remained a prisoner in the rebel camp, until released by General Middleton's column, on the 12th May." It should be here stated, that at about the same time the farming instructor at Duck Lake, and other loyal subjects were also made prisoners, and that these men were subject to great indignities at the hands of the rebels. During the last ten days of their captivity they were kept in a dark cellar, from which they were not allowed egress for any purpose whatever, the cellar being at the same time without any means of ventilation, except that afforded by a few chinks in the foundation.

The Agent at Battleford reports that the Indians of that vicinity were better clothed last winter than usual; that there were sufficient provisions on the different reserves to last until June, and that all seemed happy and contented until the half-breed insurgents began to trouble them with messages. The purport of these false missives was, among other things, that the troops were on the way northward, and that the Indians would either be enlisted as soldiers or massacred. The effect which attended the receipt of these messages was afterwards only too evident. The town of Battleford was sacked: the farming instructor on the Assiniboine or Stony Indian reserve at Eagle Hills, and one of the settlers of the vicinity, were murdered, the farming instructor and his family on the Cree Indian reserve, in the same vicinity, barely escaped with their lives, by fleeing to Swift Current, the nearest point on the Canadian Pacific Railway; and the inhabitants of the town and of the adjacent country were forced to seek refuge in the fort of the North-West Mounted Police at Battleford, which was besieged by the half-breeds and Indians for several weeks, until reinforcements came to the relief of the garrison. The Indians who revolted do not plead grievances in extenuation of their having done so. On the contrary, they express regret for the part they took, and said they were led into it by the leader of the half-breed insurrection. And those of them who suffered for their crimes on the gallows publically acknowledged that they deserved the punishment, and advised their compatriots to be warned by their fate not to

follow their example.

The Department had taken special care, inasmuch as their crops had proved a failure, to provide in the autumn of 1884, an extra large supply of provisions for the districts in which they afterwards became disaffected, and the Indians consequently had an abundance of food. The excitement extended as far west as Edmonton, and to the Bear Hills south of that place; but with the exception of the looting of the farming instructor's house and the storehouse at Saddle Lake, and the pillaging of the Hudson Bay Company's store at the house of the Methodist missionary on Battle River, in the Bear Hills, no deeds of rapine were committed, although the Indians were greatly excited, and for sometime there were grave apprehensions of an uprising; but wiser councils prevailed with them, and the arrival of the militia effectually removed the difficulties of the situation.

It is gratifying to be able to bear testimony to the loyalty, during the most trying time, of several of the most prominent chiefs, and the bands represented by them, whose reserves are situated in the districts affected by the late rebellion. I would mention specially the names of Chiefs Nis-to-was-sis and At-tak-a-koop, the most important Indian leaders of the Carlton section, and those of Chiefs John Smith, James Smith and William Twatt, leading chiefs in the vicinity of Prince Albert. Chiefs Moosomin and Thunder Cloud, whose reserves are situated near Battleford, also deserve mention; the latter, however, owing to his band having run short of supplies, and the impossibility of obtaining any elsewhere, had to seek the rebel's camp. All of the above chiefs and their followers removed to a distance from the scene of the trouble, as they had no sympathy with it. Chief Pocan *alias* Seenum, of Whitefish Lake, deserves special mention. He is the most influential of the chiefs of that section of the country east of Victoria and west of Frog Lake, and has the most numerous band: which he managed to control, and they, led by their chief, successfully resisted an attempt made by a war party from Big Bear's band to pillage the store of the Hudson Bay Company at Whitefish Lake, one man having been killed in the encounter. Chief Blue Quill, of Egg Lake, south of Victoria, and his band, likewise remained loyal; as also did Chief Muddy Bull, of Pigeon Lake, and Chief Chepoostisquahn, or Sharphead, of Peace Hills, south of Edmonton, and their followers. The other chiefs and bands of the country adjacent to Edmonton, although they were considerably excited, committed no overt acts, if we except the raiding by some of Chief Bobtail's band of the Hudson Bay Company's store at Battle River and the residence of the missionary of the Methodist Church at Bear Hills, which matters have already been referred to; and I should state that those Indians have consented that the cost of the damage done by them shall be paid for from their annuities.

None of the Indians in the southern part of the district of Alberta took any part in the rebellion, notwithstanding that messages urging them strongly to do so were constantly being received by them. The chiefs remained true to

their allegiance, and their followers obeyed them by abstaining from any interference in the matter. Many of the young men of the Blackfeet, Bloods and Piegans were anxious to be allowed to fight on behalf of the Crown against the insurgents. The chiefs in this section of the Territories whose names deserve special mention are: Red Crow, head chief of the Bloods; Crowfoot and Old Sun, head chiefs of the Blackfeet; Eagle Tail (recently deceased), head chief of the Piegans; Jacob, Bear's Paw and Chiniquy, head chiefs of the Stoneys or Assiniboines, of Morleyville.

In the district of Assiniboia, which, from its geographical position, was more readily reached from the Saskatchewan district by the emissaries of the rebels than other parts, the Indians were constantly besieged with messages from the half-breed insurrectionists, urging them in the strongest terms to revolt and assist in the movement. With the exception of about twenty or thirty, who plundered the houses and property of a few settlers, none of the Indians responded to the call; although they were naturally excited by the messages received, as well as by seeing so many troops moving north; for all of them had to pass that way to the scene of the troubles, and a considerable force was also stationed in their vicinity. The rebels did not omit to inform these Indians, as they had done elsewhere, that they would be massacred by the soldiers in the event of the insurgents being defeated, whether they had fought or not. It required all the influence which the Indian agents for the locality, Col. McDonald, of Indian Head, and Mr. Lawrence Herchmer, of Birtle, and those acting under them, could bring to bear upon the Indians, to remove the false impression engendered by these messages in their minds. Those officers were indefatigable in moving about among them and quieting their fears. And I beg here to state that all the officials connected with the Indian service in the North-West Territories, Manitoba and Keewatin, from the Indian Commissioner, Assistant Indian Commissioner and Superintending Inspector at Winnipeg, downwards, deserve great commendation for the zealous efforts made by them to keep the Indians loyal, and which endeavors, I am sure, all are thankful to know where, as regards the great majority of the Indians, entirely successful. And I would also be lacking in a recognition of what is properly due to those who assisted us with their wise counsel and active sympathy in that trying time did I omit to acknowledge the eminent services rendered by several clergymen and other gentlemen, who, though not directly connected with the Indian management in the North-West, voluntarily and magnanimously lent their services; and by their influence with the Indians, were doubtless, largely instrumental in preserving order amongst them. In this connection I would especially mention the Rev. Gather Lacombe, Principle of St. Joseph's Industrial School at High River; the Rev. Father Scollen, of the St. Albert Mission; Mr. C. E. Denny, of Fort McLeod, and the officers of the Honorable the Hudson Bay Company generally.

Despatches expressive of their loyalty and attachment to their Sovereign, and of their disap-