

negotiated the first treaty which was made with them. On that occasion we had among us some 2,000 of these savage Indians from the interior of their territory, and for fourteen days they were engaged in what was to them a most interesting and exciting discussion. During the whole of that time there was not an outrage of any kind—not a single breach of the peace. (Applause.) Is not that something in favour of the Indian character? In this country I would like to see 2,000 of your finest roughs brought together and behave themselves for a fortnight in such a way as that. (Hear, hear.) There is one thing our people have learned with regard to the Indians—that is, if they suspect you, you can do nothing with them; but if they see you are in earnest to benefit them, they give you their entire confidence. (Hear, hear.) I have been engaged with them in several of these treaties, and been constantly with them, and I can say that I always found them faithful and honest—I might almost say native gentlemen. They look like gentlemen. Take an Indian and put a blanket on him, his pose is statuesque. He talks, not like a common peasant, but as a man accustomed to sit round the council fire and to reason and discuss. Any man who puts down the Indian as ignorant and stupid makes the greatest possible mistake. (Applause.) Mr. Begg has spoken of the difficulties of communication in former days. To give you an idea of this, I may mention that, when making the voyage of which I have spoken, along the north shore of Lake Superior, and through the water stretches to Manitoba, we were desirous of not being overloaded with impedimenta, and I, thinking what was required could be forwarded through Minnesota, actually neglected to put in my portmanteau a copy of the law by which the country was to be governed. It was three months before the mail arrived. (Laughter.) For three months I was governing the country without the statutes under which the government had to be conducted. (Renewed laughter.) I will make another confession. This very law excluding the use of spirituous liquors from the Far West was made under the authority of a council which existed only on paper. (Laughter.) It was, however, a right law, which commended itself to the good sense of the people, and the Legislature afterwards confirmed that law. Another curious circumstance occurs to me. In the first election of representatives to the House of Commons the writs were sent out in the mail and buried in the snow banks of Minnesota for three weeks. You know what use an Opposition would make of such an event, even if it were an Opposition of the moderate kind you have in this country. (Laughter.) Fortunately, on ascertaining the facts, we succeeded in getting duplicates of the writs for conducting the elections. These facts, perhaps, are of no value, except as illustrating the change in the condition of the country. Last summer I visited the country again, and the journey, which took over three weeks in former days, now occupied fourteen hours. From Winnipeg to the Rocky Mountains is nine hundred miles, and only fifteen years