

these Schools are carried on in conjunction with the Indian Department of the Ottawa Government, by which a part of the expenses are paid, and it is a question whether the Church does not lose more than she gains by this *quasi* connection with the State, even in educational matters. It hampers our freedom of action, renders the schools less efficient, because conducted under a divided authority, and is used as an argument to silence complaint when another Church is virtually endowed by a lavish expenditure of public money. Theory may contend for a system of local schools, on the English plan, where the benefits of a common school education would be brought to the children of every camp; but Experience has her index finger pointed steadily in the direction of Industrial Institutes and Residential Schools, where the children can be separated entirely from the associations of camp life for a series of years, and instructed in such forms of industry as will enable them in after years to earn an honorable livelihood. To found and provide for the maintenance of these Institutes is the bounden duty of the Government, in carrying out the spirit of treaty stipulations; but the management may be assumed, with the consent of the Government, by persons appointed by the Churches, without involving such connection between Church and State as implies dependence on the one hand or the bestowment of State aid on the other.

In the report of the General Board of Missions presented to this Conference four years ago, complaint was made that the Church had not received fair treatment from the Dominion Government, especially in regard to Industrial Institutes in British Columbia and the North-West. After long and vexatious delay, a disposition is manifested to remove this cause of complaint so far as the North-West is concerned. At the present time work is in progress to provide better buildings for the Morley Orphanage, a site has been fixed upon for an Industrial Institute at the Red Deer Settlement, about midway between Calgary and Edmonton, and promise has been made of an institute in Manitoba for the especial benefit of the Indians around Lake Winnipeg, and those to the north and east. When these works are completed there will be fair provision for the children connected with our various missions, which is not the case at present. Concerning institutes in British Columbia, we cannot speak in similar terms. It will be remembered that, a few years ago, complaints were made by Government agents against some of our missionaries on the Pacific Coast, to the effect that they were stirring up the Indians against the Government on the land question. The complaints were promptly and emphatically denied, but of the denials no notice was taken by the Government. The Board felt that such action should be taken as would vindicate the character of our missionaries if they were innocent of the things laid to their charge, and at the cost of much trouble and inconvenience a mass of evidence was obtained, part of it given under oath, showing that always and everywhere among the tribes the missionaries had been the friends of law and order, and that the dissatisfaction among the Indians was caused by the injudicious conduct and broken promises of the agents of the Government. Armed with this evidence, a

deputation from the Board of Missions waited upon the Dominion Premier, and the Superintendent General of Indian affairs, and during an interview, which lasted two hours, they stated the case for our missionaries, urged in strong but courteous language the claims of the Methodist Church respecting the institutes, and requested a redress of grievances in several particulars that were named. But we have yet to learn that the first step has been taken in accordance with our requests, and so far there is no move to place any Indian Institute in British Columbia under the charge of our Church.

In connection with this subject, there is a matter of some delicacy to which we feel constrained, in the interests of the Missionary Society, to refer. On more than one occasion, within the past few years, representations have been made and communications sent to the Government by private persons respecting our Indian work, without the sanction of the Board and even without its knowledge. Among others a letter was written to the Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, complaining of the treatment accorded to the Methodist Church in the matter of Institutes, and inquiring into the cause of delay. To that letter a reply was sent which, as might have been expected, put the most favorable construction possible upon the action or rather non-action of the Government. The reply thus received was publicly used in at least two of the Annual Conferences, apparently with the object, first, of shielding the Government from any real or supposed blame in the matter of the Institutes; secondly, of locating responsibility for delay with the General Board and its officers. We submit that such proceedings are an unwarrantable interference with duties vested by the General Conference in the Board of Missions and its officers, and are calculated to embarrass the Board in its negotiations with the Government.

That there may be no ground for false impressions the Secretary is prepared to submit the whole of the official correspondence, so that the Conference may judge if there has been any neglect of duty or of the Church's interest.

Before passing away from the subject of Indian Missions, we would call attention to the condition of affairs at Oka. It is not necessary that we should rehearse the story of persecutions to which the Indians at Oka have been subjected, the destruction of their property by mobs, the false arrests and imprisonment of some of their number, and the fact that the Government has not afforded the adequate protection; but we cannot refrain from calling attention to the latest phase of this affair, which appears in a letter addressed to the Indians from the office of the Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, informing them that no further aid will be given to any Protestant member of the band unless they remove from the home of their fathers to the new reserve in Muskoka. So far as indigent members of the band are concerned, such removal may be said to involve only sentimental considerations, but to others it means the surrender of lands, to which they believe they have a just claim, for a mere fraction of their value. As the Protestant Indians of Oka are, without exception, Methodists, we submit that it is the duty of the entire Church to stand by them in any just contention;