

*" Qu'Appelle Industrial School.*

" 20th Nov. 1884.—A correspondant of *Le Manitoba* says that the supplies are 'de première qualité.'

*" Poundmaker's Band.*

" I took an inventory of the flour, bacon and other supplies on hand. The flour was of inferior quality, and weighed only ninety-eight pounds per sack. Upon enquiry the agent informed me that, running short of flour, he was obliged to borrow some from Mahaffy & Clinkskill, Battleford, and this was the only kind they had. Amongst the bacon I found five hundred and seventeen pounds "long clear."

Some discussion took place during last Session (1884) as to some delay or deficiency in the delivery of seed grain and agricultural implements, but not only did they not apply to the provisions, but were explained to have been due to difficulties of transportation. The only report of any consequence I have been able to find, in which mention is made of bad supplies, has reference to the last year of the Administration of hon. gentlemen opposite. It is signed by Mr. Vankoughnet, and is dated 31st December, 1878, and applies to the whole of Manitoba and the North-West:

" The payment of the annuities to the Indians within the North-West Indian superintendency were, I am happy to say, made at the dates previously fixed upon at the several points of meeting, and the supplies of food, implements and cattle were delivered for the most part on time.

" I regret to report, however, that complaints have been made of the bad quality of the flour and beef furnished at some of the points of payment, and also that the cattle purchased for these Indians were too wild to be handled."

I have also heard complaints that the Government had given contracts to foreigners for supplies. Especially some complaint has been made with regard to the contracts given to the firm of I. G. Baker & Co., of Benton, Montana. There was a debate, in 1883, upon this point, and it will be seen that if I. G. Baker & Co. are employed to-day to furnish the greatest portions of the supplies in the North-West, the initiative came from hon. gentlemen opposite. I will read an extract from that debate:

" Mr. CHARLTON. I notice, amongst the expenditures in the Public Accounts for the year ending 30th June last, that one firm, Baker & Co., obtained a very large sum. Where is that firm located?

" Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. At Fort Benton, Montana.

" Mr. CHARLTON. I believe they are Americans?

" Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Yes.

" Mr. CHARLTON. The other night, when I referred to the system of surveys in the North-West, I asked why the hon. gentleman had not adopted the American system in its entirety, and it was said, in reply, that I drew all my inspirations from Washington. Where does the hon. gentleman draw his inspiration from, in permitting a Yankee firm to obtain \$462,000 for supplies, which could have been obtained from our own dealers?

" Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The inspiration from which I drew those supplies, through Baker & Co., was the greatest of all monarchs, the monarch of necessity. There was nobody else to supply the food on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains for the Blackfeet and the Bloods. There were no means of getting supplies, except from Montana. I may say, though the members of the firm are Americans, they are most satisfactory contractors—fair, honest, liberal and trustworthy. They have fairly competed with other traders, because these contracts have always been put up to public competition, but nobody could tender for the supplies in the extreme west. The Hudson Bay Company tendered for a good deal. Other parties, Capt. Howard, who is known, perhaps, to Mr. Watson, tendered, and is the lowest for some contracts this year."

It will be noticed that in 1884 that contracts were given to Baker & Co.; but they were given after public tenders being asked. Did hon. gentlemen opposite pursue the same course? Hon. gentlemen opposite first gave contracts to Baker & Co., in 1876, and they did so without calling for public tenders. They asked Baker & Co., to supply the Indians in the North-West, and they even sent an agent to Chicago to obtain a portion of those supplies. Mr. Schultz attacked the Government in this House on the question. Here is the explanation given by Mr. Blake:

" The first detachment of police (about 150) was sent to Manitoba upon very short notice, in September, 1873, and during the winter of 1873-74, was supplied from the Hudson Bay Company's stores, I believe, at rates similar to those charged the militia. When the force was recruited to its full extent for the journey to the Rocky Mountains (May,

Mr. GIBOUARD.

1874), an agent was sent to Chicago to St. Paul to purchase such articles of provision as was considered be purchasable in the States at cheaper rates than in Canada. The bacon required was obtained at St. Paul, Min., at 12½ cents per pound, American currency. Twenty-five barrels of pork were also purchased there, at \$19.50 per barrel, American currency. The pork (bacon) required for the force on its return from the expedition, in 1874, was obtained in Winnipeg, Manitoba—tenders were called for by public advertisement. On 16th April, 1875, Mr. Nixon was instructed to communicate with the commissioners and purchase, amongst other things, sufficient bacon for two divisions (100 men) for six months. He had represented that he could purchase them cheaper than at a later date. The bacon for 1876-77 was included with other articles for which tenders were called, but owing to complaints as to the quality of the pork purchased in Manitoba, a supply was obtained in Ontario—Ingersoll; with the addition of re-freight charges to Manitoba, this bacon cost about 2 cents per pound more than the tenders for supply at Winnipeg. Small quantities have, at various times, been purchased from storekeepers in Manitoba, but the above mentioned include all large quantities. The bacon required for the force, in the southern parts of the Territories, has been supplied by Baker & Co., of Fort Benton, Montana, either under contract or at prices certified by the assistant commissioner of the force. It will require some time to obtain a statement of all the prices and quantities."

You can hardly imagine that this liberal policy of the Administration met with the approbation of hon. gentlemen opposite. Every year after they left office, it became more necessary to come to the assistance of the Indians, and the Indian expenditure increased, and hon. gentlemen opposite complained of this. Mr. Mills, in 1882, said:

" Mr. MILLS. I called the attention of the hon. Minister last year to the largeness of the sum for annuities, and to the fact that when you collected the payments made of the annuities due for different years it was pretty clear, from the Public Accounts, that we had not an accurate return of the number of Indians of the various bands, and that through Indian dishonesty a considerable number were paid twice, or even a third time. The sums paid last year and this year are very much larger than four or five years ago."

During the debate, in 1883, on Indian supplies, Mr. Casgrain said:

" I lay down, as a principle which cannot be controverted, that this race is becoming rapidly extinct, and we are wasting an enormous expenditure to attain an object which will never be attained—that is, to civilise these Indians. I have seen myself, at Garden River, the experiment tried by Catholic and Protestant missionaries. A small plot had been cultivated and set out in garden lots, and small houses had been built near them for the Indians, but instead of living in these houses, they built themselves, in front of the houses, small bark wigwams, and there they lived.

" Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Those were their country houses.

" Mr. CASGRAIN. As to their plots, there was not a root to be found in any of them.

" Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. You might find some briar roots.

" Mr. CASGRAIN. I give this as an instance of the inaptitude of the Indians to enter into civilised life. Now, Sir, I will make an exception in favor of the British Columbia Indians. They are a self-sustaining race, because they have not had large fields in which to hunt buffalo, and have been obliged to resort to fishing, in order to supply themselves with the necessaries of life. This gave them sedentary habits and led them to cultivate the soil. But as to Indians of the North-West Territories, they are a doomed race, and it is only a question of how soon they will disappear. This race is extremely jealous, and they do not look to the Government employees, that are bound to aid them, but, as they say, they look to the Great Mother on the other side to protect them."

Even if this race is going to become extinct some day, but I doubt that the prediction of the hon. member for L'Islet will be realised, it becomes important to consider what we are going to do with them in the meantime. Even if they are going to become extinct, Poundmaker and Big Bear are not dead to-day. Something must be done for them, in order to keep them quiet; otherwise they will plunder and murder. The policy of hon. gentlemen opposite seems to be very different from that which was plainly advocated by the *Winnipeg Free Press*, one of their organs, on 8th September, 1884. It said:

" It must be apparent to both the American and Canadian Government that their present methods of dealing with the Indians are doomed to failure. They should either make up their mind to provide sufficient food for them, or else, in earnest, set to the work of making them self-supporting."