

there. Every statement which I made last session was repeated to him in St. Peter's Indian Reserve by the Indians themselves. After holding the meeting in the new reserve, he ascertained that only 162 Indians out of 1,300 had been moved from the old reserve to the new, after an expenditure of \$30,000 or \$40,000 for legal expenses and building houses and moving those 162 people. In other words there were over 1,100 people yet in possession of the lands on the old reserve which had been wrongfully taken from them. But when Dr. MacDougall came back to Selkirk to the old reserve, I must give him credit for one thing. He acted fairly in calling a meeting. He did not do as the Deputy Superintendent General had done. He did not spring a trap on the Indians by giving them only 24 hours to come and vote away their birthright. He gave 10 days' notice that he was going to hold a meeting, and he held not one but two meetings. The first lasted over three hours. The Indians asked me to attend but I refused to go simply because I wanted to give Dr. MacDougall a fair chance. I met him and talked the matter over with him; and I said to him that I would not go to the meeting because I had every faith that he would give a fair and honest report of what took place. I did not go near the meeting, but two reporters from Winnipeg attended and made a full report of what took place. That report is in this House at present and will speak for itself. I am not going to read it, but I have a letter here from one of the Indians, Mr. William Asham. I have said before in this House, and my statement was ridiculed, that Mr. Asham is one of the most intelligent and eloquent Indians in Canada, and I do not believe that I exaggerated in making that statement. Mr. Asham knows what he is talking about, and he addressed this letter to myself:

St. Peter's, January 14, 1911.

Geo. H. Bradbury, M.P.

Dear Sir,—In the matter of Rev. John MacDougall visiting St. Peter's reserve last fall, held a public meeting with the Band of St. Peter's Indians, said that he was sent to hear the grievances in general, as well personal grievances, if there were any. Amongst other things, the following were the grievances that were laid before him:

1st. Rev. John Semmens, Inspector of Indian Agencies, was accused of saying in Cree language, just at the time when the vote was to be taken for the surrender of the St. Peter's reserve, 'Those of you that want \$90 (ninety dollars) go that side,' indicating to where the chief and councillors stood. This matter was proved by the meeting before Mr. John MacDougall that such words were used by Mr. Semmens. Of course, without doubt, these words were misleading.

2nd. That a big percentage of the treaty In-

dians never applied for their patents, nevertheless the patents were issued, but the owners of same never saw them. Rev. John MacDougall, to satisfy himself, put the following question to the meeting, 'If there are any that never saw their patents let them stand up.' Although the attendance was rather small, quite a number stood up. This matter was also proved before Mr. MacDougall that it was really the fact of the case.

3rd. The curtailment of the privilege that the Indians of St. Peter's enjoyed for many years prior to the time of the surrender of the St. Peter's reserve. The Indians were allowed to have an election of chief and councillors every three years, being the term allowed by law (Indian Act). The present so-called chief and councillors are not recognized by the band of treaty Indians as chief and councillors, knowing that their term of office expired on the 4th day of July, 1908. The Indians of St. Peter's are fully aware if the election of chief and councillors had been granted when it came due, considerable trouble would have been avoided. This matter was also proved to Rev. John MacDougall.

4th. There were also a few personal grievances that were laid before him. There was a certain woman that laid her complaint. The following was to the nature of same. That her husband was blind, and it was only her that could do anything for the family. When the patent came she went to the Indian Office at Selkirk and asked for the patent. One of the so-called councillors defied her by saying, be damned to get your patent. At the time she didn't get the patent. She also went on to explain how she was roughly handled by the Indian agent.

Many more things could be added, but we think this will be quite sufficient and worthy for consideration.

We are indeed surprised to read an account of the report of Rev. John MacDougall, why not a word is said of the grievances that were laid before him. We can now understand, unless a proper commission is appointed, the truth will never be known.

Your Obedt. Svts,

WILLIAM ASHAM,
WM. SINCLAIR,
his
JOHN X FLETT.
mark.

I hardly know how to characterize a report of that kind coming from a man like the Rev. John MacDougall. I cannot believe that he edited that report of his own volition, but am inclined to give credence to a statement made in one of the papers that when he came to Ottawa the Indian Department claimed the right to edit his report before it was laid on the table. I have no doubt that Mr. MacDougall gave a full and fair account of what he found in that reserve, but that account we do not find in the document I hold in my hand and which purports to be the report of the Rev. John MacDougall. Mr. MacDougall heard from the men who had sent their allegations and affidavits down here what their grievances were. He told me himself, when taking