

inexperienced men, however estimable and capable in other directions, are to manage Indians.

It has, therefore, been fortunate that the foresight of Canada's greatest statesman, the late Hon. Sir John A. MacDonald, determined him on a course by which politics should not be allowed to interfere with the appointment of those entrusted with carrying out the details of the Department's Indian policy.

On the whole, the Department's servants have done their duty faithfully and well.

Few not engaged in the service in its earlier days know how agents and instructors, faithful to the Department, and to the best interests of the Indians themselves, have risked their lives, refusing supplies to, and in other ways resisting idle or refractory Indians, and in no way is judgment more severely tested than in determining when to give way and when to hold out.

Agents and farmers, however, are but men, and grow weary sometimes of the struggle. It is no wonder that they may be inclined to adopt the readiest method of keeping the Indians in good humour and having all go smoothly, which, it need hardly be said, is giving liberal issues of supplies.

Still less wonder that when they have succeeded in making a marked advance, they are prone to rest upon their oars. But natural as they may be, those methods will not serve to reach the goal, and the Department from the first recognized the necessity of having someone in authority to represent it on the spot. It appointed a Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and, as the work became more elaborate and extensive, his staff necessarily increased.

The true wisdom and economy of the course cannot be over-estimated. It is not alone, what has been done, in compelling the exercise of every possible economy in working the agencies, in insisting upon the extraction from the Indians, of all possible assistance towards their own maintenance, that must be considered. The very sense of security to life and property, enabling the comparatively rapid settlement of the country, has largely depended upon the presence of a representative of the Department, easily accessible to Indians who would refrain from taking into their own hands matters in dispute between themselves and their overseers, or the settlers, which they knew they could promptly refer to him.

The Commissioner has always been in close touch with every agency. A very elaborate system of communication has been kept up by having monthly reports and diaries from each agent and farmer sent to his office. Regular returns, accounting for the issue of all sorts of supplies, are received, others