

brought a herd of reindeer into the area northeast of Fox island, in the Hudson bay channel leading out to the ocean. For some unaccountable reason, apparently lack of food, the reindeer did not do very well.

Mr. MEIGHEN: That is at Baffin's land.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Yes, and they almost completely died out. We have given the reindeer which we had on the coast of Labrador to Mr. Menier, who owns Anticosti island, and under his supervision they are increasing very rapidly, but we are not yet in a position to ship reindeer into that territory.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Does Mr. Menier own them?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): No, we gave him the herd with the understanding that when they reached a certain number we would get the increase for the purpose of shipping into the northern country.

Mr. HOEY: Where is that herd located?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): On Anticosti island. The American government have made a great success of breeding and rearing reindeer among the Eskimos of Alaska. The Hudson's Bay Company had their unfortunate experience with their herd there. We had our unfortunate experience with ours on the coast of Labrador, and I have been somewhat loath to ask for funds to purchase reindeer to put amongst these people, but I think that is the solution. We are now in negotiation with the Hudson's Bay Company, after we have investigated areas where there is sufficient moss for the maintenance of the reindeer, to enter into arrangements with them, as they send in a ship annually, to take in reindeer and to secure the services of a Lapp or preferably a trained Eskimo to put the reindeer amongst these people, because that seems to be the means of preventing utter starvation which frequently undertakes these unfortunate people when they are removed from the wooded area in severe winter weather.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I can take a moment's time to impress upon the minister the urgency of the matter. I agree that it was urgent before the minister took charge and it must be all the more urgent now. These poor people are living there in very considerable numbers, and when the reindeer took flight by reason, I think, of the great fire that devastated the territory, they were left destitute of the main means of subsistence. I do not think there is any way in which they could follow the reindeer. The reindeer went virtually to the Labrador coast.

[Mr. C. A. Stewart.]

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): They went south east to an area behind the Labrador coast.

Mr. MEIGHEN: They went a tremendously long way and these people had no other means of subsistence.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): About seven hundred miles from their former territory.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The consequence is that, struggle as we may to keep the people from dying, we cannot do that without their natural habits being encouraged and, therefore, the environment kept so that they can live. If they are held there in tents they die. Tuberculosis has become an epidemic. It is not in their being to live as ordinary people can. Heredity demands other work, other exercise and another kind of life. I do not know any trust we have more sacred than seeing to it that some means of keeping up the Eskimo race is provided, and that they are not simply allowed to die right at our doorstep as mere dogs. It so happens that there is a man who has taken a special and life interest really in this territory, Mr. Walton. I remember making inquiries in my last year in the department as to the liability, earnestness, and capacity of this gentleman, and I got nothing but the most eulogistic reports of him. He has simply devoted his entire life to that service. He is a man of very considerable practicability. What he says is this. The reason the reindeer fled in Baffin's land was that the quality of moss on which the reindeer lives does not grow there. It is a moss, but not reindeer moss. Mr. Stefansson, who felt that he had the problem well in hand, seems to have erred very seriously there as elsewhere, and the contract that was made through his agency with the Hudson's Bay Company has proven unprofitable to that company. We were to get a certain rental from Baffin's land depending upon the progress of the enterprise. The same applies to the territory where we tried to rear reindeer near the shores of the St. Lawrence. According to Mr. Walton—and he seems to have his proofs very complete—the moss that is essential to reindeer life is very abundant on that north and northwestern coast. If they can be reared there and that animal life can be restored, our problem is solved. We do not need to bother any more. They can take care of themselves. That, with the sealing traffic is all they need. I do not like asking for further grants, but it looks to me, not only the part of common humanity, but as well the part of commercial wisdom, to see to it that under the proper kind of herders