

Mr. SUTHERLAND. They made a few observations last year, and it is to be hoped it will be completed this year.

Mr. FOSTER. For this amount?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. Yes. Mr. White-Fraser is the astronomer, and Mr. St. Cyr is the surveyor.

To provide for the relief of distressed persons in the North-west Territories. \$10,000

Mr. FOSTER. I do not understand this vote. What was spent out of that vote last year?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE (Mr. Fielding). This is a new vote.

Mr. FOSTER. Last year there was a sum to recoup members of the North-west Mounted Police for relief given to destitute half-breeds. What is this for?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. This has been put in upon the application of the Hudson Bay Company.

Mr. FOSTER. I think I will ask the hon. minister to let that stand until some of the North-west members are here.

Mr. SUTHERLAND. All right.

Expenses of relief party and furnishing provisions to distressed people on the Liard and Dease Rivers..... \$20,000

Mr. SUTHERLAND. The explanation of what has been done in this matter is in a letter from the Hudson Bay officer, which is as follows:

Hudson's Bay Company,
Commissioner's Office,
Winnipeg, Dec. 13, 1899.

Sir,—In reply to your letter of December 1, I beg to state the accounts for relief of destitute miners given by the Hudson's Bay Company on behalf of the Dominion government, have just been received, and are being prepared for your approval and will be sent forward without delay.

For your information, I have to state that in accordance with your telegraphic instructions of May 10 and subsequent communications, the company's steamer 'Strathcona,' which was then laid up at Port Simpson, was immediately put in commission, and a captain and crew were despatched from Victoria on May 15 to join the vessel.

The supplies which were considered necessary were at once shipped to Wrangel to meet the steamer 'Strathcona' upon her arrival there. The 'Strathcona' was promptly launched and prepared for service, and arrived at Wrangel on May 29.

In proceeding up the Stikine River on the first trip, the boat unfortunately met with an accident which necessitated her return to Wrangel for repairs. These were effected without unnecessary delay, and the boat left Wrangel for Glenora on June 10.

In the meantime, as it was impossible to find out what other animals, if any, were available at Glenora for the transportation inland of the supplies from that point to Dease Lake, a contract was entered into with Mr. Pike, of the Casca Trading Company, for the sending in of sufficient men and pack animals to enable the inland transport to be carried out.

Mr. FOSTER.

Upon the arrival of the 'Strathcona' at Glenora it was learned that the report of destitution had been considerably exaggerated, and it was not considered advisable to send in all the supplies which had been forwarded, and in the interest of the government the contract which had been entered into with Mr. Pike was cancelled. As, however, Mr. Pike had already incurred considerable expense, he requested compensation therefor, and this was settled by paying him the sum of \$1,500. The needed supplies were then sent forward by the Hudson's Bay Company's pack train at a cost of \$464.36, and as the total amount payable to Mr. Pike under the contract which had to be first made with him was \$4,800, there was a saving to the department by the cancellation of the contract of \$2,835.64.

On June 20 the government relief supplies left Glenora for Dease Lake in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's officials, and all possible assistance was given to those needing relief.

The first of those in distress reached Glenora on June 18, and these parties had already been assisted by the Hudson's Bay Company at their inland posts. From time to time others arrived until September 4, when it was necessary for the 'Strathcona' to leave on her last trip to Wrangel on account of the low stage of water in the river. Altogether the 'Strathcona' made seven complete trips between Wrangel and Glenora, and brought out 155 men, to whom transportation, meals and accommodation were afforded. In addition to these, there were some thirty who worked for their passages, thus effecting a saving to the government. From those to whom relief was afforded certificates were taken that they were in destitution and had been given the assistance described.

The majority of those receiving assistance expressed their gratitude to the Hudson's Bay Company, as the agents of the Dominion government, in affording them relief, as well as for the treatment they had received at the company's posts which they had passed upon their long and arduous journey. There were some, however, who, disappointed by failure and hardship, were discontented, and were not so appreciative of the government's action and the efforts which had been made to relieve them.

Practically the last of the sick and destitute in that part of the country were brought down on the final trip of the 'Strathcona,' and it is hoped that the assistance which the Hudson's Bay Company has been enabled to afford, and which has only been carried out with much difficulty, may be considered by those who have been benefited as a generous and beneficent action on the part of the Dominion government.

It is possible that some small accounts may yet be received from some of the inland posts with which communication is difficult, but it is not anticipated that the amount of the present account, approximately \$29,500, will be much exceeded.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,
(Sgd.) C. C. CHIPMAN.

Mr. FOSTER. So that the amount was \$29,500?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. The account is \$29,500, and the deputy informs me that in looking over it, they have reduced it some.

Mr. FOSTER. What is this vote of \$20,000 for this year?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. They had a vote last year of \$25,000, and these accounts not