

they were received at the Fort; we never forced them into the Fort; but if they came and asked assistance and wished to stay, they did so. J. Rae, Esq., M. D.

23 February 1857.

683. Mr. Labouchere wishes to know whether anything is done with respect to vaccination?—Yes; vaccine matter is sent to all the posts. I may mention a curious fact, which is, that in the year 1835 the small-pox was brought up by a steamboat from the States. A gentleman at the Saskatchewan vaccinated all the Cree Indians that came in; and there was scarcely a single case occurred among the tribe; we supposed it was because they had all been vaccinated; whereas deaths took place amongst the more distant tribes, near the Missouri. The small-pox was brought by steamboat up the Missouri, and was brought over to the Saskatchewan by a quantity of horse stealers, who heard that the disease was at the Missouri, and went to steal horses there. They found the Indians dying by hundreds; they took the disease with them, and most of them died upon the road.

684. Taking you from Moose Factory to the mouth of the Mackenzie River, where you lived; how long did you live there?—About nine months at Fort Simpson, and two years at Bear Lake, which is in the Mackenzie district.

685. How many worn-out hunters lived there, deriving charity from you?—I do not remember; I think there were about two or three families whilst I was there; at the one post.

686. Say six people?—Yes, about that at that time; but it varies according to the privations which the Indians have suffered.

687. Mr. Gurney.] Did I understand you rightly, that in addition to the worn-out hunters who were resident, there was also gratuitous medical advice given to the other Indians as they happened to require it?—To every one that came, or that we heard of.

688. Sir John Pakington.] How far south do the Esquimaux come?—Along the shore of Hudson's Bay; they come to Churchill, in latitude 59°.

689. Do they come down as far south as the Great Slave Lake?—They do not go inland at all; the furthest inland that they go is up the Back River, that we know of now.

690. They always keep to the rivers or the sea?—Yes, it is generally found so.

691. Is there in the interval a large tract of land between the North American Indians and the Esquimaux?—Certainly; a sort of debatable land; and between each tribe of the Esquimaux themselves there is a debatable land; for instance, the tribe of Esquimaux about the Copper Mine River do not seem to me to associate or mix with those to the West or East; when any one has gone there, they have found that they have no tools, either Russian or Hudson's Bay, among them; nothing that could be traced either to the Russians or to the Hudson's Bay Company.

692. The Esquimaux, I presume, from what you say, are different tribes, but not different races?—Not different races, I think.

693. What is the extent of the debatable land between the Indians and the Esquimaux?—It varies according to the circumstances; the Chipewyans and the Esquimaux frequently meet at Churchill; then the Louchoux and the Esquimaux meet again on the Mackenzie, but on the Coppermine River the interval between them is about 60 or 100 miles.

694. Mr. Grogan.] How long at any time did you reside at the Red River Settlement?—About two months at one time; that was the longest period I was there.

695. Do you know the regulations of the American companies with regard to hunting; do they give a larger price relatively to their value for the inferior skins, as the Hudson's Bay Company does?—They sell their goods nearly at the same price as the Hudson's Bay Company, only the goods are inferior; Indians, frequently from the American side, come over to the Hudson's Bay Company to get good guns or a good article, and they get them as cheaply as in the States; that I have heard from hunters who have been among the Americans. Another point I may mention, namely, the proportion of spirits which is acquired on the American frontier; when I travelled down from the Red River to Crow Wing to the Minnesota territory, nearly every American Indian that I found travelling, had bottles of spirits with him.