

Mr. MACFARLANE, in his Report upon the result of trade for *Outfit 1876*, stated that the natives of Athabasca experienced greater privations from want of food than they had done for many years back.

The weather had rendered Moose hunting impracticable, besides very materially interfering with the trapping of Marten and other Furs. The very early settling in of spring weather also did much injury.

Writing of one of the Posts called Battle River, Mr. MACFARLANE, says:—

“Great and protracted privations were experienced here, as well as at all the Posts on Peace River, from a scarcity of food, and which, it is needless to state, seriously affected the winter hunts.

“As the season, however, advanced matters began to improve, and the Battle River people collected a considerable quantity of fine Beaver.”

Of a Post called Fond-du-lac, Mr. MACFARLANE writes:—

“The Provision Trade of 1876, is beyond all question the poorest ever made at this Outpost.

“The Autumn Receipts were almost nil, while during one winter, Reindeer were so very scarce that 19 men, women, and children perished from starvation, and a number of others would have met with the same fate if they had not been succoured in good time.” In April, Deer made their appearance in good numbers, but, unfortunately, a thaw set in, so little or nothing was secured. In these circumstances, and owing to a scarcity of Martens, the Fur Returns are some 25 per cent. below last year’s.”

Similar statements are made with regard to other Outposts.

Capital employed in Athabasca District:—

Outfit 1874 .. .. .	\$93,000
„ 1875 .. .. .	128,000
„ 1876 .. .. .	160,000

#### ENGLISH RIVER DISTRICT.

Inventory at the commencement of Outfit 1874 ... .. .	\$22,000
Inventory at the close of 1876... .. .	29,000
The supplies sent out in 1874 were ... .. .	\$29,000
„ „ 1875 „ ... .. .	37,500
„ „ 1876 „ ... .. .	40,000
Goods traded in 1874 ... .. .	\$17,000
„ „ 1875 ... .. .	47,500
„ „ 1876 ... .. .	32,000
Value of Beaver, Marten, Mink, and Lynx, in 1874 at 1876 prices ... .. .	£3,000
„ „ „ „ 1875 ... .. .	4,500
„ „ „ „ 1876 ... .. .	3,700

Accordingly it will be seen that in Outfit 1876, while the value of the principal Furs traded was only £700 in excess of the year 1874, \$15,000 more goods were disposed of than in 1874; an increase of almost 100 per cent.

We should not pass over the results of Outfit 1875, when \$47,500 were traded, or \$31,000 more than in 1874, while the value of the Furs on the same valuation was £1,500 more, or about \$7,500.

Inspecting Factor McMURRAY, in writing of English River District in Outfit 1875, stated:—

“You will observe the very large increase in the price of some kinds of Furs, that the presence of opposition traders has compelled us to make. The Fur tariff for the current Outfit is certainly very high, and would not have been adopted, if, with a due regard to our interests, we