

the complaints of the Indians were only too well founded and it is for us to profit by the bitter lessons in Indian matters which experience has taught them. Fortunately for us, we commence our relations with them in the best possible manner; they have to us no hereditary hatreds, no traditions passing from tribe to tribe of broken faith and unfulfilled promises; and it is only necessary for us to determine a policy which will be fair to them, and to convince them that our promises will be rigidly kept, to ensure to us a continuance of the present state of peace which exists.

I am perfectly well aware that a sort of stereotyped opinion prevails throughout the older Provinces that there is no danger of difficulty with the Western Indians, because we have had heretofore no serious difficulty with them in the present settled portions of Canada. I know that the fact of these Indians, American as well as English, almost religiously preserving the medals given to their forefathers in George the Third's time, will be cited as a proof of their hereditary loyalty to the crown, and an argument against the possibility of difficulties; and, while I am prepared to admit that this sentiment among them will make it less difficult to preserve peace, still I warn honorable gentlemen against placing too much reliance on that which is at best but a very intangible idea of the relations between the crown and themselves, and that whenever they are convinced that they have been unfairly dealt with, or, as they themselves would express it, "the face of 'Okemaqua,' their great mother, has been hid from them," that the feeling of injustice will produce the same results north of the 49th parallel as they have to the south, notwithstanding the sentiment of loyalty to the British Queen which undoubtedly exists. I have cited our Cree nation in connection with the American Sioux, because the lands of that tribe will be first required by the Dominion, and to draw attention to the fact that difficulty with them would be attended with the same appalling results, the same enormous expense as in the case of the war between the United States and the Sioux.

In the determination of an Indian policy, Sir, we have unfortunately very little to gain from past experience. The circumstances under which the Indians of the older Provinces were treated with are utterly different from those of the present day. Then, the advancement of civilization was slow, and the Indian continued to hunt over and enjoy, in many cases for fifty years after, the lands that he was receiving yearly payment for. The process of change was so slow that he scarcely felt it, and when he did, a change of