

required a good deal more than the mad freaks of a lunatic to induce the Indians to take up arms against the sovereign power of this Dominion. I say that every man not blinded by party prejudice, every man whose eyes are open, or who is willing to have his eyes opened and his ears unstopped, must see that the policy, the avowed policy of the Administration and of their officials in the North-West had a great deal to do, had everything to do, with the outbreak of the Indians, and that that policy would sooner or later eventuate in an armed insurrection. The way to maintain the loyalty of the Indian is not by violating solemn engagements, not by breaking every treaty entered into with the Indian, not by unfulfilled promises made by the Government, not by cheating, robbing and swindling the Indians, not by cruel and harsh treatment, not by death from cold and starvation; and of all these things I charge that this Government through their agents have been guilty. I propose to read one or two other extracts to establish the proposition I have laid down. The Rev. John McLean, Methodist missionary to the Blood Indians near Fort Macleod, discussed the half-breed and Indian question in the August number of *The Canadian Methodist Magazine*. He says:

"The causes of the present discontent among the Indians are legion. Some of the men employed by the Department on the reservations have been granted their positions through political influence, even though they have been utterly incompetent for the respective duties of their office. They receive good salaries, and yet the Indians derive very little benefit from their services. Promises have been made to the Indians by Government officials that have never been kept. The Department has professed to give these people food enough to sustain them, yet at different times their rations have been cut down. They have been told that they were to remain on their reservations, but it was impossible for them to do so on their daily allowance. About a million dollars a year is now granted by the Dominion Parliament for the Indian service, but a high official in the North-West has stated that not one-fourth of this sum, or the equivalent of one-fourth, ever reaches the Indians. The money is filtered through the hands of jobbers, supply men, agents, and other speculators until the Indian's share is reduced to very little, indeed."

Archbishop Taché says:

"The Indians, who should have been cared for and protected by the Government, were 'left a prey to the seductions of men revoltingly immoral, and when this was pointed out the friends of humanity had another regret to register.' He alleges that in other cases 'the Indians were deprived of the pittance assigned to them, or it was given to them as if they were dogs!' They were too often deceived. At the risk of creating great surprise, I affirm that the massacres were not committed without previous provocation. I here invoke the testimony of one of the victims himself. The Rev. Father Fafard said, in conversation with another missionary, who in turn related it to me:—'Such a one (naming an official) acts with shameful brutality towards the Indians. He will be killed some day.' The person alluded to was killed, and two devoted missionaries increased the number of victims they were striving to protect. A gentleman whose veracity I cannot question assured me that some Indians had told him in 1884 that an individual, whom he mentioned, 'treated them like dogs,' and the same individual was killed by the Indians who had lodged the complaint against him."

Rev. Mr. McDougall says:

"We could not find, nor did we try to find, any excuse for the promises made but not fulfilled, for the cut-throat policy often exhibited and sometimes enforced by officials of the Indian Department, for the shameful and immoral lives of many of the employees of the same. Some of these were a disgrace to the lowest barbarism, let alone civilization. Nor how could we, when earnestly trying to teach Indians habits of industry and thrift, be expected to excuse the laziness and incompetency of many sent into the country to teach the wards of the Government those lessons we have been working for them to acquire for so many years. Moreover could we be blamed when we felt strongly that something was wrong in the system which allowed such men in its branch of the service. The inconsistency has oftentimes appeared to us very glaring when we looked at a department claiming to have a certain object in view, set aside by the country at large, whose servant it is, to attain this object, and yet within its own grasp and power doing those things and adopting those methods which are defeating their object. Very little rebellion in these men ten or fifteen years ago, and had the conduct of Government officials of every department sent into this country been such as to command the respect of the natives there would have been no rebellion on the part of the Indians last spring, nor would the smouldering influences thereof still rankle in the hearts of many. The same system is being continued without change. Not one of the officials complained of has been removed or interfered with. The Government have refused to accept advice from any quarter."

Mr. Jackson, in the speech from which we have already quoted, says:

"I heard some of the men say, who took up arms against the police to protect themselves (it was said before some responsible citizens of Fort Qu'Appelle): 'We had to do it or starve to death, and we preferred to die by the police bullets rather than die by starvation.'"

Instead of dealing fairly and honestly by the Indian, as we ought to have done; instead of maintaining unbroken our treaty obligations with the Indian, we pursued, and we still pursue that mad and reckless and inhuman policy of sub-mission by starvation. The Indian agent, in his report of 1883, speaking of Way-way-se-Cappo's and Gambler's bands, says:

"They have become particularly independent, and have undertaken to compel me to give them what they required. Gambler's band were also very independent, and did not sow much, as I refused to give seed wheat to those who received it last year and kept none for seed; consequently most of the others refused to take seed. However, both these bands can get work if they want it, and a little starvation will do them good."

I say it is worse than folly for the First Minister to say that the Indians who rebelled did not plead grievances in extenuation of their having done so. It is stopping one's ears; it is closing one's eyes; it is being wilfully blind to the evidence that is submitted to Parliament in almost every page of the reports of the Department of Indian Affairs and of the North-West Mounted Police. The hon. gentleman knew, the Administration ought to have known, the terrible experience of the neighboring republic with just such a policy; we ourselves knew from our experience and the reports of our agents in the North-West, what the effect of such a policy would be. But the Government may not be satisfied with the evidence I have given that broken promises, violated treaties, fraud and peaculation, starvation bordering on death, drove the Indians into the arms of the rebellious. I shall now submit a piece of evidence, the weight and authority of which even this Government will not question. The First Minister of this Dominion has over and over again declared in Parliament that Governor Dewdney was the best official in the whole North-West to deal with the Indians. I took, and still take, issue with the First Minister on that question. I say he is the most dangerous official that ever this incompetent and reckless Government appointed to fulfil any position of trust in the North-West Territories. But let us see what Governor Dewdney says of the Indians of the plains in connection with the insurrection. In his report for the present year he makes use of the following language:—

"The bands implicated in the rebellion were those of One Arrow, Beardy, Okemasis, and part of Petequakeys, in the Carleton district, and the whole of the Indians in the Battleford and Fort Pitt districts, excepting Moosomin's and part of Thunder Child's, the latter refusing to approach the rebel camps until starvation drove him and his followers to do so."

So, Sir, you have here, out of the mouth of the Lieutenant-Governor himself, the statement that these Indians refused to join the rebel camp until starvation compelled them to do so. You have the statement out of the mouth of the commissioner that starvation compelled the chief of this band, and the whole of his followers, to join the armed insurrection. The Minister of Justice told us not long ago, in his speech in Parliament, that:

"The man who undertakes in the North-West to incite the Indians to rise and commit war and depredations on the settlers, takes his life in his hand, and if he appeals to me for mercy he will get justice."

That sentiment was vociferously cheered by hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House. I agree with that sentiment. It commends itself to my judgment; but I tell the Minister of Justice that if he is disposed to mete out merited justice to those who, by their misconduct, by their maladministration, by their incompetency and by their criminal neglect, provoked the Indian uprising, the hon. gentle-