

in 1886, carefully refrained from bringing the subject before the House when the right hon. gentleman who could best answer him was here to give him his answer. I have only to say this afternoon that it would be impossible for any person to have followed the hon. gentleman's remarks, to have compared his extracts and come to the conclusion which he desired us to arrive, that the charges which he made in 1886 were sustained. I have followed some of the hon. gentleman's quotations, and I have been unable to see that the statements contained in the pamphlet issued by the department were in the least degree inaccurate. The hon. gentleman closed, for example, by quoting his remarks in 1886 and asking the House to admit that they were borne out by the department's report. Referring to page 34 of the pamphlet, I find the following as the hon. gentleman's charge:—

"The chief complained that he could not get his treaty pigs, and that he wanted more oxen, a tool chest and milk pans."

The report reads :

"He asked for his treaty pigs, more work oxen, another tool chest, and moccasins, also some milk pans."

There is no indication that any previous application had been made, there was no allegation that they would not be given. The hon. gentleman said :

"Bob Tail's band complained that there was still due them under the treaty, a cow and a bull."

The report said :

"They claim that there is owing to them under the treaty, a cow and a bull."

That turned out afterwards to be an erroneous claim, as are many of the claims made by the Indians. The hon. gentleman said :

"Ermine Skin's band complained that there was due them under the treaty a mower and some carts."

The report said :

"The chief asked for a mower and some carts."

There was no complaint in this regard, there was no suggestion even that they were due them, and so on, all the way through, and this applies especially to the charges made by the hon. gentleman to a great many harrowed listeners, when he declared that out of a band of eighty-eight heads of families and seventeen children under three years, eleven persons had died from starvation. What the hon. gentleman said is this :

"At Oak River, eleven men have died out of eighty-eight heads of families, and seventeen children under three years old. This is very distressing and is hard to account for—the change of diet, owing to the hunting and scrofula, being probably the cause."

The report shows that out of the eleven heads of families, whom the hon. gentleman said died out of starvation, seven had died from drinking too much whiskey, in spite of the strenuous exertions adopted to put down the sale of this deadly Indian poison. Then, in the passage which the hon. gentleman read this afternoon, in which he did quote correctly the passage as regards farming implements, the contrast between the report and the hon. gentleman's statement in 1885 is just as marked as any contrast can be. This is what the hon. gentleman charged, after reading from the report that harrows and ploughs were partly buried in mud and weeds in different places :

"We have an army of officials in the North-West ; we have Indian agents, sub-Indian agents, farm instructors, all kinds and classes of men there to look after the interests of the Indians ; and yet we find that so little atten-

tion was paid to those supplies that they were dumped off in the mud and filth and left there to rot."

The report of the Indian agent is that the Indians take no interest whatever in farming, that they take no care of the implements provided for them—not that they were dumped anywhere in the mud and allowed to rot. The Indian agent says :

"In going over the reserve on the 11th September, I noticed that no attempt was made to care for the implements which had been supplied to them. The harrows and ploughs were lying partly buried in mud and weeds in different places. Some of them have never been used or put together yet, and are spoiling for want of care."

So, instead of this condition being due to carelessness on the part of officials, it appears that the implements had been furnished to the Indians and brought on the reservation, that they had not been cared for by the Indians or even put together or used ; and that fact is brought to the notice of the Government by the Indian agent who was accused by the hon. gentleman of dumping them in the ditch and in the mud and filth and leaving them there to rot. Again, on one page of the Indian agent's report, referring to the Salteaux band, under South Quill, he says, that hunting having failed, the band are miserably poor ; and the hon. gentleman used this language :

"Miserably poor ! With a magnificent donation voted by Parliament, and expended last year, of some \$1,400,000. Miserably poor ! And why ? Because this Government negligently and carelessly permit their contractors to supply these Indians with an article of wearing apparel that lasts them three days."

These are the facts as reported from the report of the Indian agent from which the hon. gentleman appeared to quote :

"The Salteaux band, at Rolling River, refuse to take their new reserve after it had been acquired for them at great trouble and expense. Many of them are now anxious to take it, but I fear the part proposed to be purchased cannot now be had. However, they cost the Government little or nothing, and I have warned them that until they do settle down they will get no assistance."

He goes on to say :

"I do not expect to make of these Indians farmers : a little corn and potatoes will be about the extent of their harvest. There are one or two good men, but the influence of the rest is too strong for them. They have a good fishing lake, and they will have to look to that for subsistence, as they can sell their surplus fish."

These are the people who are said to have been miserably poor, but this not from any fault in the administration of the Indian Department. The hon. gentleman also quoted from Mr. McKay's report for the purpose of showing that the Indians had, as long ago as 1886, made complaints. It was never denied that they were dissatisfied ; no one ever knew of Indians who did not complain ; the fulfilment of treaty obligations with them was just the beginning, and they required these obligations to be filled to the rest of their days. But Mr. McColl says :

"To say that the Indians are wholly satisfied with the manner in which the terms of the several treaties have been carried out, would be saying what is inconsistent with their character. To complain is a chronic feature of their nature. I am forced, however, to admit, from personal intercourse with them, and from abundant data at hand, that the manner treaty stipulations have been observed in this superintendency in the past has given them just ground for complaint. They have been furnished—by no fault of the Government, which paid the price of prime supplies and implements—with inferior and old worn-out cattle, or cattle too wild for working or dairy purposes, and with supplies of all kinds of the most inferior quality, which would not be accepted at any price by the ordinary consumer."