

63 VICTORIA, A. 1900

assignment, but at a very low rate on account of that requirement. The requirement intended to benefit the Half-breeds is therefore being turned to their disadvantage, but at the same time the dissatisfaction thus created is likely to spread in advance of the Commissioners and lead the Half-breeds, at the points at which the Indians have yet to be met, to use their influence to prevent the further extension of the treaty. The Half-breeds of this district have evinced much intelligence and industry and are much better able to look after their own interest and the interest of their children than were the Half-breeds of the older portions of the territories. Consultation with the natural advisers of the Half-breeds has led to the conviction that they would make good use of their children's scrip and that it would be in their interest to have it at their disposal. It has therefore been decided to strike out from the scrip certificate, Form A, the words 'and to be delivered to the said..... or assigns,' which appear at fifth and sixth lines between the word 'bearer' on the fourth line and the word 'and' on the sixth line.

DAVID LAIRD,

Chairman.

J. H. ROSS,

J. A. J. MCKENNA,

JAMES WALKER,

J. ARTHUR COTE.

LESSER SLAVE LAKE, June 22, 1899.

SIR,—Referring to the meeting of the Half-breeds to-day, at which I acted as intermediary and adviser, after careful consideration of what was urged as to the form of scrip, I have come to the conclusion that very much trouble will arise if the parents be not able to make use of their children's scrip for their benefit during their minority. As you have no doubt observed, the Half-breeds here have evinced more intelligence and industry than did the Half-breeds to whom scrip was issued in 1870 and 1885, and although I came here strongly impressed with the desirability of doing everything possible to prevent the parents from using the scrip of their children, and from freely disposing of their own, the conditions here have led me to the conclusion, that action in that direction will not result in any benefit to the Half-breeds here, but to their disadvantage, for they are determined to make prompt use of their scrip and that of their children. I find that the Half-breeds here, when they heard that scrip was to be issued, counted upon turning it into money for investment in cattle for themselves and their children. Very, very few, if any, of them will take land scrip, and I am convinced that none of those who take money scrip will use it in direct payment for land, and the result of the impediment to free disposition will therefore be the depreciation of the scrip. They are bound to dispose of it and it is in their interest that they should be in a position to get the best return possible for it. The dissatisfaction with the form of certificate is so great and so widespread that I fear, if the Commissioners have to persist in using it the dissatisfaction will spread in advance of the Indian Commission and make it very difficult, if not impossible, to further extend the treaty which I am so anxious to have all the Indians enter into. In the interest of the Half-breeds and in the public interest, I would therefore advise that if it be in the power of the Commissioners, they should take upon themselves to amend the scrip as to meet the wishes of the Half-breeds.

With respect and consideration, I remain sincerely,

Truly your devoted servant,

FATHER A. LACOMBE,

As Adviser in the Commission.

HON. DAVID LAIRD,

Chairman of Indian Commission.