

record; or the applicant for admission to the church has been labelled "infant" or "adult." But whatever the value to the department, this is one of the conditions of application; and it forms the most frequent stumbling block to the seeker after scrip.

It sometimes happens that a man of undoubted and well authenticated half-breed lineage will refuse to take scrip, and will insist on taking treaty with the band he lives with. He is absolutely ignorant of the value of scrip, and totally indifferent to the arguments of the scrip buyers who endeavor to show him the error of his ways. One such halfbreed refused scrip last year, and took treaty with the rest of the Indians. This man had a family of four children. His record was well known, and his claim was perfect. It was put to him by the scrip buyers that by taking scrip he would come into possession of a large sum of money. He got up at treaty time and made a little speech in which he said that he had lived all his life with the Indians. They were his people. If he took scrip, he and his children would have to live like the white man, away from the reserve and their relations. He would live and die with his people.

That man could have had for the asking, five scrip certificates. These at the current prices in the north, were worth a thousand dollars each. They could have been sold in Winnipeg for ten thousand dollars for the five. The income of that at six per cent. would

have brought him in fifty dollars a month in perpetuity. He had probably never earned a hundred dollars a year at any time in his life. Yet he put fortune aside with a wave of the hand and sat back, content with five dollars per annum for himself and each of his children, rather than leave the life he had been brought up to.

With childlike simplicity like that the lot of the scrip buyer must be a happy one—providing he is unhampered by competition. To detach scrip certificates from such specimens of unsophisticated guilelessness must be like taking candy from a baby. And if the halfbreed himself takes no thought for the morrow, such is far from being the case with the scrip buyer.

This year treaty has been concluded at York Factory and Churchill. All last winter, scrip buyers were on the ground, searching out likely applicants, and persuading the backward ones to apply; making advances in cash or supplies where they would do the most good; hunting up evidence that would probably have been available anyway; and generally making themselves officiously useful—and in spite of the fact that any sale of scrip before it is delivered to the owner is absolutely illegal, doubtless wheedling out of the expectant beneficiaries a promise to deliver up the scrip, when it is obtained, to the good Samaritan who has taken all the trouble and been so kind and helpful.