

I respectfully submit that there is no public question of the day more worthy of the consideration of this House than the determination of a policy which will ensure a continuance of the peace which exists, and the avoidance of those Indian wars which are always characterized by brutal outrages, and enormous expense. Allow me to cite one instance only, among the many such which have occurred in the United States: West of the Red River, and south of the boundary line is the country of the Sioux Indians, corresponding to our Cree tribe, who occupy a similar geographical position on our side of the boundary. These tribes are about equal in numbers; both are Indians of the prairie, practiced horsemen and excellent shots. Ten years ago, this tribe of Sioux were in as profound a state of peace with the United States as the Crees are now with us; but a grievance had been growing; the conditions of their treaties had not been carried out; remonstrances to their agents had been pigeon-holed in official desks; warnings from half-breeds and traders who knew their language had been pooh-poohed by the apostles of red tape, till, suddenly, the wail of the massacre of '63 echoed through the land. Western Minnesota was red with the blood of the innocent, and for hundreds of miles the prairie horizon was lit with burning dwellings, in which the shriek of childless women had been silenced by the tomahawk of the savage. The military power of the United States was of course called into requisition; but the movement of regular troops was slow, while that of the Indian was like the "pestilence which stalks in darkness." Where least expected; where farthest removed from military interference; in the dead of night, they appeared, and the morning sun rose on the ghastly faces of the dead, and the charred remains of their once happy homes.

Trained soldiers, in the end, overcame the savage; but not until a country as large as Nova Scotia had been depopulated; not until the terror had diverted the stream of foreign immigration to more southern fields, and not until three military expeditions, on three successive years, had traversed the Indian country, at an expenditure to the United States Government of ten millions of dollars, and necessitated since that time the maintenance of ten military posts, with permanent garrisons of three thousand men.

It needs, Sir, no argument to show that in Indian difficulties of this sort, prevention is better than cure. Americans admit that this tribe of Sioux were the best, when fairly treated, that the Government had had dealings with, and confess that in very many cases