

hanging around the different stations, they have only been fed on half rations, and we have been so severe upon the Indians in this regard that we have on several occasions received remonstrances from the medical men in the vicinity of these points, stating that the food was insufficient to support them. Still we hope that the demand for food will decrease every year, as the Indians become employed. We find them betaking themselves to getting out ties for the railway, and it is believed that they will be ready and willing to apply themselves to the work of construction, not to rock cutting, but to the use of the pick and the spade, which will be of great advantage in view of the scarcity of labor in the country. I would also state that the agents for treaties 1, 2, 3, and 5 have been instructed to subtract from the payments to the Indians next year the overpayments which have been made. Will the hon. gentleman object to the cost of \$12,000 for building an office for the Commissioner. He will be situated at a central point. \$12,000 will not build a very big house anywhere, and certainly not out there. The Commissioner must have an office, and also a council room in which to receive the Indians.

Mr. SCOTT. Some hon. gentlemen may think the expenditure for the Indians is in excess of what it ought to be, but they should take into consideration the fact that it is most necessary to the opening up of the North-West that we should maintain the most friendly relations with the Indian tribes. To do that, we must keep faith with them. When treaties are made, the amount must be paid punctually and promptly; if not, we will be sure to get into the same difficulty with the Indian tribes of our North-West that our friends on the other side of the border have to contend with. We know from experience in the North-West that the Indians, when opportunities are offered them, are always ready to lend a helping hand in the farming operations, and that the policy of the Government in appointing farming instructors in the North-West has had already a most beneficial effect. It is much better to pay this small sum — for although it may appear large, I contend it is a small sum for the extinguishing of the Indian title and the purchase of lands in the North-West — or to pay double the amount rather than have an Indian war. I believe the Indian agents appointed in the past, have managed the business, at all events, to the satisfaction of the Indians; if not, we would have heard of it long before this. I presume the Government must have sufficient check on their officers in the North-West to know if they are dealing honestly with the Government or not. I have every confidence that the movement which the Government have made in regard to the treatment of the Indians of the North-West will result in good hereafter. I trust they will continue that policy. I trust they will be even more generous towards the Indians. We know well that during the regime of the Hudson's Bay Company, we never heard of difficulties with the Indian tribes, and that notwithstanding it has been called a great monopoly, it held the Indians tribes true to the British flag.

Mr. JONES (Leeds). I am aware of the truth of what the First Minister has said. I know of one man who was placed on one of the outposts, and who gave up his position on account of the reduction of rations, as he was afraid to remain there on account of the position of the Indians.

Mr. McCALLUM asked what kind of cattle were supplied. Where they wild Montana steers, such as were purchased by the late Government?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I believe some wild cattle were given under contract some years ago, but I have no doubt my hon. friend opposite called the contractors to account.

Mr. MILLS. Montana and Minnesota were the only places where cattle could be purchased. I have no doubt the

Government are obliged to purchase cattle now where they were purchased before. I believe the last lot was bought from the Hon. James McKay, but he had formerly purchased the cattle in Manitoba. The wild cattle were not purchased in my time, but before I came into office and since.

Mr. McCALLUM. The hon. gentleman made the most extraordinary contention that it would be good policy to starve the Indians. The Indians will not starve but will fight or steal, and it will cost less to feed them than to fight them. The hon. gentleman says we should make them farm lands, but we must first teach them how to do so. They must be coaxed into becoming self-sustaining.

Mr. TROW. The hon. gentleman appears to have misunderstood the remarks of the hon. member. His statement was that the appropriation was not unreasonable, but that its application in many instances was not proper, that it was not legitimately expended. I have had some little experience out there, and I know large sums are expended for provisions which are not properly appropriated. Indians have been obliged to come to some places hundreds of miles to receive their pay. It is not proper they should be obliged to come all that distance to receive their paltry pittance of \$5 each. If the paymaster would travel, instead of the Indians, for hundreds of miles, it would save money, because the Indians are allowed certain days' rations. On one occasion at Qu'Appelle several Indians had travelled five days to the place of payment, and occupied a like time in returning to their hunting grounds. That could be altered.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. That is being altered.

Mr. TROW. I cannot understand the system of checks to which the hon. First Minister has referred. Badges were used many years ago, but several of them were lost, and agents had to take it for granted that they wore the right parties. One great grievance I noticed was, that the Indians would remain feasting several days before they would accept their payments; on one occasion the time was nine days. I can understand that this might occur when the Indians were making treaties, but no reason existed after the treaty had been made and amount of payment fixed. On all occasions of payment, merchants and peddlars follow the paymaster, and within an hour of receiving their pittances, nine-tenths were expended in trifles not worth five cents, but for which a dollar was charged. I know cases in which Indians have bought a bottle of Pain-killer for a buffalo robe worth \$5. I hope the system initiated by the Premier will have a tendency to prevent fraud, because at one time 27 Sioux Indians who had escaped from Sitting Bull's band came to Qu'Appelle and nine of them received payments.

In reply to Mr. MILLS,

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The chief scene of the destitution among the Indians is in the territory extending from the vicinity of Wood Mountains to Fort Macleod. Besides the gradual and rapid decrease of the buffalo, there was the fact that the American troops were drawn up on the front in order to watch the hostiles, the Sioux, and the buffalo were thus driven back.

Mr. SCHULTZ. There are a large amount of lakes in the North-West filled with whitefish, while others have no fish. I would suggest that the department consider the advisability of stocking such lakes with fish spawn.

Sir RICHARD J. CARTWRIGHT. What information can the First Minister furnish respecting Sitting Bull and his band?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The main portion of the hostiles have surrendered to the United States. Sitting Bull with a much diminished body, numbering only 60 lodges out of all the vast body of men, is in a starving condition, but is still obstinate, more from apprehension, I think, than any-