

Thus began his connection with the Department of Indian Affairs to which his talents and energy have since been devoted.

Even at this early age and notwithstanding his many and varied duties, Mr. McKenna found time to interest himself in works of philanthropy and charity. In 1887, in conjunction with the late J. B. Lynch, then of the Dominion Audit Staff, he adjusted the finances and consolidated the debt of St. Patrick's Asylum, and his work as a director and later as president of that institution had much to do with putting it on a sound business.

His lecture on a "Neglected Field" delivered before the St. Vincent de Paul Society led to the establishment of the Catholic Truth Society at Ottawa, and, as one of the first directors of the organization, he played an influential part in its inaugural work. He was also actively instrumental in the Undenominational Children's Aid Society, being a member of the first council of management and succeeding the late Sheriff Sweetland in the Presidency, although at that time the youngest member of its board of directors.

When the Hon. Clifford Sifton assumed the portfolio of the Interior he entrusted Mr. McKenna, though he had never previously met him, with the handling of important and intricate questions affecting the Interior as well as the Indian department. In 1897 he was commissioned to conduct at Victoria, B. C., in conjunction with Mr. T. G. Rothfell, the legal adviser of the Department of the Interior, negotiations with the Government of British Columbia respecting the Railway Belt lands and Indian reserves. He proved himself a persona grata with that government, and his work met with the fullest approval of his minister. Through the negotiations an arrangement was effected for the administration of the Railway Belt lands, the complication resulting from the occupation by the Esquimalt and Nanaimo railway of land within the Songhees Indian Reserve was put in train for settlement, and there was a clearing up of the clouds that hung about the question of the joint rights of the Dominion and the Province as to Indian lands. A flood of light is thrown on that complicated subject by Mr. McKenna's correspondence in 1897 with the British Columbia government, which is published in the Provincial Parliamentary Papers.

In 1899 he prepared all the reports and papers in connection with the treaty which abolished the aboriginal title to the lands of the Peace River and Athabasca country, and was appointed one of the commissioners to negotiate the treaty. Though he was