

think, by keeping at the agency a supply of hop yeast, or furnishing them soda or some inexpensive leaven, that you will hear no further complaints about the flour.

That is the idea this gentleman had as to the article which was spreading disease and death among the Indians. He reports: The flour is all right; if the Government would only give the Indians a little soda, matters would be satisfactory. Now, the Government might have spared some soda, if that was all that was necessary. We read further:

"I ate bread made of the same flour during my stay at Calgary in October last, and it was sound and sweet and good baker's bread.

"I trust this explanation will be satisfactory, as we aim and do furnish goods equal and better than the samples we tender on.

"Begging a reply to-day, if practicable, as I have important business to settle with the Canadian Pacific Railway in Montreal, and cannot well return.

"I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"W. G. CONRAD,

"Of I. G. Baker & Co."

That is what he said in regard to the flour. Having mentioned the name of the milling firm it would not be right if I did not read the letter of the milling firm with respect to this same flour; because however much we may find fault with the Department, I hold that we have no right to do injustice either directly or indirectly to business firms in the country. I shall therefore read the statement of the milling firm with respect to this flour. Messrs. Baker had written to O'Gilvie & Co. with respect to it, to which the latter replied:

"MONTREAL, 17th May, 1884.

"Messrs. I. G. Baker & Co.,

"GENTLEMEN,—Yours of the 14th to hand, referring to the flour we delivered during the season of 1883. The superfine you ordered from us for the Indian Department was equal to the Toronto standard of superfine, and sound when it was shipped. When we were informed last month that complaints were being made of the quality of the flour, we sent one of our best men as far west as Calgary to enquire into it. He examined the flour at Indian Head, Blackfoot Crossing and other places. He reports our flour all right except what was damaged by exposure. He complained of the storehouses in which it was kept not being suitable to keep flour. One place in particular, he saw a lot of our flour out of condition from the dampness in the building in which it was stored. We were so particular in the delivery of this flour, the quality asked for, namely, Toronto superfine, being low, that we frequently had bread baked from it and submitted to your agent, Mr. Howard, at Winnipeg, which was accepted as satisfactory. We are also aware that Messrs. Langdon & Shepard, contractors on the C.P.R., borrowed two car-loads of this flour from your agent, and used it for themselves and were satisfied, when the flour they generally used was strong baker's. Not having heard any complaints of this flour till quite recently, we think it must come from what has been injured from exposure, and certainly we are not responsible for it. And, moreover, the grade asked for, namely, Toronto superfine, is a low grade flour and not suitable for the requirements. Our man also informs us that he consulted Mr. Reed, of the Indian Department, at Regina, and he expressed himself satisfied that we were in no way to blame, so we hope this explanation will be satisfactory.

"Yours truly,

(Signed) "A. W. OGILVIE & Co."

That is what the milling firm say for themselves, and it is said that in addition to Denny and Pockington reporting on the flour Mr. Reid, assistant commissioner, expressed himself satisfied that they were in no way to blame. But what were the facts in regard to the matter. There is a report from Mr. Wadsworth; he alluded to the letter of the milling firm as a letter written with a view of setting themselves right. If I could find the document, I would read it.

Mr. O'BRIEN. I hope the hon. gentleman will read Mr. Wadsworth's letter, because it is one which will have great weight with hon. members.

Mr. PATERSON (Brant). I have it here. It is a report from Mr. Wadsworth, addressed to the Department of the Minister of the Interior:

"200 SIMCOE STREET,
"TORONTO, 25th January, 1884.

"L. VANKOUGHNET,
Deputy Supt.-Gen. of Indian Affairs.

"SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 8533, dated 23rd instant, and in reply beg leave to state that the
Mr. PATERSON (Brant.)

amples of flour forwarded to you by the Indian Commissioner were handed to him by myself having procured them during my inspection.

"Preparatory to making a report to the Department, I wrote the Messrs. Ogilvie regarding this flour, knowing that they had supplied the contractors, and being branded with their mill brand, a copy of which letter I herewith send you, also their reply to the same; their letter is evidently written to protect themselves."

What was the remark I was trying to recall. I do not know whether hon. members want to hear the balance.

Mr. O'BRIEN. We do.

Mr. PATERSON (Brant). The letter continues:

"In taking stock of the flour upon the different reserves in Treaty No. 7, it was necessary to handle most of it, as the different stores had to be emptied and then carried back again; I may therefore say that it all came under my immediate notice.

"I was satisfied that the flour upon the Blood and Piegan reserves was of fair quality and filled the spirit of the contract, although I came upon an occasional sack that was inferior, but they would not amount to one per cent. of the whole; the weights were also satisfactory, more sacks weighing over 98 lbs. than under. There was also a few sacks of 'sour' flour at these points (this was old stock), but this is the natural consequence of keeping flour through the summer.

"The flour at Blackfoot Crossing was similar to the sample I brought down (that submitted to Thos. McKay & Co.), with the exception of some Montana or American flour (say 200 sacks) left over from last spring, having been stored in the back part of the building and could not be got at until I had this removed.

"My opinion of this (like sample) flour is that it is barely No. 1 superfine, and that there is some frozen wheat in it; I do not consider it unwholesome; the white men on the reserve were using it and did not complain; I ate some of it (bread made from it) and found it palatable.

"Compared with No. 1 superfine at \$2.25 per sack, I consider this worth \$2.10—two dollars and ten cents.

"With regard to the sample from the Sarcee reserve, I agree with the opinion expressed by Messrs. McKay.

"I do not think the flour has been the cause of the disease lately epidemic amongst the Indians of this district.

"I have the honor to be, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"T. P. WADSWORTH,

"Inspector of Indian Agencies, &c."

Mr. SPROULE. That is from a practical miller.

Mr. PATERSON (Brant). I did not know the gentleman and therefore I am not actuated by any malice in the matter. I notice that he gives his opinion with reference to the effects upon the constitution of the Indian of this flour, against that of the medical gentleman who testified that in his opinion it was injurious, and I would submit that a doctor, a licensed practitioner, would be better able to understand the effects of a certain article of diet upon the constitution than even a practical miller. He reported his views to the Department and they were so implicitly believed that the Deputy Minister made a memorandum to the First Minister in which he alludes to the loss of so many lives in the past, and for that reason I am unable to accept the opinion of Mr. Wadsworth in opposition to that of the medical gentleman. Now, if he was a practical miller, I suppose he would know that the supply of flour with the weeds in it as described by these experts, it certainly did not come up to No. 1 Superfine Toronto, and that the other which was somewhat better and still no better than Red Dog, would come within the category. He says himself that he wrote this milling firm because he was prepared to report to the Department that it was not up to the mark, and how is it that as I read to you, the 5,100 sacks were received and paid for by the Department. We know very well that the Indian Department are not in the habit of paying their accounts very quickly. That flour must have been in store and used for some time before, and yet it was paid for and there was enough left to be used for some time afterwards. It had received the approval of an agent named Pockington, who is to-day a servant of the Government. If he certified in ignorance that the flour was of that kind, if he did not know any better, I submit that he is not capable of discharging the duties of an agent, one of whose duties it is to see that the supplies given the Indians under his control, are right. With reference to Mr. Denny, I do not know