

were productive of a great deal of benefit to the country. Just after the troubles in 1869, a committee was appointed by this honorable House by whom a great deal of information in relation to the North-West was obtained, which is contained in the Minutes of proceedings of that year, and was the means of attracting public notice to the North-West as a fine country for settlement. On another occasion when the public mind was filled with deep anxiety and uncertainty in reference to the location of the Canadian Pacific Railway, a committee was selected from amongst the members of this House which sat during two consecutive sessions. They proceeded to take evidence, after which they made their report. I will not say that the change of the line was the result of their report, but it is a fact that the line was changed, and changed for the better. Since the railway has been completed I think the changed location of the new line has given general satisfaction. The Indian population of the North-West deserve a certain amount of assistance, and that assistance is not only asked for in the interest of our own people but in the interest of the country and in the interest of the Government. Large sums of money are expended every year for the sustenance of the Indians under the treaties that have been made. It is only right and proper that the Indians should not be allowed to perish from hunger; at the same time the country would be more benefitted if we could suggest some means by which food could be provided in that vast Territory by their own effort. I remember that last session when the question was before this House I took occasion to mention the fact that an Indian Chief who was dying at St. Boniface, was visited by Lieutenant Governor Dewdney; and on his death bed he implored the Lieutenant Governor to preserve for his band a certain Lake which was in his reserve. He said that as long as the fish in that Lake were preserved his people would not perish; but if the whites were allowed to put their destroying hand on the fish of that lake the Indians would die of starvation. There are many places in the North-West specially adapted for the propagation of fish and game,

some of which are mentioned in the work of His Grace Archbishop Taché, and we know how appreciated are the suggestions of that deserving and patriotic man throughout the Dominion. If hon. gentlemen have read his little work on the North-West Territories they will have seen that gold has been discovered in all the streams coming into the Saskatchewan, but the people there up to that time had not the necessary means and appliances to ascertain the value of those deposits. Certainly there is gold there, and if some effort is made it could be traced to its source in the Mountains, and if found it would add greatly to the wealth of the people of the Dominion. It may perhaps be suggested that a large expense will be incurred by this proposed Committee; but the intention is to obtain all the information that is necessary from people who are actually at the Capital. I do not think it is the intention to call witnesses from Manitoba and the Territories to give evidence before the Committee. Those who will be called are people who are already here, who have visited the country and have observed it with a view of ascertaining its resources, and we will find plenty of witnesses ready at first call to come forward and give evidence.

HON. MR. MACDONALD (B. C.)— I was very much struck indeed by one portion of the Report read by the hon. gentleman, which refers to the increase in the number of the treaty Indians for some time after the first payment under the treaty. It seems to me that the increase reported could not have been a genuine increase; that there was some sort of deception practised, by the Indians going from one treaty to another to receive money. I should like very much to know if the hon. gentleman has come to any conclusion as to the reality of that increase. It has not been conceded that Indians increase so rapidly as is set forth in the report. yet there is a marvellous increase of 10,000 in one of those treaties in one year. I have listened with much pleasure to the hon. gentleman's enumeration of the natural food supplies in the North-West Territories, and I am glad to hear it for this reason: that I consider the present sys-