

the steamers; they drive ox teams to Cariboo, and are in fact indefatigable in the summer season. Of course, as soon as they have \$200 or \$300 in cash coming to them, they will go back home. We have made a mistake in this Indian Commission business, which I believe was inaugurated when the hon. member for Bothwell was Minister of the Interior. We have given them more land than they can cultivate. If an Indian is kept in a moderate space he will cultivate his land very well, but if he is given too great a number of acres he will ask for more, and a great deal of dissatisfaction is now felt in British Columbia about the reserves which have been given to Indians. I do not advocate the American idea of driving the Indians to the reserves and telling them to stay there. That system would not be tolerated in our Province. The Indians are the most independent class that I know of. Forty or fifty of them will go at a time to the mines with their horses during the summer season, they will work very hard, and, as a rule, make more than the white man in packing over the mountains. The trouble is that sometimes they get in with Chinamen who supply them with whiskey. We have had no case but one of an Indian murderer in the upper country since the Chilicoten outbreak of 1864. The Indians are peaceable, and they know that if a white man steals an Indian's horse, or breaks into an Indian's house, the white man is amenable to the law as much as the Indian is; and they also know if they commit a breach of the peace they are also amenable as much as the white man, and that, in fact, they are in the same position, except as to voting, as the white men who rule the country. They are satisfied with their lot, if you do not bring too many Commissioners among them, and tell them they are to rule the whole country. Last winter an unfortunate outbreak occurred in British Columbia, in which some half-breed boys, the youngest of whom was sixteen, and the eldest twenty-four years of age, murdered a constable, then murdered another man who was herding sheep, and wounded two persons who were sent in pursuit of them. The oldest of those half-breeds was married to the daughter of an Indian chief. There are several Indians and half-breeds

scattered along the border who are ready to make an outbreak. They steal horses on both sides, and then run across the border. One of these Indians went to the head chief of the Nicola tribe, and said: These half-breeds have gone out on the war path. We have plenty of Indians here now to clean out all the whites. What did the old chief say? "Suppose we kill off all the white men, who can make the flour, the tobacco, the tea, sugar, and the blankets which we need?" This mode of reasoning silenced the warlike Indian. That is the class of Indians we have amongst us.

MR. ORTON: I have received a letter from a friend in British Columbia, making complaints in reference to the management of Indian lands. I will just read an extract:

"Mr. Sproat, the Dominion Land Agent here, has been making great havoc with the settlement of the lands, giving to Indians all the land that was of any good for settlement and that was not previously preempted. His decisions have caused universal dissatisfaction among the whites. To a white friend in this valley he gave 500 acres of pasture land in exchange for about six acres of meadow for some Indians."

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD: These complaints are very natural. The whites think the Indians get too much and the Indians think they do not get enough. Government have to hold the balance and see that the Indian is protected. In fact, Government is the guardian of the Indians. It is quite true, as has been said, that the Indians are too apt to throw themselves upon the Government, and the more they receive support the less self-reliant they will be. It is a choice of two evils. We cannot allow them to starve, and we cannot make them white-men. All we can do is to endeavour to induce them to abandon their nomadic habits, and settle down and cultivate the soil. The Crown is continually obliged to resist the pressure to deprive the Indians of their lands. I have no doubt my predecessor has found that civilisation and improvement in the vicinity of an Indian Reserve, have been much retarded by the fact of the Indian Reserve being there, and by reason of the slatternly and slovenly mode of farming by the Indians. It is a great injury to any portion of the country to have an Indian Reserve in its midst. They have no municipal institutions.