

Mr. MILLS. Then I must say it is pretty evident that the Indians have become pensioners upon the Public Treasury, that we are called upon to feed them, to clothe them, and that they are doing little or nothing for themselves. Now, I believe a barbarous population like the Indians may very easily be made wholly dependent upon the Government. I felt satisfied that that was the danger in dealing with the Indian population of the North-West, and I think that the extent to which they have been provided for during the past two or three years has produced such a condition of things that it will be very difficult to induce the Indians to devote themselves to industrial pursuits. I am of the opinion that the Government is largely responsible for this large sum. I have been told that in some instances the agents have told the Indians that if they did not hunt that they would be provided for at any rate, and the Indians have become discouraged. One party wrote me that a friend of his had been offered a very large sum if he would remain with an agent for the purpose of assisting him in feeding the Indians. He said the bands under him were not going out to hunt, and there would be a handsome thing in providing food for these Indians. Now, it is easy to see that unless there is some stringent check upon the appropriation that is being made for the Indians in this way, at a great distance from the seat of Government, and without any special supervision, there is great danger that the agents may be tempted to malappropriation of these funds.

Mr. HESSON. An agent can have nothing to do with furnishing supplies to these bands. We are driven into a large expenditure of this kind. We were told a year ago that this expenditure would go on increasing, by reason of the efforts made to induce the Indians to settle down under a system of farming. I desire to ascertain if the agents had control of the supplies under this item. If so, it is an unfortunate state of affairs; but I understand that the goods are furnished by contract.

Mr. CASEY. At whose discretion are supplies issued?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. In case of apprehended famine the matter is to be dealt with on the spot; but the whole matter is dealt with by Mr. Dewdney, who has charge of the whole reserves. When the Indians are starving they have been helped, but they have been reduced to one-half and one-quarter rations; but when they fall into a state of destitution we cannot allow them to die for want of food. It is true that Indians so long as they are fed will not work. I have reason to believe that the agents as a whole, and I am sure it is the case with the Commissioner, are doing all they can, by refusing food until the Indians are on the verge of starvation, to reduce the expense. The buffalo has disappeared during the past few years. Some few came over this year, and although their arrival relieved the Indians, I was rather sorry, looking to the future, that such was the case, as the Blackfeet, Bloods, and Piegans who had settled on reserves at once returned to their nomadic habits and abandoned the settlements. It will occasionally happen that the agents will issue food too liberally, and the Government must depend on their agents—the agents advocated by hon. gentlemen opposite and who are doing the work well. I do not hear any complaints of dishonesty. One case occurred in which the agent would neither issue food or allow the Indians to take it, and the agent thought it was better he should issue it. We hope that the Indians will now settle down; but Indians are Indians, and we must submit to frequent disappointments in the way of civilizing them.

Mr. MILLS. No doubt the Indians will bear a great degree of starvation before they will work, and so long as they are certain the Government will come to their aid they will not do much for themselves. The maintenance of farms has

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD.

reached \$90,000, and although the experiment has been two years on trial there are no results therefrom, nothing adequate to warrant the expenditure.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The Indians eat the produce.

Mr. MILLS. Then that should be stated in order that we may arrive at a correct conclusion as to the cost of the Indians. No less than \$170,000 are expended for managing 30,000 Indians in the North-West.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. More than that.

Mr. MILLS. Whatever the number may be it is not very large. No doubt if there was a white man on each reservation working with the Indians, showing them how to farm, and at the same time impressing upon them the fact that they must produce food for their sustenance, much greater results would have been accomplished.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The hon. gentleman is mistaken. The farm is there on the reserve or just contiguous to it. We try to get a practical farmer with an assistant to work with the Indians. The expectation of the Commissioner is that the Indians will sow about 4,000 acres in the spring of 1882.

Mr. TROW. There is considerable force in the remark of the hon. gentleman for Bothwell (Mr. Mills), in reference to indulging the Indians. It would be wrong, of course, to allow them to suffer, but they should be thrown on their own resources as far as possible. I have known bands of Indians to be lounging about when they might have been providing for themselves. Last fall we saw them in large numbers begging at points in Montana, when we counted in one day more than one hundred carcasses of buffalo on the prairie.

Mr. BANNERMAN. The hon. gentleman is speaking of the country south of the boundary line, and not of our own territory. There is nothing in which the Canadians compare more favorably with the people of the United States than in their treatment of the Indians.

161. North-West Mounted Police..... \$413,000

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. This amount is estimated for 500 men instead of 300. The average cost of a Mounted Policeman and a horse, prior to 1879, was \$1,000 per annum. The cost during the current year will be \$875, while the estimate for 1882-83 is \$820. The average annual cost of an infantry soldier in the United States is \$1,000, and of a cavalry soldier, from \$1,600 to \$2,000. The cost per man and horse of the Mounted Police is \$875; the pay of the force, including the staff and gardeners, is \$160,000; the vote for 1881-82, was \$110,000. The present vote is for 500 men and 5 officers, an increase of 200 men; but no increase of officers.

Resolutions ordered to be reported; and (at 2:55 o'clock, a.m.) the House adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

THURSDAY, 27th April, 1882.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

PRAYERS.

### CIVIL SERVICE.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN moved that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider certain resolutions to be embodied in Bill (No. 36) respecting the Civil Service of Canada.

Motion agreed to, and House resolved itself into Committee.