

hanging been driven south by the necessity of seeking for actual subsistence by the large numbers of foreign Indians at present within Canadian territory in addition to our own Indians.

The undersigned avails himself of this opportunity to mention the anxiety which he feels respecting the anomalous and critical condition of Indian affairs in the south west portion of the territories of Canada, in consequence of the continued presence of the large bodies of Indians, who crossed the boundary for refuge from the United States troops in 1876. The formidable character of this element and its disturbing tendencies considered in relation to our own Indians, and its effect upon their food supply, must continue to excite apprehensions as to the ultimate consequences should such an arrangement not soon be made as will result in the return of the foreign Indians to their own country.

The best authorities agree in representing five years as the maximum period for which the food wants of the Indians of the Plains may be to any reasonable extent supplied from the buffalo, and the situation is rendered all the more critical from day to day during the period in consequence of the risk of a collision between our Indians and those of the United States within our territory, increasing, as that risk does in exact proportion to the decrease of this means of subsistence.

Had it not been for the excellent temper shown throughout by our Indians during the past two years and a half in view of the presence among them of such large numbers of foreign bands, whose only means of subsistence has been drawn from their food supply, disturbances seriously compromising the two Governments might before now have occurred.

It is only fair, however, to Sitting Bull and the other principal chiefs of the United States Indians who took refuge in our territory, to say that their conduct has been of a character to which no exception whatever can be taken. But it is hardly reasonable to suppose that the next few years can be got over without, to say the least, great inconveniences being caused to the two Governments from the ebb and flow of the Indians of both countries across the boundary line. The Dominion will be called upon immediately—indeed the question had already forced itself upon us—to determine how our Indians of the Plains are to be subsisted when the supply of food afforded by the buffalo shall be exhausted. The difficulty with such view will, it is not necessary to say, be enhanced to a serious extent by the presence in the territories of large numbers of United States Indians, having no means of living, and who are therefore cannot be regarded in any other light than as a marauding element and consequently antagonistic to the peace of the country.

It is hardly necessary for the undersigned to remind His Excellency that the Canadian Government are in no way responsible for the condition of affairs under discussion. The Indians in question were driven into Canadian territory after having been worsted by United States troops, with whom they have come into collision, it is said, whether rightly or wrongly of difficulties arising out of unjust treatment they had received at the hands of the agents of the Government of Canada to drive them in the matter of treaty promises. The nomadic habits of these Indians, and the facility with which they move from place to place, render it impossible for the Government of Canada to drive them back and the only way out of the difficulty which suggests itself is for the Government of the United States to take such measures as may induce them to return to their proper allegiance and their own country. It may be said that efforts already made with that view have been unsuccessful. It is equally true, however, that these efforts were made very shortly after the Indians arrived in Canada, before the feeling of bitter animosity entertained by them to the United States troops and Government had had time to be at all softened, and especially at a time when buffalo were abundant in Canadian territory. There is some reason to believe that a different spirit might be exhibited by Sitting Bull and the other leading chiefs,

see 2nd sheet