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The papers and correspondence of these times are full of references to the misery of the Indians and the dangers of an Indian rising. The buffalo were disappearing with fearful rapidity. From Fort MacLeod 30,000 buffalo robes were exported in 1877; in the following year the number fell to less than 13,000; and in 1879 only 5,764 were handled. Similarly, at Fort Walsh in 1878, 18,235 robes were exported, but in 1879 only 8,617. While/p.199/ some have thought that the practical extinction of the buffalo within so brief a period could be accounted for only by a general epidemic, the prevailing opinion is that the wholesale destruction of the herds, without distinction of age or sex, to supply the fur market provides an adequate explanation. Doctor MacRae, of Calgary, in his History of Alberta (p.377), Mounted Police, as having expressed to him the belief that the extinction of the buffalo herds was consummated under the deliberate management of the American military authorities, with a view to reducing the Sioux to submission. Startling as this suggestion may be, it coincides with the opinions expressed to the present writer by well informed buffalo traders, such as Mr. Louis Le Gare; of Willow Bunch.

Through sub-inspector Denny, a number of Blackfeet chiefs at this time sent an appeal to the Princess Louise, the Governor-General's Consort. "Our people are starving; do help us, for some of us have nothing to eat, and many of us could find none anywhere. We have heard of the daughter of our Great Mother being now on this side of the Great Lake. She has her mother's heart. Let her know that women and little ones ask her to give them life, for our Great Mother's sake. She is good, and will hear us and save us. Too many other people eat our buffalo--Sioux and Halfbreeds--and we have nothing to eat ourselves."

It is a satisfaction to note that the Indians' confidence was not altogether misplaced, as sub-inspector Denny was provided with means for the relief of some of the most distressed of the Indians who applied to him.