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Registered

17<sup>th</sup> May 6.

Rev. Sir:-

With further reference to your letter of the 10<sup>th</sup> March which was acknowledged by me on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March, when I informed you inter alia that I should communicate the contents of your letter to the Indian Commissioner for the North West Territories, I beg to inform you that I did so, and I am now in receipt of a letter from that officer in regard to the matters referred to by you.

Mr. Dewdney states  
that

Rev. James Robertson,  
Supt. of Presbyterian Missions,  
Winnipeg, Man. 1

that the contents of your letter have been very carefully noted by him and that he can find but little therein which can be investigated; that your remarks are in great part so general and vague that it is impossible to regard them as charges that can be investigated; that many of your statements are a repetition of gossip and old rumors, which having come to his ears, had been sifted long ago in the closest possible manner; some of which were found to be utterly baseless and any that were true had been met by prompt action.

Mr. Sedgwick expresses regret that a man whose words should have weight in and out of his Church should make statements based on

2      unfounded

unfounded rumors as matters of fact in order to stir up sympathy with the cause he advocates, especially when that cause is so excellent and holy that it should not need the support of sensational advocacy.

The Commissioner is of opinion that your utterances show a total ignorance of Indian character and of the work of the Department amongst the Indians, and that you have given public utterance to rumors which investigation has shown to be false; moreover that some passages in your deliverances suggest an animus, if reported correctly, anything but becoming one filling the sacred position which you hold.

With regard to your statements that the Indians were quite willing

take Riel's side in 1885; the Commissioner remarks that in addition to what I have already stated to you in my communications the tendency of the Indians generally in 1885 would have been to rebel had they been unjustly treated, as no means were left untried to persuade them to do so and to persuade them to believe that they had grievances which would justify them in rebelling, but notwithstanding the Department has reason to congratulate itself that the fairness of its treatment of them prevented the Indians generally from joining the insurgents.

As regards the contrast which you draw between the action of some of the Indians in 1885 and

the action of the Indians in 1879, when  
 Riel's first rebellion occurred, the Com-  
 missioner states that no inducements  
 were held out to the Indians to join  
 the rebellion in 1870 as Riel had  
 comparatively no opposition and re-  
 quired no force; that certainly the  
 North Western Indians, if not all  
 of those in Manitoba, had not the  
 slightest interest in Riel's cause in  
 1870, not from lack of sympathy  
 with the Half breeds, but from the  
 fact that Riel's action and desires  
 in no wise concerned and were  
 not represented as concerning them,  
 and that the two cases, that is, the  
 rebellion of 1870 and that of 1885, are  
 in no wise parallel. I would also  
 add here that none of the Indians  
 of Manitoba joined in the late  
 rebellion

rebellion and that of the Indians of the North West only a very small minority were active participants in it.

As respects the class of employees of the Department in the North West, the Commissioner states that although in a large Service such as that of the Indian Department bad men will sometimes manage to obtain a place or men may possibly become corrupted during their tenure of Office, the Department has invariably as such characters were discovered to be in its employ, dismissed them, and that he believes that our employees generally at the present time are as honest, industrious, and as moral a set of men as it is possible to obtain.

With regard to your  
representations

representations that Indians go into towns and search swill barrels and refuse heaps for bread, &c. Mr. Dendrey states that the same are made in a manner that suggests that they are purposely intended to create a false impression inasmuch as you state that "people acting in this way must be starving." The Commissioner remarks that if they were starving they would not be acting in this way, but would return to their Reserves and draw rations as they may at all times do on their Reserves.

The Commissioner states that he draws attention to this matter in order to demonstrate that if, as you pretend, you are aware of the way in which the Indians are treated by the Department, you knowingly  
by falsified

falsified your deductions to impose upon the people to whom you were speaking.

The Commissioner proceeds to deal in detail with the rumors which you have given utterance to as facts, and says with reference thereto that you have made these old matters appear of recent date so that the Department's present management may be found fault with.

He remarks that your course in publicly charging the officers of the Department with fraud, &c., and then when called upon to point out the wrong done, referring to occurrences of years ago, is most unfair; that the impression which your words were calculated to give rise to was that the Department at the present time is doing  
 8 injustice

injustice through its Agents to the Indians and to the public, but that you have failed to present a single instance of this during recent times.

As to Mr. Provancher and Mr. Willoughby Clark, the former was deprived of his office, and the latter left the Service many years ago; and in the case of Mr. Clark, the irregularities committed were not discovered until after he had left the Service; and any wrong done the Indians by ~~him~~ was remedied by the Department.

As respects Mr. Wright, the Indians did not suffer any wrong at his hands that the Department has been able to discover, and the amount of public money embezzled by him has been refunded to  
 9 she

the Government, and Mr Wright dismissed the Service.

With regard to your allegation that an Agent of this Department had recently paid \$2000 to a Mr McKay, of Fort Pelly, the Commissioner states that he knows nothing of any such transaction; and I may here state that the Department is unaware of the same. The Commissioner adds that he does not believe there is any man of that name in the Hudson Bay Co's Service at Fort Pelly and that nothing of the sort occurred.

With regard to the officers whom you state the Rev. G. Flett alleges defrauded the Indians of Athabasca, Mr Sedgwick wrote

to the former gentleman for particulars,  
and a letter was received from Mr  
Hlett to the following effect:-

"Yours of 31<sup>st</sup> March to hand  
'to-day.

"I am rather astonished at  
'its contents, and think that Mr  
'Robertson must have taken me up  
'wrong or be laboring under some  
'mistake, as I never at any time  
'made such a statement nor even  
'thought it."

"My opinion has always been  
'that the Agents <sup>Mr</sup> McDonald, Martinican,  
'Kerchner, and Bartle have always  
'treated the Indians very fairly, in  
'fact have at all times given them  
'more than the Government promised  
'to give them when making the  
'Treaty; and I think that they  
II 'deserve

"deserve great praise for the able and  
 "efficient manner in which they  
 "have at all times done their duty.

"The only thing I have ever com-  
 "plained of that I thought was this, that  
 "the Government at the making of the treaty  
 "promised to support a school teacher on  
 "the Reserve as soon as the Indians wished  
 "one. Now we ought to have had one here  
 "eight years ago, but instead of that we  
 "have had to put up with a student  
 "now and again for a few months at a  
 "time, and whose salary was paid by  
 "the Government. The consequence is that  
 "the Indians forget the little they have  
 "learned before another student takes  
 "the place of the former one. Besides  
 "the pay those students got never was  
 "sufficient to keep them, being only  
 "at the rate of \$300 per annum.

" However, I am satisfied now as  
 " this Winter we have been provided  
 " with a permanent Schoolmaster at  
 " a salary of \$600 per annum - part  
 " paid by Government and part by the  
 " Presbytery.

" I am also writing Mr. Robertson  
 " for an explanation, and will let you  
 " know the result, as I am confident  
 " he must have made a mistake;  
 " and under all circumstances I  
 " again say that I never knew of any  
 " case of defrauding the Indians and  
 " never said so to any one."

You will observe Mr. Plett's  
 letter that he denies having ever  
 made the statement alleged by you  
 to have been made by him.

As respects the point  
 which you state you insisted  
 last

Last Autumn whereat the Indian Agent was supplying stopping places in the District with Indian flour and bacon, Mr Dendrey is unaware of any such thing having been done. It will now be for you to give the name of the Agent and the names of the stopping places thus supplied.

In this connection I have to remark upon the apparent inconsistency of your allegation. You stated in your letter that the bread made by the Indians was so bad that you were sure the Department could not have known of the quality of the flour supplied from which the bread was made, and then you go on to state that this same flour apparently was

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fraudulently supplied to the stopping places by the Agent of this Department. Now if that was the case, how is it that these stopping places would accept of and use flour of such very inferior quality that you considered it even unfit for Indian use? I would also enquire how you knew that the bread which you condemn was really made of flour supplied by the Department?

The Indian Commissioner states that the general incompetence attributed by you to the Farming Instructors can by no means be admitted; that the allegations made by you against them on this head are wholly untrue; that the Department went to great

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trouble

trouble to secure the most competent men for the positions, and that where any of them were found to be guilty of any serious misconduct, they were discharged and replaced by others who were fit for the positions; that whenever it is discovered that the dismissal of any man in the employ of the Department will be beneficial to the Service, the change is made; and the instance quoted by you of the change in the Instructorship at Kivua Mountains being a case in point, is a proof of this.

With regard to your opinion respecting the amount of work done upon the Reserves, Mr. Seddway states that the work cannot be measured by the standard set up by

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by

by you, namely, such factors as those which you may have been brought up on, as many matters have to be taken into consideration to decide whether an Instructor is making fair progress or not; that from your method of reasoning the small amount of Mission work done in the North West would be chargeable to your incompetence as Superintendent of Missions, and it might be said of you exactly what you say of the Employes of this Department how little fitted you are to fill the position.

With regard to your reference to the late Instructor Payne on the Stoney Reserve, Mr. Dewdney states that he considers your

statements as both uncharitable and unchristianlike; that Payne died in defence of the stores on the Reserve; that he was a man of good character who spent time, all his earnings, and his energies in benefiting the Indians amongst whom he was employed, and that he did greatly benefit them.

With regard to the other Empls, is who perished at their posts of duty in a time of great peril, they paid for their loyalty to their duties with their lives; and J. W. Dendrey adds that you have grossly misrepresented them in stating that their end was brought about owing to their brutality and licentiousness.

Mr Dendrey states that  
 18                      slanders

slanders in an Indian country against  
 both laymen and clergymen or  
 missions are very numerous; and with  
 regard to your statement above quoted  
 as respects the dead employees of  
 this Department, that you have  
 libelled those who have no power to  
 challenge your coarse utterances  
 regarding them; and Mr Sewdrey  
 asks why the Priests and old  
 man Williscraft, who were massacred  
 at the same time at Frog Lake as  
 Mr Zimmer and Mr Selaney of this  
 Department, are not to be charged  
 also with brutality and licentiousness  
 as the cause of their being massacred,  
 and he asks if it is necessary to  
 assume a motive in one case, why  
 not in the others? Your question  
 "How did Payne and others lose  
 their

"their lives" may be answered with another, why were women and children threatened with death and Priests and old men slaughtered? I Mr. Denney states that your impression that instructors endeavor to retard Indian progress is ~~great~~ absurd, that the least move in such a direction would inevitably come to light and be rewarded with immediate dismissal.

The Commissioner denies your assertion that there is a good deal of drinking going on to the detriment of the Service; that the same rumor had reached him before, and if any of our officers or employees abused the position through the use of liquor intemperately, they would be dealt with severely and summarily.

summarily, as has been done in one or two isolated cases in the past.

The evidence adduced by you respecting the quantity of the food supplied to Indians, Mr. Seawiney states is bad, that it proceeds in every case from persons who are known to be ill-informed or to have no knowledge whatever on the subject; and it is stated that some of those named as authorities by you, have grounds for antipathy against the Department, for instance, Mr. Scott, who is said to have traded for years at Saddle Lake and Frog Lake and to have supplied the Indians with food to save them from death, was suspected at that time to have

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been

been implicated in a transaction or  
 transactions with an Instructor named  
 Donnelly which led to the dismissal  
 of the latter from the Service, and some  
 of Mr Scott's accounts were refused  
 payment, or reduced in amount,  
 as they appeared to be either exorbitant  
 or fraudulent, and that doubtless  
 he has on this account cherished  
 enmity against the Department;  
 and Mr. McDougall states that he is  
 credibly informed by one who lived  
 near the above point that the Indians  
 were any thing but badly off during  
 the Winters that Mr Scott was in  
 that part of the country. The expend-  
 iture of the Department in pro-  
 visions and ammunition supplied  
 those Indians to further improve  
 their condition was notwithstanding  
 22 by

by no means light. Mr. Dewdney states that at Fort Belly, Battleford, and Moose Mountains the rations given in the Winter of 1885 were ~~exceedingly~~ large, and our Indians make no complaints of hardship. At the latter place the rations for the year from December 1<sup>st</sup> 1884 to November 30<sup>th</sup> 1885 amounted to 836 lbs of flour and 65 lbs of meat (bacon) per soul per annum; and 600 bushels of potatoes, 180 bushels of turnips and 20 bushels of wheat were also consumed in addition to the large quantities of game the Indians of that part are always able to procure; and when the large number of infants and small children is taken into account, it would appear that had

the Indians only had rations to subsist on, they would not have experienced starvation. Mr. Sweeney states that he spoke the day before writing to a Headman of White Bear's Band of Inverness Mountain on the subject of destitution, and that this Headman did not know of the destitution that you stated. Mr. Campbell informed you checked! - that indeed he says they have been feeding turnips to their cat the

With regard to the statement of Mr. James McArthur of Prince Albert, Ban. Sec. he is a resident of the Village and he certainly knows nothing about the Indians on Reserves in the vicinity, and it is very questionable whether he

ever visited any of the Reserves; that if he did so, it was probably by chance while passing through one on his road elsewhere; that he may have come into contact with a few Emigrant Sioux and other Indians that camped at Prince Albert during the Winter of 1884-5, but that Mr Hughes, a member of the North West Council, and an Indian trader who knows them well, says that even these Indians were comfortably off and certainly were in very good condition in the Spring of 1885; at the time the rebellion broke out.

As to the Reserve Indians, they receive when necessary, regular rations, and Mr Hughes who

was lately spoken to on the subject, stated that the Indians did not suffer from distress in the Winter of 1884-5. Mr. Dewdney states that Mr. Hughes is not only reliable, but being a fur-trader, he sees much of the Indians; and the reports of our Agent and other people that are to be relied upon, assure him that the allegation of Mr. McArthur which you quoted is unfounded.

With regard to the late Mr. Michie's statement, Mr. Dewdney says that he has no doubt that Mr. Michie believed what he stated, but that to a stranger the Indian's condition and lot in life although perfectly satisfactory to himself always seems to be miserable;

that the same impression has been frequently received when the Indians were well off during the buffalo days when the sympathizing stranger saw little in their lives that might not be bettered; and years of experience are necessary to estimate upon view an Indian's status and resources; and that although Mr. Michie might have apparently concurred in your address, like others, would perhaps have been astonished to be found himself quoted as an authority in the matter.

With regard to the Rev. J. H. Cameron's statements, Mr. Dundas says that he has learned upon the best authority that Mr. Cameron had never

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been upon the Reserves as a missionary,  
although he might have found  
room to minister there, and he  
certainly could not without being  
constantly amongst the Indians  
speak as to their condition or the  
actions of our employees with the  
least authority.

With regard to the Indians  
seen by you at Soapstone Inlet  
Creek, Swift Current, and elsewhere,  
which places are off the Reserves,  
Mr Dunning states that Indians  
will pick up waste crusts or  
pieces of meat when they can  
find them, and that their choice  
of food is not the same as ours;  
that he cannot believe your statements  
to be correct if you mean by them  
to assert that emaciated faces

and shrunken forms are common among the Indians of the N.W.2. He says that Indians will eat horse meat, but no Indian will touch a horse in the putrid condition described by you; and that he thinks it highly improbable that you ever knew of such a case; that they will eat such things as dead horse with a relish, and the entrails of animals are a great delicacy to them, and are seldom by the Indians or Half-breeds washed before being eaten, this being considered unnecessary; but Mr. Dewdney states that you have fallen into error in speaking of a people whose customs you do not understand, and it is quite natural that you should do so;

that even when the buffalo were plentiful when killing an animal they ate the entrails in preference to any other part, and even the rectum and fatty surroundings are considered by them to be the most delicate portion of the animal. However disgusting this may seem, Mr. Dawdney states, it is the case.

The Commissioner states that it would be interesting to know what sufferings were witnessed through lack of food at Broadview and Peace Hills, but that without reliable evidence in regard to the carrier, he cannot believe that matters were such as they presented themselves to you.

Mr. Dawdney says that she

the greatest assurance that the  
 Department has of the sufficiency  
 of the food supply and its competency  
 to alleviate distress among the In-  
 dians consists in the fact that the  
 Indians themselves invariably ad-  
 mit that they are well treated in  
 respect to their rations with the  
 exception of perhaps a few con-  
 stitutional grumblers; that while  
 casual travellers amongst the  
 Indians may hear complaints as  
 to stipulations of the treaties not  
 having been fulfilled, our records  
 and statistics prove the contrary,  
 and that such allegations will be  
 found to have been made by  
 chronic grumblers among the  
 Indians; that they have nothing  
 to do but talk in their leisure  
 moments

moments, and through bandying  
 the provisions of the Treaties from  
 one to another they have become  
 so distorted that very few Indians  
 now know what they are, and  
 that almost invariably when the  
 point is raised by an Indian  
 he can be easily satisfied that  
 more than justice is being done  
 to him, as the records of the  
 Department clearly show that  
 more than the Treaties stipulated  
 for have been and are being given  
 to and done for the Indians of  
 the N. W. Co. The Indian Commis-  
 sioner asks whether it can be  
 expected that Indians will all  
 think alike, when even among  
 White men there are always dis-  
 satisfied characters who

imagine

imagine and allege that they have rights which when investigated truth compels a denial of

Mr Dewdney says that when he visited the Indians of Battleford in the Fall of 1884 they professed to be contented; and he adds that when you visited the Battleford District you were, he was informed, driven around the Reserves and professed yourself wonderfully astonished and pleased at what you saw and wrote a letter to the Winnipeg "Free Press" stating so; that with regard to poor Payne, the late Farming Instructor at the Stony Reserve, who was killed by the Indians and whose memory you know reproach, you at that

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time

time bestowed almost unequalled  
praise upon him.

As regards the state of  
the Indians on the Blood and  
Piegan Reserves, the Assistant  
Indian Commissioner was  
specially deputed to investigate  
all matters of complaint that  
these Indians might have to  
make, and he has reported  
that they had none whatever  
after a full investigation made  
by him and examination of  
Indians and other parties well  
acquainted with them; and I  
may state that the Rev. Mr. Andrews  
and the Rev. Mr. McLean, one  
of whom lives near and the  
other lives upon the Blood  
Reserve, have both complimented  
the the

the Department upon the manner in which the Indians are treated.

With regard to your allegations about Indians of the Lake of the Woods being discontented, I have a letter from the Indian Agent at that point in which he says that these Indians have never made such complaints to him as you state were made by them, that instead of complaining, they have always made it their business to express their thankfulness to the Department and to the officers of the Department for what has been done for them, and that he sees no reason why those Indians should have any cause of

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of

of complaint; that the Department as well as its officers has always taken great precaution to fulfil the Treaty obligations and to even go beyond them when necessary.

As regards Piapot's statement, Mr. Sweeney reports that he is a well known quack and great talker, considering himself a man of no little importance; that he has the loud manner that distinguishes many Indians as well as White men, but that even Piapot professes to have no grounds of complaint other than those that naturally arise in the management of an Indian Reserve, and Mr. Sweeney feels confident that it is some of these petty matters that

have been magnified into matters of serious importance; that Bispo has frequently stated that he considers himself and people well used, and that he believes all the provisions of the Treaty are being faithfully kept.

With regard to school matters, Mr. Dewdney states that it is to be regretted that the Missions have not been more active in their work upon the Reserves, and that you should certainly be the last to complain in respect to the illiberality of the Government in connection with Schools, as Mr. Dewdney is unaware that any of your reasonable requests have

been refused, but on the contrary he believes that they have been heartily acceded to; that only very shortly before you preached your sermon denouncing the management of Indian Affairs in the N. W. T. you applied for an Industrial School in connection with your Church, and that this request was favorably reported on by him; that Orders in Council have from time to time been passed sanctioning the payment of larger salaries to Inspectors and more liberal grants for school maintenance.

to the promises being made to the Indians by officials which were never carried out or never

expected to be, Mr. Dewdney states that it would be so inconsistent and foolish to make the same and break faith with them knowingly, that no such course could be attributed to any official in the service of the Department; that no employee knows that their usefulness would be gone if they committed themselves to such a ridiculous course.

With regard to the promises alleged to have been made to the Indians of Battleford by the former Governor General, Lord Lorne, Mr. Dewdney states that His Excellency only informed the Stony Indians that two work-shops were going to be given them, and that this

was done immediately, and that no other presents were spoken of, so that you are entirely mistaken in your assertion that certain things were promised by Sat Lone which were not given the Indians.

Mr. Dredney adds that it is difficult to understand where you have collected so many false reports, and that you must be remarkably credulous to believe so many tales that are as foolish as they are malevolent.

With respect to your allegation regarding the feeling of the Indians in the South Western portions of the Territories being unsatisfactory which  
 are

are based upon the assertion that there is a difficulty in recovering stolen horses, and in connection therewith you ask "Did not Red Crow order the Police off his Reserve?"—Mr Durdney says that owing to our relations with the United States some trouble had occurred relative to the recovery of stolen horses, but nothing of such a nature as to cause serious apprehension of an outbreak of the Indians; that as to Red Crow ordering the Police off his Reserve, the Police report that no circumstances of the sort ever occurred. Mr Durdney adds that visitors to the Territories like yourself form numerous impressions  
which which

which a little experience of the country serves to dispel, and that the fair prospects at present seem to belie your forebodings of coming trouble upon which you and Major Stewart would have been willing to stake your reputations; and as regards the Rev. Father Lacomb's verbal communication at Calgary on the subject of Indian feeling in the South West, that gentleman has recently addressed a letter to Mr. Dewdney in which he makes the following statement:—

"Let the Indians alone with  
 'the Government Officers appointed  
 'to look after their welfare, and  
 'there will be no trouble with  
 "them"

With regard to your statement that "you are glad to state that things have improved a good deal since you were West, that the increase of supplies and the vigilance of officers account for the change," Mr. Durdney states that our officers are no more vigilant now than in times past, and if anything the rations are lower than at the time of your visit, and have been so all the past winter.

As to your enquiry about the object of sending a "flying column" into the country, Mr. Durdney enquires whether you know that the anticipation of an outbreak among the Indians was the sole and only reason for

that proposal.

As regards the charge against the Indian Agent at Fort McLeod of co-habiting with two Indian girls, the Assistant Indian Commissioner made an investigation into that matter last Winter and he states as follows:-

"The charges of immorality  
 "amongst the officials have also  
 "been too wide in scope. Although  
 "the general public of the West has  
 "become impressed with the idea  
 "that officials are as a rule living  
 "in cohabitation with Indian  
 "women, I am, except as herein-  
 "after shown, safely deny this,  
 "and in doing so I am supported  
 "by the Affidavits of the employees  
 "of the Department in Great B.  
 "The

"The exceptions are, that of an Inter-  
 "preter, who is himself a Blood  
 "Half-breed, who is living with a  
 "Blood woman. He has done so for  
 "the past three or four years and  
 "is regularly providing for her and  
 "her offspring. He has married her  
 "according to the Indian rite and  
 "on one or two occasions has re-  
 "quested a Priest to come and  
 "perform the Christian ceremony,  
 "the reply having been that he  
 "would as soon as possible. The  
 "man fully intends being so  
 "married. The other exception  
 "is that of an Interpreter, a  
 "young Half-breed, who had a squaw  
 "whom he looked upon as his own,  
 "but who lived on another Reserve.  
 "He said it was his intention to have

"have the marriage ceremony performed at once"

And as to the evidence which you seek to establish of immorality by referring to Mr Trivitt, who you allege has some startling facts in this connection, the same is entirely subverted by a letter from that gentleman which was received at the same time with Mr Reid's report. The charge against the Indian Agent in question was based upon the assertion of a man, Mr Dowdrey states, of at best questionable repute.

In connection with the scandal reports that are constantly being disseminated throughout the Hall-Neet Smiths, Mr

Dewdney cites a number of instances  
 in which Clergymen, Ministers  
 of the Gospel, and Catechists have  
 been assailed by such scandals.  
 It is unnecessary for me and I  
 have no wish to repeat the  
 instances given by him. It is  
 sufficiently painful to think  
 that men occupying the positions  
 which these Reverend gentlemen  
 do in the Territories should be  
 subjected to such scandals with-  
 out further enlarging upon them  
 than to say that what Mr.  
 Dewdney has stated in respect  
 to the same is but confirmatory  
 of reports that I heard on almost  
 every Reserve that I visited during  
 the Summer of 1883 wherein  
 there was a Missionary or  
 42 Missionaries

Missionaries stationed; but I may state that I did not place such implicit reliance in those reports as to warrant me in even repeating them, much less in publishing them to the world as has been done in respect to rumors of a similar character regarding our employes in the North West Territories.

I have the honor to be,

Rev. Sir,

Your obt servant  
~~Haubroeque~~

Deputy of the Sup<sup>t</sup> Genl.  
 of Indian Affairs.