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Ottawa, 27th June, 189.

Sir:-

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of copy of Mr. Inspector McGibbon's report of his inspection of the Swan River Agency, dated 4th April, and transmitted by you on 8th instant and with regard thereto to inform you as follows:-

While the condition of affairs generally seems to be sufficiently satisfactory, the storage of hay is very far from being so.

In speaking of this at paragraph 14 of his report, the Inspector remarks that it is a lesson to ~~be~~ no more such chances, but the Department would have supposed that the severe losses sustained throughout the Agencies generally some years ago, from this very same cause, would have impressed upon Agents the absolute necessity for strictly adhering to instructions re-iterated over and over again, as to always having an ample supply of hay ~~on hand~~.

From your marginal note to paragraph 23 it would appear that few if any deaths would be attributable directly to the scarcity of hay, but for the escape from immediate loss, good fortune and not good management may be thanked, and what the indirect loss may eventually result from insufficient nourishment during the ~~past winter~~ will never be accurately ascertained.

A. E. Forget, Esq.,
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The Department has to request that the Agent be called upon to furnish full explanation of what on its face has the appearance of gross neglect.

There are also some minor matters which indicate at any rate some lack of care and energy in the management, such as (paragraph 4) the omission to see that accommodation was made to keep pace with the increasing requirements of the cattle.

(Paragraph 13) The failure to have got the Indians to haul the manure from the vicinity of the stables and spread it on their fields.

(Paragraph 21) Allowing the thresher and horse power to remain out in the corral - and mowers rakes and ploughs in the fields exposed to the ^awether.

With regard to the manure, and exposure of implements, it is observed that you were communicating with the Agent.

As to the recommendation in your marginal note to paragraph 5 of the purchase of a waggon for Fiddler, the young fellow from the Regina Industrial school, to be repaid by him by instalments, the Department is very willing to do what it can within reason to afford encouragement, in such cases, but unless their necessities are foreseen and provision made in the estimates, it does not appear where money can be found to make the necessary advance, unless indeed repayment in full before the close of the fiscal year could be guaranteed.

With reference to your marginal note to paragraph 41 the Department has to point out that although


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as you say, returns and statements are now received by it you were intimately acquainted with their nature and the necessity of having them, when at the time of re-organizing the service you made certain recommendations, and the Department under the circumstances must decline to assume the responsibility of dispensing with any of them, without a ~~full~~ ^{full} recommendation from yourself.

So far the Department may say that it fails to see if it is to keep in touch with the Agencies at all, what returns could be dispensed with, nor can it understand why any serious difficulty can be experienced at an Agency such as Swan Lake, in keeping up the office work and at the same time giving all necessary supervision to the Indians.

Certainly there may be difficulty if as gathered from paragraph 61 the Agent devotes two days a week to the work of local Post Master, and it fails to understand in view of his complaints as to the amount of office work - why he should have been so anxious (unless the Department has been misinformed) as he was to assume the duties of Post Master.

Your obedient servant,


Secretary.