

quired to fast during the three days over which the ceremonies last, the men who endure the torture neither eating, drinking, nor sleeping. The chief medicine man offers up prayers to the spirits and then the music strikes up. Indian music is more quaint than beautiful, yet there is a certain impressiveness in it. A group of a dozen men seated on the ground in the central space beat drums and tom-toms. This is a signal for the men and women concealed by the inner fence, to spring up with brightly painted faces, and blowing shrill whistles of bone, keeping time with the drummers, with their eyes fixed on the centre post of the tent. Meanwhile the squaws seated on the ground sing a monotonous chant, commencing on a high note and gradually descending on a minor scale. These musical interludes go on throughout the day at intervals of about ten minutes as long as the dancing proceeds. But hark! what is this sound of moaning and crying? It is one of the dancers approaching the tent. He enters. He wears only the breech-clout and a leathern belt round his waist, the rest of his naked body daubed in the paint. In his hand he carries strips of colored cotton print, and a fan of feathers. For some moments he leans against the centre pole sobbing, then he resigns himself to the chief and medicine men to prepare for the torture. With a small knife the flesh of his chest is cut and two pegs of wood are inserted under the skin. To these are tied two cords which run up to the top of the centre pole. The man now leans back with his full weight on the cords, the flesh of his chest being drawn up four or more inches from the body. He dances wildly to and fro on the south side of the tent, opposite the sanctuary, the drumming and whistling becoming meanwhile yet more energetic. The wife of the dancing man, following her husband with tearful eyes, sits at the back of the tent with an offering for the medicine man. The dancer meanwhile preserves a perfect silence, his features impassive, whilst the perspiration trickles down his body as he throws himself excitedly from side to side. Sometimes a man will endure this torture for an hour; at other times he grows faint from the pain after fifteen or twenty minutes; or sometimes the pegs will break, or the strip of flesh under which they are inserted, will give way, and he falls backwards to the ground. But it is enough. The Great Spirit is propitiated. He offers up his colored cottons and retires to his teepee the blood trickling from his wounds. On the day on which we paid our visit we were told that four men suffered this torture, whilst a fifth varied its character by walking through the camp and entering the tent with two ponies attached to the flesh of his shoulders.

But we had no desire to see more of these terrible rites. We came away feeling sick at heart that men should think they could please God by enduring these tortures, and earnestly longing that the day might soon come when the simple sincerity of their faith might find its satisfaction in a

truer and better religion. I hope that those who read this will do all they can to send the Gospel of Christ to the Indians of Western Canada.

Our Indian Department.

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THE following extracts from the last report of the Department of Indian Affairs are both interesting and instructive. We would especially commend extract No. 2 to the notice of those who think either that our Protestant missions are far behind those of Rome, or that there are few Indians still heathen. The figures in this extract refer only to Manitoba and N. W. T.

1 The census of the Indian population of Canada as shown in the annual report of the Indian Department is as follows:—

Ontario.....	17,752
Quebec.....	13,500
Nova Scotia.....	2,059
New Brunswick.....	1,574
Prince Edward Island.....	314
Manitoba and Northwest Territories.....	24,522
Peace River District.....	2,058
Albany District.....	8,000
McKenzie District.....	7,000
Eastern Rupert's Land.....	4,016
Labrador, Canadian Interior.....	1,000
Arctic Coast.....	4,000
British Columbia.....	35,765

Total.....\$121,500

2. Over half of the Indians in this country are still pagan. Eleven thousand one hundred and twenty-four have embraced the Christian religion, and of that number 8,997 are Protestants and 2,127 Roman Catholics. Sixty-eight schools are maintained for the education of children, forty-four of them