

The wood Indians assemble in the spring to celebrate their medicine and other notable ceremonies. During the summer they separate into families or small bands, and hunt, fish or go to the Plains in search of buffalo. At the approach of winter, they "take debt" or otherwise obtain supplies at the different posts of the Company, and retire to their winter quarters to trap the fur-bearing animals. The Plain or Prairie Indians follow the buffalo, and vary the monotony of their existence by forming war parties against their enemies, such as the Plain Crees against the Sioux and the Blackfeet, the Ojibways against the Sioux.

When on the south branch of the Saskatchewan last August, we found the Plain Crees hastening from the west to the east bank of the river, at the Elbow, with a strong war party of Blackfeet in pursuit. The chief of the Crees of the Sandy Hills, near the south branch, Short-stick by name, pointed out some of his band who had penetrated through the Blackfeet country to the Rocky Mountains two years ago, and returned with several scalps, grizzly bear claws, necklaces, pipes, and other trophies of success; he also related with much feeling how twenty-five young warriors had gone on a similar excursion the summer before last, but none had yet returned. Last July, the Plain Crees met a portion of the Blackfeet tribe, at the Eagle Hills, on the north branch of the Saskatchewan, to arrange terms of peace. All matters went on smoothly and the tribes separated as friends. Some of the Crees, however, incapable of resisting the opportunity, stole some horses from the Blackfeet. They were pursued, and three of them taken. One was killed instantly, the others were led back in triumph to the camp of the Blackfeet. They were stripped, their hands were tied behind their backs, a hole bored through both wrists and a stick passed through them and so tightly fastened that it could not be removed without assistance. The captives were then separated and dismissed singly to find their way to their friends. One only reached his tribe and was lying in a tent which we passed on the banks of the Qu'apelle, near the south branch.

The chief "Short-stick," when relating these adventures, held up the pipe he had in his hand and exclaimed, "this is what my Blackfoot friend gave me one day, the next he killed my young men; he is now my enemy again." I expressed a wish to purchase the pipe; the chief's reply was "take it," handing it to me with a gloomy frown, and silently extending his hand for the common "clay" which