

We already owe to the "Lexique de langue iroquoise," and to the "Etude philologique sur quelques langues sauvage de l'Amérique," of Abbé Cuoq, valuable help to the study of the Iroquois and Algonquin tongues. We are no less indebted to the Rev. Father Lacombe for the like aid in his "Dictionnaire et grammaire de la langue des Cris." But the frontiers of Quebec are still occupied by native tribes little affected by the civilization of European intruders, and beyond this, the Eskimo of Labrador are easily accessible. In Ontario, the Huron-Iroquois are being transformed into an industrious, civilized people. In the Maritime Provinces, the Micmacs and Miccentes are in process of like transformation; and on many Canadian reserves the representatives of Algonquin and other tribes are now settled, and gradually learning to conform to the usages of their supplanters. But in such a process language, and much else which is invaluable to the ethnologist, must disappear; and still more is this the case in the great wilderness of the North-West. There, in very recent years, the buffalo roamed in vast herds, furnishing an unfailling supply, not only of food, but of furs and skins, from which the tents, robes, and couches of Crees and Blackfeet were fashioned, and on which the Hudson Bay factors largely depended for like supplies. The Indian tribes lived around the Hudson Bay forts much after the fashion of their fathers, bartering the produce of the chase for other needful supplies. But now all this is at an end. a revolution of the most radical character has supervened. The inevitable disappearance of the wild hunter tribes of the North-West, at no distant date, can no longer be questioned. Some memorial of the native races will, doubtless, survive in civilized tribes settling down to

cultivate the soil over which their fathers roamed as nomad hunters. But such a process cannot fail to involve the extinction of the native languages, from which alone the ethnical affinities and the history of the race are to be recovered.

Nor must we overlook the significance of the fact that the Province of Manitoba began its independent career with a population of some ten thousand half-breeds. In that old historic past, when the gifted Roman annalist followed on the steps of imperial conquest in the British Islands, the dark type of the Silurian Britons was noted by Tacitus, and assigned by him to an Iberian source. In the latest classification of anthropologists, the modern representatives of this persistent type are designated "Melanochroi," the assumed representatives of the *metis* of Europe's prehistoric dawn, when the first wave of Aryan immigration came in contact with their Turanian or Allophylian precursors. Here, in our own Dominion, the same great Aryan wave, which reached the shores of the New World before the close of the fifteenth century, and, with ever added volume, has driven before it the native tribes, moves westward with irresistible aggression; and on our North-West frontier, the same results are everywhere apparent. The ethnological history of Europe repeats itself here; and this phenomenon of the rise of a race of mixed blood settling down among the intruding colonists is replete with interest to the student of ethnology.

I bring this subject under your special notice now, because it is one that demands immediate attention, one indeed that will not brook delay. The Indian may survive for a time. The interblended elements due to the contact of native and intruded races, I doubt not, will remain as a permanent factor in our future popula-