

Let us picture to ourselves the Indian, as he was in the past, and the gradual change from thence to the present. The buffalo, deer, moose, elk, or other large game, they covered the land, and were always near at hand. His life was a continued hunt from year to year, the chase being his only work, as well as amusement. In this wild state, he was singularly free from disease; and the fact of his having to engage in violent exercise, gave the required action to all the bodily functions so necessary to one in a life dependent on animal food.

Furs were plentiful, and his topee, or wigwam, was covered with buffalo skins, whilst his only clothing was the skins of smaller animals, sown together with sinew; rudely constructed moccasins covered his feet; whilst his thickly matted hair, hanging in long plaited tresses over his shoulders, well protected his head.

Always away on the hunt, on his bare-backed pony, he left the inferior work of housekeeping to his squaw, who, besides, had the care of the papoose, closely strapped into the moss-lined basket, with its legs close together, and the toes turned inwards, requiring little attention, however, save an occasional glance, for it is hanging up under the shade of a tree near by, dreaming its little dreams in the arms of Morpheus, or leaning against the trunk of a tree, its little black, wild, expressionless eyes, watching the mother preparing a repast for her absent lord and master. On his return, he greedily devours the food prepared, caring little where the next meal comes from. If he has been unsuccessful in his hunt, he can speedily replenish his larder from Nature's storehouse. After gorging himself, he lays upon his back and sleeps, or smokes his stone pipe filled with Indian tobacco; and as the smoke curls up in rings, skywards, he pictures to himself imaginary conflicts with different animals of the chase, the pipe falls from his mouth, and he sleeps and dreams. His couch, mother earth, with, perhaps, a few skins spread out; his habitation, his tepee, all the year round, over when the temperature in winter averages 30 degrees for a month at a time, or falls to below 60 degrees. To bed at sunset, and up with the first spread of dawn. No artificial light is he the happy possessor of, save what he obtains by his flints for cooking or other less peaceful purposes.

In war time, he prepares his weapons, the stone hatchet or tomahawk, war club, and bow and arrow, removes his clothing of skins, and paints himself from head to foot with all possible shades of colours, obtained from the earth and plants. This is done in the most hideous manner imaginable, half-moons and circles around the eyes, with bars radiating over the forehead and face; one side of the face, perhaps, yellow, the other red, and even carried up through the parting of the hair; the rest of the body covered with devices of every conceivable shape and form,—and all this to strike terror into the hearts of his enemy.

This body-painting was also resorted to on the occasion of their religious and other ceremonies.

SCIRON.

(To be continued.)

OUR WINNIPEG LETTER.

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, Jan. 23rd, 1886.

Dear Critic,—I promised in my last to comment on the Indian question in the North-West. Without entering into details, which would more than fill the space allotted to other news, it may be profitable to look at the subject from a broad point of view, and consider the Indian as he is at present in contrast with the past. To this end, I would refer your readers to the sketch elsewhere, headed "The North-West Indians." It is not necessary for one to be judged an alarmist who looks upon the present condition of the Indian as anything but acceptable, and even fraught with the greatest dangers to our scattered population in the Territories. Contrary rumors reach us daily, whilst the papers, Government and Opposition, are full of information relative to some future move on the part of the red man against the white. To what an extent, or in what direction, they are all unable positively to state, and it is next to impossible to extract anything of importance from the naturally cautious or secretive Indian or Half-breed, other than that he is discontented. Many of the rumors are, no doubt, tainted with the personality of the men who report them, and some for a purpose. There are plenty of people between here and the Rockies, and also in Winnipeg, who would like to see the country involved in another rebellion, or failing that, a vast camp of armed men ever ready for a fray, and all to fill their own mercenary pockets. I have before me two letters from members of the N. W. Mounted Police, who do not predict any premeditated outbreak, but nevertheless, affirm that the greatest caution and foresight will be necessary on their part and that of the settlers; and one of them states that there *always* will be more or less trouble with the Indians, as long as they live in their present restless condition, and show an unwillingness to settle down to agriculture, or kindred pursuits. I may also say I received a letter from one of these same policemen, nearly a year before the late rebellion, foretelling there would be trouble in the Saskatchewan Valley before a year closed, growing out of the discontent amongst the Metis, and the probability of the Indians joining them,—we know with what results. The general impression in the city is much the same as the reports, just as people like to take them. But I think, if men were less partizan, and considered their country as pre-eminent to party principle, we could look with more certainty on what we hear, as there is no doubt a tinge of personal spleen in many of the reports.

The shortness of the season throughout Manitoba and the North-West, before the early frosts visit us, has brought the question of adopting an earlier kind of wheat, than that at present grown, prominently forward amongst the wheat-growers and millers.

According to many, the seasons appear to have become much shorter

since the settlement of the country. We generally hear the same statement pretty much all over the world. Nature seems to become inspired, as soon as the white man puts his foot upon virgin soil, to deal harshly with him, and true to Scripture, makes it necessary for him, through her immutable and now exacting laws, to till the ground, not only with the sweat of his brow, but with a cunning hand, pointing us out in contrast with the red man as the true children of Adam.

The variety at present widely grown is what is known as Red Fyfe, with a very hard silicious coating, but it is claimed by some that a softer kind would mature earlier. Whether it does, or not, it has not been decided to depart from the present one, moreover as the millers of England and elsewhere are calling for it.

What is wanted, is selected seed of *this* variety, properly grown with a view to obtain in the future a hardy and earlier maturing growth; and to do this, it would have to be cultivated in a scientific manner, probably requiring the establishment of Government farms for the purpose. It received its name in a pleasing manner. A farmer named, Fyfe, living at Otonabee, Ontario, asked a friend from Scotland, who was visiting him, to send him out a "bonnet-ful" (Tam O'Shanter) of some new kind of wheat for seed. On his return to Scotland, this friend, seeing a ship starting from Glasgow with grain for the east, took a bonnet-ful and sent it to Fyfe in Canada. From that "bonnet-ful" has sprung the famous Fyfe wheat of Canada. It is supposed that the ship-load mentioned came from the Baltic. The Red Fyfe is the wheat for the country, and is in fact the only variety that can be grown to advantage on the Northern prairies. It brings a better price, and 90lbs. of flour made from it are equal to 120lbs. of any other.

Prof. Turner, of the Institute of Agriculture, S. Kensington, seems to have taken the subject up, and interests himself generally in this country, issuing pamphlets from time to time on its resources, etc.

The farmers in future will take more to mixed farming, rather than run the risk of losing all in a wheat crop; and already, 33 per cent more land is prepared than last year for spring crops.

In general, the more northern the wheat is grown, the more gluten it contains, consequently, the more valuable; whilst the more southern, the more starchy it becomes. The sample that obtained the prize at Philadelphia Central Exhibition was grown on the Church of England Mission, 900 miles north of Calgary. The Farmers' Union, here, instead of being a benefit to the country, has been doing great harm with its dabbling in politics and anti-immigration schemes. It is made up of lawyers, doctors, ministers, editors, and politicians (farmers?). When the Secretary (who has since resigned) could not obtain a reduced rate of 5 cents per bushel less than other shippers from the C. P. R., he, with others, resorted to threats, and telegraphed to England that farmers could not make a living in the country, being unable to dispose of their frozen wheat. The real farmers have been duped, whilst unprincipled individuals have been filling their pockets at their expense. The scheme as exposed, shows that the farmers have been getting less for their wheat, through the union, than they could have got elsewhere. It is quite easy to surmise where the difference has gone to.

The rebellion has left a great quantity of money in the country. Many farmers, through its aid, have been able to pay off mortgages, and business in general appears to be opening up for a spring trade. Many places along the line of the C. P. R. have profited in consequence. In Calgary alone, \$300,000 was the gain.

There has been quite a tirade at this latter place over a libel case in which Fitz Cochran, of Halifax, prominently figures as one of the defendant's counsel. The Stipendiary Magistrate there has sentenced Cayley, editor of the *Herald*, for "contempt," to pay a heavy fine. Cayley refuses to pay, and has been committed to jail, to stay there for *life*, unless certain parties (accomplices) pay the fine. The affair has not been settled yet. The action of the Magistrate has been upheld by the majority of the citizens, whilst others are requesting his removal.

The intense cold still continues. It is now about 45 degrees below zero in the morning, to 35 degrees at noon. It does not do to dawdle about the streets in such a temperature as this; 5 miles per hour is then the regular pace. Many old people, for this reason, remain in doors, from December to March. They could venture out on milder days, but are afraid. Others complain about the cold air "taking their breath away." There would be no trouble in this respect, if they only kept their mouths shut, and breathe naturally through their nose. A good wrinkle worth knowing, (especially to the ladies), is, that breathing through the nostrils during sleep will greatly delay the appearance of the noted crow's foot marks at the corners of the eyes.

Yours, etc.,

SCIRON.

[FOR THE CRITIC.]

A SPIRITUAL SYMPHONY.

"Is there such a thing as a perfect union of souls in this world, I wonder? Is there such a thing do you think as perfect love?" That question broke forth with a mournful appeal in every tone. "Union of souls and perfect love are very different things," was the answer given thoughtfully and sadly. "I think you can have a love perfect and beautiful in its kind, such as the love of a mother and son, without any union of soul between that mother and son. Ah yes, believe me, it takes something more than mere love to perfect that strong comenoting of heart to heart, and soul to soul—which constitutes the true marriage of spirits.

Am I not right? Do we not often see two human beings, it may be husband and wife, or mother and daughter, loving each other devotedly, and yet spiritually as far asunder as the poles!

I hold that it takes a full and pure sympathy to complete that true