

Very few, if any, are of pure Indian blood. They must be looked upon as among the tribes the most advanced in civilization in Western Canada. Many of them speak either French or English fluently, have a keen knowledge of their own interests, and would be capable of managing their own affairs."

In religious belief they are nearly equally divided between converts to the creed and worship of the Roman Catholics and those of the Methodist faith. They attend the churches and mingle with other worshippers at the town of Amherstburg, distant about three miles from the settlement; and were it not for the distinctive character of the policy adopted toward them as being nominally Indian, they would "inevitably merge into the general population, and disappear and be lost; but only in so far as they ceased to be distinguished from other members of the civilized community."*

At La Jeune Lorette, in the province of Quebec, is another remnant of the Hurons. Its members are descended from those stragglers of their nation whom the Jesuit missionaries of the seventeenth century humanely guided from their ravaged hunting grounds and corn-fields around the Georgian Bay, to the banks of the river St. Charles. In 1868 their population numbered two hundred and ninety-seven, having increased twenty-one since the census of the previous year.

The commissioners who reported to the Canadian government in 1858 speak of them as a band of Indians "the most advanced in civilization in the whole of Canada," but by the intermixture of white blood they have so far lost the original identity with their race as scarcely to be considered as Indians. Of all the tribes in Canada, they alone have lost nearly all traces of their native language; and, but for the pecuniary inducements of the annual Indian grant, would long since have intermixed with and disappeared among the *habitans* of French descent, by whom they are surrounded.

The theory of the sterility and ultimate extinction of the mixed Indian and European races appears to be confuted by the well authenticated fact that the numbers of individuals in the hybrid tribes have largely multiplied since 1844, and that the increase yet continues. Professor Wilson, a close observer and accurate analyst, says: "They seem likely to survive until, as a settlement of French-speaking Canadians, on the banks of the St. Charles, they will have to prove their Indian descent by baptismal register, or the genealogical records of the tribe, after all external traces have disappeared."

Within the last year the *dicta* of an eminent European ethnologist as to the influence of the climate of our continent on our race, have been extensively quoted, and elicited ample commentaries in both hemispheres. He based his conclusions on a letter from a French Canadian, who pathetically lamented that, although he and his family heroically remained French in sentiment, after an absence of two centuries from the parent stock, they were becoming Hurons in physical form. Viewing the subject as he did, simply from a single point, and in reference to climatic influences, the marvel of the case is magnificently increased by the fact that an opposite effect is produced upon the Hurons, who, in the same period, have become so nearly French. The *savant* bore unconscious testimony to the existing amalgamation of the races.

The Algonquin race formerly extended from the Atlantic shore of New York, through New England and the British maritime provinces, along the lower St. Lawrence, and thence westerly along the northern shores of Lakes Huron and Superior, at least as far as the Mississippi.

* Professor Wilson, of Toronto University, on Prehistoric Man, &c.