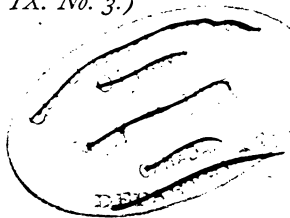


duplicate

(Reprinted from Canadian Naturalist, Vol. IX. No. 3.)



SKETCHES OF THE PAST AND PRESENT CONDITION OF THE INDIANS OF CANADA.

BY GEORGE M. DAWSON, D.S., Assoc. R.S.M., F.G.S.

It is computed that the Indian population of the Dominion at the present day numbers nearly 100,000, distributed as follows—the figures being those of the last report of the Department of the Interior:—Ontario, 15,666; Quebec, 10,917; Nova Scotia, 2,116; New Brunswick, 1,425; Manitoba and N.W. Territories, 27,308; Athabasca District, 2,398; Rupert's Land, 4,370; British Columbia, 35,154; Prince Edward Island, 296.

Constituting thus nearly a fortieth part of the entire population of Canada, the Indians would even numerically be a not unimportant factor in questions of interior policy. As the original possessors of the land, however, though possessing it in a manner incompatible with the requirements of modern civilization, and as having been at times ready to assert that ownership, even in a forcible manner, they acquire quite a special interest; even without that afterglow of romance which follows the memory of the red man in those regions from which he has already passed away.

Though in the ante-Columbian period of American history nearly all the Indian tribes and nations appear to have been either drifting or gradually extending, by force of arms, in one direction or another, as indicated by their history or traditions, their movements were neither so rapid nor erratic as those which have occurred since the old organization and balance of power began to crumble before the advance of irresistible force from

m. d.

[1878 or 9?]