

“In last year’s report, I stated that His Honor Lieut.-Gov. Morris, very strongly recommended that no further delay should take place in entering into negotiations with these Indians. His Honor reported, in effect, “that there was a general consent of opinion amongst the missionaries settled in that territory, and others who are acquainted with these Indians, as to the desirableness of having such a treaty made at the earliest possible date, with a view to preserving the present friendly disposition of these tribes, which might easily give place to feelings of an unfriendly or hostile nature, should the treaty negotiations be much longer delayed.”

“In view of these facts, and in order to satisfy these important tribes, and to prevent the difficulties which might hereafter arise through the settlement of whites, who are already flocking into Fort McLeod and other portions of this territory, Your Excellency decided that these Indians should be treated with this year, and the Indians were notified accordingly.

“His Honor Mr. Laird, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories, and Lieut.-Col. James F. McLeod, C.M.G., were selected by Your Excellency to negotiate the treaty. The former of these gentlemen, had assisted in 1874 in negotiating Treaty Number Four, with the Cree and Saulteaux Indians, and the latter, during his residence for some years past at Fort McLeod, as Commandant of the Mounted Police Force, had acquired the entire confidence and good will of the Indian tribes proposed to be dealt with.”

Besides all this, the Chiefs of the Blackfeet, in 1876, sent to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories, a letter, with regard to a treaty, and also by a messenger, in whom they had confidence, a message, to a similar effect. The Blackfeet Indians are a bold and warlike race. When the Sioux war with the United States was about being initiated, the Sioux invited them to join in the war, but they promptly refused. They are unlikely to become farmers, but as the country they inhabit presents unusual facilities for that industry,