

turbed, they gradually became again powerful, and then issuing forth drove back the conquerors. The aborigines now extant may be descendants of the more ancient, as well as 'the more recent tribes that peopled the new world.

The broad American continent, once the domain of the Indian, is now to a great extent possessed by the European. It is a fact well known that by the advancing tide of emigration the aboriginal inhabitants are carried away, and it has been inferred that physical degeneration of the race was the cause. This point may, however, be questioned. Indeed we are in possession of facts which seem to show that the Indians under favourable circumstances do not numerically decrease. They have succumbed to the European and to the power of colonization; yet the Indians of Canada have not since the close of the war of 1812, decreased in number. Formerly these nomadic tribes were wont to traverse extensive regions of the wilderness, but the presence of the European has pressed them into limited spots of *Reserve*; and it is not true that their number has decreased since the tomahawk and scalping-knife ceased to do their work of extermination. It has been a common belief that civilization is inimical to long life among the American Indians, but the writer has the testimony of Captain Anderson, who was for many years Superintendent of Indian affairs for Canada and who has spent the greater part of his long life among the Indians of the Hudson's Bay Territory, that mortality is far greater among those tribes that still lead a nomadic life than with those who have become domesticated\*. In this connection it must be stated that the Indian has an intense desire for alcoholic drinks, and it is the concurrent testimony of many who have been associated with them that it is the indulgence of this passion that has led to such a great mortality.

There is no possible way of learning the rate of mortality among the wandering tribes, but respecting those domesticated in Canada, trustworthy testimony can be adduced.

In the year 1858, the Government of Canada appointed a commission to make certain enquiries concerning Indian affairs in the Province. This commission, in carrying out the object of its organization, submitted some forty questions to the superintendents of Indian affairs, and

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In returning to Canada, the writer was fortunate in having for a fellow-passenger Bishop Taché of Red River Settlement, who has been there residing among the Indians 22 years. He says that speaking generally the *Indians* of the Hudson's Bay Territory are not decreasing, notwithstanding their wandering life. Their exposures frequently cause inflammation of the lungs; but there are few cases of consumption.