

CHAPTER X.

TREATY NUMBER SEVEN; OR THE BLACKFEET TREATY.

THE making of this treaty, which completed the series of treaties, extending from Lake Superior to the slopes of the Rocky Mountains, was entrusted, by the Privy Council, to the Hon. David Laird (who, after the effecting of the Carlton and Fort Pitt Treaties, had, in 1876, been appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories, subsequently to the erection of these territories into a distinct Government) and Lieut.-Col. McLeod, of the Mounted Police Force. The necessity which had arisen for making the treaty is thus stated by the Hon. the Minister of the Interior, the Hon. David Mills, in his Annual Report for 1877:

“The conclusion, in 1876, of the treaty with the Crees, Assiniboine and Saulteaux Indians (being the sixth of the series of treaties up to that time negotiated with the Indians of the North-West) left but a small portion of the territory lying between the boundary line and the 54th parallel of latitude unsurrendered.

“The unsurrendered portion of the territory, including about fifty thousand square miles, lies at the south-west angle of the territories, north of the boundary line, east of the Rocky Mountains, south of Red River (Treaty Number Six) and west of the Cypress Hills, or Treaty Number Four. This portion of the North-West is occupied by the Blackfeet, Blood, and Sarcees or Piegan Indians, some of the most warlike and intelligent but intractable bands of the North-West. These bands have for years past been anxiously expecting to be treated with, and have been much disappointed at the delay of negotiations.