

is said to have numbered about 5,000 souls, since which time it has gone on prospering, and is to-day one of the most flourishing districts in the Province of Manitoba.

I must now deal with another body of the early settlers, viz :—the Half-breeds. Of these there were two classes, the English and the French—the former being the offsprings of marriages contracted by Company officers and servants with Indian women, the latter being descended from the pioneer traders and hunters who came from Lower Canada. These Half-breeds, accustomed to roving habits on the prairie and in the woods, were not favourably disposed to the quiet life of a settler, and therefore devoted themselves more to hunting and trading than to the cultivation of the soil. They were wont in those days to assemble in large bands in the spring, and proceed in a great body to the hunt. To give an idea of the formation of these hunting bands, I may quote the one which left the Red River Settlement for the hunting grounds of the buffalo in 1840. The brigade consisted of 1,210 carts and harness, 655 cart horses, 586 draught oxen, 403 horses used for running, with saddles and bridles, and the number of persons in the band amounted to 1,630 souls—men, women and children. These bands framed a code of laws for their guidance on the plains, and were very strict in their enforcement. The plain hunters generally returned to the settlement in August, and bringing with them, as they did, an abundance of provisions, they were not apt to pay much attention to gathering in the harvest.

The first missionaries to the North-West were the French Roman Catholic priests, for we hear of Father Dalmas, about the year 1690, engaged in the study of Indian languages to enable him to preach the Gospel to the savages of Hudson's Bay, and in 1736 Father Arnaud was killed by the Sioux in the vicinity of the Lake of the Woods while on a missionary tour. The conquest of Canada by England, however, interrupted the Catholic missions in the North-West, and it was not till 1818 that they were again resumed.

The Scotch settlers had their own Presbyterian missionaries from the first, and in 1820 the first minister of the Church of England, Rev. John West, arrived in the North-West. While noting the early progress of settlement it may not be amiss for me now to give some particulars concerning the Indian tribes.

The original bands living to the East of the Rocky Mountains as far as Lake Winnipeg and Red River, within British territory, were as follows :—

Cree,	Shonshwap,	Yellow Knife,
Assiniboine,	Mountain,	Dog Rib,
Blood,	Saulteaux,	Strong Bow,
Blackfeet,	Takall,	Inland,
Beaver,	Nahany,	Copper,
Carrier,	Chipewan,	Swampy.

The population of the above in 1855 was, as near as it could be estimated, 47,000. A large proportion of the above bands, however, have become extinct since then, or they have become merged into other tribes, and according to the last census there were only 33,959 Indians in the North-West Territories.

It is notable that the Indians of the British North-West have ever