

habits of civilized life. They have there subsisted to a large extent by agriculture. Some progress has been made in teaching them in schools, and the influence of religion still exerts its sway over them, or at least their religious teachers still command their attention and respect. Out of seventeen hundred and fifty of which this band still consisted, according to the last report which I have seen, sixteen hundred are represented as subsisting by agriculture.

The prairie Indians yet remain as wild and untamable as ever. They are still averse to the labors of the field, and enjoy the life of indolence or else the excitement of the chase, by which and their annuities from the Government they eke out a scanty subsistence. The finger of fate seems to be pointed alike at the most civilized and the most savage. Final extinction is the end of the way down which all are swiftly rushing, and it would seem almost practicable to calculate with mathematical certainty, the day when they will live only in memory and in history.

They left Illinois thirty-five years ago with five thousand souls. At the date of the last report they had dwindled down to three thousand five hundred, and at this moment their numbers can scarcely exceed three thousand. From this each one may calculate for himself when the last day shall have passed—when there will be no living representative of that powerful people who but a century ago exterminated a nation at a single blow at Starved Rock. The last of the Pottawatomies will then have ceased to be.

I shall close this paper with an account of the great war dance which was performed by all the braves which could be mustered among the five thousand Indians here assembled. The number who joined in the dance was probably about eight hundred. Although I cannot give the precise day, it must