

## I.—INTRODUCTION, HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL.

NAME OF THE TRIBE. — The Indians to be described in the following pages were called "Couteau" or "Knife" Indians by the employees of the Hudson Bay Company; but at the present day this name has been entirely superseded by that of "Thompson" Indians, taken from the name of the river in the neighborhood of which they have their homes. They call their entire tribe Nlak'a'pamux. They are also so designated by all the neighboring tribes of the interior, although they are sometimes called Lükatimū'x and Sa'lic by the Okanagon, and Nko'atamux by the Shuswap. The Lillooet occasionally call them Cē'qtamux, which name is derived from that of Thompson River. In all these words the ending "-mux" means "people." The Indians of the Fraser Delta, whose territory adjoins theirs on the southwest, call them Sēmā'mila (said to mean "inland people," "inland hunters," or "people up the river"). Their language belongs to the Salishan stock.

HABITAT. — Their habitat is the southern interior of British Columbia, mostly east of the Coast Range, but it extends far into the heart of that range (see opposite map). It is about a hundred miles in length, by ninety in breadth. Through this territory flow three rivers, — Fraser River; its principal tributary, Thompson River; and a smaller tributary of the latter, Nicola River. In the valleys of these rivers, or in close proximity thereto, are found the principal villages of the tribe, while the country on either side is their hunting-ground.

Their neighbors to the north and east are the Shuswap, to whom they are nearest akin. To the northwest of their territory live the Lillooet, to the south and east the Okanagon, while at the mouth of the cañon of Fraser River they border on the Coast Salish. In former times a small tribe of Athapascan affinity inhabited the upper portion of Nicola Valley. They have become merged in the Thompson Indians.

The tribes with whom they are familiar, and their names, will be found on the map. The Upper Thompson Indians had no knowledge of any Coast tribes except those of Lower Fraser River. Some of the tribal names, such as Smilē'qamux ("the people of Similkameen"), signify the location which the people inhabit, regardless of their tribal affiliations. A number of more distant tribes, the location of which is not given on our map, were known to them by name. These were most of the Salish tribes of Montana, Idaho, and the interior of Washington; the Sahaptin; the Kootenay; and the most northern Shoshone tribes, who were called "tail people" because they wore attached to their head-dresses a long string of feathers reaching down to the feet. A tribe to the southeast called Stiltx', ten days' journey from Spences Bridge, neither Salish nor Sahaptin, came sometimes to trade fish near the mouth of Nicola River. The Crees were also known by name. Before the advent of the whites no other tribes were known. The Hudson Bay Company's employees are called