

FASHIONS.

We will now direct our steps towards the Company's depot which, as before stated, is on the banks of the Assiniboine at its junction with the Red River. As we approach we see a lot of buildings enclosed within a stone wall about fifteen feet high, with a small circular tower rising above either corner facing the rivers, these are pierced for guns, but no muzzles are protruding to warn off the foe.

At the gateway is a redcoat or sentry and several others moving around. A hundred men of the Royal Canadian Rifles have been stationed here for some years back, at the Company's expense, to intimidate the Sioux and other Indian tribes, but they were removed in the fall of 1861. On entering the enclosure we find a suite of buildings occupying the centre, the Governor's residence and officers' quarters, on the right the store, and on the left the barracks. In the rear are the storehouses surrounded by a high, close, wooden fence. One is struck with the apparent ease which exists among all the bystanders; each one is engaged in conversation, or smoking with all the dignity and composure we would expect to find in a potentate who made everything tremble at his nod.

Mlle. Demcrest's *Mirror of Fashion* is not subscribed to in this locality, nor are the latest importations from Paris paraded before the eyes of the community by tailors and modistes. The bonnet is an invention that can be scarcely said to have been introduced in place of the handkerchief, shawl or fashionable piece of broadcloth which serves as the covering for the head and shoulders when the long black hair, nature's protector, is considered insufficient. Long dresses, crinoline, and patent leather shoes neither retard nor assist the motions of the fair. The dress is the pattern that existed among the middle classes of the old countries long, long ago, rather short than otherwise, with the addition of that part of the female costume common among the Indians, consisting of pantalettes about eighteen inches long, composed of black cloth ornamented with variously colored beads according to the fancy of the wearer, and covering the ankles. The feet are encased in neatly made moccasins with either silk or bead-work fronts, which undoubtedly serve to show off the neatness of the foot better than any other variety of slipper that could be invented.

Now and then some parties may be noticed who wear the more modern innovations, but they are few, and at first sight a stranger is inclined to consider the appearance of the Red River ladies as very tame and forbidding, but in time the sex gains the mastery (as ladies will command attention and respect, no matter how apparently absurd the fashion may be that they are inclined to adopt); and the mode, after a time, ceases to be an object of remark.

The dress of the men is various but is not so much an object of curiosity; it may be summed up as consisting of a cloth cap, woolen or cotton shirt, vest, coat, pants and moccasins, which are worn as a whole or in part. Owing to the occupation of the individual, some partake more or less of the dress of the untutored savage himself.