

children at Sault Ste. Marie, and during the last three summers (since the C. P. Railway was opened) have been visiting the Cree, Saulteaux, Sioux, and other tribes in Manitoba and the North-West, in the hope of inducing those Indians to send some of their children to our institution. Last summer six Sioux boys and six Ojibway boys from the north-west came to us, and this summer I have succeeded in bringing down two young Blackfeet from their prairie home at the foot of the Rockies. We have in our homes at present 52 Indian boys and 27 Indian girls. Mr. Hale, hearing of my projected visit to the Blackfeet Indians, asked me to act in his place in furnishing the following report; and, as I am quite unused to this sort of undertaking, I hope that any blunders I may make in my style of writing or in the putting together of the material which came into my hands will kindly be overlooked. I think I may vouch for it that whatever I have offered in the following pages is the result, either of what I have seen with my own eyes or have gained from the lips of reliable Indians or from missionaries living on the spot.

The Blackfoot Indians, as Mr. Hale mentioned in his report of 1885, consist of three tribes, united in one confederacy, speaking the same language, and numbering in all about 6,000 souls. The common name by which they call themselves is Sokitapi, the prairie people. Siksikaw, Blackfeet, is a title given to the northern tribe by those living in the south (*i.e.* the Bloods and Pégans) on account of the black earth, which soils their feet; where the Bloods and Pégans live (50 miles or so to the south) the land is gravelly or sandy, so that their feet are not made black. The Bloods call themselves Káinaw (meaning unknown). The Pégans call themselves Pekániu (meaning unknown). By the white people they are all called, in a careless way, Blackfeet.

WHENCE THEY CAME.

Chief Crowfoot (Sapomakseka), the head chief of the whole confederacy, with whom I had a long and interesting interview, was very positive in asserting that his people for generations past had always lived in the same part of the country that they now inhabit. He entirely scouted the idea that they had come from the East, even though I cautiously omitted any reference to the theory that the Crees had driven them. 'I know,' he said, 'the character of the soil in all parts of this country. The soil of Manitoba I know is black, but that proves nothing, for this soil where we are now living is black also, and hence our friends to the south call us Blackfeet: our true name is "Sokitapi," the prairie people.' In answer to further inquiries, Chief Crowfoot said that there were no people west of the Rockies in any way related to them. His people crossed the mountains sometimes to trade with the British Columbia Indians, but their language was quite different, and they were entire strangers to them. He informed me, however, that there were a people a long way to the south in the United States who were related to them, and spoke the same language as they did. One of his wives, he said, came from that tribe. The woman was present in the teepee, and he pointed her out and ordered her to tell me what she knew. I questioned and cross-questioned the woman closely, the Rev. J. W. Sims, who has been four years among the Blackfeet, and is well acquainted with their language, interpreting for me. The information I drew from the old woman appeared to me most interesting. She said it was a journey of about thirty days' distance, and,