

of which they were formerly made, acquiring a market value, but being exchanged for nothing so essential to their health. There are also moral causes tending to depress the race—such as the consciousness of decline; the pressure of new necessities; the hopeless sense of inferiority to the whites in many respects, which, with all their reputed pride, is a general feeling among the Indians. Lastly, we must add the influence of practices which have a frightful prevalence in certain districts. I mean the administration of potions destined sometimes to produce abortion, sometimes to cause absolute sterility, in females. Dr. Hodder, in an Essay on the Poisonous Plants of Canada, read since the date of this paper, has alluded to the former as one of the secrets of the Indians in Canada, which he has not succeeded in discovering, but to which he attributes, in a very great degree, their decrease in number. Many instances of the latter were related to me in the interior—the Crees, more particularly, have a bad eminence as medicine men, which, shews a general disposition among them to these unnatural arts. In fact they are stated to be among the commonest resources of jealousy and revenge. However, some of these causes have not been found to check the reproductiveness of other races; and it may be doubted whether any or all of them are adequate to explain the broad fact, the final solution of which can probably be found only in the supposition of a design of Providence to make way for one race by removing the other.