

many of them perish and some tribes have been annihilated. The Canadian Government for the last twelve years has made an accurate annual census of the tribes under treaty, but their figures are not available for the present calculation, because there is nothing to indicate whether a reported increase is due to excess of the number of births over deaths or, as undoubtedly is often the case, to families coming home from other parts of the country, where they may have been living for years, joining their friends and entering the treaty relations. Similarly, on the other hand, an apparent decrease is often due to Indians of mixed blood withdrawing from the treaty, so as to be able to take scrip as halfbreeds. In the absence of reliable information of a more general character I may say that of the bands in this part of the country, of which I can speak from personal observation, and from the knowledge of officers of the Indian department with whom I have conversed, there seems to be no evidence that the Indians are dying out but rather that, unless in exceptional cases, they are increasing slowly, with the prospect that the increase will become more marked in proportion as the Indians learn to pay more attention to the laws of personal health and cleanliness, to take better care of the sick and to attend to the sanitary condition of their surroundings. It is worthy of notice that according to the departmental returns the most noticeable causes of decrease are among the unreclaimed and unsettled Blackfeet and Sarcees, while the marked cases of increase are among those Crees who have taken most kindly to farming.

The best method for the Government to use in civilizing the Indian wards of the nation is difficult to determine. It will be granted that any scheme which fails to teach them to rely upon themselves is fore-doomed to failure, and it will be granted, too, that it is very difficult indeed to carry on the present system of rationing and clothing them and still maintain the independence and dignity and self-respect with which the romance of a former day, with some show of justice, clothed "the noble red man," but which we have "civilized" out of him. The worst feature of the present system is the great danger of pauperizing those whom we, at great expense of men and money, are trying to help. It is notorious that in some parts of the country there are bands of