

had as yet penetrated the solitude of the great West, to develop for the benefit of the whole community the incalculable wealth that nature had lavished on that part of the Dominion. To the east of the region of the great lakes, the old provinces of Canada, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, had the social, commercial and industrial movement of the Dominion all to themselves. Manitoba and the Territories of the North-West, more extensive than Russia in Europe, were separated from the sister provinces by a chain of lakes, as large as seas and by more than 600 miles of unexplored territory covered by seemingly boundless forests. From the western end of Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains, over a stretch of some 1200 miles, in this same year 1878, there was but a single town at all worthy of the name, the city of Winnipeg, which had then a population of about 5,000 souls. Beyond Winnipeg and its little French-Canadian suburb of St. Boniface, the Canadian North-West was at that time almost a wilderness. The missionaries, the trappers in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, a few settlers here and there and the remnants of the once powerful Indian tribes, alone inhabited that great region.

All over this fertile prairie, in the midst of which we have just been visiting brilliant cities, with broad streets, lined by richly stocked stores, and lighted by electricity, we should in 1878 have found but the missionary's tent, the trappist's hut and the Indian's wigwam, those itinerant habitations which for more than two