
“Our Indians are in this position: the Indian traders on the Missouri hold out great inducements to them to go south and hunt, and to this end fee the chiefs, while the United States Government instruct the military to drive them back, should they come south across the boundary.”

SURVEYS.

Surveys of the boundaries of the reserves assigned the Indians within the territory covered by Treaties 4 and 6, were completed during the open season, under the direction of Dominion Land Surveyors Simpson and Nelson, while the boundaries of several of the reserves allotted the Indians under Treaty 3 were surveyed by Dominion Land Surveyor Vaughan; and some changes which it was deemed advisable to have made in some of the reserves, embraced in the territory covered by Treaty No. 2, were effected by Dominion Land Surveyor Austin. The rapid settlement of the country renders it absolutely necessary, with a view to the prevention of future complications, that the work of surveying the boundaries of all Indian reserves in Manitoba, Keewatin, and in the North-West Territories, shall be prosecuted vigorously to completion; and increased efforts will be put forth, as soon as practicable, to effect this much-to-be-desired end.

The reports of the surveyors above mentioned, (with the exception of Mr. Vaughan's, which has not yet been received,) describing their operations in the field, as well as sketches of the reserves surveyed, will be found herewith.

MANITOBA.

The Indians of Manitoba and of a large portion of the district of Keewatin, suffered considerably during last winter, owing to a combination of causes, among which may be mentioned, as respects the Indians of Lake Winnipeg, the partial failure in most places, and total failure in many, of the fisheries; the scarcity of muskrats, which form a large portion of their means of subsistence; the paucity of fur-bearing animals generally; the early flight of the wild fowl, owing to the unusually early setting in of winter; the flooding during the open season, by an unprecedented rising of the lake, of many of their planting grounds, and the consequent destruction of the most of their crops; and an early frost which blighted the crops that were not destroyed by the high water. Matters in the Lake Manitoba district were not quite so bad. Several bands, however, experienced the loss of their crops by the rising of the water of that lake, and consequent misery among those bands ensued; the water even entering the houses of some of the Indians; and in the case of two reserves the Indians were obliged to abandon them. Many cattle perished during the winter, owing to a scarcity of hay; the Indians being unable to secure a sufficient quantity of that product on account of so much hay land having been flooded.