

companions to rescue him, and in the melee the unfortunate old warrior met his death./page 190.

CHAPTER XV

LAIRD'S ADMINISTRATION AND COUNCILS, 1876-1881

DAVID LAIRD--THE DEBT OWED HIM BY THE WEST--MEMBERS OF HIS COUNCIL--LIVINGSTONE, SWAN RIVER, THE PROVISIONAL CAPITAL--HUMORS OF THE EARLY JOURNALS--PETITIONS FOR SCHOOLS--FIRST LEGISLATION OF THE COUNCIL--INDIAN TROUBLES, AND TREATY NUMBER SIX--TERRITORIAL BUDGET--TRANSFER OF GOVERNMENT TO BATTLEFORD, 1877--THE CIVIL MARRIAGE CONTROVERSY--THE COUNCIL ASKS THE SETTLEMENT OF ALL HALFBREED CLAIMS--DANGER OF AN INDIAN OUTBREAK--FIRST PROVISION IN AID OF SCHOOLS--DIFFICULTIES REGARDING ELECTORAL DISTRICTS--DILATORY CONDUCT OF THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES--THIRD SESSION OF COUNCIL, 1879--LAIRD RESIGNS SUPERINTENDENCY OF INDIAN AFFAIRS--NEWSPAPER COMMENT--DISAPPEARANCE OF THE BUFFALO--APPEAL TO PRINCESS LOUISE--DISAFFECTION OF BEARDY'S BAND--DELAY IN FORWARDING TREATY MONEY--VOLUNTEER MILITIA COMPANY--PROTESTS AGAINST FEDERAL MALADMINISTRATION--DEWDNEY BECOMES INDIAN COMMISSIONER--FIRST ELECTORAL DISTRICT PROCLAIMED--CONSTITUTIONAL DIFFICULTIES--HARD TIMES--MAIL SERVICE--VISITS OF LORD DUFFERIN AND THE MARQUIS OF LORNE--LAIRD'S SUBSEQUENT CAREER.

When, on October 7, 1876, the Honorable David Laird became Lieutenant-Governor of the North West Territories, a new era was opened alike in the government and the development of the West. Mr. Laird was already well known to the public as a journalist and statesman. He had been a member of the Haythorne administration in Prince Edward Island, and was a delegate to Ottawa from the island colony when negotiations were undertaken for its entry into the Dominion. In 1873 he was elected to the House of Commons, and in Mr. Mackenzie's administration he held the office of Minister of the Interior. In that capacity, as we have seen in a previous chapter, he had already played a very important part in relation to the negotiation of Indian treaties, especially the Treaty of Qu' Appelle. Mr. Laird was subject to his share of acrimonious party criticism, but now that the smoke of battle has cleared away it is agreed on all hands that there/p.191/ are few men who have given to the West services more characterized by fairness, breadth of sympathy, integrity and public spirit. The following paragraph is quoted from a well-known publicist who, though a political opponent, was cognizant of the problems confronting our first resident Governor:

"Mr. Laird's position was far from being a sinecure. His time was taken up with receiving deputations of discontented and often defiant savages. His residence was the central figure of an Indian encampment for his followers loved to observe and comment upon his every movement, and his kitchen was an Indian restaurant, where meals were served at all hours while the guests waited. To add to the pleasure of his environments, his actions and motives were misconstrued and misrepresented by some of the eastern newspapers, which were ready with their criticism despite the fact that they displayed a vast ignorance of everything pertaining to the North West in the very articles