

During the fall of 1874 the Government treated with the Plain Indians of these parts at Fort Qu'Appelle, but many were absent. The next year, however, some 5,000 assembled from all quarters to receive their annuity, and right glad they were to receive also a good supply of food etc. At the same time those chiefs who had not attended the previous year now attached their signatures of adhesion to the terms of the Treaty, and myself signed as one of the witnesses thereto. Such a large gathering of Indians at one time and place I have not seen since, all living in tents made of buffalo skins well dressed by the women.

Doubtless it was a Providential thing that the aborigines of these vast plains were now taken over by the Government, for the buffalo, though still very numerous, were likely soon to become extinct at the rate at which they were then hunted and slaughtered. At times fresh buffalo meat was brought in by the hunters, but the old time pemican and dried meat formed the staple article of food. As a delicacy, fine pemican intermingled with saskatoon berries is still well remembered, as also the bladders of fine fat. If news came that the buffalo had crossed the elbow of the South Saskatchewan away went the Indians with a procession of Red River Carts, soon to return laden with the riches of the prairie. Very little farming could be done under such circumstances; but ^{it} is well now, in one sense that the buffalo have disappeared, for the Red man has been taught by his guardians a far better way to live. Mainly dependent upon game, the Indians would never have risen in the scale of civilization, had not the Government practically become a Father to them. It used to be a "feast and a fast". In 1875 the Spring was late, and consequently the summer fowl were very late in arriving. While the writer was away to Winnipeg, one of his dogs was killed and eaten by the starving people. It might here be noted that during this absence of about 6 weeks my good wife was left among them and braved the lonely situation in the "Lone Land".