

of U. S. troops upon a camp of Peagin Indians, close to the British border, in 1879, as having had a disturbing effect on the Indian mind north of the border.

Lt. Butler states that the Indian mind is exceedingly simple in its character, and receives impressions in the same way as a child's would. Thus any wild story told to Indians, especially if it suited their prejudices, would be received as truth, and an impression be made which no kind of reasoning could afterwards dispel. Apart from the sources of distrust we have stated, the Indian has no distrust or dislike of the white man as such. On the contrary he is almost certain to receive him with kindness and friendship provided that he adopts the native system, joins the hunting camp, and lives on the plains. But most of the tribes, the Crees and Blackfeet in particular, are in direct antagonism to ownership of any particular part of the soil by settlers.

Next in importance to the native race is the half-breed element. There are settlements of these scattered along the line of the North Saskatchewan. The persons composing this class are chiefly of French descent. Many of them have emigrated from the Red River settlement; and others are discharged servants of the Hudson's Bay Co.; or relatives of persons still employed by the Co. Their characteristics are inaptitude for settled employment; love of hunting and freedom from all restraint. They spend almost the whole summer on the plains in well organized bands in pursuit of the Buffalo, bringing their produce to the Hudson Bay Co. In winter they generally reside in their settlements. Lt. Butler says that in political feeling they sympathize with their brethren in Manitoba, and entertain the sentiments which produced the outbreak in 1869-70.

He further says, there is a troublesome element of white settlers, European and American, at present numerically insignificant; but which might rapidly develop into importance—the class of Miners. Gold has been found throughout a considerable portion of the territory lying at the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains. It has been found on the Peace, Athabaska, McLeod and Pembina Rivers, all of which flow into the Arctic Ocean; and also on the North Saskatchewan, Red Deer and Bow Rivers, flowing into Lake Winnipeg. The Blackfeet are especially hostile to Miners and always attack them. The Miners, on their side, are not slow to retaliate; and they are sometimes the aggressors and commit horrible atrocities.

Lt. Butler says: "It has only been in the neighbourhood of the forts of the Hudson's Bay Company that continued washing for gold could be carried on. In the neighbourhood of Edmonton from three to twelve dollars of gold have frequently been 'washed' in a single day by one man, but the miner is not satisfied with what he calls 'dirt washing,' and craves for the more exciting work in the dry diggings, where, if the 'strike' is good, the yield is sometimes enormous." He adds: "From conversations which I have held with these men, as well as with others who have partly investigated the country, I am of opinion that there exists a very strong probability of the discovery of gold fields in the Upper Saskatchewan at no distant period."

Should these anticipations be fulfilled, as is very likely, there would probably come here as elsewhere in similar circumstances, a war of extermination between Miners and In-

dians, unless some controlling influence be interposed to prevent.

He describes at length the various ravages committed by the small pox among the various tribes. In many cases they have been truly horrible. The Indian does not understand in any way how to manage this disease; nor how to avoid contagion. He has taken it from outrages on the corpse of his dead enemy. Whole tribes are often decimated by it; and in some cases almost entirely swept away. The fact of its introduction by whites among red men is therefore naturally a cause of strong feeling.

Lt. Butler gives detailed accounts, which would be too long for insertion in the *Year Book*, of the various Indian tribes of the Saskatchewan and Assiniboine regions. The following general description, which we extract from his report, is interesting: "The aboriginal inhabitants of the country lying between Red River and the Rocky Mountains are divided into tribes of Salteaux, Swampies, Crees, Assiniboines, or Stonies of the Plains, Blackfeet and Assiniboines of the Mountains. A simpler classification, and one which will be found more useful when estimating the relative habits of these tribes, is to divide them into two great classes of Prairie Indians and Thickwood Indians—the first comprising the Blackfeet with their kindred tribes of Bloods, Lurcees, and Peagins, as also the Crees of the Saskatchewan, and the Assiniboines of the Qu'Appelle; and the last being composed of the Rocky Mountain Stonies, the Swampy Crees, and the Salteaux of the country lying between Manitoba and Fort Ellice. This classification marks in reality the distinctive characteristics of the Western Indians." The Prairie Indians live on Buffalo, and in large camps, and are warlike; the Wood Indians live on Deer, &c., in small parties, and are peaceable.

Lt. Butler states that since the outbreak in Minnesota and Dacotah, in 1862, a few Sioux Indians have made their appearance in the vicinity of Fort Ellis, at Portage la Prairie; and he is of opinion that the number may increase contemporaneously with the prosecution of railway enterprise in the Northern portion of the United States. At present, however, those who have made their appearance consider themselves as strangers, and do not assert any rights of proprietorship in the same way as the older resident Indians do.

As one mode of preserving peace between the Crees and the Blackfeet, Lt. Butler considers that the former should be made to understand that the Forts and Settlements along the Upper Saskatchewan must be considered as strictly neutral ground, where hostilities cannot be waged against the Blackfeet. At present if Blackfeet Indians venture on a trading expedition to the Forts of the Hudson Bay Company, they are assaulted by the Crees and killed. On the contrary the Blackfeet never attempt to kill the Crees in the vicinity of the Forts, and they are much more easily controlled.

The Blackfeet occupy the immense tract of country between the Saskatchewan and the frontier, a large portion of which is arid and sandy, being a true extension of the great American desert, which extends from the fertile belt of the Saskatchewan to the borders of Texas. It thus happens that the most active trading relations of the Blackfeet are more easily carried on with the Americans on the Upper Missouri, and the product of their robes, &c., generally finds its way down the waters of the Missouri.