

THE MÉTIS IN THE CANADIAN WEST

Volume I

MARCEL GIRAUD

Translated by George Woodcock



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by

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

The long task of translating Marcel Giraud's *Le métis canadien* has been a rewarding and interesting experience. It has revealed to me many details of which, despite my considerable knowledge of western Canadian history, I was unaware and which will be unfamiliar to most anglophone readers; and also, in the months of translation, it has made me familiar with a panorama of prairie life on a scale broader and deeper than that of any other work I have encountered on the subject. *Le métis canadien* is the largest book yet written on the Métis in the Canadian West, and, though it was originally published four decades ago, in 1945, it is still the most thorough ethnographic and historical study of that people who considered themselves a "nation" apart from both whites and Indians and who played so vital a role in the history of the parkland and the prairie between the Canadian Shield and the Rockies. But it is also a notable contribution to the general history of the region that has been inaccessible too long to anglophone readers.

The story of the origins of *Le métis canadien* is an interesting and even at times a dramatic one. Marcel Giraud's lifetime of studies in the francophone societies of North America began in 1918 when he was a student at the University of Aix-en-Provence and for the first time encountered Americans—soldiers who had been sent there for a period of study before they were discharged from military duties. It was this encounter that turned his attention to the transatlantic world. He graduated first from the University of Aix and then from the University of Paris. "After being rid of all those degrees," he says in a brief account of his career, "I had one thing in mind: find an original subject to write a doctoral dissertation which might open to me a professorship in a university."

Still maintaining the interest in the New World that his encoun-

ters with American soldier-students had aroused in him, Marcel Giraud began a series of readings and of explorations in the French colonial archives which, as he says, "made me suspect that the origins of the large expanse of western Canada had generated and bequeathed to its population historical problems that might justify and require a historical scholarly study still unwritten."

He accordingly applied for and won a Rockefeller scholarship that took him to the western provinces of Canada in the early 1930s. Once he got there, he became aware of the Métis and their historic situation as a group poised between the white and the indigenous societies and belonging to neither. He spent a great deal of time visiting Métis communities and observing the conditions that existed among them roughly half a century after the collapse of the vision of a Métis nation through the defeat of the North West Rebellion in 1885. These observations provided the basis for the later chapters of *Le métis canadien*, concerning the situation of contemporary Métis communities between the two world wars. He also researched the documents preserved in the archives of the Roman Catholic missions, mainly in Edmonton and St. Boniface, which narrated events in the history of the Métis as they had been observed by the missionaries. And he supplemented these observations in the field and in ecclesiastical documents by establishing contact with such scholarly authorities on the Canadian and American Wests as Harold Innis, Chester Martin, and A.S. Morton in Canada, and J.B. Brebner and A.L. Burt in the United States.

He soon came to realize that the best records illuminating the history of the Métis must be traced in the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, which at this time were stored not in Winnipeg, as they mostly are today, but in the Company's historic headquarters in the City of London. But there was no immediate opportunity to carry on research in England, and so he returned to France, where he took some ill-paid teaching posts to keep alive until he was fortunate enough to secure an appointment to the Institut Français in London, which allowed him to work in his spare time in the Hudson's Bay Company's archives. It was about this time that he first began to publish material based on his researches, notably an article in the Paris magazine *Politique* under the title "Les Canadiens français dans les provinces de l'Ouest" (September 1938). Finally he received a scholarship from the University of Paris that enabled him to devote a whole year to completing his research in London.

Giraud was still in London when the Second World War broke

out. He had to return to France, but he had gathered the material he needed for his book, and throughout the German occupation of France he devoted himself to the writing of it, using the history of another people far away as a kind of refuge from the even more violent and appalling history that was being made around him as he wrote. With the liberation of Paris, life returned surprisingly quickly to normal, and in 1945 Giraud's completed book, which earned him his doctorate, was published by the University of Paris's Institute of Ethnology; it was a massive volume of almost 1,300 pages that in those straitened times must have taxed both the funds of the University and the paper stocks of its printers.

It was clearly regarded in French academic circles as a notable achievement, and, as Marcel Giraud has remarked, it enabled him to reach the top of his profession "without going through the customary routine." The chair of North American history at the prestigious Collège de France fell vacant, and Giraud's book made him an eminently suitable candidate, so that he gained his professorship in one of France's great academic institutions without having to go through an apprenticeship teaching in a provincial university, as was the normal practice.

Substantial though it may be, *Le métis canadien* is not Marcel Giraud's most important work. After his appointment to the Collège de France, he turned his attention southward from Canada toward the other French colony in North America, Louisiana, and in 1953 he published the first volume of his *Histoire de la Louisiane française*. This work has been a continuing preoccupation over the decades. Four volumes have appeared, and now, living in retirement in Nice, Marcel Giraud is working on the fifth instalment of this massive and definitive work.

The Métis were a people given a sense of historic mission by those outsiders—the bourgeois of the North West Company—who invented the concept of a "Métis nation." Yet they recorded no history of their own, an anomaly largely due to the fact that during the period when they played a notable role in western Canada they were mostly illiterate. They had their bards, like Pierre Falcon, who recorded in song the crucial events of their collective life, but they had no real chroniclers and to this day no historian of their past has emerged from their own ranks. They were and have largely remained a preliterate people. This does not mean that they were ignorant in terms of necessary knowledge, and in

their own way many of them were educated, for a man like Gabriel Dumont could be fluent in six languages and know the prairie, as was once said of him, "as a sheep knows its heath," could be capable of notable feats of social organization, as happened when he and Father André created the famous commune of St. Laurent, and yet be able barely to sign his own name.

Writing the history of such a people presents its special problems, since the historian in such a situation is really involved in a kind of elaborate mirror play. He has to trace their record by reflection, in the way other people saw them, and he will find this kind of record has its intermittencies, when facts have to be supported by conjecture. More than that, there are the problems of point of view. A missionary's or a fur trader's perception of a Métis hunter is inevitably conditioned by his own calculations. The missionary sees him as a soul ripe for saving, the fur trader as a potential supplier or customer, and judgments are related to spiritual or material profits. So we have our accounts of the Métis seen from the outside, but—since this was a people lacking in those forms of artistic self-expression that are languages of the spirit—we have little tangible record of their inner lives. Before Louis Riel with his confessional writings, no Métis really bared his soul on paper, and Riel, with his Quebec classical education, was hardly a typical Métis. Gabriel Dumont, in the two oral narratives that have been recorded and have survived, gave some striking insights into the attitudes of a rather exceptional hunter of the western prairies. Otherwise, we must mostly rely, as Giraud did, on the objective data, and on probability when that data is scanty.

Given these limitations of information, *Le métis canadien* is a remarkable book. It pieces together an objective history of the Métis as a people playing their part in the changing history of the Canadian West. That history begins to reveal itself with the scanty *données* from the period of the early French explorers, when *métissage* first began, and builds up to the time when missionary archives, fur-trade records, and later the narratives of travellers and official data, create a complex of observations that presents the Métis record in considerable relief. Giraud extrapolates from this history a plausible collective portrait of the Métis character, with the strengths that made him so well adapted to the free life of the hunter and the weaknesses that made him incapable of coping with the changes in the economic and social life of the West that came with the collapse of the fur trade and the incursion of settlers. But

the scantiness of autobiographical or biographical documents means that, with the exception of notable figures like Cuthbert Grant and Louis Riel, there are few particular portraits in this book rendered with any degree of psychological depth, so that we tend always to see the Métis collectively rather than individually; this of course is usually the case with preliterate peoples existing in small communities far from the centres of the dominant culture.

Some of the limitations of *Le métis canadien* were self-imposed. While the subtitle of the book is "Son rôle dans l'histoire des provinces de l'Ouest," Giraud has tended to interpret "history" in social rather than political terms, and for this reason some readers will be surprised and may even be disappointed to find in the book no detailed accounts of the political and military events that took place during the Red River rising in 1869 and the North West Rebellion of 1885. The insurrections are treated summarily, and Giraud concentrates much less on the dramatic episodes of such periods, which have preoccupied other historians of the Canadian West, than on the effect which the two events had on the social conditions of the Métis community, and on the way they determined its position in the new society that arose in the West after annexation to Canada and the influx of immigrants, at first mostly white Anglo-Celtic Protestants from Ontario. Given the ethnographic nature of Giraud's approach, I think such a limitation is valid and acceptable. In any case we have plenty of detailed accounts of the two insurrections, and more have appeared recently to celebrate the centennial of the North West Rebellion. What we have lacked is the deep and intensive study of Métis origins, and of the fate of the Métis between and after the insurrections, and this Giraud amply provides us. Hence, even if *Le métis canadien* does not offer us a detailed narrative of the two rebellions, it does provide us with a wealth of material and of sound analysis regarding social developments in the West that helps us better to understand these events and their tragic consequences, and also to see the Métis not merely as the actors in two dramatic episodes in our history but as an enduring element in our society which cannot merely be relegated to the past.

Le métis canadien inevitably reflects in some ways the prevailing attitudes of historians and ethnologists at the time and place when it was written. There is an inclination to echo the earlier ethnologists who tended to see processes at work in society analogous to those the evolutionists perceived in the natural

world. Indeed, there are times when Giraud does talk about white society being more "evolved" than indigenous societies, and at other times, in his descriptions of the life-styles of Indian peoples, he appears to be judging them according to white standards of honesty, decency, and so on, so that his account seems often more negative than we would expect from a modern ethnologist. However, Giraud was not insensitive to these issues. At one point he talks of the subjection of people of mixed blood to "a variety of factors, some of which tended toward their elevation and others toward their debasement to the level of the native people" (Vol.I, p.323). But lest we assume his choice of language implies a comparative moral judgment, he adds a footnote that should be read with attention:

By this we mean in no way that the native society is, in its conception or organization, inferior to white society. The two are in opposition because of their differences of structure, which we are not called upon to judge in terms of inferiority or superiority. If at times we resort to terms like "raising" or "lowering," it is solely because they describe the reaction caused among the native peoples by contact with the whites and by the comparison of their conditions of life with the more privileged status of the Anglo-Saxon.

This caution should be borne in mind whenever the reader encounters passages that seem to express judgments one might not find in the writings of contemporary anthropologists; where judgments exist in *Le métis canadien* they can be taken as relative to the changing situation of the West and not as absolute.

There have been comparatively few difficulties in the task of translation, for Marcel Giraud writes a straightforward and happily jargon-free prose. Occasionally his text contains redundancies that a strict editor might have judiciously pruned in the original, but in such cases I have chosen not to assume a *post factum* editorial role and have respected the text that print in its own way has made definitive.

The title posed problems, since clearly what Giraud meant by "le Métis canadien" was the person of mixed French-Canadian and Indian ancestry, and to translate the term merely as "the Canadian Metis" would have blurred that special connotation. However, in the anglophone usage of Canada, the term "Métis" is

in any case restricted to people of mixed blood who are either of French descent or have been absorbed into a French-speaking group, so that the qualifying adjective did not seem necessary. In the end I decided that the most descriptive title could be obtained by uniting title and subtitle; I have called my English translation *The Métis in the Canadian West*.

The word "canadien" itself aroused similar problems within the text. In the early part of the book it refers entirely to Québécois who came from Lower Canada to work or live in the West or, used adjectivally, to their descendants and their culture. After Confederation, however, and especially after the West became part of the new dominion of Canada, the word is also used at times in Giraud's text to signify people of non-French descent coming from the old Canadian provinces. I have been unable to follow any strict rule in this connection; in each case I have been led by my judgment of what is appropriate in the context. In general I have tended to use the term "French Canadian" for a person of Québécois descent wherever there is any danger of misunderstanding. In practice this means that up to the 1860s "Canadian" wherever it appears means "French Canadian," but after about 1865 it is likely to mean "English Canadian." There seemed no better way of solving the problem.

Another problem arose over the word "Métis" itself, since, unlike anglophone writers, Giraud uses it to describe all persons of mixed blood in the West. Since to continue this usage would have led frequently to confusion, I have adopted the practice of restricting it to people of partly French descent—the "Métis canadien" of Giraud's title. In describing in a general way people of partly Indian descent I have favored the term "mixed blood." And in describing those of partly Scottish or English descent, who lived apart from Métis society as described in this book, I have had recourse to the term "half-breed." I am aware that in certain circles this usage has fallen into disfavor. On the other hand, it is hallowed by the practice of historians and it is the translation of "Métis" favored by the definitive bilingual *Dictionnaire Canadien/Canadian Dictionary* (1962) prepared by the Lexicographic Research Centre of the Université de Montréal.

I would like to end by expressing my thanks to the Canada Council for providing a translation grant that made my task possible, to Mrs. Norma Gutteridge and the staff of the University of

Alberta Press for their encouragement and help, and to Mr. Gerhard Ens for his invaluable assistance in checking a considerable number of points in the Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company and to Mrs. Shirlee A. Smith, the Archivist at the Hudson's Bay Company in Winnipeg. Ms. Jean Wilson of Vancouver copy-edited the text, Vic Marks of Typeworks, Vancouver, did the typography and typesetting, and Eve and Ron Gardner of Gardner Indexing Service, Edmonton, compiled the index. This work is published in co-operation with the Western Canadian Publications Project Committee of the University of Alberta. The University of Alberta Press has asked me to thank Les Éditions du Blé of Saint-Boniface, Manitoba, for their permission to use the plates of the maps and illustrations prepared for their 1985 reprint of *Le métis canadien*.

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GEORGE WOODCOCK

PREFACE

If interbreeding between white and red peoples can be considered a general fact in Canada, if no part of the Dominion has completely escaped it, the provinces of the West offer the most numerous and the most striking examples. Not only do the Métis form a distinct group in the heterogenous society of this country that has hardly emerged from the frontier period,¹ but they also have their own history within this setting. They are the survivors of a race which for a long period had its own special customs and an economy partially resembling that of the primitive tribes from which it had emerged, well adapted to the natural resources of the West; a race whose personality was repeatedly made manifest during the evolution of those territories which were so rapidly converted from the exclusive exploitation of furs to the development of the primary resources they concealed. Even more than the Indians, who today are detached from their original patterns of organization and re-

1. We use the term "frontier" in the sense that has been defined and widely spread by Professor F. J. Turner (*The Frontier in American History*, New York, 1921). The frontier denotes the advance guard of colonization, the marches in which the influences of the primitive and the civilized worlds confront each other, in which the existence of the white man, whether he is trader, hunter, or settler, will depend on concessions to the wilderness he enters and the native peoples he meets there. The Canadian frontier thus shifted in gradual stages from the valley of the St. Lawrence to the shores of the Pacific. It underwent a long period of stagnation in the country of the West; this favoured the emergence of the Métis group, which provided by far the most living expression of its spirit.

moved from their former ideals of life, the Métis have suffered, through the pressure of a new economy on their way of existence, a total disaggregation as a people. Nevertheless, this situation does not justify us in applying a uniformly negative verdict to them all, or in failing to appreciate the originality of their history and their past economy. Their personality reflects the influence of an environment which today is largely effaced, where the presence of primitive races, the existence of violent natural forces, to which man was closely subjected, and the distance from any nucleus of civilization dominated the attitudes and shaped the way of life of its inhabitants. Condemned, in regions difficult of access, to a long period of isolation, the Métis group was able to develop there without interference and to create for itself traditions and aspirations unknown to the hybrid groups that emerged in other parts of Canadian territory.

INTRODUCTION

In undertaking the story of the Métis in the provinces of the West, we have set out to portray the evolution of their group from its origins, to define the role it has played in the history of the North West, and to seek out the causes that explain the economic and social position it occupies today in these provinces. Thus this is neither a genealogical study, for we have deliberately mentioned only a small number of families, and then only when it was necessary, nor is it a study of the insurrections of 1869-70 and 1885, events that have become the subjects of remarkable narratives and of innumerable polemical arguments, and which we touch on only insofar as they affect the evolution of Métis society and hasten its decay. In this study, which is essentially confined to Métis of French-Indian descent, the Scottish halfbreed appears only when his presence helps us better to define, by means of comparison, the personality of the Métis of French descent and to contrast the attitudes and ways of life of the two groups. Sometimes also, the lack of documentation regarding the French-speaking Métis leads us to find examples among the Scots and describe them more extensively than one would otherwise do in such a work. This occurs especially in the period of the origins of the Métis, when the scantiness of texts forces us not to observe too strictly the limitations of a work which we have devoted to that group whose role is manifested so vigorously in the history of the West, and whose assimilation into white society is even today so imperfectly achieved that it perpetuates a problem the solution to which it is difficult to foresee.

This is the case especially in the three prairie provinces, the region where the Métis group, especially numerous because of the contacts between races which the isolation of the country long

favoured, constituted at an early period a distinct element, animated by national pretensions, whose demands the public authorities were in many cases forced to accept. We have not extended our study to the mountainous zone of the Pacific coast. At the same time, given the fact that it would have been impossible to adhere strictly to the conventional boundaries of provinces lacking—except to the West—in natural frontiers, we have been unable entirely to ignore the other bordering territories: to the northwest the valley of the Mackenzie River, and the area of the Barren Grounds, and to the East the region whose waterways drain into Hudson Bay and James Bay, which have been linked to the general framework of our study, yet we have not made them the object of an enquiry in depth, which the scarcity of population would have made irrelevant.

In chronological terms, we have adopted as the era for beginning our work the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Only from that epoch can one date the establishment of the white race in the country of the North West in groups large enough and stable enough to give rise to appreciable interbreeding. If the phenomenon undoubtedly occurred earlier on the Labrador coast, which seamen and fishermen have long frequented, it is not likely that the pioneer expeditions which ventured into the Bay of the North contributed to the mingling of races. Since no precise data have come down to us on the even earlier Scandinavian expeditions, perhaps in the tenth or eleventh centuries,¹ it is impossible for us to form a judgment on such a remote epoch. But we can have no doubt that Henry Hudson's expedition (1610) and those that followed it (led by Thomas Button, Jens Munck, Luke Fox, and Thomas James), which were all simple voyages of discovery without those commercial or colonial preoccupations that led to the union of whites and Indians and which in any case made no contact with the peoples of the shorelines, played no part in the birth of the Métis group.

We regret that, owing to events, we were unable to make ourselves acquainted with the English or American works regarding the provinces of the Canadian West that may have been published since the spring of 1940.²

We wish to express our thanks to Mr. Chadwick Brooks, Secretary to the Hudson's Bay Company, and Mr. Leveson Gower, the Company's Archivist, who have kindly given us access to their remarkable collection of archives, and to Professor J. B. Brebner

of Columbia University, New York, Mr. G. Lanctot, the Dominion Archivist, and Miss Grace Lee Nute, Archivist of the Historical Society of Minnesota; to Professors A. L. Burt of the University of Minnesota and A. S. Morton of the University of Saskatchewan; to Professors H. A. Innis and Chester Martin of the University of Toronto; to Professors P. Renouvin of the Sorbonne and A. Siegfried of the Collège de France; and to Professor M. Griaule and Monsieur P. Lester, General Secretaries of the Institut d'Ethnologie, whose advice and material assistance have enabled us to complete and publish this work.

At the same time, we would have been unable to carry on our investigations among the Métis groups of the Canadian West without the help of the Congregation of Oblate Fathers. We express our fullest gratitude to them, and also to Monseigneur E. Yelle, Archbishop-Coadjutor of St. Boniface (Manitoba) and his distinguished secretary, Father A. Deschambault, who agreed to put at our disposal the important documents in the Archiepiscopal Archives.

MARCEL GIRAUD

1. On this subject, see the interesting article by W. S. Wallace, "The Literature Relating to the Norse Voyages to America," *Canadian Historical Review* (March 1939), and that by C. T. Curelly, "Viking Weapons Found Near Beardmore, Ontario," *Canadian Historical Review* (March 1939).

2 The events to which Giraud refers here are, of course, those connected with the German invasion of France and the occupation of Paris in 1940, which isolated him from current publications in the English language until after he had completed *Le métis canadien* (translator).

PART ONE

THE PRIMITIVE
ENVIRONMENT

CHAPTER ONE

THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The true Canadian West—the North West of the *voyageurs*—began only on the far side of Lake Superior. This was the termination of the water route that formed a natural extension of the St. Lawrence, and whose ease of access gave travellers from Lower Canada a rapid entry into the heart of the American continent. At the end of the eighteenth century it was the trans-shipment point where the roomy *canots de maître* that plied the Great Lakes, and their canoemen, too inexperienced to brave the spaces of the North West, both ended their stage of the journey into the interior. The winterers, inured to a harder way of living, now took the place of the “pork-eaters” from Montreal, and their Northern canoes, whose lightness was designed for the difficulties of navigating the waterways of the Canadian Shield, were launched on the network of rivers that traversed the broken country between Lake Superior and Lake Winnipeg.¹

At this point the traveller crossed the threshold of the true wilderness, whose entry at the beginning of the nineteenth century was guarded by the citadel of Fort William at the mouth of the Kaministiquia River. The voyageurs who reached Fort William from Montreal had already traversed, by the Ottawa River and French River route to Georgian Bay, vast stretches of the rocky and wooded Canadian Shield. The lower edge of the Shield continued to skirt the Great Lakes from Lake Huron westward until at Fort William it hemmed in the western shore of Lake Superior with its compact mass, which extended in a vast arc of rock formations—primeval, hard and meagre-soiled—in the direction of Hudson Bay and the Arctic Ocean. In just the same way as the landscape seemed to close itself off, so the civilizing influence of Lower Canada, which had percolated by way of the Great Lakes as

far as the frontier posts of Sault Ste. Marie and Michilimackinac, was unable to overleap the rugged shores of Lake Superior. In the country that stretched beyond, races and cultures would long continue to mingle and merge freely, far away from the domination of the civil and military authorities in New France.

To the first explorers this Shield, which separated the West from the colonized regions of Canada, appeared as a rocky wilderness, sombre and grey as its own granite. In places the surface was horizontally level, but then it would break into ridges and undulations, a fearsome chaos of wild-looking outcrops and of hollows filled with a multitude of lakes, turbid muskegs, marshes and streams both large and small.² These streams were the numerous affluents of James Bay and Hudson Bay, which they entered through sluggish and marshy estuaries. Everywhere they had delved valleys of varying depth, broken frequently by falls and rapids shaped by the grinding of vanished glaciers.³ On the rocky surfaces, the soil derived from decaying vegetable matter was scanty and thinly spread. "The spots of tolerable soil are neither large nor frequent," wrote David Thompson in 1785.⁴ Here and there, in the basins around lakes or in the depths of valleys, sand and clay had collected,⁵ often mingled with grits,⁶ as around Lake Athabasca,⁷ and in other places reduced to a thin scurf that barely hid the rock.⁸ Only on the very margins of the Shield, to the south along Rainy River and Rainy Lake, around Lake of the Woods and Lake Winnipeg,⁹ and to the north on the shores of Hudson Bay, did a layer of humus sometimes cover the stretches of sandy soil and the lakeside or seashore claybeds.¹⁰ Thus the possibilities of cultivation were narrowly localized. Forest and rock determined the look of the landscape. "Everywhere wooded shores, and never a distant view."¹¹

But the woodland did not cover the Shield with a uniformly dense mass of trees. Sometimes it reared up a tall and crowded forest where stands of conifers—black and white spruce, tamarack and larch, the dominant species of the north—mingled with leaf trees such as poplars, aspens, and white birches; the last provided both native hunters and Canadian voyageurs with bark for their canoes and wood for their sleighs, hatchet handles and snowshoe frames.¹² Sometimes the forests were broken by sterile rocky outcrops or broad marshes where muskegs of decomposing vegetation accumulated on the permanently frozen sub-soil.¹³ And often

the forest opened into clearings filled with a thick undergrowth of wild hops (*Humulus lupulus* Linn.) and wayfaring tree (*Viburnum opulus* Linn.),¹⁴ or into burns opened by fire and encumbered by the charred trunks of conifers and birch trees among which poplar saplings (*Populus balsamifera* Linn.) had sprung up.¹⁵ "Fire has made such ravages" on the north shore of Lake Superior, George Simpson noted in 1832, "that in many places nothing remains to show that vegetation had ever existed, but a few scorched trunks of trees standing upright among the ruins of immense forests laid waste by that overwhelming element."¹⁶

In the neighborhood of the seacoast the effect of the colder and more humid climate was to aggravate that of the fires, and around the great indentation of Hudson Bay, on whose shores the tide ebbed and flowed over vast open beaches,¹⁷ the forests were reduced, despite the comparatively thick vegetable mould, to growths of willows and stunted conifers scattered among vast marshes.¹⁸ The scarcity of wood in this region and the distances from which it had to be brought help to explain why James Knight hesitated in 1716 to order the construction of a fort at the mouth of the Churchill River.¹⁹ The marshes nourished a rich growth of hay from which the Company's posts on Hudson Bay fed their livestock.²⁰ On this level ground the drainage was always poor, because thaws never penetrated more than three or four inches below the surface, and the constant dampness of the soil was increased every spring by the floods caused by ice building up at the river-mouths,²¹ and was sustained through the summer by nightly frosts.²²

Along the shorelines, enveloped in their icy mists, the cold was always more intense than inland. In 1782 Andrew Graham noted in the journal of Fort Severn that his men could not endure the cold when they hunted ptarmigan in the open marshes along the coast, while those who hunted hare in the forest, only a little way inland, complained of the warm, heavy atmosphere.²³ The Indians who brought their furs in the spring to the posts on Hudson Bay dreaded approaching the shore, where they were often enveloped in snowstorms as soon as they left the shelter of the forest. By the end of October the coast was almost completely under ice.²⁴ The larger rivers might remain free until the beginning of January²⁵ but from October onwards the ponds, marshes, and slow-flowing streams were already frozen; the fragile structure of York Factory,

built on marshy soil, was greatly disturbed by the effects of winter frosts,²⁶ and at the end of November the intense cold would begin to splinter trees and to crack rocks.²⁷

At this season all work outside the forts came to an end. Cutting wood was impossible; within twenty minutes the faces and hands of men engaged in such tasks would be frost-bitten.²⁸ In 1715 one of the governors of York Factory expressed doubt whether in a land so meagre and deprived it would ever be possible to keep domestic animals alive.²⁹

The winter raged for eight months, sometimes broken by intervals of moderate temperature, followed by violent storms and by cold so intense that the thermometer would fall to 63° F. below zero and even, on occasion, to 100° below.³⁰ In Hudson Bay the sea froze to within ten leagues of the shore, and the open water between could only be identified by the veil of pale mist that obscured it.³¹ In spring the cold was aggravated by humid fogs; only in the middle of July was the coast again accessible to shipping, and the posts at last emerged from their winter isolation.³² From the beginning of June, however, there were many warm days, interrupted by sudden forays of returning cold, whose effect was intensified by penetrating mists that threatened the health even of the native peoples,³³ by plagues of insects, and by fires in the woods caused by both Indians and the employees of the posts.³⁴ As a result of these fires, the coast took on, year by year, a progressively more desolate appearance. The trees scattered there were ravaged by fire, and the gaps thus opened in the forest pushed the wooded area farther inland. In 1774 Samuel Hearne observed in the neighborhood of the Churchill River the effects of this manmade devastation, which deprived the posts of their supplies of wood and would have been even worse if the Hudson's Bay Company had not made an effort to end the setting of fires.³⁵

Beyond Prince of Wales Fort, the land became even more arid and the cold more rigorous. When Michael Grimington explored the Churchill River in 1686, he observed that its lower reaches formed the boundary between the woodland and the Barren Grounds, that sterile expanse which opened out beyond the Seal River and extended the Canadian Shield as far as the Arctic Ocean.³⁶

Nowhere was the bleak monotony of the Shield more evident than on the Arctic-facing inner side of the great arc which the wooded zone, edged by a tangle of trees brought down by the

winds,³⁷ traced from the Churchill River to Great Slave Lake and the Mackenzie River, where it came to an end near the mouth of that great Arctic waterway.³⁸ Here and there, beyond the line of the forest, a few trees still grew in sheltered dips or where pockets of humus had collected. But very soon they gave way to the vegetation of mosses and lichens that covered the gently undulating surface of the Barren Grounds, dotted in every direction by lakes and sometimes breaking into chaotic heaps of glacial boulders that in the north subsided into the flatness of the tundra along the shores of Coronation Gulf.³⁹

Yet even that far extremity of the Shield, its most impoverished region, was not without resources, and human life was still possible there. The wild berries, mosses, and lichens,⁴⁰ which at times of famine gave nourishment even to travellers, provided grazing for herds of musk-oxen (*Ovibos moschatus moschatus* Zimm.) and Arctic caribou (*Rangifer arcticus* Richard.). The range of the musk-oxen ended south of Seal River, but that of the caribou reached as far as the southern shores of Churchill River and Reindeer Lake.⁴¹ The native peoples made a practice of ambushing the caribou on their winter and summer migrations; in winter these wanderings led the bucks from east to west, toward the forest, where they sheltered during the cold season, and in summer back toward the east, in search of the does who passed the whole year in the desolate spaces of the Barren Grounds. Reunited near the shores of Hudson Bay, they provided an abundance of food for the Indians and the trading posts.⁴² In summer the woods caribou—a distinct species⁴³—would also leave the shelter of the forest to graze on the Barren Grounds.⁴⁴

Similar resources, in great variety, existed in the wooded zone which to the south and west spilt over the Shield's igneous formations and encroached broadly on the soils of the great inland plain that fanned out beyond the Shield's archaic nucleus, extending from the lower end of Lake Winnipeg to the Rocky Mountains and touching the Arctic Ocean at the mouth of the Mackenzie River.⁴⁵ In addition to the great variety of berries and wild fruit in this region—gooseberries, strawberries, blueberries, huckleberries, saskatoons⁴⁶—there was an abundance of Labrador tea (*Ledum latifolium* Ait.) in the muskegs and marshes; its bitter decoction took the place of tea among the Indians and the Métis.⁴⁷ In many places wild rice (*Zizania aquatica* Linn.) grew profusely, springing from the muddy beds of the chain of lakes—particularly Rainy

Lake and Lake of the Woods—that marked the route of the northern canoe brigades between the Kaministiquia and the Winnipeg rivers; the Ojibwa and the Dakota had long disputed its favorite habitat among the glacial alluviums and the marshy soils around the sources of the Mississippi.⁴⁸

Big game and fur-bearing animals were also more varied in the forest region. Most numerous were the woods caribou (*Rangifer caribou* Gmelin.), larger and stronger than their arctic cousins; influenced by changing wind directions, they wandered incessantly over the rocky terrain and the frozen marshes in search of their food.⁴⁹ There were also black bear (*Euarctos americanus americanus* Pallas) and especially moose (*Alces americanus americanus* Clinton); the latter preferred the southern parts of the forest, where poplars, aspens, and willows grew thickly,⁵⁰ but the trading post journals also report their abundance in the regions of Ile à la Crosse, Lesser Slave Lake, and Athabasca Lake.⁵¹ The Woods bison of this region (*Bison bison athabasca* Rhoads) were shorter and more stocky than the plains bison (*Bison bison bison* Linn.), whose habitat lay to the south of the forest.⁵² The elk or wapiti (*Cervus canadensis canadensis* Erxleb.) crossed the southern limit of the wooded zone, but by nature it was an animal of the prairie.⁵³ When big game was scarce the Indians would resort to rabbit and hare,⁵⁴ as well as fish and the flights of migrating wild geese that followed the coasts of Hudson Bay.⁵⁵ The forest was also the haunt of fur-bearing animals—beaver and otter, martens, foxes, and muskrats—and it was on the woods Indians that the fur-trading companies relied for their best peltries.⁵⁶

Yet, varied as they may have been, the resources of the forest were precarious and unevenly spread. Wild berries did not ripen until the summer's end, and large areas of the Shield grew nothing but a covering of the lichen known as reindeer moss.⁵⁷ In winter, game was often hard to find anywhere, and there were large areas where even in the best of seasons it was scarce;⁵⁸ the presence of caribou in particular was unpredictable because of their constant wandering.⁵⁹ The explorers who first entered the wooded area of the Shield soon became aware of the agonizing precariousness of the Indian way of life, subject to periodic famine and threatened by cyclical phenomena like the disappearance of the hares at the end of seven- or nine-year periods.⁶⁰ Only for the most adept hunters did the profits gained from fur-bearing animals compensate for the uncertainty of natural means of subsistence. At its best the native

life was hard. The privations it involved were aggravated by a climate whose arctic character, even when it was less extreme than in the Barren Grounds, allowed no escape from rigorous cold in winter or torrid heat in summer, made all the more unendurable by the proliferation of insects.⁶¹ In such circumstances it was to be expected that the woods Indians should often desert their forests for the prairie to the south, with its more reliable and easily accessible resources.⁶²

Between the true prairie and the forest, the transition was not so abrupt as between the forest and the Barren Grounds. An intermediate zone existed where they came together, uneven in topography and broken by frequent hills, lakes, and rivers, or by marshy sloughs whose high grasses concealed the trunks of trees felled by fire.⁶³ In this parkland the forest lingered in the form of thick copses, more deciduous than coniferous,⁶⁴ which alternated with broad clearings, veritable plains where cultivation would be established before agricultural settlement spread to the real prairie. This landscape extended from the Red River to the north branch of the Saskatchewan and reappeared, hemmed in by dense forest, on the black, heavy soils of the Peace River, where in 1792 Alexander Mackenzie noted the alternation of woods and of plains inhabited by herds of bison and elk.⁶⁵ Farther on, beside the Mackenzie River, he encountered parkland less constricted by the forest.⁶⁶ The harmonious landscape of the North Saskatchewan was similarly described by Gabriel Franchère: "Hills in varied forms, crowned with superb groves; valleys agreeably embrowned, at evening and morning, by the prolonged shadow of the hills and of the woods which adorn them."⁶⁷ The dense forest line of oaks, aspens, elms, and maples beside the Red River was often broken by open areas, such as Image Plain and Limestone Quarry, that linked up with the level expanses of the great prairie.⁶⁸ In that intermediate zone, the animals of the northern forest—bears, moose, and fur-bearers—often mingled with the plains bison, which found winter shelter and pasture there, though the prairie was their usual domain.⁶⁹

To the south the prairie spread out in that vast grassy surface which in 1690 impressed Henry Kelsey when—the first white man there—he entered the Saskatchewan Valley. "You leave the woods behind, and then you have beast . . . black buffilo, nothing but beast and grass."⁷⁰ A thrilling sense of immensity hovered over the landscape as it opened out from the parkland to the Mississippi

Valley, and merged without a break into the great American plain, to which David Thompson could fix no limit nearer than the Gulf of Mexico.⁷¹ Yet the voyageurs who travelled by the classic route of the North Saskatchewan did not see this treeless prairie stretching before their eyes until they reached Fort Carlton,⁷² beyond which it encircled the banks of the South Saskatchewan and its tributary, the Red Deer River. But along the lower reaches of the Assiniboine River to near its confluence with the Red, and along the shores of the latter river, it reappeared, and the impression of endless space brooded over the prairie, created as much by the lie of the land as by the effects of climate and vegetation.⁷³

In this area the terrain was too little broken and too fragmentary in its variations to disturb the level monotony of the plain or to create in the general uniformity any clear pattern of landscape. Yet farther west the completely flat prairie gave way to the rolling prairie gently undulating⁷⁴ and gashed by riverbeds that sometimes opened into broad muddy valleys and at other times cut their meandering courses between steep banks as much as 150 metres in height.⁷⁵ More important as a feature of the western terrain was the series of escarpments, roughly oriented from north to south, and surmounted by thick glacial deposits dotted with enormous crystalline boulders,⁷⁶ which divided the prairie into three successive terraces, stepping up from east to west and merging into the Rocky Mountains through a zone of gullies and badlands.⁷⁷ The Saskatchewan wove its way through the escarpments in rapids that for long distances imposed on the voyageurs the slow labor of tracking, or hauling their canoes by rope.⁷⁸ These successive elevations of the land were themselves broken up by erosion into a great number of often asymmetrical hills which by no means filled the bare horizons of the prairie. The Hair Hills, also known as Pembina Mountain, were succeeded by Turtle Mountain and Boss Hill, by the Grand Coteau of the Missouri, by the Touchwood Hills and File Hills. The Bear Hills merged into the Eagle Hills, and these into the Birch Hills, a cluster of plateaus and undulations that rose up to 250 to 300 metres above the general level of the prairie; finally there came Wood Mountain and the Cypress Hills which, rising slowly from east to west, reached from 300 to 600 metres above the plain.⁷⁹

In the Indian economy, as later in that of the Métis before settlement chased them from the plains, these ranges of hills played a primordial role. They acted as natural observation posts where

camps might be established and the approach of enemies could always be detected.⁸⁰ Some of them provided the birch bark from which the Indians made canoes to transport their furs each year to the trading posts.⁸¹ Others attracted fur-bearing animals⁸² and often, as in the copses of the parkland, herds of bison found shelter in cold weather among the trees that grew on their slopes. On the northern flank of Turtle Mountain the forest was so dense that horsemen could not penetrate it;⁸³ as the hills progressed toward the west,⁸⁴ the woods opened out, yet they still impressed the traveller as treed oases in the bare prairie.

On the broad surface of the plains, trees in fact occurred only sporadically, dispersed in scanty marooned copses in the bare prairie,⁸⁵ or hidden in the groins of valley bottoms, which the French Canadians called "coulees,"⁸⁶ or aligned, like detached reminders of the parkland, in narrow corridors of oaks, aspens, birches, and conifers along the courses of the larger rivers.⁸⁷ Between these patches of woodland grew an abundant vegetation of grasses and small shrubs: mint and wormwood (*Artemisia canadensis* Mich.), alternating with Spartan feather grass (*Stipa spartea* Trin.), with kinnikinnick, also called harouge (*Cornus stolonifera* Linn.), growing only on sandy soils and in valley depths (its inner bark being used by Indians and Métis as a substitute for tobacco), with cotton-grass (*Eriophorum polystadion* Linn.) and its aquatic foliage, and with lilies and vetches covering vast areas in an astonishing blossoming.⁸⁸ This diversity of grasses and other plants grew on soils of varying richness; sometimes a black, sticky alluvial soil that was an extension of the fertile earth of the Red River, consisting of a clayey mud, "as firm as the surface of a road," covered with a layer of humus renewed each year by vegetable decomposition;⁸⁹ sometimes a poorer chalky clay, covered with wormwood and cactus, and broken by marshy stretches where Red River carts of the Métis would bog down; often a lighter sandy soil or a thick mantle of glacial drift that concealed the real character of the sub-soil.⁹⁰ On the dry earths between the two branches of the Saskatchewan and in the southerly parts of the prairie, around the saline lakes and marshes that were frequent in this area, appeared a short greensward which the bison especially sought out: it consisted of a variety of "buffalo grasses" (*Boutelous oligostachya* Tott., *Stipa spartes* Trin., *Spartin gracilis* Trin.) which attracted enormous herds.⁹¹

Owing to the fires that periodically coursed over the prairie and

destroyed its trees, this herbaceous vegetation continually gained ground.⁹² Conflagrations usually broke out in dry periods, sometimes accompanying spring thaws, but more often occurring during the autumn, when the scourge of fire was noted repeatedly in such documents as Alexander Henry's memoirs and the journals of the Hudson's Bay posts.⁹³ It usually spread easily in the vast open spaces, and was circumscribed only by areas of poor sandy soil whose more scanty vegetation limited its ravages, by river barriers it could not leap, or by the numerous ponds that helped protect the hills among which they were scattered.⁹⁴ The American prairie suffered as much as the Canadian,⁹⁵ and travellers who went to Red River by way of a detour through the Middle West were often overtaken by fires whose crackling approach took on a nightmare rapidity.⁹⁶ Sometimes the Red River Colony was isolated by sudden fires that destroyed the reserves of hay on which it depended and decimated its livestock;⁹⁷ fires consumed the pastures beside the Assiniboine and the Saskatchewan,⁹⁸ and could threaten the trading posts themselves.

The most important of them, Fort Edmonton, barely escaped destruction in November 1848, while in December 1846, the plains between Fort Carlton and Fort Ellice, both of which were closely hemmed in by the flames, became for thousands of square kilometres a vast charred wasteland.⁹⁹ In the autumn of 1848 and again early in December 1852, almost the whole prairie from Pembina to the North Saskatchewan was ablaze, except for a narrow corridor from the Missouri to Turtle Mountain that the fire spared.¹⁰⁰ Sometimes Métis caught in the plains were the victims of conflagration.¹⁰¹ "The plains are and have been these several days past, burning in the most dreadful manner," wrote James Bird from the post of Edmonton on 12 October 1812. "Fires are raging in all directions, and the sun obscured with smoke. . . Eleven Blackfoot have been consumed in the flames near Paint Creek House."¹⁰² The colony of Assiniboia was forced to protect itself against the possible carelessness of its own people during the dry season by instituting rules designed to reduce the causes of a scourge whose frequency shook the confidence of even the most energetic settlers.¹⁰³ When agricultural settlement reached the plains farther west, it had to deal in its turn with this calamity whose ravages were so difficult to turn aside. Thus the settlement of St. Paul des Métis in Alberta experienced from the beginning the kind of difficult times the Red River Colony had already lived

through, and only just escaped annihilation in a classic autumn fire that destroyed its first crops and its stores of hay.

Invaded by such periodic devastations, the fragments of forest on the prairie continued to shrink. Along the rivers, clearings spread gradually among the corridors of woodland that shaded their damp banks; the grass grew lushly in these new open spaces, but the dwarf oaks and alders that sprang up in place of the original firs could not provide enough wood to heat the posts or to build the boats used on the Saskatchewan.¹⁰⁴ Already in 1799, almost a century before the geological surveyor G. M. Dawson confirmed his observations, David Thompson had noted in the plains beside the Bow River this steady growth of the prairie at the expense of the forest;¹⁰⁵ the debris left by one fire soon became fuel for the next, since the Indians were constantly starting prairie fires.

Indeed, whether intentionally or otherwise, the actions of the native people seem to have been the main cause of the retreat of the woodland on the plains. Sometimes it was merely negligence on the part of Indians or fur trade employees encamped on the prairie that started the fires.¹⁰⁶ But more often it was caused deliberately by plains Indians returning from warlike expeditions or from one of the many raids aimed at stealing horses from other tribes. They would light fires to protect them from their enemies' reprisals, either by creating a smoke-screen that threatened to suffocate pursuers, or by burning the grass to eliminate the tracks of their travois.¹⁰⁷ Sometimes, as well, in areas where there were no natural landmarks, fires might serve as signals between different bands, or they might simply be set to give richer pasture for the horses around the camps which the wandering Indians set up in the plains.¹⁰⁸ Finally, it sometimes happened that, to get their own back on whites who had been too energetic in frustrating their attempts at pillage or with whom there had been commercial misunderstandings, the Indians would set a fire to drive away the herds of bison and in this way lessen the traders' chance of living off the land or of supplying their fur brigades with food.¹⁰⁹ When the Sioux were unable to defeat the Red River Métis in battle, they followed this procedure in 1843 and 1844 so as to limit the periodic intrusions of the Bois-brûlés into their territories in North Dakota; unable to conquer their rivals with arms, they deprived them of food supplies by burning the prairie.

No sooner was a fire ignited than it caught on immediately, encouraged by the dry and luminous atmosphere of the West, whose

clarity—like that of desert air—reinforced the impression of flat immensity that was so striking in those first levels of the prairie where the horizon endlessly receded, an impression broken only momentarily by the deception of mirages or by discontinuous faults in the terrain.

The customary dryness of the prairie atmosphere did not mean that either snow or rain was lacking. Snow might fall heavily during the autumn and winter months, and if it was followed by a rapid thaw, it could produce those spring floods which in the first years so adversely affected the colony of Assiniboina and in May 1826 almost annihilated it.¹¹¹ Rain fell especially at the beginning of summer, and on its relative abundance depended the success of the crops sown beside the Red River.¹¹² But dryness was still the most striking feature of the prairie climate. In the central plains of the West, springs and watercourses dried up in summer; in 1847 the Indians told F. U. Graham that they feared they would have to abandon their usual summer territories and stay beside the main rivers.¹¹³ In this hot season, the dryness of the air accentuated the variations of temperature; in June, in August, and especially in September, warm days might be followed by nocturnal frosts that were harmful to the attempts at cultivation in the colony of Red River or around the trading posts. And during the winter the same dryness sharpened the cold, and congealed the rivers into pack-ice which remained from the beginning of November or December until the last days of April.¹¹⁴

Yet the prairie climate was notably gentler than that of the zones we have already described. Not only was the winter shorter there, so that the earth was free of snow from April onwards,¹¹⁵ but the warm breath of the Chinook, or south wind, interrupted the bitterest stretches of winter with warm days, which could follow without transition on periods of the most intense cold. The rise in temperature during such an interlude surprised Anthony Henday when he emerged on 29 December 1754 from the wooded zone through which he had travelled all the way from York Factory and reached the south branch of the Saskatchewan. There it was so mild that he could shed his clothes: "The weather has been so warm today that we have gone without anything over our bodies and felt no cold . . . This part of the country is nothing to compare to York Factory for cold . . ."¹¹⁶ Similarly the Fort Garry journal noted on 19 April 1828: "After cold and snow, the wind changes to the South, and warm weather succeeds the cold almost

instantaneously."¹¹⁷ Finally, compare the extremes of cold on the shores of Hudson Bay as recorded in Andrew Graham's "Observations" with those noted in Alexander Henry's journal and in the reports of the prairie trading posts. To the minimum temperature of -100° F. which Graham reports, we need only oppose such considerably more moderate figures as the -27° F. at Pembina in the winter of 1807, and the -48° F. in the Red River Colony during the winter of 1846-7.¹¹⁸

In the warm temperatures of summer and autumn, berries and fruits ripened in profusion on the prairie. Eaten raw, incorporated into pemmican, or infused in water mixed with bison fat, they formed one of the Indians' principal foods.¹¹⁹ Many species flourished in the rich soils of the plains and especially where there were clumps of trees. Wild plums and cherries (*Prunus americana* Marshall, *Prunus Virginiana* Linn.), huckleberries (*Vaccinium oxycoccos* Linn.), rose hips (*Rosa blanda* Ait.), squashberries or "pembinas" (*Viburnum*), and service-berries or "saskatoons" (*Amelanchier canadensis* Torr. and Gr.), were to be found everywhere in the plains, but they were especially abundant in the Peace River country. There, during the customary gathering season for wild berries at the beginning of August, they formed the almost exclusive diet of the Indians and the Métis.¹²⁰ In addition there were the wild roots, such as the prairie potato or prairie turnip (*Psoralla esculenta* Nuttall), which the Indians would dry to use as a vegetable during winter,¹²¹ and the various products of the wooded zones. Each spring the maple furnished its sugar which the Indian women attached to the various posts would gather; in summer the saps of poplar and birch also provided a sugary liquor appreciated by both whites and Indians.¹²²

This rich vegetation of the prairie in its turn nourished a variety of big game whose numbers for a long time seemed inexhaustible: moose which, like the bear, tended to prefer the parkland and the wooded areas; elk (wapiti), antelope (*Antilocapra americana americana* Ord.)¹²³ and, dominating all the rest because of the part they played in the economics of both the Métis and the Indians of the prairie, the herds of bison, as dense as swarms of locusts,¹²⁴ which crowded among the short grasses and saline pastures south of the north branch of the Saskatchewan; sometimes they invaded the trading posts in their black masses and the palisades had to be reinforced to save them from destruction.¹²⁵

The Saskatchewan country was indeed the favored region of the

great herds. Here the animals multiplied freely, protected from excessive hunting by the permanent threat of warfare between rival tribes, principally the Blackfoot and the Cree. In 1857 an uncountable array of herds, each containing hundreds or even thousands of animals, spread out before the astonished eyes of Captain Palliser over pastures they had grazed down to the earth.¹²⁶ Both the North West and the Hudson's Bay companies would find in these great hordes the provisions of meat they needed to feed even their most distant posts. One can judge the importance of these supplies from the figures contained in Governor Simpson's correspondence: in 1822 the post of Edmonton alone, which dominated this vast buffalo preserve with its unlimited resources, gathered no less than 5,000 bison tongues, more than its employees had the time to salt down.¹²⁷ Aware how necessary the riches of their territory were to the fur traders, the tribes of the plains were able to force the Hudson's Bay Company into a dependence that, in George Simpson's view, made the Indians arrogant and hard to please.¹²⁸

On the prairie between the Red River and the Grand Coteau of the Missouri the herds also gathered in large numbers.¹²⁹ There also, in the environs of Red River, on the approaches to the Grand Coteau, on the upper reaches of the Souris River, and along the Cheyenne, the animals were attracted by pastures dotted with saline lakes. And there, just as in the Saskatchewan region, wars between Indian tribes long helped to conserve the bison.¹³¹ Alexander Henry was only one of the writers to describe the passage of the buffalo herds along the banks of the Red River, where their trampling transformed the soft, blackish earth into a hard and solid block.¹³² Here the produce of the hunt was reserved first of all to feed the brigades on their way to the posts of the North West; once there, the winterers were nourished by provisions from the pastures of the Saskatchewan country.¹³³

The buffalo were not in the habit of staying in set localities. From the last days of spring and through the hot season, the prairie pastures were their favored terrain, and it was at this time that the Indians and the Métis both organized their collective hunts here. But the spring and autumn fires, and the consequent impoverishment of the available fodder, might force the herds to wander so far that it became difficult to reach them. Sometimes, indeed, the animals themselves were decimated by fire, as happened in 1846 in the Edmonton region¹³⁴ and on many occasions

in the plains near Red River,¹³⁵ And when this did not happen, they would wander from the burnt prairie¹³⁶ toward the northern parkland in search of pasture,¹³⁷ or sometimes to the wooded hills whose greater humidity curbed the ravages of fire, such as the heights dominating Fort Dauphin,¹³⁸ or Turtle Mountain,¹³⁹ from which Fort Ellice had to get its provisions in 1852; or at other times along the banks of the large rivers which constituted the most effective barriers to the spreading conflagration.¹⁴⁰

But none of these places invariably attracted the herds. Year after year the migrations varied in their direction, and the posts on the verge of the parkland or beside the rivers could not count with certainty that the bison would pass near them when fires raged on the prairie. Despite their favored positions beside the North Saskatchewan and in the proximity of wooded areas, the environs of Fort Edmonton, Fort Carlton, Fort Pitt, and Rocky Mountain House¹⁴¹ were as vulnerable to the effects of fire as the rich pastures of the Qu'Appelle River¹⁴² or the wide prairies that spread between the Missouri and Red rivers.¹⁴³ In unusually bad years, like 1826 and 1852, when the conflagration spread all the way from Lake Winnipeg to Fort Edmonton and the Missouri, the Hudson's Bay Company was forced to do without the provisions of dried meat needed for its posts and its brigades. The employees in the posts had to make do with the scanty game resources of their immediate neighborhoods, while the brigades had to get their food from the rivers and lakes on which they travelled and from the woodlands bordering their route.¹⁴⁴ Over the burnt prairie in such years, famine spread among the tribes who made it their home¹⁴⁵ and equally among those who had deserted the woodland to follow the easier life of the buffalo hunter.¹⁴⁶ But it was seldom that the fire in fact spread over the whole of the plains, and the threat of famine was usually confined to limited areas. At such times the Company was able to balance the poverty of resources in one area with their abundance in another.¹⁴⁷

Similar uncertainties emerged in the changes of habitat caused by the play of weather conditions on the prairie, a factor that influenced the wanderings of the herds even more than fires. In his report for June 1835 George Simpson noted that the number of bison varied according to both the extent of autumn fires and the nature of the winter.¹⁴⁸ And if the journals of the trading posts often blame fire for affecting the seasonal migrations of the herds,

they lay even greater stress on the influence of climate, by which they mean the relative intensity of the cold and the varying heaviness of the snowfall.

The bison remained on the open prairie only if the winter was moderate enough to allow it and if the snowfall was light enough to give them free access to pasture. In very temperate winters, the herds would wander far over the flat plains,¹⁴⁹ where they would be out of reach of the hunters,¹⁵⁰ but their migrations would never follow established routes. Sometimes they were attracted to American territory;¹⁵¹ other years they were drawn to the expanses of the Canadian prairie, and then, except for a few places like Devils Lake where the bison seldom failed to appear, the Indians of North Dakota would be deprived of the provisions on which they relied.¹⁵²

In his report for 1815, taking up observations he had already made in his correspondence,¹⁵³ James Bird discussed the causes of the fluctuation of trade at Fort Edmonton, and blamed them mostly on the excessively mild winters which usually allowed the bison to remain on the treeless prairie south of the post.¹⁵⁴ In 1812, Wilham Auld noted the same phenomenon. In 1813 an excessively mild winter, compounded by the effects of a fire that chased the herds far into the broad expanses of the plains, caused great privations among the settlers newly arrived on the banks of the Red River.¹⁵⁵

At such times, famine threatened the Indians of the prairie: many succumbed and some avoided death only by having recourse to the degrading practice of cannibalism.¹⁵⁷ Travellers crossing the prairie had to sustain themselves by eating roots and rose-hips.¹⁵⁸ And the trading posts, unable to maintain their personnel for lack of food supplies, had to leave their employees and their families to glean outside the fort a precarious diet of roots, dried bison sinews, and gophers.¹⁵⁹ Undoubtedly the gardens which most of the posts maintained helped to mitigate the scarcity of food caused by the absence of the bison.¹⁶⁰ But at best they provided an inadequate substitute for supplies of meat, and in bad years even the gardens failed. In 1847, when F. U. Graham visited the post of Beaver Creek, he found a complete lack of provisions; the Indian woman and children gathered there were sharing with dog teams the last scraps of a bison carcass.¹⁶¹ In 1860, at a period when the prairie posts no longer maintained the simple gardens of

earlier years, George Simpson noted that both Fort Carlton and Fort Pitt were obliged to abandon the support of their many employees.¹⁶²

Sometimes, after weeks of mild winter weather, there would be heavy falls of snow, and if they were accompanied by violent blizzards, the bison might be cut off on the prairie to which the warm weather had attracted them. Unable to make their way toward the shelter of the woodland and equally unable to dig down through the frozen crust to the pasture beneath, they would die in great numbers.¹⁶³ Sometimes the Indians would ferociously attack such herds that were trapped in deep snow; careless of the ultimate consequences to their families of such systematic massacres, they would not even use their bows, but would slaughter indiscriminately with their knives.¹⁶⁴ The death rate among the herds was even greater when snowfalls followed autumnal conflagrations and made it impossible for the animals to reach what remained of the pastures that had been ravaged by fire.

It is indeed impossible to estimate accurately the mortality among the herds in such especially disastrous years. But George Simpson's observations, based on the reports he received from the heads of posts, leave no doubt of the wide destruction which took place at such times. In 1848, when equally unfavorable conditions prevailed from the Red River to the North Saskatchewan, he concluded that tens of thousands of beasts perished under the combined effects of snow and fire, and he feared it would take several years before the herds in the Saskatchewan region would be able to build themselves up again.¹⁶⁵ Sometimes, of course, despite the snowfalls that impeded their movements, the bison were still able to make their way to the wooded parts of the parkland, to which in normal winters they went at the onset of severe weather.¹⁶⁶

At such times all the places that offered shelter from the rigors of winter became gathering points for the herds. They sought out the coulees that cut down deeply into the earth, especially in the neighborhood of the hills with their many watercourses. In these folds of the land, where clumps of trees growing in the moist soil protected the grass from being buried under snow, thousands of animals would crowd together.¹⁶⁷ Certain lakes, like Devils Lake in American territory, whose banks were sheltered by abundant growths of woodland, attracted the presence of bison at all seasons.¹⁶⁸

Well-treed hills and the river banks provided even better shelter from the wind and cold. Among such refuges were the shores of the Saskatchewan and the Missouri; the Touchwood Hills, whose slopes were dotted with clumps of trees alternating with broad grasslands;¹⁷⁰ the Sweet Grass Hills¹⁷¹ and the File Hills, where the personnel of Fort Pelly often went hunting to renew their provisions;¹⁷² the Hand Hills, a cluster of undulations broken by numerous streams and lakes whose shores were covered with a rich soil that nourished good pastures;¹⁷³ and finally the group formed by Turtle Mountain and the Hair Hills,¹⁷⁴ a bastion that occupied 800 square miles of the glacial plain and whose dense forests linked up with the verges of the parkland which swept in an arc around the verges of the plains and in winter became a favored haunt of big game.¹⁷⁵ The forts that lay like markers along the fringes, Fort Edmonton, Fort Pitt, and Fort Carlton,¹⁷⁶ enjoyed the double advantages of the closeness of the hunting grounds in the prairie and the park belt, and the relative nearness of the great northern forest that offered a hiding-place for fur-bearing animals. Every year, toward the month of December, during a particularly snowy or unusually mild winter, the herds would migrate in the direction of the parkland.

For the officers in charge of these important posts, the approach of the animals would compensate for the bitterness of the weather. "The winter is severe," wrote John Rowand from Edmonton in January 1830, "and the snow very deep; the Wolves . . . are making war on our poor horses . . . The only thing in our favour is that the Buffalo are numerous."¹⁷⁷ Similarly, in the journal of Ile à la Crosse, G. Deschambault noted, January 1857: "the Buffaloes were still an immense distance from our Establishment . . . Our thermometer stood not long ago at 40 to 45 below zero, with such weather we have reason to believe that the Buffaloes will be driven toward the woods."¹⁷⁸ And George Simpson summarized the fragmentary observations of his agents in a general formula when he wrote, in his report for July 1834, that the bison "come from the open distant plain country to the neighbourhood of the thick woods as is usual in that season."¹⁷⁹

But as soon as the cold weakened, the bison would abandon their refuge in the parkland and return to the plains as quickly as they had left them. Noting that men were coming in loaded with buffalo meat, the journal of Fort Edmonton added on 4 January

1828, "should mild weather ensue the Buffalo would be as quick out of our reach as they are at present within."¹⁸⁰ The observation confirmed those which Alexander Henry the Younger noted in his memoirs after many years in the prairie: "Stormy weather causes the buffalo to approach the woods for shelter, and it no sooner abates than they return to the plain."¹⁸¹

There was a rather alarming capriciousness about these migrations in unpredictable directions on which the herds would embark thanks to the excess or mildness of the winter or because of the chances of spring or autumn fires. Not enough is known of the causes of this behavior to assess the true importance of the commanding positions occupied by the wooded buttes that dotted the plain or even of the parkland itself, where normally the animals went to seek the refuge dictated by the rigors of winter. Undoubtedly certain points can be regarded as the places generally frequented by the herds, and it was seldom indeed that the ranges of wooded hills, less vulnerable to fire, with their ponds and their pastures rich enough to survive the grazing of incalculable numbers of beasts, were entirely deserted by the bison. The approaches to the Grand Coteau of the Missouri and to Turtle Mountain were particularly favored in this regard, and the Pembina region, benefitting both from the proximity of Turtle Mountain to the west and the nearness of the park belt along the Red River to the east, owed to its situation an exceptional wealth of game which saved the colony of Assiniboia from ruin in its early days. But sometimes, even in these localities of whose importance the Indians and the Métis were both well aware, the bison did not appear during the winter, whether because exceptionally moderate temperatures led them far into the prairie, or because the early onset of a hard winter induced them to depart suddenly toward the park belt in the north.¹⁸²

It was this capricious element in the wanderings of the great herds that explained the uncertainty of the hunting expeditions which the Red River Métis undertook each year in the plains that open out toward the Missouri, and the relative fragility of the resources which the prairie Indians sought when they hunted the bison. The apparent abundance of the herds concealed a precariousness in prairie life which, though it was seldom comparable to that endured by the woodland hunters, in certain years could lead to want and even to real famine. This kind of existence, in which

scarcity alternated with periods of unbounded plenty, was in varying degrees the lot of all the tribes indigenous to the West. Among them the kind of sedentary life which the peoples of the Great Lakes so capably developed was quite unknown, and the nomad existence of these peoples of the plains would long inspire the way of life of the Métis people who sprang from them.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

To a great extent the human environments of the three North Wests echoed their primitive natural characters. The conditions under which the native tribes lived, their numerical importance, their varying density of population, their political and social conceptions, and even some of their mental characteristics were shaped in varying degrees by the influence of the environment that surrounded them.

THE PRAIRIE TRIBES

Of the three zones that constituted the West, the expanses of the prairie offered the native peoples the most abundant and the least precarious resources. Apart from animal and vegetable food, the country furnished the Indian with clothing and the means of shelter and enabled him to rear troops of horses that were useful not only for transport but also in warfare and in hunting bison. Thus it was on the prairie that the most unified and at the same time the most widely spread—even if not the most populous—of the tribes were to be found.

As well as the groups that originally occupied the central and western parts of the prairie, the wealth of the Western plains soon attracted tribes from the forest who had been discouraged by the poverty of their own territories and were seduced by the promise of an easier mode of existence. The original peoples of the plains consisted of the Blackfoot, the Blood, the Piegan, the Gros Ventres, and the Assiniboine,¹ a detached branch of the great Sioux nation which, in American territory, inhabited the higher course of the Mississippi and part of the Upper Missouri valley. It was the Cree and the Ojibwa or Saulteaux who pushed their way south

and west out of the wooded zone that was their original home and joined the complex of the prairie population. By settling there, these people who were unaccustomed to the life of the plains introduced a new equilibrium of forces, which rested neither on affinities of language nor on similarities of origin, but depended only on common material interests.

The Ojibwa began their westerly migration in the middle of the seventeenth century, propelled by the great Iroquois offensive that overflowed the region of the Great Lakes. Provided with firearms by the Canadian traders of Sault Ste. Marie,² they reached the eastern fringes of the plains of Manitoba and Minnesota, where the Sioux, alarmed by the superior armament of the newcomers and incapable of halting their aggression were forced to abandon part of their territories to the Ojibwa, and withdrew to the plains of North Dakota,³ leaving many villages whose forlorn remains could still be seen around the marshy lakes of the Upper Mississippi at the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁴ Though they never gave up their links with the wooded region north of Lake Superior, which had stamped on their economy its distinctive character, the Ojibwa were unable to resist the allure of the rich plains they were now entering.⁵ From this time onward many of them began to live permanently in the environs of Red River, the lower Assiniboine, Lake Winnipeg, and Lake Manitoba,⁶ where they were constantly reinforced by new groups coming from the forest region, and whence in turn they swarmed out toward the south and west.

To the south a new round of conflict began as the Ojibwa pressed on the hunting grounds now occupied by the Sioux. They also penetrated the flooded lands of the Upper Mississippi, whose rich harvests of wild rice they coveted.⁷ A kind of no-man's-land came into being around the present international boundary, a battleground perpetually contested by Sioux and Ojibwa, so that on their annual hunting expeditions the Métis would traverse it with the greatest caution. Toward the west, the Ojibwa spread out over the pasturelands along the southern fringes of the park belt, as far as the confluence of the two branches of the Saskatchewan.⁸ There they encountered the Cree, who also had originated in the wooded zone and had abandoned it to exploit the better resources of the prairie.⁹ Thus, as well as the original Woods Cree, there appeared a new group, known as the Plains Cree.

Even before the Hudson's Bay Company had established trading posts beside the great marine inlet whose name it assumed in 1670, the Cree had already acquired the habit of periodically travelling from the forest in small bands to hunt the bison on the prairie.¹⁰ Already these intermittent movements had led to skirmishes with the Sioux, to whose ferocity in 1659 or 1660 the fur trader Radisson bears witness.¹¹ But when the great English company provided them with firearms, which enabled them to hold the plains tribes at bay and at the same time extend their hunting operations, the Cree—as the Ojibwa had done with the support of the Canadian traders—were able to surge in greater numbers toward the prairie, to encroach on the valley of the Saskatchewan, and to push southwards beyond it as far as the banks of the Missouri.¹² Now they became involved in violent clashes with the Assiniboine, who occupied the right bank of the Saskatchewan and dominated the central region of the prairie.¹³ By the end of the seventeenth century, the state of warfare had become permanent.¹⁴ As early as 1690 Henry Kelsey observed the terror which the weapons of the newcomers inspired in the Assiniboine, who—like the Sioux to whom they were related—had to defend themselves with bows and arrows.¹⁵ It was the superiority in arms which the Cree owed to their prior contact with the whites that created in the prairie, before the Sioux were able to fight back with equal weapons,¹⁶ a new balance of power.

Too weak to resist, the Assiniboine eventually separated from their congeners to the south and formed an alliance with the Cree and the *Saulteaux* to fight for the supremacy of the plains against the Sioux and the powerful western tribes. This alliance, formed at the end of the seventeenth century,¹⁷ was still in existence during the nineteenth.

During this period the Cree mingled freely with the Assiniboine, and went on joint hunting expeditions with them.¹⁸ Despite the difference in language, they also collaborated frequently with the Ojibwa.¹⁹ The three groups were united in a common hostility to the Blackfoot, whose way to Hudson Bay they barred,²⁰ and to the Sioux with whom their encounters were often so violent that a tributary of the Red River was called Dead River because of the carnage that had taken place on its banks.²¹ The journal of Brandon House bears witness to the fierce joy manifested by the allied tribes when they celebrated victories over their inveterate enemies.²²

The warfare became ever more intense as the Cree gravitated increasingly toward the prairie grazing grounds of the buffalo. They did so in spite of the traders' attempts to dissuade them from leaving the woodland with its abundance of fur-bearing animals. Andrew Graham in 1771 attributed the reduction of the quantity of furs traded at the posts on Hudson Bay to the indolence of the Cree, seduced by the easier life of the great plains.²³ In 1822 F. Heron accused them in his report to the Company's directors of passing the winter among the bison hunters of the prairie and thus depriving the posts of the rich harvest of pelts they expected at this time of the year.²⁴ Given the Indians' inclination toward idleness, the wealth of fur-bearing animals in the forests, and the profits they could draw from them, seemed a meagre compensation for the harshness of forest existence. The contagion even spread to more distant tribes like the Chipewyan; large groups of these went to the Fort Pitt region in search of the plentiful nourishment offered by the bison herds.²⁵

As elsewhere, the introduction of the horse, probably in the first half of the eighteenth century, combined with the presence of firearms to increase the deadliness of tribal wars and widen their extent.²⁶ Threatened by the growing offensive from the east, the western tribes in their turn formed a loose confederation. Centred on the Blackfoot, it included the Piegan and the Bloods, and also the small tribe of the Sarcee, who lived in the parkland and spoke a different language from the other groups, yet shared their way of life and their conceptions.²⁷

The inevitable trespasses on the hunting grounds of their adversaries into which the tribes were led in their pursuit of the herds,²⁸ and the even more frequent raids to steal horses²⁹ or furs from their enemies,³⁰ created a habit of war in the West which, as J. Marest observed as early as 1695,³¹ became entrenched in the mental outlook of the prairie Indians. It was not, of course, a question of wars conducted by large regular armies, but rather of limited expeditions carried out by a few warriors who fell suddenly on enemies they hoped to take by surprise, with the sole intention of seizing whatever goods they carried and perhaps taking a few scalps.³² At the same time, this petty warfare was a constant danger to the Europeans in the area and paralyzed their commercial operations,³³ for the prairie tribes did not hesitate to attack the trading posts, which were amply stocked with all kinds of goods

and had herds of horses that especially excited the Indians' love of pillage.

Because of their situation on the eastern edge of the prairie, the Ojibwa were less involved in the conflicts among the tribes of the central and western prairies, and tended to be preoccupied with their traditional struggle against the Sioux, who lived in American territory.³⁴ But their period of easy victories did not last, for the Sioux in turn obtained firearms which enabled them to put up a more effective resistance and to regain control of the plains in which their enemies had driven them back in the first phase of attack.³⁵

Thus, by the middle of the eighteenth century, the prairie was divided between two hostile groupings whose territories were somewhat ill defined in this terrain lacking in natural boundaries, a situation which favored mutual encroachments on hunting grounds. In the eastern and central prairie, from the Hair Hills and the lower reaches of the Assiniboine River as far as the confluence of the two Saskatchewan and as Fort Vermilion on the North Saskatchewan, the Assiniboine had their domain, which in the south reached the banks of the Missouri.³⁶ The Plains Cree were dispersed between the same limits,³⁷ while the Saulteaux to the east, more closely attached to their primordial habitat, mingled outside the Red River plains with their many relatives who had remained in the woodland.

West of the Assiniboine territory were deployed the rival federated peoples whom David Thompson collectively described as "the Slave tribes." First of all there was the powerful Blackfoot tribe, whose country was bounded to the south by the banks of the Red Deer River, to the north of the Battle River and the Saskatchewan, and to the east by the territory of the Assiniboine;³⁸ next the Blood Indians who occupied the region between the Red Deer River and the South Saskatchewan;³⁹ and finally the Piegan, whose territory extended from the South Saskatchewan to the source of the Milk River, a tributary to the Missouri.⁴⁰ The Piegan were separated from the Assiniboine by the Gros Ventres. This last group, equally hostile to the peoples of the central plains, had been pushed out of the Canadian prairie by the end of the eighteenth century, and from this time onward they ceased to play an active role in the conflicts that divided the Indians of Canada.⁴¹ These western tribes which, like the Cree and the Saulteaux, spoke

Algonkian dialects, were supported in the northwest by their alliance with the Sarcee. Established on the upper course of the North Saskatchewan and on the Athabasca River, the Sarcee spoke an Athapaskan or Dene language, and were related to the more northerly Beaver tribe, though culturally they were assimilated to the Blackfoot.⁴²

These rival alliances, uniting tribes that in many ways were alien to each other, were no more absolute than the boundaries of their respective territories. The fact that the Cree lived dispersed in Assiniboine territory often resulted in members of the two tribes stealing each others' horses or carrying off each others' women, and often the conflicts flowing from such incidents endangered the general alliance of the two peoples and led to violent skirmishes.⁴³ Nor did the Assiniboine live in perfect accord with the Saulteaux, while between the tribes of the West, whose federation was in any case devised to safeguard the independence of all its members, there were frequent disputes.⁴⁴ On the other hand, though the Cree lived normally in the same territory as the Assiniboine, small groups of them did occasionally enter the territory of the Blackfoot and, without incurring their hostility, settled peacefully among them.⁴⁵ But in general terms one can speak of an accord among the tribes of the eastern and central prairie as against those of the west⁴⁷ and against the Sioux.⁴⁸ During the nineteenth century, as much as in the eighteenth, the Cree and the Assiniboine co-operated in their hunting expeditions into the territory between the Assiniboine and Missouri rivers.⁴⁹ Their differences remained localized, and did not lead to a breakdown of the balance of power that determined the relations between the two great tribal groupings who shared the prairie between them.

It is impossible now to determine in any exact way the strength of the two opposing alliances. Estimates regarding the western tribes are contradictory, and there is no reliable information at all before the end of the eighteenth century, by which time the nomad population had already been greatly diminished by the smallpox epidemic which swept over the plains between 1780 and 1781.⁵⁰ Even in the early nineteenth century population estimates differ greatly. In 1824 John Rowand, then in charge of Fort Edmonton, made a report based on many years of contact with the Indians. He gave a total number of warriors in the western confederation, including the Gros Ventres, as 7,780. It was distri-

buted unevenly between the Blackfoot, renowned for warlike prowess and gallantry, who numbered 2,000 braves; the Piegan, who accounted for 2,400; the Bloods and the Gros Ventres, each of whom assembled 1,600 fighting men; and finally the Sarcee, smallest of all, who contributed only 180 warriors.⁵¹ This suggests a population of at least 21,500 people for the three leading federated tribes (Blackfoot, Piegan, and Blood), and 27,500 for all the five peoples listed by Rowand. The figure is notably higher than that of F. Heron in 1822, also based on several years in the West, which estimates a total of 11,000 people;⁵² earlier on, Alexander Mackenzie had put the entire total of warriors in the three major allied tribes at 2,500, which would reduce the approximate total population to 9,000 men, women, and children.⁵³

It is even more difficult to evaluate the exact importance of the rival groups which populated the central and eastern prairie, for we have no means of knowing what proportion of the Cree and Ojibwa had deserted the woodland for the plains. The mingling of territory between the Cree and the Assiniboine increases the difficulty of making even an approximate calculation. Only with caution did Alexander Henry the Younger at the beginning of the nineteenth century estimate the number of Cree warriors at 900,⁵⁴ which would mean that the portion of the tribe established on the prairie consisted in all of 3,200 to 3,500 persons; this roughly corresponds to the figure of 4,000 that Youle Hind proposed for 1838.⁵⁵ As for the Assiniboine, though David Thompson suggested as few as 3,200 persons, it has been customary to assume a population of between 8,000 and 10,000 at the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁵⁶

If one takes the figures offered by John Rowand as a basis, the prairie must in all have supported a native population of about 40,000 people, almost exactly equal to that of the northern woodlands. But the lesser dimensions of the prairie allowed a more even distribution of the tribes established there, while the wealth of its herds of bison saved them from the uncertainties of life in the forest.

Hunting the bison, and their own kind of warfare, were the distinctive features of the culture of the plains Indians. The tribes followed similar hunting procedures, so that the Cree who were bred in the forest learnt from their Assiniboine allies the method of taking the bison in "buffalo pounds."⁵⁷ The peoples of the Blackfoot

Confederacy used the same general style of hunting and it is hard to make a sharp distinction between the tactics used by the Bloods and the Piegan, who drove the bison over a cliff or a sharp slope on to a level where the hunters waited to massacre them in their confusion or into an enclosure from which they could not escape and where they were killed at leisure, and the procedure of the Blackfoot, Assiniboiné, and Cree, who enticed the animals into an enclosure on level ground or at the foot of a gentle slope.⁵⁸ For if the last two tribes seem to have used this latter method more or less habitually,⁵⁹ Matthew Cocking's accounts show that the Blackfoot sometimes used the same method as their more westerly allies.⁶⁰

In both cases it was a matter of driving the animals toward two lines of hurdles or tree trunks that gradually narrowed into an angle, at which was situated either the opening of the enclosure where the bison were imprisoned or the sudden drop over which they fell sharply, to become the prey of the young Indians who were given the task of slaughtering them. Various ruses were sometimes used to direct the bison's movements, such as setting fires which prevented their following any direction but that which led to the pound,⁶¹ or leading them on by counterfeiting their movements and cries.⁶² Often it was at night that the Blackfoot and their allies went about their task of leading the animals toward the enclosure, where they could be encircled and massacred during the daylight hours.⁶³ At other times, and especially in summer, mounted hunters surrounded the animals, either driving them toward the pounds or attacking them directly and slaughtering them with arrows.⁶⁴ Thus the buffalo pound was not the only way of hunting, since in summer the tribes also attacked the herds directly, and in winter, when the Indians dispersed into small groups and attacked isolated animals,⁶⁵ it was often not possible to have recourse to a system that demanded a certain concentration of population. Yet the buffalo pound was still the most widely employed procedure, and the Indians were reluctant to attach themselves to trading posts in regions where the scarcity of wood made it difficult to construct enclosures.⁶⁶

The capricious migrations of the bison into territories that were often inaccessible created an element of hazard in the existence of these nomad peoples that sometimes exposed them to harsh periods of famine. Yet, in comparison with the life of the wood-

land peoples, that of the prairie Indians was still relatively secure and easy: secure because the temporary absence of the bison did not exhaust all the resources of the prairie, for the Indians could then resort to the wooded river banks or the verges of the parkland, which harbored other species of animals and also provided sheltered spots to set up encampments;⁶⁷ easy, because hunting bison neither involved the physical exhaustion nor demanded the powers of minute observation that were inseparable from hunting in the forest. Moreover, the bison provided for all the needs of the Indian's material life. It gave him nourishment⁶⁸ and also clothing, which consisted mainly of the skin of the animal, carefully dressed and tanned with a preparation made from its own brains and fat.⁶⁹ It gave him the material for a dwelling, consisting of several skins formed into a roughly conical tent or "teepee," whose design originated among the Sioux and neighboring tribes on the Missouri in American territory.⁷⁰ In such ways the bison assured the plains Indians a higher standard of living than the people of the forest, and this meant also better health and greater physical vigor.⁷¹

Given these circumstances, hunting necessarily dominated the activity of the prairie peoples, and the other resources available there assumed lesser importance. Agriculture was almost unknown to them. For the people of the Blackfoot Confederacy it was confined to the cultivation of a few fields of tobacco. They weeded the ground roughly rather than tilling it, and sheltered their plots from the north wind by placing them usually in the lee of a sloping poplar wood.⁷² As well as gathering wild rice, the Ojibwa cultivated a few meagre gardens along the Red River and on the moist soils around Red Lake in the Minnesota region.⁷³ But in the strict sense nothing resembling a sedentary life existed in this region. For the Canadian tribes as much as for the Sioux,⁷⁴ who even abandoned the gathering of wild rice once they were established on the grazing grounds of the bison, the pre-eminence of hunting meant an end to primitive farming.

Fishing also held a minor place in their economy. Only the Ojibwa, who were less fully committed to the prairie existence, followed it with any vigor. In 1823 S. H. Long described them as "good hunters and skilful fishers,"⁷⁵ and in 1834 Jean Nicolet described the ponds in Ojibwa territory, populated by birchbark canoes and surrounded by the elegant lodges of the fishermen,

who spread their nets in the bays and coves.⁷⁶ But the nomad peoples of the West were deliberately neglectful of this resource which their rivers and lakes offered in such profusion.⁷⁷ In 1764 the Indians of the Blackfoot Confederacy expressed to Anthony Henday their contempt for such inferior food, and they repeated the same sentiments in 1768 to Andrew Graham.⁷⁸ Only after the bison had disappeared did the Piegan and the Blood Indians eventually become reconciled to eating fish.⁷⁹

Even the trapping of fur-bearing animals was subordinated to the hunting of big game. It was practised on a large scale only by the Iroquois whom the trading companies had brought to the prairie; they became active in trapping largely because they were strangers to the country and did not—like the indigenous trappers of the woodlands—feel any need to conserve their resources.⁸⁰

To a lesser degree, the Ojibwa—insofar as they were still attached to the forest economy—continued trapping in the zone of parkland which, along the Saskatchewan and the Red River, and around Lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba, bordered on their hunting grounds.⁸¹ But after the end of the eighteenth century this region no longer offered the original abundance of fur-bearing animals,⁸² and its peoples, as they began to experience prairie life, became less willing to keep up an activity that now seemed pointless.⁸³

For their part, the true prairie tribes showed little eagerness to hunt fur-bearing animals. In the second half of the eighteenth century the posts along the shore of Hudson Bay received from the country of the Assiniboine and—to a lesser extent—of the Blackfoot, a fair quantity of good-quality beaver pelts. The trade was carried on through the Cree, whose double links with forest and prairie enabled them to pursue the vital role of middlemen.⁸⁴ But the diminution of the fur-bearers and the easy way of life offered by the bison herds combined to undermine this activity from which the Cree had gained the most profit. The Cree themselves set an example of negligence that quickly spread when they confined themselves to the middleman's role, which implied the abandonment of actually hunting fur-bearing animals.⁸⁵ After 1771 they thought of nothing but hunting the bison and living at ease on the produce of the chase.⁸⁶ From about 1795 the Assiniboine seem to have imitated them,⁸⁷ and by the middle of the nineteenth century the Hudson's Bay Company no longer regarded them as the providers of beaver pelts whom Andrew Graham had portrayed.⁸⁸ It was the same with the Piegan. If they collected along

the banks of the Missouri and in the western foothills of the Rockies the beaver skins that helped to keep going the posts on the North Saskatchewan, these were the fruits of theft from the other tribes of this region, for they "rarely hunt themselves."⁸⁹ As for the Blackfoot and the Blood Indians, from 1754 onward they saw themselves as bison hunters and neglected the fur-bearing animals that were abundant in their territories but which could not clothe and feed their families so generously as the skins and meat of the bison.⁹⁰

By providing them with everything, the bison guaranteed the Indians of the prairie an absolute independence in relation to the whites, for the security of their material life freed them from reliance on the generosity of the traders, whose goods were indispensable for the Indians of the forest. Their needs were reduced to supplies of tobacco and above all alcohol, for which they were very eager, and for which they paid with provisions of meat;⁹¹ of needles they used in making their tents and clothing;⁹² of beads to decorate their moccasins and clothes;⁹³ and of firearms and ammunition. Some of them, like the Assiniboine and the tribes of the western confederacy,⁹⁴ used their guns, as well as bows and arrows, in hunting the bison, while the Cree, who continued to use bows more than guns, traded the firearms they obtained for horses which they often used in pursuing big game.⁹⁵ But many articles that were of prime necessity to the peoples of the Shield were not needed in the prairie. Anthony Henday in 1755 completely failed to overcome the ill will he aroused among the Assiniboine and the Blackfoot when he tried to convince them that it would be in their interests to visit the posts on Hudson Bay. "They can do without any European support," was his summary of their attitude.⁹⁶

As a consequence of this attitude, the activities of the prairie Indians were virtually limited to the hunting which took care of their immediate needs, and strangers who entered their territory gained an impression of general idleness that contrasted sharply with the laborious existence a poorer environment imposed on the woodland peoples.⁹⁷ The Piegan rejected all efforts to provide them with modern implements, while the Cree, the Assiniboine, and the Blackfoot, satisfied with the substantial nourishment and occasional banquets which successful hunts provided, had little interest in preparing stores of dried meat for the trading posts.⁹⁸ Thus there was some justification in Anthony Henday's remark in 1756

on the tribes of the confederacy, that for them work was reduced to junketing: "Indians doing little more than feasting on fat buffalo flesh."⁹⁹ The Hudson's Bay officers who best knew the native peoples admitted that in their efforts to increase the prosperity of their posts¹⁰⁰ they were incapable of shaking an indolence which, though the conditions of prairie life encouraged it, was an expression of the mentality of all the Indian peoples and reflected their natures. For, no matter whether he belonged to the plains or to the woodland, the Indian disliked continuous effort and could be stirred out of his torpor only by the spur of compelling need.

The independence which the Indians owed to the easy life of the western plains also produced a haughty pride which made them despise any kind of activity that might be profitable to the traders. Sustained and renewed through the constant pursuit of war by the prairie tribes, this pride produced a fiercely aggressive attitude toward the whites,¹⁰¹ in contrast to the submissive and conciliatory mood of the woodland tribes.¹⁰² In escaping the economic tutelage of the fur companies, the Indians were also aware how far the traders depended on them for the provisions that would enable the fur brigades to operate efficiently, and the Hudson's Bay Company's officers were so realistically conscious of this fact that they were willing to violate in their own immediate interests the decision which the London Committee had reached, in the Indians' own interests, to cease distributing alcohol.¹⁰³

The pride which the nomad and the warrior shared called up among the plains Indians a reaction of defensiveness and superiority toward the whites who entered their country, which was most evident among the Blackfoot, who had so many powerful enemies that they were forced to create a warrior mystique more potent than that of all the other tribes.¹⁰⁴ They went so far as demanding of the traders at Fort Edmonton free distribution of trade goods in compensation for occupying part of their country.¹⁰⁵ They were reluctant to allow the employees of trading posts to organize buffalo hunts within their tribal territories and reacted indignantly if their demands were in any way refused.¹⁰⁶ As a result the Hudson's Bay Company had to appoint to its posts in the Saskatchewan region men who were accustomed to the Indian way of thinking, who were adept at flattering pride and sweetening a refusal, yet who had the courage to assert their will and dissolve any impression that the white man was at the mercy of Indian generos-

ity.¹⁰⁷ It was most important to maintain in the forts established in the territories of such hostile peoples a personnel strong enough to assume the role of a military garrison. Fort Edmonton was the best equipped of all in this respect. As its chief, John Rowand, remarked, the tribes of the Blackfoot confederacy would have scalped the whole staff of the fort if they had lowered their defences and given the Indians any impression of weakness.¹⁰⁸ Defensive precautions became all the more necessary as prairie tribes realized that their federal organization turned them into a more powerful force. In this respect they began to resemble the more socially evolved peoples of the Great Lakes region, among whom the Iroquois reached the highest level of organization.¹⁰⁹ By the same token, they differentiated themselves from the peoples of the Shield, whose dispersion over vast areas made them incapable of understanding any principle of collective action.

In contrast to the latter, the people of the prairies were obliged by the necessities of the summer buffalo hunt to organize expeditions in which the whole of the tribe participated, and by their incessant warfare to develop a degree of co-operation and discipline which limited the caprices of individuals to the profit of the community. As early as the end of the seventeenth century Nicolas Perrot observed among the prairie peoples a collective organization that enabled them to forestall enemy aggressions and thus to conduct their hunts more successfully.¹¹⁰ The Blackfoot, especially vulnerable to attacks from the tribes encircling their territories,¹¹¹ evolved the strongest and most thorough forms of organization. Their society was initially founded on the basic cell of the family, but it formed itself into groups of varying importance which brought together clusters of families related in the male line; each of these bands possessed a recognized and clearly delimited winter hunting ground, but in summer they came together to form the united tribe.¹¹² The tribes in turn were brought together in a confederation created in response to the need for common defence; we have already described its composition. This alliance remained flexible enough to respect the independence of each of the component peoples; it infringed neither on the individual tribes' rights over their own territories, nor on the right of all the tribes, when they came together, to order their own affairs in complete freedom. Nevertheless, the alliance was cemented by the community of language and culture that existed between at least the three most

important tribes, and it was strongly enough established to allow its members to range without hindrance over the whole region from the North Saskatchewan down to the Missouri and from the Rocky Mountains to the land of the Assiniboine.¹¹⁵

Without achieving such a degree of organization, the Assiniboine likewise grouped themselves in clusters of families,¹¹⁶ and the Cree, living among them, doubtless imitated their customs and organization.¹¹⁵ Such a division of society of course required means of co-ordinating the movements of the various groups and of protecting their interests by agreed common rules of behavior. The need for discipline made itself most strongly felt during the great hunting expeditions which the whole tribe undertook in summer, but there were times during the winter when it also became evident.¹¹⁶ Chiefs and councils were therefore appointed to supervise the conduct of the tribes as a whole, as well as others who were in charge of the lesser units of which the tribes were composed. But the prairie peoples had not attained the concept of a chief furnished with lasting and absolute power. The power of the chiefs, whether of tribes or bands, was subject to many limitations inherent in the attitudes of native peoples, such as the authority the father exercised over the members of his family,¹¹⁷ the recognition of the right of each individual to redress offences or wrongs he had suffered, and above all the impediments created by the habit of independence among the Indians which made inconceivable to them the idea of an undivided authority.¹¹⁸

The chief was chosen because of the prestige conferred by his fine bearing, his personal courage, wisdom, or eloquence, by his long experience, by the repute he had acquired through the practice of magic or medicine, or by the popularity he had won through lavish giving.¹²⁰ Thus the dignity of his role had essentially a psychological foundation; it was co-extensive with the repute of the man who held it, and it could only be transmitted hereditarily if the chief's heir showed the same qualities as he had done and enjoyed an equal prestige.¹²¹ When the chief of a band was promoted, because of his strong personality, to the leadership of the whole tribe, he had to respect the feelings of the other chiefs and to rely on their consent.¹²² In dealing with important matters, he would seek the advice of the most highly regarded warriors, the elders, and the chiefs in council.¹²³ His functions included arbitrating differences, giving instructions regarding the strategy of the

buffalo hunt, and deciding the movements of the tribe and their camping arrangements. He could only exercise them effectively by appealing to the free consent of all, and by relying on advice and recommendations, for too open an assertion of his authority would have destroyed it immediately.¹²⁴ When necessary, during the collective hunts of the summer season which brought about the reunion of all the braves in the tribe, the chief had a kind of police force which he could call on to intervene. It consisted of members of the "military societies," recruited from the various bands of the tribe, which existed among both the Assiniboine¹²⁵ and the Blackfoot confederacy¹²⁶ and which organized the annual ritual dances and the religious ceremonies connected with them.¹²⁷ In their role as a police force, the members of the societies preserved public order, intervened in the quarrels aroused by the Indians' passion for games of chance,¹²⁸ ensured the observation of the rules essential to the success of the hunt, such as the ban on prematurely attacking a herd of bison in such a way as to frighten the animals and prevent their destruction,¹²⁹ and finally maintained the sanctions against such crimes as murder, wounding, and theft. They could inflict severe penalties, which the tribe approved, on delinquents or on those who defied the authority established by custom; such punishments might consist either of the seizure of meat belonging to a hunter who had violated the rules, the destruction of his weapons, the cutting up of his garments, mercilessly administered flogging, or even the penalty of death.¹³⁰ As effective as any of these was the subjection to public ridicule, by loading him with sarcasm, of whoever refused to obey the orders of the chief or the council.¹³¹

At such times of activity by the tribe as a whole, the authority of the chief was unrestricted in its scope, but its power and his influence vanished as soon as the collective enterprise came to an end.

Warfare, like the hunt, took place under the direction of a chief: he was often chosen spontaneously because a dream had suggested to him that he should go on a campaign¹³² or because he simply expressed a desire to organize a war party,¹³³ but always he was a man whose military qualities were already known.¹³⁴ A number of men would put themselves under his leadership, inspired by the desire to fight and return as victors, and they followed his directions without constraint merely by virtue of their free commitment to the venture.¹³⁵

Thus there existed everywhere in the prairie, among the Sioux as well as among the Canadian peoples, an organization which, incomplete though it may have been, was no less effective for that reason, and which obliged the Europeans to take account of the strength of the indigenous tribes.

The Ojibwa were established in smaller numbers on the prairie, and their activities were more varied and less dominated by hunting the bison,¹³⁷ so that though they too were obliged to protect themselves against their enemies, discipline and organization were less advanced among them. They amounted to no more than the customary division of the tribe into bands each of which was led by a chief who, given the state of frequent war in opposition to the Sioux, often assumed the role of a war chief. But there were neither chiefs of tribes nor any kind of police force meant to sustain their authority.¹³⁸ This simple system extended into the prairie that which the Ojibwa had originated in the wooded area, where most of them still lived. Spreading into the western plains, they had been able to retain their woodland ways of life, since in the marginal region into which they moved, the more elaborate organization of the great prairie tribes was less necessary, and the institutions of the forest Ojibwa were still adequate for their new conditions of life. On the other hand the Cree, who originally had no concept of organization, were obliged in their new habitat to adapt to the customs of the peoples already established there. Between the Plains Cree and the Wood Cree, the break was thus much sharper than between the two sections of the Ojibwa.

THE WOODLAND TRIBES

To that great Algonkian tribe, variously described as the Nahathaway, as the Wood or Swamp Cree, and—by the French Canadians—as the Christinaux,¹³⁹ the forest offered living conditions considerably harder and more uncertain than those of the prairie. Obligated by their situation to devote themselves to the more active hunting of fur-bearing animals, they accepted with greater docility the demands of the fur traders and the conditions they laid down. The latter were constantly deploring that they did not have under their control on the prairies peoples as industrious and conciliatory as those of the forest.¹⁴⁰

Provided with firearms by the posts on Hudson Bay, the Cree—like the Ojibwa on the prairie—had been able to make

themselves masters of the Shield country, and to overflow their original territory as far as the Peace River and Great Slave Lake.¹⁴¹ But they had to withdraw from these extreme positions as a result of the epidemics that decimated them at the end of the eighteenth century,¹⁴² and also because of the resistance which the Athapaskan or Dene tribes were soon able to offer.¹⁴³ Yet despite its reduction, their territory covered an immense area, limited to the west by the Churchill and Athabasca rivers, to the north by the shorelines of Hudson Bay, to the south by the north Saskatchewan and the country of the Ojibwa, while to the east it bordered on the peninsula of Labrador, where it surrounded the territory of the Naskapi. But in these limitless spaces of the Shield, the Cree, despite the relative importance of their tribe (20,000 people),¹⁴⁴ formed only a slight and scattered population, as James Isham and Andrew Graham observed at an earlier period.¹⁴⁵ David Thompson at the end of the eighteenth century estimated at a mere 644 souls the indigenous population spread over the 22,360 square miles to the north of Cumberland House known as the Rat Country, which gives each family of seven persons a territory of 240 square miles.¹⁴⁶ In the drainage basin of the Albany River, from Lone Lake to its estuary, George Simpson counted no more than 150 families.¹⁴⁷ The Hudson's Bay Company's journals confirm these impressions by the small numbers they record of native people gravitating to the posts situated in the rocky zone; 300 at Albany, 200 at Marten's Falls, and 800 at Cold Lake and Lac la Ronge.¹⁴⁸

This low density of population corresponded to the poverty of resources in the Shield. Game was not entirely lacking, and to a certain degree moose replaced bison for the forest peoples,¹⁴⁹ but, as we have seen already, the animals were too unevenly distributed and too scarce in winter to assure the sustenance of a numerous population.¹⁵⁰ Certain areas were especially meagre, such as the Albany River basin, where the scarcity of game discouraged the Indians from taking their goods to the fort at its mouth,¹⁵¹ and the environs of the rivers that flowed into the Bay at York Factory; here the Indians were unable to break their journeys and pitch their tents for even a few days without running the risk of perishing from hunger through the exhaustion of the game.¹⁵² In the environs of Cumberland House, where the Indians gathered in excessive numbers, they were reduced to living off beaver and muskrat, and the rapid disappearance of one animal, compounded by the

uncertainty of finding the other, created an endemic threat of famine.¹⁵³ Such a situation F. Heron described when, writing to George Simpson in 1822, he remarked that in the forest the difficulties of material living contrasted with the wealth of furs: "Furs valuable, but food hard to get."¹⁵⁴ On the shores of Hudson Bay the brief period of the migrations of caribou and wild geese farther reduced the availability of food, and here the absence of even fur-bearing animals aggravated the poverty of resources.¹⁵⁵ As early as 1659, Pierre Radisson recorded that during the winter the Cree had to abandon this sterile region and make their way to the less deprived parts of the woodland,¹⁵⁶ while James Isham contrasted the barrenness of the coast with the more clement nature of the inland regions.¹⁵⁷ Each year in their journals the Hudson's Bay Company's officers mentioned the arrival around the trading posts of people dying of hunger, whom they gathered on the spaces outside the forts where they assured them food and what clothing they needed while they waited for the arrival of the migratory birds.¹⁵⁸

As a result of these uncertainties of living, the Woods Cree—except for those called Home Guard Indians who lived miserably around the posts on the Bay, relying for their survival on the charity of the whites¹⁵⁹—were condemned to a perpetually nomadic life.¹⁶⁰ Like the animals they hunted, they were constantly on the move, in search of nourishment. Their life seemed even harder than that of the Eskimo.¹⁶¹ The threat of famine hung without respite over the Cree, and haunted them with superstitious terrors.¹⁶² The trade at the posts was often interrupted by periods of dearth which condemned the native hunters to inaction,¹⁶³ and instances of cannibalism, exceptional on the prairie, were more numerous in the forest. Menaced by hunger, the Indians would sometimes kill their children to feed themselves, and later on they would seek to efface the memory of their crime by incorporating other children by adoption into their families.¹⁶⁴

This poverty of resources deprived the woodland Indians of the warm and abundant clothing which the bison assured their congeners in the prairie. Moose and caribou could also provide such clothing,¹⁶⁵ but as these animals were often not to be found, the Cree had to make up for their scarcity by using woollen garments and blankets,¹⁶⁶ which did not offer such effective protection as skins. Shelter was equally precarious; in such an extreme climate the Cree tents of caribou skin, their wigwams roofed with bark, or

the makeshift bivouacs they constructed from branches and slabs of bark arranged to break the wind¹⁶⁷ did not provide a protection like that of the prairie Indians' tepees. Thus in every way the standard of living of the Woods Cree was perpetually inferior to that of the prairie tribes, and they lost all care for physical cleanliness.¹⁶⁸ Nor did they have the vigor and good health of the plains Indians to help them endure an existence that involved far more exhausting tasks and more severe privations than the peoples of the prairie normally experienced. Undoubtedly their degradation was greater near the coast; Andrew Graham portrayed the Cree of the interior as less backward, and less negligent in their persons and in their ways of feeding, than those of the shorelines; they were also more robust, better adapted to endure the inclemencies of the weather and likely to live to a greater age.¹⁶⁹ David Thompson made the same distinctions between the people of the forest and those of the coast.¹⁷⁰ However, even if we ignore the ravages that alcoholism and contagious diseases quickly wrought upon them after contact with the white men,¹⁷¹ it is unlikely that the Woods Cree of the interior, though they were better off materially than the "Home Guards," were equal in stamina to the warrior tribes of the prairie. Certainly they could not have been asked to perform twice in the same summer the journey from Norway House to York Factory, which a Canadian voyageur could do without difficulty.¹⁷²

In such circumstances, the forest Indians could not neglect—as the prairie peoples did—such an important resource as fishing. Even if they regarded fish as an inferior kind of food,¹⁷³ they often had to swallow their hunters' pride and make substantial use of it.¹⁷⁴ They also had to utilize such resources as wild berries, fur-bearing animals, hare and rabbits, and migratory birds,¹⁷⁵ as a necessary compensation for the uncertainty of finding big game. Above all, they had to abandon any thought of independence from the European traders, for it was only from them that they could obtain the various articles which helped them overcome the hazards of their existence: muskets and ammunition, steel traps to kill big game and capture fur-bearers, fishing lines and hooks, clothes, provisions of food when necessary, and, last but not least, alcohol, whose distribution was a source of vice and criminal disorder,¹⁷⁶ and whose ravages soon reduced the Indians of the coast to a state of mental wretchedness which all observers attributed to the same cause.¹⁷⁷ Yet, while the prairie posts dispensed little else

than alcohol and tobacco, those of the forest and the Bay dealt principally in articles of basic necessity, among which woollen fabrics, steel traps, muskets, and fishing tackle were the most important.¹⁷⁸ Because of their dependence, the woodland Indians never thought of forbidding access to their territory to the Europeans whose goods met their material needs.¹⁷⁹ Far from fearing to encounter here the proud and haughty temper of the prairie peoples, the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company found among the forest peoples a docility which it was easy for them to exploit in the interests of their trade.¹⁸⁰

The good will of the traders was in fact the price with which they bought the pelts the native people gathered in the forest. Forced to overcome their temperamental indolence, the Woods Cree were thus the people who dedicated themselves most actively to hunting fur-bearing animals, the people through whom the trading companies obtained their greatest profits, and whom they strove to keep in the forest lest they lose their inclination to work once they had experienced the idle life of the prairie.¹⁸¹ The Cree brought to the search for pelts an experience and a skill¹⁸² that quickly established their reputation as fur hunters among the traders.¹⁸³ Andrew Graham portrayed them assembling in spring on lakeshores or riverbanks they had agreed on before the annual dispersion of families,¹⁸⁴ to construct their bark canoes.¹⁸⁵ Then they would transport to the posts on the Bay the furs they had obtained during the winter or which they had collected, in the days before trading posts were established among the prairie peoples, from tribes to the south of the forest.¹⁸⁶ Even in the heart of winter, if they had collected enough pelts, they would not hesitate to travel with their sleighs over two or three hundred miles of broken country to deliver them to the Hudson's Bay Company; on such journeys their only shelter at night would be an improvised windbreak of branches arranged in a semi-circle.¹⁸⁷

The Cree did not in fact hold the monopoly over this lucrative hunting. The other peoples of the wooded zone were compelled to follow a very similar way of living; they too became dependent on the trading posts and alternated hunting big game with trapping fur animals.

Such was the situation of the tribes speaking the Dene or Athapaskan language who were northwesterly neighbors of the Cree; the Beaver who inhabited the western shores of Lake Athabasca and the Peace River basin, and the Slaves to the west of

Great Slave Lake, where they reached the farthest limit of the wooded zone.¹⁸⁸ It was also the situation of the Ojibwa, who occupied most of the country to the south of the Cree between Sault Ste. Marie and Lake Winnipeg.¹⁸⁹

Of these various groups, the Slaves were worst off. There were few of them—less than 1,300 in all—and they occupied the northern edge of the forest verging on the Barren Grounds, but they confined their activities to the woodland and refused to venture into the desolate spaces north and east of it;¹⁹⁰ hence the French Canadians called them "People of the Dense Woods."¹⁹¹ The very dwellings of the Slaves showed how completely they relied on the forest; in summer they consisted of simple conical assemblages of pine bark, and in winter of rudimentary log huts protected by roofs of pine boughs.¹⁹² In this distant region, big game was even less numerous and varied than in the country of the Cree; it was limited to scattered populations of moose and wood caribou,¹⁹³ and this not only narrowed the subsistence resources of these people but also deprived them of the possibility of making tents of skin like their neighbors to the south. They had to devote more attention than other tribes to fishing for the salmon, pike, suckers, and ground fish of which the lakes and rivers contained ample supplies,¹⁹⁴ and often had to rely solely for their food on rabbits and hares, whose cyclical disappearance often exposed them to starvation.¹⁹⁵ Undernourishment debilitated them and predisposed them to tuberculosis;¹⁹⁶ Alexander Mackenzie described them in 1789 as an ill-grown race with little vigor, suffering the same defects as the Cree who had established themselves around the posts on the Bay. "They are a meagre, ugly, ill-made people."¹⁹⁷

Though they did not escape the uncertainties of nomad existence, the Beaver and the Ojibwa were better off than the Slaves. The first tribe, numbering about 1,500,¹⁹⁸ mingled in the rich parkland of the Peace River with a small group of Saulteaux who had migrated from the prairie and exploited the abundant hunting resources of this region where moose lived side by side with bison.¹⁹⁹ In addition, Lake Athabasca possessed inexhaustible fish resources. But the Beavers, like the Cree, neglected the fisheries and mainly hunted the large animals, of which the moose constituted their favorite game²⁰⁰ and provided them, as the bison did for the prairie Indians, with food, clothing, and shelter.²⁰¹ Yet they were not so free as the plains tribes from the tutelage of the

trading posts. The frequent wanderings of big game, which led them to the bounds of Sekani territory;²⁰² the uncertainties of winter hunting,²⁰³ the inadequate protections which—as George Simpson remarked—their habitations offered to the cold;²⁰⁴ and finally the poor quality of their clothing,²⁰⁵ all forced them to call often on the benefits offered by the whites. The abundance of furs which they could produce from their well-stocked region enabled them to retain the goodwill of the traders.

The Ojibwa, finally, had access to a variety of resources not available to the Beaver and even less to the Cree. They garnered the best of every gift of nature and despised nothing; they not only accepted fishing as a useful complement to hunting, but practised both activities with equal diligence and success. Enjoying the less rigorous climate of the southern fringe of the forest, they exploited the vegetable resources of the Shield, such as the berries which they ate fresh or dried and kept in reserve for winter; the sap of maples and birches; and above all, the wild rice that grew abundantly in their territory.²⁰⁶ Rather than limiting themselves to searching out specific animals, they indiscriminately hunted moose, bear, and fur-bearing animals.²⁰⁷ At the same time, they were so far dominated by the woodland economy, like the Slaves, that they constructed their dwellings of slabs of bark held down by a conical sheathing of poles; only rarely did they make tents from the skins of animals.²⁰⁸ The utilization of so many resources made their existence less precarious than that of the other woodland peoples, without offering the complete security which only an agrarian economy, like that of the sedentary groups of Ojibwa at Sault Ste. Marie and on the southern shores of Lake Superior, could guarantee. The subsistence they derived from hunting in fact varied from year to year, and it also depended on which part of the Shield they traversed; fishing was a standby that did not always suffice to remove the threat of dearth, and in bad years it could not prevent the practice of cannibalism.²⁰⁹

Numerically, the Ojibwa were probably roughly equal to the Cree, that is, about 20,000 men, women and children,²¹⁰ but they were just as unevenly scattered over the great terrain they occupied as the neighboring tribes. The slight density of population in the Lake Nipigon region—with its 820 inhabitants—was reminiscent of the desolate Rat Country.²¹¹ However great their capacity to endure privations and fatigue, the Ojibwa do not seem

to have been able to challenge the plains Indians in terms of physical vigor.²¹²

On all the woodland peoples, the most fortunate as well as the poorest, the need to survive imposed an incessant pattern of wandering whose uncertainties subjected them to the domination of the trading posts established by Europeans. At the same time, this nomadic existence implied an incessant fragmentation of the tribe into small groups, which in turn led to the absence of organizational ability that was shared by the prairie tribes.

The breakup of the tribe into basic units, each containing a few families, was related to the dispersion of game animals, which in the forest never formed compact herds like the bison in the plains. This in turn meant a scantiness of food resources, which were insufficient to maintain even families for very long in the same area of woodland. The lack of organization was also encouraged by the pacific way of life which these people necessarily followed, since they were too scattered to sustain meaningful contact and too preoccupied with their own survival to dissipate their energies in warlike occupations. The collective precautions which the prairie tribes observed when they moved from one location to another would have been pointless in a woodland setting.

Between the Cree and the Ojibwa there was an undisturbed accord. It was only on the northern verge of their territory that the Cree came into conflict with the Eskimo and the Chipewyan.²¹³ Yet even then it was not a question of the kind of personal conflicts that in the prairie were renewed each year at the end of winter when groups of braves provocatively infringed on their enemies' territory, but merely of fortuitous clashes, provoked by accidental encounters between members of hostile tribes. For example, around Prince of Wales Fort, where the Cree and the Chipewyan traded, there were sometimes skirmishes between the "northern" and the "southern" Indians.²¹⁴ On several occasions, in 1726 and later in 1729, the officers in charge of the Fort, Richard Morton and Anthony Beale, had to intervene so as to mediate dissensions that were prejudicial to trade.²¹⁵ But the journals of the trading posts make only rare allusions to such conflicts, which the infrequent contacts between the two tribes made unusual.

It is true that the invasion of Beaver territory by the better-armed Cree provoked more embittered encounters, yet these did not create between the two peoples a hostility as deep as that

which for very similar reasons divided the Ojibwa and the Sioux. Resigning themselves to a situation they were powerless to change, most of the Beaver made peace with the aggressors, even adopting their customs, and henceforward lived on good terms with them. The rest, not wishing to sustain—like the Sioux—a relentless struggle against their invaders, were content to find refuge from further incursions in the Rocky Mountains.²¹⁶ Thus David Thompson, whose judgment was confirmed by the observations many years later of Milton and Cheadle, was able to attribute to the woodland peoples a generally pacific way of life: "Whereas the forest Indians have a peaceable life with hard labour. . . ." ²¹⁷ From such inclinations the trading companies benefited greatly, since in their posts in the Shield they had no need to maintain the strong garrisons that were unavoidable in the prairie forts.

In such a situation, the dispersion of the forest tribes took place without difficulty every year at the beginning of winter. The families then set off in all directions, searching for big game or fur-bearing animals, and never stayed long in the same place. As the journal of Cumberland House in 1815 tells us, the Cree "live together in little parties, pitching camp or wandering about in the winter, never more than a fortnight in the same place."²¹⁸ When spring came, families would gather together again, either to transport collectively the furs gathered in the winter²¹⁹ to the Hudson Bay posts, or to fish in large groups, or to hunt more effectively the animals that from this time were more numerous and less scattered.²²⁰ But these gatherings did not attain the proportions of those which took place in the prairie, and the tribe never came together as a complete entity.

Perhaps—more favored by the nature of their terrain—the Ojibwa to an extent escaped this constant fragmentation of the tribe, for the harvest of wild rice at the end of summer demanded a certain concentration of labor.²²¹ Their more diligent practice of fishing acted in the same way by gathering large groups together in spring and fall near the rapids or around the lakes.²²² But during the winter even the Ojibwa could not avoid, any more than the Cree, the need to disperse into small groups.²²³

A way of living that assumed no need for collective action was incompatible with principles of organization and discipline. Between the groups of Beaver who wandered over the parkland of the Peace River the only links were those established by their accidental meetings at the trading posts or their encounters in the

hunting grounds.²²⁴ Among the Slaves, who were broken into equally unimportant groups,²²⁵ it was only war that might lead to the formation of a larger and vaguely disciplined group, under the leadership of a chief elected for the occasion.²²⁶

The Cree had nothing more elaborate in the way of organization in the true sense of the word. The biological family formed the basis of their society.²²⁷ Several families might come together in simple clusters and share their winter wanderings, but they never abandoned their respective autonomy, and they recognized no authority other than that of the father of the family.²²⁸ But even his ascendancy proceeded less from any principle of authority than from the spontaneous obedience and affection of his children.²²⁹ At the most, during the springtime gatherings, a chief might be designated, either to lead the people to the trading posts, or to direct some warlike enterprise.²³⁰ His qualities of courage and endurance and his knowledge of the terrain would qualify him for such functions, but his ability to exercise them often depended on his power to reward his subordinates.²³¹ This institution spread under the influence of the Hudson's Bay Company, whose officers eventually took upon themselves the naming of the chiefs or "captains," whom they picked from among the good hunters, the best orators, and those most versed in the practice of magic. The function of such leaders, who were encouraged by presents and flattery, was to lead a greater number of Indians to the posts, so as to augment the supply of furs.²³² Yet the chief's influence never equalled that of the shaman, whose pronouncements gained a prestige that nobody cared to contest because of the superstitious fears that dominated the life of the Cree.²³³ Among the Cree who collected around Fort Albany there was also a system of totemic clans, and this type of relationship was strengthened by the presence of the Midewiwin, the religious society of sorcerers or shamans which was active among all the people of the region.²³⁴ But these institutions did not in fact originate among the Cree; the latter borrowed them from the Ojibwa whose territory bordered on that of the James Bay people, and only the Cree who lived in contact with the *Saulteaux* observed them.

The Ojibwa lived less in isolation than the other forest peoples, and co-operative gatherings of various kinds made their life more easy. They were also in contact with more advanced tribes in American territory.²³⁵ Perhaps these were the reasons why they attained a level of social organization somewhat less elementary than

that of the Cree, though they never developed any true concept of collective discipline.

The biological family remained the foundation of their society, and in winter they too dispersed as a tribe. In the poorer regions they split into separate families,²³⁶ but in the less meagrely endowed areas related families would sometimes maintain quite large encampments,²³⁷ very similar to the gatherings of families that even today take place in their summer villages.²³⁸ Quite apart from the larger concentrations of summer and autumn, ceremonies and celebrations that brought people together were often organized. Such occasions, which would include feasts and both ritual and profane dances, helped maintain a feeling of tribal unity.²³⁹

Quite apart from the family, Ojibwa society was also organized into a number of exogamous clans, each with its animal totem.²⁴⁰ Some of these clans seem to have been loosely linked into larger groups or phratries; these did not possess the same kind of cohesion as the Iroquois phratries, nor did they or the clans have any political or religious role.²⁴¹ And thus, although there were many manifestations of collective life among the Ojibwa, no kind of political organization developed nor was there any institution similar to the indigenous police forces among the prairie tribes.

The powers of the Ojibwa chief, also chosen for his persuasiveness and his personal merits, were as fragile as those of his Cree counterpart, for they were limited to the occasion for which he was elected.²⁴² He might be assisted by a council open to all adult men, but its functions were vague and limited, and it had no power of direct action.²⁴³ The concept of a "national council," summoned to discuss matters of concern to the tribe as a whole, was unknown;²⁴⁴ the decisions of the chief and the council applied only to a limited group of families, and then only if each freely accepted them.²⁴⁵ In matters of civil order, the organization of war parties,²⁴⁶ or the settlement of personal grievances,²⁴⁷ everything was left to the free obedience or the free initiative of the individual. "They live in a perfect state of freedom and liberty," as one fur trader remarked.²⁴⁸ Among the Ojibwa as well as among the Cree, and for the same reasons, the Hudson's Bay Company's officers took it upon themselves to appoint captains, whose loyalty they sustained with gifts and with regales of alcohol.²⁴⁹

But even more than among the Cree, the shamans assumed among the Ojibwa a role of leadership alongside those officially

appointed to chiefly dignity, and their prerogatives extended beyond the framework of magic or supernatural curing. Their influence was all the greater since it was they who constituted the powerful religious society of the Midewiwin, the idea of which some of the Cree borrowed from the Ojibwa. Open to men and women alike, this society held a great ceremonial each year that exceeded in importance all the other manifestations of Ojibwa religious life.²⁵⁰ It also preached to the members of the tribe a veritable social ethic,²⁵¹ and it gave them a principle of cohesion which none of the other forest peoples possessed. Thus it was the Ojibwa alone who attained even a semblance of organization, and, in spite of its shortcomings, this enabled them to adapt to the life of the prairie while retaining the customs of the forest life, whereas the Cree who left the forest for the prairie, and became Plains Cree, imitated in every way the organization of their new allies.

Tribes of the High Latitudes

On the upper verge of the forest belt and in the Barren Grounds beyond it, there was a worsening of those natural conditions which already condemned the tribes of the wooded zone to a dispersed and nomadic existence and weakened their powers of organization. Among the Dene (Athabaskan) peoples whose territories bordered on those of the arctic Eskimo, this situation restricted farther the basis for a common existence.

First among these peoples were the Chipewyan, established on the northern verges of the forest, which they left periodically during the summer for excursions of varying duration into the Barren Grounds. During the cold season, the absence of wood for fuel and of protection from the rigors of the climate made it impossible for the Chipewyan to spend long periods in these desolate territories, and forced them quickly back to the wooded region in which they spent the greater part of the year, so that in spite of their constant coming and going between the two zones, they remained mostly a woodland people.²⁵² Yet in this sparse northern forest, resources became even scantier and the vegetation no longer played such a part in sustaining the people as it did in the areas inhabited by the Cree.²⁵³ The winter there was marked by long periods of privation which the more thrifty disposition of the Chipewyan²⁵⁴ was not sufficient to mitigate, and even by famine which—here as well—reduced the native people to the point

where they destroyed their families and resorted to cannibalism.²⁵⁵

The Chipewyan did their best to counter the uncertainties of their existence by the exercise of a foresight that aroused the admiration of David Thompson and the approval of the Hudson's Bay traders.²⁵⁶ They exploited every means of subsistence, no matter how meagre, that they found in nature. In difficult times they did not hesitate to utilize the mosses that clung to the rocky surfaces of the Barren Grounds,²⁵⁷ nor did they neglect the forest clearings, whose produce they garnered at the end of summer.²⁵⁸ They fished in winter as well as summer,²⁵⁹ catching their prey under the ice or in open water by means of harpoons, nets, or hooks of wood or bone.²⁶⁰ They snared waterfowl,²⁶¹ and though they were less adept hunters than the Cree,²⁶² they pursued the wood bison and moose which were rare and scattered in their region, and even hunted musk ox. But it was from the herds of caribou that they drew their most valued sustenance.²⁶³ They awaited the herds on the main routes by which they migrated in autumn from the coast toward the interior. Then they ambushed the animals at the crossings of lakes and rivers, where they speared them in easy massacres.²⁶⁴ During the winter they captured them in pounds erected in the forest, or shot them down with arrows.²⁶⁵

These varied activities dictated a constantly nomadic life, alternating between the forest and the Barren Grounds, a situation that has not changed down to the present day.²⁶⁶ The price of such wanderings, which resulted from the great dispersion of the resources which the Chipewyan were able to exploit, was the fragmentation of a tribe already small in numbers.²⁶⁷ According to James Isham there were a thousand families, scattered in unequal groups over the immense area in which they wandered.²⁶⁸ It was only during the great migrations of the caribou herds that the families gathered in appreciable numbers.²⁶⁹ Most of the time they lived in scattered isolation or in small bands, always on the move, since in any region the game they hunted might be abundant for a few days and vanish shortly afterward because of a mere change in the wind.²⁷⁰ To such natural uncertainties must be added the Chipewyans' lack of skill in hunting the larger game like bison and moose. As a result, they might be able to make warm and comfortable clothes for themselves with caribou skins,²⁷¹ but they did not have the resources to create habitations suitable for the rigorous climate of their country.²⁷² This made them more narrowly dependent than the great neighboring tribe [the Cree] on the

goodwill of the trading posts. And since there was no lack of fur-bearing animals, and the Chipewyan were better hunters of marten and beaver than of big game,²⁷³ they were well supplied with the means of exchange to acquire the articles they needed for their material existence; they would not trade for articles that were of no practical use to them.²⁷⁴

Owing to this constant fragmentation of the tribe, organization became virtually non-existent. The family was a distinct community, under the direction of a father who took the place of a chief, or of old men whose opinions were heard with respect.²⁷⁵ "The authority of the father is the only one known to the Montagnais [Chipewyan]," wrote the future Archbishop of St. Boniface, Father Taché, in 1853.²⁷⁶ That authority was limited to the narrow circle of the family or the group of families depending immediately on the father-chief.²⁷⁷ If there had once existed chiefs, chosen from among the individual families, who exercised a broader authority, their memory was virtually extinct by the second half of the eighteenth century, or survived merely in the degree of honor accorded to certain heads of families.²⁷⁸ Such influence, barely perceptible and devoid of real substance, had already been supplanted by the prestige which the best hunters acquired thanks to the tangible rewards—and also to the esteem—which the whites accorded to them.²⁷⁹

The fragmentation of the tribe had one advantage; it reduced the risks of war with neighboring peoples. The conflicts in which the Chipewyans became engaged were reduced to unimportant skirmishes with the Cree, with the Eskimo whom the Chipewyan had pushed back from the southern edge of the Barren Grounds,²⁸⁰ or, more rarely and at the other extremity of their territory, with the Beaver, whom Governor Simpson was anxious to keep from contact with the Chipewyan.²⁸¹ The concerns of their material life were in fact too pressing to allow the Chipewyan the leisure needed to organize warlike expeditions. This lack of military initiative explains why, accepting the opinion of the Cree,²⁸² Europeans attributed a pacific nature to the Chipewyan, notwithstanding the cruelty they displayed when they came to blows with the Eskimo.²⁸³

The same remarks apply, with few qualifications, to the peoples living beyond the territory of the Chipewyan. These tribes, the Dogribs, the Yellowknives or Copper Indians,²⁸⁴ the Hares, and finally, the Statudene around the Great Bear Lake, were even

farther removed from any conception of organization.²⁸⁵ Indeed, it is barely possible to accord the title of tribe to these groups, since they had neither cohesion nor numerical importance. The three first-named peoples appear to have comprised, respectively, 1,250, 450, and 750 individuals;²⁸⁶ frequent periods of malnutrition,²⁸⁷ the insanitary conditions of their existence,²⁸⁸ and the hard labor imposed on their women,²⁸⁹ condemned such populations to remain stationary. For all these peoples, dispersion in small and tenuously united groups was the unavoidable law of existence.²⁹⁰ The poverty of the land made it inhospitable to any accumulation of people. If the Hares and the Dogribs were divided into clusters of families in possession of well-defined hunting grounds,²⁹¹ the Statudene knew no other unit than the cellular family, free to link up with other families during its wanderings, but lacking any territory of its own.²⁹² The notion of the clan did not exist among these people,²⁹³ and authority with them remained as undefined as it was among the Chipewyan.²⁹⁴ In the interests of trade, the Europeans tried to increase the sense of authority by conferring on the most experienced hunters the title of chief,²⁹⁵ but such efforts had little success.²⁹⁶ The tribes of these extreme latitudes conceived of no other chief than the elder, known for his courage or hunting skills, who could guide the families in their peregrinations.²⁹⁷ Nevertheless, when several families came together to attack the caribou on their migratory wanderings, they would accept the guidance of a hunter or an elder, without extending his role beyond that particular collective activity.²⁹⁸

It was only in the event of warlike expeditions that a chief would be elected, but as soon as hostilities came to an end his right to offer advice would cease.²⁹⁹ However, among these peoples conflicts were as rare and on as local a scale as they were among the Chipewyan. They might arise from the desire of two groups to occupy the best hunting grounds, from an attempt to abduct women from another tribe, from the feeling that a group or tribe was thwarting its neighbor's hunting efforts through the power of sorcery,³⁰⁰ or even from the temptation to take advantage of the weakness of a more timorous group in order to subdue it. And when such engagements did take place, these tribes would behave with as much cruelty as the Chipewyan. Thus, at the end of the eighteenth century and in the early years of the nineteenth, hostilities broke out between the Yellowknives on one side and the Dogribs, Hares, and Slaves on the other.³⁰¹ Many skirmishes also

took place between the Yellowknives and the Chipewyan, but this warfare ended, and in the first half of the nineteenth century, with the fusion of the two tribes.³⁰² Even the more violent hostility harbored toward the Eskimo by all the tribes who hunted on the verges of their territory gave rise only to occasional skirmishes. All things considered, the Indians of these arctic regions were in fact only moderately bellicose.³⁰³ Often, indeed, when groups of strangers met in the same territory, they would peacefully set about exploiting the same resources in common, Hares or Yellowknives hunting beside Slaves, in a relationship favored by the lack of cohesion within their own tribes and broken only occasionally by brief clashes.³⁰⁴

For the same reasons as the Chipewyan, none of these tribes limited its wanderings to the stony spaces of the far North. All of them could be regarded as intermediate between the two zones. Though the forest, rather than the Barren Grounds, formed the semi-permanent habitat where they took refuge at the end of summer, their way of life fell into a pattern of migration that led them from the Great Slave Lake to the Arctic Ocean, and from the banks of the Mackenzie to the coastal fringe of Hudson Bay, the domain of the Eskimo. During the mild season, from the month of April, they made their incursions on to the tundra of the Barren Grounds, where they hunted both musk ox and arctic caribou. The Statudene and the Hares were indifferent hunters in comparison with the Yellowknives and Dogribs.³⁰⁵ The latter tribes were expert at trapping the caribou in pounds, spearing them in the lakes where they took refuge from insect pests, and driving them into snowdrifts where the foundering animals could be massacred without difficulty.³⁰⁶ The conical tent of caribou skins was the favored habitation of these tribes,³⁰⁷ and only rarely did they have recourse to the rectangular huts, assembled out of poles and branches,³⁰⁸ which were customary among the Hare and Statudene, for whom they took the place of the teepee.³⁰⁹ These last tribes actually pursued the animals of the Barren Grounds in the spring and also the months of August and September, but they were indifferent hunters, and fed mostly on fish, which they caught in all seasons, and on hare, which they hunted during the winter.³¹⁰ As they used the hare not only for food but also for clothing, they were exposed, whenever there was a dearth of these animals, to periods of privation and famine, to which many of them succumbed.³¹¹ Even the personnel of the trading posts were

not exempt from these disasters,³¹² for in such times of despair anthropophagy would make its appearance. In 1842 two employees of Fort Good Hope were savagely massacred by famished Hares, of whom fifty starved to death at the very gates of the fort.³¹³ The part of the wooded zone where these people sheltered over winter, around Great Bear Lake, along the Mackenzie River, and as far west as the foothills of the Rockies, nourished—apart from the hare—only scanty populations of woods caribou, moose, and fur-bearing animals.³¹⁴ This lack of local resources made their existence more difficult and precarious than that of the Yellowknives and Dogribs, who were better provided with both game and furs³¹⁵ in the northern rim of the forest which they inhabited between Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake. But even this relative security did not preserve them from the hazards of existence; either of these groups might sometimes in winter have to rely on the meagre nourishment which the hares offered, and they were no more exempt than their neighbors from the threat of famine.³¹⁶

In these distant territories, the far verges of the third North West, the trading companies established few posts, and those they did set up were situated in the immediate vicinity of that great route of penetration, the Mackenzie River. The relations with the whites of the tribes we have just discussed were restricted to such localized and comparatively infrequent contacts, and this fact lessened the part they played in the formation of the Métis people.

Native Society: Conceptions of Life and Psychological Attitudes

In spite of the differences between the three North Wests, the native tribes distributed within their limits were united in the similarity of their ways of life, equally dominated by nomadism, equally estranged from any sedentary occupation. There is no doubt that the physical setting was largely responsible for such inclinations. It forbade any kind of agricultural activity on the part of the tribes who inhabited the northern forest and the Barren Grounds. And while it is true that the rich earth of the prairie lent itself to cultivation, its bare horizons and the dry and harsh climate that limited its farming season made it more suited for modern colonization, with its technical resources, than for the simple gardening the Indians customarily practised.

Conditions favorable to such rudimentary agriculture existed only in the dampest clearings of the park lands, where the banks of

the Red River and the Peace River were particularly well adapted to cultivation. Yet the difficulties which the white colonists encountered when they first tried to improve an area so favorable as that of the Red River, and the need they experienced for several years to model their way of life on that of the Indians, help one to understand why the Indians made no serious effort at breaking the land. The clearings along the Red River were lightly exploited only by the Ojibwa, but elsewhere neither the Slaves nor the Beavers practised anything that could be termed agriculture. Nowhere in the west did there exist a region so favorable to cultivation as the lands of the Huron and the Iroquois, whose more southerly latitude, more moderate climate, and richer soil were suitable for an agrarian economy. At the same time, even in the areas that lent themselves to farming, hunting offered such rewards that it would have been difficult for the peoples of the West, naturally indolent and hostile to any kind of sustained labor, not to be tempted by an abundance whose exploitation encouraged a nomadic existence in contrast to the perseverance and the methodical work of the agriculturist. Thus the native mentality conspired with the environment to explain the kind of life that was shared by all the tribes of the North West.

Doubtless one must also turn to the psychological element to explain the nature of their political and social structures, which cannot be attributed merely to the influence of natural conditions. It is apparent that, sometimes through causing a concentration of people and a reinforcement of discipline, and on other occasions by motivating a dispersion of the tribe and a loosening of its cohesion, natural conditions may indeed have determined the kind of differences in the degree of organization which we have observed among the tribes of the prairie, of the woodlands, and of the extreme latitudes. But the effect of the physical environment does not in itself sufficiently explain all the political and social conceptions of these peoples, from their notion of authority limited to a framework of provisional jurisdictions, to their views of property and personal courage, or their ideas of the reciprocal relations between men and women in marriage; even less does it explain the modalities of their religious life or the functioning of their moral code.

Perhaps it is necessary, as Diamond Jenness thought, to attribute a greater influence to historic events, to the links which the Indians made during their migrations with other tribes whose cul-

tures influenced them.³¹⁷ Certainly there is good reason at this point to bring in the native psychology. Closely related, as it was, to the mentality of the Indians of Lower Canada, it can usefully be evoked to explain the existence, among peoples whose material lives were not always dominated by identical conditions, of a group of non-varying characteristics.

To a certain degree, of course, their mentality was shaped by their nomadic existence, for the unending contact it involved with the setting in which they had evolved conferred on them certain qualities of mind which all who encountered them agreed in recognizing. Their intimate knowledge of the smallest of forest paths, of the ways of wild animals, of the landmarks that determined their movements over the boundless plains, combined to develop in them an extremely sharp power of observation, and a visual memory that remained fresh to an advanced age. The smallest details of the regions they traversed were engraved on their minds and guided them unfailingly on their migrations, enabling them to find again years afterwards, merely by viewing the lie of the land and the shape or disposition of trees, routes they may have followed once only in the past.³¹⁸ Because it was not supplemented by writing, their memory was constantly being exercised, and for this reason it retained faithfully the deals they had concluded and the conversations they had shared. James Isham claims to have known patriarchs a hundred years old who were still sufficiently in control of their faculties to keep a vivid memory of all the transactions in which they had been involved.³¹⁹ The simple observation of trees, and the logical deduction of the reasons for their apparent abnormalities, gave them a sense of direction that did not fail them, either in the horizonless forest or on the bare prairie.³²⁰ A thicker bark, suggesting a greater exposure to heat, or the bending of tree trunks before the prevalent winds from the northwest, revealed to them a southerly direction;³²¹ abundant layers of moss would indicate a northerly aspect,³²² while the position of the stars,³²³ the placing of poplar bluffs, or mere breaks in the land, served as substitutes for landmarks by which they excelled in tracing their routes across the prairie.

The same sharpness of observation can be seen in the representations of animals with which they ornamented their garments and their tents; physical proportions were well observed, movements accurately apprehended and reproduced with vigor, yet—no more than the geometric motives which they executed on their leather

pouches or arrow quivers—did their accuracy of observation rise to a level of true artistic sensibility comparable to that manifested in the more evolved designs of the Pacific coast tribes.³²⁴

Forced to make the best of the resources they found in nature with the rudimentary implements at their disposal, these peoples showed a remarkable manual skill in making their canoes, their snowshoes, and their habitations. An inferior hatchet, a knife, a file, and an awl were all that the Cree needed to cut from birch trees the sheets of bark which, after making them flexible by heat, they sewed with the roots of fir trees onto frames of branches cleverly curved and held at their top edges by washboards that were fastened together fore and aft.³²⁵ Once the craft was finished, they would caulk the joints with turpentine gathered from coniferous trees.³²⁶ With nothing more than an axe, they would split poplars and birches fourteen or sixteen inches thick to extract strips seven or eight feet long on which they fashioned their snowshoes by weaving a network of cord or "babiche."³²⁷ Finally, they were always good marksmen, skilful with the bow and arrow, and adapting to the use of firearms as soon as the Europeans introduced them.³²⁸

At the same time, their habitual nomadism led to an essentially irregular life-style, in which idleness went side by side with effort, and abundance alternated with dearth. The wanderings of the tribes of the northern forests and the Barren Grounds involved periods of intense effort, made all the more painful by the privations that accompanied them. At such times the Indians displayed extraordinary powers of endurance. On their snowshoes, whose broad surfaces enabled them to glide over shallow snow but did not prevent sinking to the knees when it accumulated thickly, the Cree moved about endlessly during the winter months, unperturbed by the efforts demanded by this mode of locomotion, so often described by the missionaries.³²⁹ Frequently, for lack of dogs, they themselves had to drag sledges heavily piled with baggage over distances of between two and three hundred miles, travelling twenty miles a day.³³⁰ Among the northern tribes, living in sparse forest and therefore less well provided with usable trees than their neighbors to the south, the construction of toboggans was less widespread, and goods were more often carried on the backs of men and dogs, but here also the snowshoe was used habitually to facilitate travel.³³¹

In themselves, such migrations were painful enough, without

the other sufferings that might be encountered. There was the anguish of undernourishment; this was mitigated only for those who, having placed themselves on the caribou migration routes, found an abundant but short-lived plethora of food, followed, as soon as winter set in, by the risk of scarcity consequent on the annual dispersion of the herds.³³² There was also the insufficient protection afforded by the habitations they improvised on halting for the night, or when they stayed for several days in a place relatively well supplied with game. Having nothing better than their tents of moose or caribou skin, or fragile and hastily constructed shelters, they experienced all the effects of the polar climate. "Itts' unknown what hardships," James Isham wrote in 1743 "men must Endure in these parts, to see Isceles of Jack Frost, hanging over men's heads as they Lye in bed, —from the mouth to the top of the tent will hang Ice in a great quantity, in one night's time, occasion'd by their breath, and their Blankets are so thick of frost itt takes them one hour every morning to thaw and dry such."³³³

As a result, the tribes of the Shield developed an almost unbelievable resistance to the elements, which rendered them equally indifferent to the coldest temperatures and to the most oppressive heats: "heedless of exposures" was the description of the Chipewyan by S. H. Long in 1824;³³⁴ "patient under fatigue, hardships and privations," noted the report of the Athabasca Department in the same year.³³⁵ Their constitutions endured the most exhausting travels.³³⁶ They cured their wounds by simple applications of water mixed with turpentine. They treated their sicknesses sometimes by sessions in the sweatlodge, and on other occasions by bleeding, which the Cree practised by puncturing the back of the hand with the point of an awl or a sharp knife, afterwards staunching the bleeding with a ligature.³³⁷ The women, on whom the hardest work was often imposed, shared to the full this capacity for endurance. James Isham declares that they could become mothers at the age of seventy.³³⁸ When, on their wanderings, Chipewyan women happened to bring children into the world, they immediately continued on their way, loaded with the extra burden of the infant, or harnessed to their sleighs, which they had often to drag through water and wet snow.³³⁹ Above all, the Indian constitution lent itself to long periods of fasting which no European could emulate. At times of famine they would make do with putrefying meat, but when their hunting was successful they

would gorge to their utmost capacity. They showed no signs of dissatisfaction or discouragement in times of scarcity, and they did not appear to be affected physically by a diet that might be excessive or inadequate but was never balanced.³⁴⁰ Such characteristics faithfully recall the traits which the first missionaries observed on their arrival in New France among the native inhabitants of the St. Lawrence valley;³⁴¹ they confirm the judgment of Captain Le Duchat, writing in 1756 on the peoples of the New World: "All the various nations I have encountered are untirable, accustomed to ill fortune, and endure cold and hot alike without discomfort."³⁴²

On the prairie the climate was less rigorous and material existence was less difficult. The Indians harnessed their dogs or horses to travois, rudimentary vehicles consisting of long poles which carried their baggage, and this means of transport, which could be used in winter and summer alike, saved them from the laborious migrations of the forest people.³⁴³ But in periods of scarcity they showed the same fortitude as the peoples of the Shield, and when the need arose they could display an equal power of resistance to inclement weather.³⁴⁴ The sole exceptions were the "Home Indians" established around the posts on the shores of Hudson Bay; they had been too deeply affected by their contact with the whites to remain capable of enduring the efforts and the sufferings which the country demanded of its nomadic inhabitants.³⁴⁵

At the same time, if the Indian was superior to the European in his powers of endurance, it was essentially because he sustained, in the struggle against an unfeeling nature, a passive courage which made him accept without question the harsh trials to which his way of life constantly exposed him, but which never animated him to the degree of energetic enterprise that gave the whites their superiority. Men like Alexander Mackenzie and David Thompson, who carried out with such dogged heroism the exploration of the great river of the Arctic and of the most difficult routes through the Rocky Mountains, found in the passivity of their native guides—hostile to all efforts unconnected with the basic needs of their existence and indifferent to tasks whose usefulness they could not recognize—one of the greatest obstacles to the realization of their projects.³⁴⁶ As soon as he thought himself sufficiently provided with food, the Indian at once abandoned all effort, and surrendered to the spontaneous indolence of his temperament and the improvidence of his nature.

In such improvidence the hazards of their way of life farther encouraged the peoples of the Shield, and especially those of the far North. For them, any thought of building up reserves of food was negated by the feeling that death might come on the morrow and destroy the fruits of their foresight.³⁴⁷ The difficulties which their wandering life put in the way of accumulating a stock of provisions prevented them from imitating in this way the sedentary agrarians; the tribes of the prairie, though they were less narrowly dominated by the rigors of their environment, tended to obey the same reflexes.

The improvidence of the native peoples was reinforced by their superstitious beliefs. Regarding the "Great Spirit" as responsible for the dearth of victuals which they experienced,³⁴⁸ or believing that the animals would reappear in even greater abundance if they were killed in large numbers,³⁴⁹ they took little care, even when famine threatened them,³⁵⁰ to portion out over several days the meagre product of their hunting. If, on the other hand, the game was especially numerous, they abandoned themselves to a veritable sport of massacre, ready to abandon on the spot or throw into a river the slaughtered beasts they could not consume,³⁵¹ or to take merely the choice morsels, neglecting to smoke the rest of the carcass, though by this simple procedure it might have been preserved indefinitely to provide for the sustenance of their families.³⁵² Thus Andrew Graham estimated at five thousand the number of caribou destroyed by the Cree in a single summer around York Factory, yet out of this exceptional abundance, use was made only of the animals needed for the immediate consumption of the families themselves and for the provisioning of the fort in exchange for the alcohol the Indians craved.³⁵³

On the prairie, the Indians were no less inclined to the blind destruction of the bison herds;³⁵⁴ the pounds in which they captured them became veritable charnel houses in which the animals were wasted without profiting either the natives or the trading posts.³⁵⁵ Yet, quite apart from the fact that the great number of herds and the frequency of their migrations alleviated the consequences of such massacres on the prairies, the tribes there at least sometimes had the foresight to prepare pemmican or to dry or smoke some of the meat. These measures were in fact less useful than they might have been in the wooded zone, for the groups of families that wandered over the prairie during the winter would settle down for a while—as soon as they had encountered the bison—around the

pounds which they erected, and they could live for several days on the "booty" preserved by the rigorous cold. Among the northern peoples only the Chipewyan showed any degree of prudence. In spite of the entirely nomadic character of their existence and the uncertainty of resources in their country, according to David Thompson they avoided wasting the fish and meat destined for their families.³⁶⁶ But one should not exaggerate these qualities. Even if the Chipewyan appeared more careful than other peoples of the same latitude to save their children from the hazards of want, if they took care to preserve meat by cutting it into fine strips or reducing it to powder, they succumbed to the same passion for destruction as the other tribes when they encountered herds of caribou in the Barren Grounds. On such occasions, they systematically slaughtered the animals, keeping only the tongues, the marrow, and the fat, and throwing away the rest or leaving it for the wolves.³⁶⁷

In hunting fur-bearing animals, the Indians were also liable to surrender to their lack of foresight and to destroy blindly, without any thought of the future, particularly in those areas where the beaver was used for food.³⁶⁸ They were actually encouraged in such destructive practices by the trading companies and their policy of outbidding each other, and when the Hudson's Bay Company finally became master of the West [in 1821], it often found difficulty in preventing the total exhaustion of the resources of certain districts.³⁶⁹ Yet sometimes, left to himself, the Indian would spontaneously conserve the resources of his territory. This happened when the hunting grounds were divided among individuals or families. Thus the natural good sense of some hunters prevented the exhaustion of game; others, on the contrary, allowed destruction to proceed unchecked.³⁶⁰

Once he had gathered enough to eat for a few days, the Indian would give in to his tendency to idleness, which he overcame only when the search for food again became necessary, and would happily pass his time doing nothing. "They will never move but when necessity obliges them," wrote James Isham in 1743.³⁶¹ In such periods the Indians' days were spent in idleness, or in the frantic playing of games of chance, to which all the peoples of the West were passionately addicted.³⁶² When Alexander Henry reached the shores of the Pembina River in November 1800, he observed there the disgusting indolence of a group of Ojibwa, among whom the men were so obsessed with their gambling that

they paid no attention to the crying of their hungry children, and only at rare intervals broke off their game to kill a bison and save their families from actually dying of hunger.³⁶⁵ On 13 June 1806, the journal of Brandon House noted a similar example of negligence. "The Indians at the House all starving through mens Laziness to hunt. They do nothing but smoke and play at the platter."³⁶⁶

If the Woods Cree showed an exemplary activity in hunting fur-bearing animals, it was because their material existence depended on it. But they were quick to abandon it whenever the moose became numerous enough³⁶⁶ or whenever they found means of getting enough merchandise to render unnecessary the acquisition of the monetary tokens which furs represented.³⁶⁶ "Left entirely to their own exertions," declared the report of Cumberland House in 1825, "they decrease in their activity, loose all ambition for pleasing the traders and even become callous to their own wants."³⁶⁷

No matter whether one considers the Woods Cree, the Beaver,³⁶⁸ the Slaves,³⁶⁹ the Yellowknives,³⁷⁰ or the tribes related to them, or even the Ojibwa,³⁷¹ all these peoples incurred—from the mouths of the most various observers—the same reproach of indolence and passivity that justifies our identifying them with the tribes of the prairie. Both groups had based their existence on a strict adaptation to the conditions of the physical environment that surrounded them; once this objective was attained, their intelligence did not conceive the possibility of going beyond it.³⁷² In fact, the mental outlook of the tribes in the three North Wests hardly varied; it conceived of effort only under the spur of necessity, with the sole exception that the need to resort more often to the trading posts somewhat stimulated the energy of the tribes of the northern forest and the Barren Grounds, without in any way changing their view of existence.

Thus the life of the Indians, uniformly alien to regular and methodical work,³⁷³ comprised a succession of periods of hard effort, which the whites would have found it hard to sustain, and periods of idleness, which alternated in various ways according to the differences between environments. Often, in their slothful interludes, these peoples became prey to fears similar to those caused by their improvidence, or fell under the dominance of the emotional side of their nature, which among them always overruled logical reason. Thus in 1831 the Beaver of the Peace River were

attacked by a severe epidemic; giving in to the grief they felt for the loss of their relatives or friends, they entirely abandoned hunting the muskrat.³⁷⁴ Whenever they were unlucky in hunting, the Chipewyan believed themselves the victims of a malevolent spirit, and instead of redoubling their efforts, they gave in to despair, became inactive and, having massacred their families, passively awaited their turn to die.³⁷⁵ Yet, despite their basically indolent nature,³⁷⁶ the Chipewyan shared completely neither the fecklessness nor the negligent attitudes of the other tribes. If many of them were content, when caribou were numerous, to feast and live without effort near the pounds where the beasts were trapped, many others persevered in hunting fur-bearing animals and taking their precious pelts to the trading forts.³⁷⁷ Alexander Mackenzie, George Simpson, and the officers of the posts situated in Chipewyan territory constantly describe them as more diligent in their work and more sensible than their congeners to the west, and as being receptive to the persuasions of the traders who warned them not to destroy blindly the beaver populations or suggested that they should temporarily withdraw from exhausted districts to allow the stock of fur-bearing animals to revive.³⁷⁸ Aware that it was in their interest to acquire the trade goods their families needed, the Chipewyan began by meeting the demands of the North West Company, and delivering to them a rich store of pelts at a modest price.³⁷⁹ When competition for their furs arose between the English and Canadian companies, it offered the possibility of un hoped-for gains, and this temporarily disrupted their work habits;³⁸⁰ but it was not long before they resumed their more steady and prudent routine, encouraged by a thrifty and somewhat calculating mentality.³⁸¹

Perhaps it is this mentality, nearer to that of the whites and less completely alien to the notion of private property [than that of other Indian groups] which explains the accusation of avarice levelled against the Chipewyan even before the competitive bidding between rival companies could have been responsible for the greed with which they were reproached. Already in 1789 Alexander Mackenzie imputed to them egoistic inclinations—a “selfish disposition.”³⁸² In 1793 John Macdonell considered them “mean in their nature,”³⁸³ in this way anticipating the opinion George Simpson formed in 1821 of this “rapacious people,”³⁸⁴ of whom Sir Henry Lefroy also said that they were “acute to their own interests.”³⁸⁵ Without exaggerating their egotism, and without de-

nying the hospitable customs which they seem to have widely practised among themselves,³⁸⁶ one can say that they do not seem to have possessed to the same degree as the Cree or the other peoples of the Shield the natural qualities of generosity with which the latter were generally credited.³⁸⁷

Among these peoples, whose existence was an incessant struggle against an unkind nature, the need for mutual aid was always evident, and it was a general practice for one of them to relinquish to his less fortunate neighbors any goods he possessed in excess of his needs. "They are . . . very kind and humane one to another, sharing their victuals till all is done; so that widows can live as well as others."³⁸⁸ Though the hunter had the privilege of disposing as he wished of the meat or furs that belonged to him,³⁸⁹ it was rarely that he kept more than he personally required. Among the Cree, if a hunter gathered more furs than he could dress, he would give the surplus to someone whom luck had less favored.³⁹⁰ If by some accident he lost his modest possessions, he would obtain from those around him all the help they could give.³⁹¹ Among the naturally generous and liberal Ojibwa, when several families gathered in the same camp, they would often put all their supplies into a common pool and share them equally.³⁹² Sometimes, as among the Slaves, there were customary rules of sharing which prevented the hunter from disposing as he liked of the game he caught, and obliged him to share it out among the members of his own group.³⁹³ For the great nomads of the plains, the "law of the Prairie" demanded that any Indian who violated the official instructions of the hunt must give up to the families with most children the animals he had killed against the rules.³⁹⁴ The Chipewyan themselves divided the caribou which they captured in their pounds among all the hunters who took part in the operation.³⁹⁵

From that natural generosity proceeded the Indians' habits of hospitality,³⁹⁶ the custom among many of them of aiding the sick and the dying in their agony³⁹⁷ and of taking orphaned children into their own families.³⁹⁸ Perhaps in these customs of mutual aid and sharing can be found one of the reasons for white accusations of apparent ingratitude. "They recieve favours . . . but never think themselves under obligation to the Donor."³⁹⁹ Their spontaneous generosity prevented them from appreciating the value of any presents that were given to them, since they themselves distributed whatever they had without expecting recognition from the beneficiary.

Yet native societies were not organized on a strictly communist basis.⁴⁰⁰ The general disinterestedness of individuals did not preclude a sense of property. The forest tribes often reserved the possession of certain defined territories and the right to exploit their fish and game to specific families or to groups of families who shared out the hunting grounds.⁴⁰¹ Of course this was not an absolute rule applying uniformly to all the peoples of the wooded area. The Cree around Cumberland House, whose territory was especially poor, allowed families the right to hunt wherever it pleased them, and even tolerated the encroachments of strange tribes.⁴⁰² The Ojibwa, who were less deprived, had enough respect for the principle of property to recognize that anyone in possession of a hunting ground had not only the right to exploit it and to refuse entry to other families, no matter how destitute they might be, but also the privilege of hereditary transmission in the male line.⁴⁰³ Yet the Ojibwa also allowed a free exploitation of the wild rice meadows under the terms of a temporary use that ended with the crop.⁴⁰⁴ Access to fishing and berry picking grounds were open to everyone without restriction.⁴⁰⁵

For the prairie tribes or for the people who lived off the arctic caribou, there could be no question of dividing up the land between families with exclusive rights to hunt within determined limits. The need to pursue wandering game, and the collective organization of the hunt in which all the braves of the tribe might take part, would have rendered harmful and indeed impossible any hindrance to the liberty of their movements.⁴⁰⁶ It was only when the northern tribes were divided into tiny groups that the hunting grounds could be assigned to the families who scoured them for food; and even to that custom there seem to have been many exceptions.⁴⁰⁷ In the prairie such a law was unknown, and the tribes, being more compact than in the northern regions, attained a broader conception of the collective ownership of the land included within their limits, which they saw as the appanage of the whole tribe; in an outburst of local patriotism they could claim sovereignty over it in opposition to the whites.⁴⁰⁸

Moreover, each member of the western tribes disposed of a modest property, consisting of his weapons, his clothes, and his canoes, which were his personal possessions, and which were often buried with him.⁴⁰⁹ On the prairie, the horse was an item of property which the Indians particularly valued. Taking the place of cash, it could enable them to buy wives or objects like medicine bundles which they desired for the prestige that accompanied

them, or it could enable them to acquire, by the practice of liberality, a high position in native society.⁴¹⁰ The individual Indian was master of whatever he had acquired by his own toil, and he was not opposed to the idea of accumulating enough goods to satisfy his personal ambition, to augment the esteem in which he was held, or to gain whatever he coveted;⁴¹¹ it never amounted to a great deal, and the modesty of his accumulations prevented it from becoming a cause of conflict. Native society acknowledged and respected individual property,⁴¹² whose transmission was conducted without difficulty according to the rules peculiar to each tribe, unless the possessions of the dead man accompanied him after death.⁴¹³ The property of a man and his wife could be separate, so that, among the Ojibwa, such items as weapons, snowshoes, canoes, and sleighs, together with the game he slaughtered and the hunting territory he had inherited, were the property of the man, while the habitation and the household effects belonged to the wife and were transmitted in the female line; the man, for his part, had an equal right to bequeath his hunting ground and his personal effects in his own line.⁴¹⁴ Similarly, among the Blackfoot the habitation was considered the property of the woman.⁴¹⁵ But among the tribes of the forest and of the northern latitudes, the crushing harshness of existence elevated the status of the man and reduced the woman to an increasingly subordinate role, so that often she lacked the property rights which were granted to her sex by the peoples of more temperate regions. In the process she lost all vestiges of individuality and could be treated with the utmost harshness.

In this respect, even though they recognized a woman's right to dispose of personal property,⁴¹⁶ the Chipewyan exceeded in cruelty the other peoples of the Shield. They imposed on their women the most laborious tasks, obliging them during the tribal migrations, which lasted nine months every year, to transport the heavy belongings of the men, so that the latter might be free to hunt game. Any failure on their part was punished without pity. Excessive use of snowshoes soon deformed their posture, and by the age of thirty, worn out prematurely by fatigue and motherhood, they had lost all appearance of youth.⁴¹⁷ The Chipewyan were in the habit of fighting over women—married or otherwise—with no respect for their personal freedom, and carrying them off by main force, against their will, to serve as virtual slaves in supporting them in their wanderings.⁴¹⁸ The same lack of

humanitarian sentiments was demonstrated by the scanty compassion they displayed for the weakness of the old and the infirm, whom they habitually left to die in the bare spaces of the Barren Grounds when they could not follow the tribe on its hurried marches.⁴¹⁹ It also emerged in their tendency to ridicule the sufferings of those who could not endure the effects of cold.⁴²⁰ Far from taking pity on the weak, they subjected them to violence, and, according to Mgr. Taché, they treated widows and orphans with the same meanness of spirit.⁴²¹ One cannot dismiss such an attitude simply by attributing it to the experience of privations which dulled all humanitarian sentiments. It is true that the Yellowknives and the Loucheux treated women with no greater consideration.⁴²² But though the life of the Slaves, the Hares, and the Dogribs involved sufferings as severe as those endured by the Chipewyan, they neither treated their women so barbarously nor burdened them with such exhausting tasks. If they often destroyed female infants at birth, it was to spare them the privations inherent in the life of such a deprived land—and also to husband the family's supplies of food.⁴²³ To this practice, as we have seen, a number of commentators attributed the stationary population of the Slaves.⁴²⁴

The tribes of the southerly latitudes displayed more humane attitudes. Among them, the practice of infanticide did not exist. In David Thompson's view, the barbarity of the Chipewyan would have aroused the disapproval of the Woods Cree,⁴²⁵ who were as considerate as the Peace River Beaver of the old and the infirm,⁴²⁶ who neglected widows and women of advanced age only if they had been barren,⁴²⁷ and who took care not to abandon orphans.⁴²⁸ On the prairie, women escaped the hard duty of transporting goods, and enjoyed special attentions during the period of childbearing. Sometimes the men actually helped them in carrying out the less pleasant tasks.⁴²⁹ It is difficult not to attribute such differences to the more advantageous way of life among these tribes.

Yet, though the condition of women undoubtedly improved as one went from the Barren Grounds to the prairie, they were still, in all three zones of the North West, relegated to tasks of an inferior order.⁴³⁰ The very nomadic existence of the western peoples reserved for men the more elevated role of the hunter, alone responsible for feeding the family, and this left to the women such functions as the preparation of skins and meat, the making of pemmican, the collection and carrying of firewood, and the trans-

port of water for domestic needs.⁴³¹ Even among the Woods Cree, known for their humanity,⁴³² or among the Ojibwa,⁴³³ the women were condemned—just as among the Chipewyan—to carrying the family's goods, setting up its camp, making its snowshoes, and ceaselessly looking after all the various details of material existence, so that in the eyes of Europeans they seemed no better than "wretched slaves."⁴³⁴

To make matters worse, the carrying out of all the tasks that were imposed on them allowed no interruption, and as a consequence the only way of allowing for maternity was the practice of polygamy. This necessity arose as much on the prairie as in the forest, but above all in the region of the Barren Grounds, where the hunter could only carry out his task and keep on wandering if he had the help of several women.⁴³⁵ For this reason women became the objects of trade and, if they were not carried off by force, went to the highest bidder,⁴³⁶ so that the acquisition of wives had very little to do with the usual preoccupations of conjugality.⁴³⁷ The Hares, the Dogribs, the Slaves, may have shown relative consideration toward their women, but they disputed possession of them as violently as the Chipewyan,⁴³⁸ and with an acrimony due to the reduction of the female population by the practice of infanticide. Thus polygamy was a general custom in the North West: among the Ojibwa, Alexander Henry tells us that the chief whose daughter he married was endowed with four wives, of whom three were sisters,⁴³⁹ and this number was often exceeded;⁴⁴⁰ among the Woods Cree, a man was generally accompanied by four or five women;⁴⁴¹ as to the Indians of the extreme north, the scantiness and uncertainty of their resources often prevented them individually from keeping a great number of wives,⁴⁴² but the best hunters could assemble a cohort as impressive as the file of seven "grenadiers" belonging to Chief Matonabbee, the companion of Samuel Hearne.⁴⁴³ Nowhere in the nomad societies of the West, among whom the woman was incapable of playing as effective a role as the man in maintaining the family, could she claim the same rank as her sisters among the sedentary peoples of the Great Lakes, who showed them a consideration proportionate to the usefulness of their functions in the economy of the tribe, and who gave them a place of honor in their system of government.⁴⁴⁴

Yet though the Indian of the West accorded his wife only a subordinate status, though he bullied and sometimes treated her cruelly, he showed a boundless affection for his children, which

his wife shared. The first missionaries noted an unrestrained depth of feeling in this direction among the primitive people of the St. Lawrence, but the observations of the Récollets and the Jesuits in that region differed in no way from those of James Isham, Andrew Graham, or Samuel Hearne in the West. Both groups remarked on the reluctance of the Indians to inflict on children the reprimands or punishments their whims or misdemeanors might deserve, and on the sorrow they displayed on losing a son or a daughter, which, however, was quickly allayed by the adoption or birth of a new child.⁴⁴⁶ If a boy showed a special aptitude for hunting, he gained the right to every kind of consideration and favor.⁴⁴⁷ The Indian parent systematically avoided corporal punishments; in his view, these could injure his son's pride and therefore his future as a warrior,⁴⁴⁸ and in any case such chastisements seemed to him acts against nature.⁴⁴⁹ And though the prairie peoples' passion for games of chance could lead them to sacrifice almost everything—weapons, clothing, horses—they avoided risking things that were necessary for the well-being of their children, such as axes needed for cutting wood to protect them from the cold and kettles used in preparing their food.⁴⁵⁰ Even the Chipe-wyan, so little inclined to compassion for their neighbors, devoted to their children as much tenderness as the prairie peoples,⁴⁵¹ and the other tribes of the extreme north⁴⁵² were no exceptions to this common law which rules emotional reactions in primitive societies.

Though they were accustomed to such excessive indulgence, the children do not seem, on reaching the age of reason, to have abused the affection directed toward them. They were generally receptive to their parents' advice and to the instructions of the elders, whose example and teaching constituted their only education. They grew up under the tutelage of the old men, who for this reason assumed an importance in native societies that explains their traditionalist and conservative character.⁴⁵³ The child respected their wishes and suggestions, imitated their actions and attitudes, assumed their gravity, and received from them the knowledge that would guide him in his future roles of hunter and warrior.⁴⁵⁴ Later on, the training to which the boys were submitted reinforced the knowledge they had imbibed from the words of the elders and from their evocation of the past of the tribe. Especially among the prairie peoples, with their warlike preoccupations, the youths were early subjected to a strict schooling. They were in-

ured to extreme temperatures, broken in to the fatigue of marches and horse rides, accustomed to the pain of wounds which the plains Indians habitually inflicted on themselves when their relatives died, and trained in the ruses which taught them to evade enemy attacks and to strike without direct confrontation.⁴⁵⁵

At the same time, by virtue of the examples they saw around them, they were imbued with the code of morality which animated native society and which, when one compares it with the ideals and teachings of Christianity, was governed by principles no less severe, based on obedience to one's parents, reverence for the elders, veneration for the "medicine bundles" and their magic power, respect for the personal dignity of the individual, condemnation of robbery, treason, and false witness, and exaltation of courage and of the duty to protect women and children.⁴⁵⁶ Not all the tribes attached an equal importance to these various elements of the moral code. Lacking in respect for old people and disinclined to protect the weak, the Chipewyans placed greater value on individual honesty and especially condemned the practice of theft,⁴⁵⁷ while the peoples of the prairie set great store on the warrior's qualities of bravery and self-sacrifice, which they elevated above all other criteria when choosing their chiefs.⁴⁵⁸ At the same time, from the prairie to the Barren Grounds, every tribe had a certain number of rules to which its members submitted spontaneously and to which their conduct conformed.⁴⁵⁹

Sometimes the collectivity intervened to guarantee good order and morality in the tribe by applying disciplinary sanctions to transgressors. For example, among the prairie peoples at the time of their summer gatherings, the "military societies" administered justice and imposed penalties proportionate to the guilt of each offender; crimes like murder, assault, or the theft of horses involved punishments that might go as far as the death penalty.⁴⁶⁰ Sometimes, having satisfied his desire for personal revenge against his enemies, an Indian would immediately hand over to the camp the responsibility to judge his conduct, and would accept the verdict pronounced by the collectivity, no matter how severe.⁴⁶¹

Among these groups which had no regular tribunals, however, it was more often the individual or the family that in their own way redressed offences or crimes of which they had been victims, following a system of compensation mutually agreed between both parties.⁴⁶² Even in the event of murder, the injured family would reserve to itself the pursuit of revenge. Its members might

decide to kill the murderer, or they might be content with fixing an appropriate compensation, generally consisting of payment by the guilty party or his close relatives of goods sufficient to indemnify the victim's family.⁴⁶³ Similarly, it was the individual who had the right to see that justice was done in cases of adultery. Among the prairie peoples, the penalty of death was often inflicted on the offenders. If the woman were spared, she would be pitilessly beaten by her husband or marked on the face with a mutilation that would be the visible sign of her guilt.⁴⁶⁴ Among the Ojibwa, the society of the Midewiwin offered an ideal in which honor was combined with piety; teaching that the length of each man's existence is related to the rightness of his conduct, this society condemned theft, lying, and drunkenness, but the only action it pursued against transgressors was to predict that the lives of the guilty would be shortened by their own errors.⁴⁶⁵ In most cases, the Indians willingly obeyed the laws that governed their tribe; accustomed since childhood to a docility unaccompanied by constraint, they were naturally submissive to the restrictions embodied in their society's code of morals.

Yet this docility did not diminish the strongly independent side of the Indian character. In nomadism and the liberty it implies there is an incitement to break free, and the Indian's individualist temperament was not only animated by his spontaneous inclinations, but reinforced by the teachings of the elders and the examples of his peers, so that he hated servitude and resisted any excessively strict discipline.⁴⁶⁶ This individualism was modified only by economic dependence on the whites and by the need for collective discipline which on occasion the conditions of the nomad life might impose. This explains why the Indian concept of authority always remained incomplete, and why the powers of their chiefs were always dependent on the voluntary obedience of the people and limited to provisional time-spans. Thus the mechanism on which the moral code of the Indians was founded functioned as a natural response to their habits and inclinations. On the whole, it was well ordered. The individual redressing of wrongs and crimes, and the general recourse to compensatory indemnities worked as efficiently among them as the decisions of tribunals in a more elaborately organized society.

It is true that such a conception of morality was accompanied by a number of customs and ideas that were peculiar to the Indian peoples, and Europeans, when they tried to relate these to their

own view of life, often distorted their character and exaggerated their importance. For example, the Indians did not regard marital fidelity with the strictness that the missionaries sought to impart. If the prairie peoples, as well as the Sarcee and the Chipewyan, behaved toward their wives with great severity,⁴⁶⁷ while exempting men from the same restrictions of behavior,⁴⁶⁸ other groups showed a broad degree of tolerance in this area. To the strictness of the Chipewyan, Samuel Hearne contrasted the indulgence of the Cree, about whom James Isham for his part noted in 1743 that they were "prone to all manner of lewdness and vices," and that the girls among them rarely retained their virginities beyond the age of thirteen or fourteen.⁴⁶⁹ In their eyes adultery was not a sin or chastity a virtue.⁴⁷⁰ If a husband occasionally punished an erring wife, it was because she provoked his annoyance by not asking his permission.⁴⁷¹ As for the tribes of Great Bear Lake, they seem to have attached little importance to the fidelity of their spouses.⁴⁷² The strictest among them would punish adultery, not in the name of any principle of morality, but because they were jealous of their freedom to maintain or to surrender at will the property rights they claimed in their wives.⁴⁷³ Even the Chipewyan, severe as they were, appeared to Europeans "hardly fastidious about the honour of their women."⁴⁷⁴ They did not hesitate openly to authorize adultery, and they differed from the more amenable Cree and Blackfoot—who were always ready to interpret the law of hospitality as requiring the offer of their wives to strangers⁴⁷⁵—only by a more active jealousy and a sharper sense of property, which gave their society an appearance of being better behaved.

In fact, among all these groups, looseness in sexual relations was inevitable. It derived not only from a different view of individual morality, but also from the very nature of Indian marriage. For, though this did not exclude mutual affection between spouses,⁴⁷⁶ and examples of marital fidelity were not lacking,⁴⁷⁷ especially when the birth of children had strengthened the mutual links,⁴⁷⁸ broken marriages were frequent happenings. This was largely because the women were married at such an early age that after a short time their affections were inclined to wander; in many cases they were happy to renounce attachments regarding which—outside the prairie tribes⁴⁷⁹—they were frequently not consulted.⁴⁸⁰ The ease with which separations were made and new unions formed predisposed the women to an extreme looseness of morals,⁴⁸¹ aggravated in some tribes by the inhuman harshness of

the lives they had to lead. The aversion they often developed toward the men who treated them with so little consideration encouraged them to embark on illicit relationships. On such occasions it was only the fear of punishment or—more rarely—of the shame of social disapproval, that might hold them back, and they remained attached to their husbands only through their affection for the children they bore. Governor Simpson said of the Chipewyan women that they “were not celebrated for their continence, even altho’ the vigilance of the Husbands cannot be surpassed.”⁴⁸² At the same time, the Indian custom of accepting illegitimate children into their society without regarding their origin as a degrading blemish⁴⁸³ resulted in the encouragement of extramarital liaisons. It was natural, in such circumstances, that the native women should enter willingly into relationships with Europeans, with the consistent exception of those of the Beaver tribe, whose religious principles alienated them from all sexual contact with whites, and who from the very beginning of European penetration into their area showed an aversion in this respect that was shared by neither the Chipewyan nor the Cree nor any of the prairie tribes.⁴⁸⁴

Distant as they were in such matters from the concepts of Christianity, the Indians were even farther removed from white attitudes in their ideas of warlike courage. All the tribes exalted individual bravery; all saw it as an essential element in the choice of a chief. At the same time most of them left among Europeans an impression of their cowardice, and this impression has some justification. Yet it would be unfair because of it to ignore the real role that personal courage played among the Indians. Indeed it seemed to them a characteristic so natural that they attached less importance to it than to such matters as self-control and to the ability to elaborate “invisible and patient” ruses designed to take the enemy by surprise.⁴⁸⁵ Such warlike practices, which remind one of those among the nomads of the Asian steppe, were already noted by Champlain and Frère Sagard among the peoples of the St. Lawrence.⁴⁸⁶ Among the tribes of the prairie as well as the Shield, war was a matter of raids and surprises to be accomplished without harm to the aggressor and to end with the theft of coveted property or with the massacre of the adversary. Only if these expectations were fulfilled could the Indian take pride in his achievements and claim among the members of his tribe the repute of a proven warrior.

Because the peoples of the prairie had no idea of rational breeding methods,⁴⁸⁷ they were forced, when they wanted to renew their supply of remounts, to plunder the animals of hostile tribes, organizing frequent expeditions against camps well supplied with horses. But such enterprises were only regarded as warlike exploits if they were carried out in silence, preferably at night, and without arousing the enemy's attention, and if they involved seizing the horses on the edges of the camp where they were tethered and watched.⁴⁸⁸ The success of such nocturnal expeditions undoubtedly required on the part of those who undertook them not only a personal courage that did not shrink from the perils to which they exposed themselves, but also a meticulous control of movements and of the smallest reflexes, a total mastery of the warlike guile needed to deceive the enemy and to avoid arousing the suspicion of his sentries, and a rigorous discipline to which all participants abdicated their customary independence. Sometimes an expedition would be motivated less by the desire for revenge than by the thought of effacing the sorrow of families stricken in earlier wars, and its aim would be to attack the enemy and carry off scalps for distribution among the mourning families. On such occasions the methods never varied; the attack would be made by surprise, usually at daybreak when the camp would be off guard; once the enemy had been overwhelmed, the retreat would be immediate, covered by such ruses as firing the grass of the prairie to eliminate all trace of the direction taken by the aggressors.⁴⁸⁹

Thus the qualities of the ideal warrior consisted of courage, self-mastery, guile, and physical vigor. This explains the very restricted character of the enterprises we describe as wars, which were in fact carried out by small parties of men who gathered voluntarily under the leadership of freely accepted chiefs to steal the enemy's property or win his scalps.⁴⁹⁰ But though this warfare carried out by the prairie peoples may have been intermittent and not very costly to the attackers, it did not exclude the possibility of open encounters and clashes,⁴⁹¹ and it created a state of permanent insecurity on the plains, so that the tribes could move about only in large groups.⁴⁹² This was particularly the case with the tribes of the Blackfoot Confederacy, who were threatened by enemies on all their borders, and also with the Ojibwa, and later on with the Red River Métis when they exposed themselves to attack by the Sioux in the no-man's land in American territory where they ventured in pursuit of the herds of bison.

The peoples of the Shield, on the other hand, did not have to maintain the same kind of vigilance; the dispersion of population in their territory rendered it unnecessary. For them also war was a matter of expeditions by small parties, of surprise attacks at dawn on isolated groups and never of open confrontations.⁴⁹³ They avoided fighting with groups that were aware of their approach or numerous enough to defend themselves,⁴⁹⁴ and with a mixture of barbarity and cowardice, justified by their peculiar criteria of warlike exploits, they massacred women and children indiscriminately. In the narrative of Samuel Hearne, examples abound of odious attacks by the Chipewyans on parties of Eskimos, who had no firearms and, without distinction of age or sex, succumbed to the cruelty of their better-armed neighbors.⁴⁹⁵

If the Chipewyan were especially inclined to such inhuman practices, other peoples, such as the Cree of the Hudson Bay shoreline, the Yellowknives, the Slaves, and the Ojibwa showed no greater mercy for the enemies they took by surprise.⁴⁹⁶ Thus the relatively peaceful way of life among the forest tribes appears to have been derived less from a natural inclination than from the scantiness of the contacts they made with neighboring tribes. The Woods Cree were perhaps more humane, for according to Peter Fidler they spared the lives of young women and of some of the children, incorporating them into their families or reducing them to slavery.⁴⁹⁷ On occasion the tribes of the prairie confederacy also spared the lives of some of their prisoners, giving them to families who wished to adopt them in place of members they had lost. Yet the same peoples did not hesitate to slaughter children, and if one of their war parties failed in an enterprise, the tribe took its revenge on the prisoners it had made and killed them without mercy.⁴⁹⁸

Inevitably, the habitual use of guile, which the Indians themselves saw as an attribute of personal valor, tended to degenerate among them into duplicity, and it is impossible to deny that this became a familiar aspect of their character.⁴⁹⁹ They themselves condemned duplicity when it was practised within the group and threatened its cohesion, but they accepted it when it was a matter of taking the enemy at a disadvantage by betraying his trust.⁵⁰⁰ Often, for example, they pretended to accept offers of peace from their enemies merely to be in a position to strike at them more effectively. Alexander Henry the Younger portrays the Cree in 1810 preparing to attack the prairie confederacy by taking advantage of

the peace negotiations the latter had initiated with them,⁵⁰¹ and such examples of double-dealing were frequently paralleled in the relations between the Sioux and the Ojibwa. Even when it had no serious cause, the enmity which the Indians harbored for their foes was too deep and too tenacious for any tribe to renounce sincerely the desire to pursue it to the bitter end. Once hostility had been established, usually as a result of the hazards of migration, which might lead a tribe to enter new territory or to trespass on regions well known for their abundance of game, it would be relieved only by brief truces, and would come to an end only in the absorption of the weaker of the two antagonists by the more powerful, as in the partial incorporation of the Beaver into the Cree, or by the conclusion of an alliance, like that between the Cree and the Assiniboine, based on common interests and a fear of the same adversary.

Hatred remained long engraved on the Indian heart.⁵⁰² Such persistence characterized the individual intent on gratifying his personal resentments as much as the collectivity pursuing its hostility against an enemy tribe, for the collective reactions were merely the amplified reproduction of those of the individual.⁵⁰³ Just as the warrior watched patiently for the moment to surprise his enemy, so an ordinary Indian would wait with equal patience for the opportunity to take his revenge on anyone who had offended him.⁵⁰⁴ Far from betraying his feelings by his behavior, he would deceive his adversary with an easy and familiar manner, converse with him amiably while planning his destruction, and smoke in his company until the very moment for action.⁵⁰⁵ If he got the worse of the encounter, he would not hesitate before the cowardly killing of his rival in an ambush.⁵⁰⁶ "They may seem to forgive," David Thompson remarked: "they defer revenge to a more convenient opportunity."⁵⁰⁷ This obstinacy in bearing grudges forced the Europeans to be constantly circumspect in their behavior. A wrongly understood gesture, or a wound inflicted by accident, would be enough to make an Indian ignore all reasonable argument and immediately pursue with his hatred the white man he considered responsible.⁵⁰⁸ Incapable of transcending the stage of thinking collectively and unable to differentiate the individual from the group, the Indian would include within his resentment the relatives and congeners of the person he thought had offended him, and would often set out to take his revenge on all the white men chance might put in his way.⁵⁰⁹

The Indian's power of dissimulation, which Champlain had already noted in 1603,⁵¹⁰ and his capacity to control his reactions indefinitely, were the expressions of his introverted temperament, so different from the open nature and expansive speech of the black races, characteristics which have notably facilitated their adaptation to white customs and attitudes.⁵¹¹ This introversion explains why Europeans who passed long years among the Indians began by seeing them as beings devoid of sensibility, and entirely alien to the white man's spontaneity of reaction. "They appear to an Englishman morose, insensitive and much on the reserve."⁵¹² Sometimes their "cold and phlegmatic"⁵¹³ temperament communicated itself to Europeans who were habitually in their company.⁵¹⁴ It was seldom indeed that the Indian, so hostile to exuberance,⁵¹⁵ displayed the vexation he felt at the failure of enterprises whose success was close to his heart.⁵¹⁶ Rarely did he express the sorrow he felt on being separated from his relatives or friends, or his joy at meeting them again after a long absence.⁵¹⁷

But this apparent impassivity concealed a deep and ardent inner life, affections as urgent as those of white men,⁵¹⁸ and equally violent passions,⁵¹⁹ whose expression in rare and unusual circumstances⁵²⁰ showed no lack of sincerity or spontaneity. In intimate circumstances, the Indian enjoyed conversation,⁵²¹ showing a lively interest in tales of marvels punctuated by supernatural interventions,⁵²² and on such occasions his external gravity would be tempered by a lively taste for jesting,⁵²³ in which his powers of observation would emerge, sharpened by intelligence, for he loved especially to ridicule the gestures and facial expressions of other people and to compare them with the animals with whose behavior experience had made him familiar.⁵²⁴ The repugnance he felt for lavishing attentions and expressions of affection on the woman he desired,⁵²⁵ the contempt he felt for the excessive manifestations of affection by the whites for their native wives,⁵²⁶ did not paralyse his capacity for passionate reactions, and when they inspired him he did not hesitate before crime, coldly planned and slyly accomplished.⁵²⁷ Samuel Hearne often described the absence of sensibility among the Chipewyan, yet he also tells us that their affection toward their closest relatives was as great as their insensitivity to the sufferings of others, and that they were profoundly moved by the death of parents to whom they were attached.⁵²⁸ We have already seen how, as a sign of mourning, the Indians would give up hunting; sometimes they would spontaneously abandon

or destroy all their goods—muskets, axes, kettles, and even the furs they had laboriously accumulated.⁵²⁹ Nor were they indifferent to ambition or praise.⁵³⁰ They enjoyed the attention gained from their exploits as hunters and warriors, which they would describe with great willingness.⁵³¹ Some of them would even play on the credulity of their public by exaggerating for the sake of prestige the true or supposed revelations they had experienced in dreams.⁵³²

The women, for their part, gave free expression to their emotions, though when the need arose they were quite capable of controlling their feelings as completely as the men. The example of Sakakajewa, the legendary interpreter of the Lewis and Clark expedition, is illuminating. Taken from her tribe at the age of twelve, she seemed to have lost the memory of her parents and friends, and betrayed no emotion at the news that she would soon be returned to them. But as soon as she recognized them she gave way to the most touching exhibition of joy,⁵³³ without trying to repress the kind of emotions that an Indian would have thought unworthy of a man.⁵³⁴ Among the Cree, the peoples of Great Bear Lake, and the Chipewyan, whenever someone died, the women would follow a custom that still continues and abandon themselves for several days to lamentations and piercing cries,⁵³⁵ while the men remained silent.

When they came into contact with Europeans, the attitudes which the Indians owed to their training and their way of thinking were quickly deformed, so that the judgments made on them by white men after several years of association tended to project the image of a society whose culture had been deeply changed. Their moral code, which worked principally because of their docile acceptance of it, soon lost its power to restrain individual caprices. The restrictions it allowed rather than imposed crumbled away under the impact of a society whose culture was radically different, a society in relation to which the Indian felt that he need no longer observe the rules that had been conceived in terms of his tribal life and shaped to act within its framework.⁵³⁶ All too soon, the young people, in their anxiety to imitate the whites, neglected the teachings of the elders and picked up a way of speaking whose crudeness was alien to those who did not grow up near the trading posts.⁵³⁷ All too soon, as well, the men began to condone every kind of liberty in the relations between their wives and daughters and the employees of the posts; the example of the whites quickly

led them to succumb to the temptations of personal interest, and in the hope of gain they did not hesitate to encourage the prostitution of their womenfolk.⁵³⁸ Following a practice that became general around the trading posts,⁵³⁹ the Cree actually encouraged the women to give themselves to the whites in exchange for supplementary rations of alcohol.⁵⁴⁰ Despite their severity, even the Chipewyan were mercenary enough to dabble in this trade; according to Samuel Hearne, when their women visited the European establishments, they lost all restraint.⁵⁴¹ The Blackfoot and their allies also took advantage of a practice that often compensated them for unproductive hunting, enabling them to obtain by means of shameless prostitution the trade goods they desired.⁵⁴² Everywhere in the North West the native tribes, with the sole exception of the Beaver,⁵⁴³ went out of their way to facilitate such relations, and, except in the cases of abuse and violence, which could incur cruel reprisals on the whites,⁵⁴⁴ the sanctions which the Indians customarily applied in their own societies ceased to operate when it was a matter of this kind of trade, which they themselves so often solicited.

The Indians were highly conscious of the white men's wealth, which they contrasted to their own poverty, and they were equally aware of the value the traders placed on the furs which native people could supply and the greed with which they sought them out. Thus, in their relations with Europeans, the Indians developed a highly mercenary attitude.⁵⁴⁵ With the Chipewyans, their natural acquisitiveness was exaggerated, and to get anything they wanted they would willingly cast aside all the rules they respected in their tribal life. Their duplicity was cynically paraded.⁵⁴⁶ In their relations with Europeans, theft ceased to be a reprehensible practice,⁵⁴⁷ and spread rapidly even within their own society.⁵⁴⁸ They lost all scruples as they gladly deceived the whites with imaginary tales whose fabrication out of whole cloth was a further manifestation of their double-dealing.⁵⁴⁹ For this reason the Hudson's Bay Company's agents were continually picturing them as a two-faced, lying race, who flattered shamelessly to obtain better terms to the detriment of the traders' profits, who lacked all sense of gratitude, and who took as their due any favors they received. Thus in 1743 James Isham made this judgment of the Cree: "a crafty sort of people, cheating, stealing and lying," "the more you give, the more they Crave,"⁵⁵⁰ clever at manipulating the competition between rival companies to raise the price of

their furs,⁵⁵¹ always ready to forget the benefits they received, but never forgiving the injuries they suffered.⁵⁵² The coastal Cree, not content with having their subsistence guaranteed by the Hudson's Bay Company, refused without extra payment to hunt the game needed by the posts or to transport the mail from one post to another.⁵⁵³ In August 1764 a group of them brought the officer in charge of Fort Albany the still bleeding scalps of four French traders whom they had killed in the hope of gaining further rewards.⁵⁵⁴ Yet the Cree, like the Beaver,⁵⁵⁵ were by nature less mercenary than the Chipewyan, and often, in spite of the egotistical mentality which they acquired through their association with the whites, would still receive Europeans with a friendly and generous hospitality.⁵⁵⁶ Among the Chipewyan the faults that can be attributed to the breakdown of their culture⁵⁵⁷ were aggravated by their natural tendencies. In the days before the Hudson's Bay Company was able to impose on them its own conditions, George Simpson denounced their extreme covetousness, their falseness and cowardice, their duplicity and vindictiveness, describing them as "covetous to an extreme, false and cowardly, treacherous and revengeful."⁵⁵⁸ As for the Ojibwa and the peoples of the prairie, they often degenerated into petty beggars,⁵⁵⁹ and Simpson considered that there was not a single Indian one could not buy from his allegiance with the gift of an extra blanket.⁵⁶⁰ Only the Indians of the far North, whom the dispersion of the posts brought into less frequent contact with Europeans, appear to have kept their original cultures intact for any length of time,⁵⁶¹ though even they were often accused of lying and duplicity.⁵⁶²

At the same time, the Indians felt in their relations with white men the suspicious timidity of primitive man in the presence of a more civilized being, whose degree of evolution enabled him to assert his superiority despite the scanty number of his representatives. All the groups realized how dependent they were on the European posts. Even the prairie tribes were unable to remain completely free of their tutelage; too accustomed to the alcohol and tobacco that were distributed to them, they reconciled themselves to the minimum of work necessary to acquire such commodities. Even this gave them a feeling of inferiority that made them extremely sensitive in their relations with those who dominated them in this way. Fanned by their natural pride, such feelings made them exaggerate the offensiveness of an attitude or the awkwardness of a word,⁵⁶³ and distorted their view of European

intentions. In excessive indulgence they saw weakness that might be exploited; in excessive severity, injustice to be resented. Hence, when they were face to face with whites they displayed those immediately defensive reactions that called for a profound knowledge of the indigenous psychology among the men in charge of the trading posts. More submissive by nature than their prairie counterparts, the peoples of the forest endured the humiliations which the whites imposed on them in deriding their beliefs and practices. Yet some of them opened up rather timidly to David Thompson. "You white men always laugh and treat with contempt what we have heard and learned from our fathers, and why should we expose ourselves to be laughed at?"⁵⁶⁴ This feeling of being humiliated was all the more painful for them since they were privately convinced of their own superiority⁵⁶⁵ over these newcomers who, despite the higher achievements of their culture, were unable to face the hostile natural conditions of the North West as successfully as the native people with their more modest means. Sometimes they countered the contempt the whites showed for them by striving to demonstrate their own superiority, and then they would hide their timidity under a show of overconfidence in their own strength that ended in boastfulness. Sometimes their means of self-defence was to cling all the more strongly to their traditional beliefs, whose higher nature the immorality of some of the whites seemed to demonstrate.⁵⁶⁶ Or they would turn the tables by ridiculing the effeminate practices of the whites, which they did in trenchant jests; excellent observers of human nature as they were, they quickly detected the weaknesses of the white man who could not control his responses, and they were not easily deceived by a display of feigned courage.⁵⁶⁷

It is true that, being essentially emotional in their responses, they soon abandoned their preconceptions and let themselves be won over by anyone who knew how to impose on them or who could win their confidence with a clever word or a touching gesture and dissipate their feeling of inferiority by playing on their vanity. "I know by experience that good usage and dealing justly and honestly with them will gain their esteem," wrote Andrew Graham in 1771, "and when once a factor has ingratiated himself with them he may sit easy. A free open countenance they love, but a morose ill natured person they despise and name him the devil."⁵⁶⁸ The clerk Duncan Finlayson, who kept the Edmonton journal in 1823 and 1824, flattered himself that he could get the

better of the proudest-natured among the peoples of the prairie by nothing more than his free and easy way of conversation,⁵⁶⁹ and George Keith, reporting from Fort Chipewyan in 1825-6, in every way confirmed this judgment.⁵⁷⁰ But the Indians were quick to change their minds, and some unexpected turn of events might at once transform their attitudes. Only an officer well acquainted with their character and accustomed to their company, like John Rowand, the chief factor of Fort Edmonton, could be confident of controlling their responses. From their incessant shifts of mood as well as the irregularity of their activities,⁵⁷¹ the Europeans gained the impression of an unrelieved capriciousness as the dominant Indian characteristic. Their way of thinking, in which weak bursts of energy would be terminated by moods of discouragement,⁵⁷² made them unfitted, as Champlain had observed,⁵⁷³ for anything that demanded real steadfastness of intent, whether it was a question of lengthy campaigns⁵⁷⁴ or, we have observed already, of expeditions of discovery. Yet one should not generalize excessively;⁵⁷⁵ if their fickleness of mood notably reduced their usefulness in the service of the white men, they were nevertheless quite capable of showing energy and perseverance when their own subsistence was at stake, or when, as prisoners of a victorious tribe, they endured heroically the tortures inflicted on captives. Even the successful carrying out of the surprise attacks they plotted against their enemies presupposed qualities that hardly matched the capriciousness of which they were accused—a capriciousness whose manifestations would in any case have been less frequent if the blunders and follies of the whites had not so often provoked them.

The character of the Indians, as it emerges from the insights offered by the most trustworthy observers, is a complex mixture of spontaneous responses, partly dictated by the conditions of their existence and partly by a psychology whose pedigree is obscure, and of reflexes resulting from their contacts with the whites and from the gradual disintegration of the indigenous culture. Undoubtedly the general characteristics we tend to attribute to the tribes of the North West must be modified to accord with the special natures of the peoples inhabiting the three various zones. But such local variations do not appear to have altered the underlying common characteristics which were shared by all the different groups. At one extreme we have noticed among the prairie peoples a haughty temperament which the whites never succeeded in subduing.⁵⁷⁶ Certainly the pride of the Indian declined in the

more deprived regions of the Shield,⁵⁷⁷ and even when he remained inwardly convinced of his own superiority, he accepted the ascendancy of the white man and showed a greater external humility than his congeners of the plains. At the same time, the introverted aspect of his temperament became more and more evident. To the comparative vivaciousness of the Cree and the Beaver,⁵⁷⁸ one can contrast, for example, the more sober attitude of the Chipewyan and the northern tribes,⁵⁷⁹ who were further distinguished by their relative lack of the taste for external finery that was so developed among the Ojibwa and the Blackfoot,⁵⁸⁰ and by their preference for simple clothing.⁵⁸¹ It is likely that the crushing difficulties of their material life were not unrelated to these differences.⁵⁸² Yet in general the indigenous mentality found expression in remarkably similar reactions, which created virtually identical problems for the whites who lived among them and which one cannot avoid relating to the mentality of the peoples of the St. Lawrence as recorded in the patient observations and fine analyses of the Jesuit fathers in the seventeenth century.⁵⁸³

Among all these groups, regardless of their habitat, contact with the whites provoked the same effects, produced the same distortions, and exaggerated the less honorable sides of their characters. Above all, the white men debased the native people and undermined the foundations of their culture by abusing the distribution of alcohol, a practice to which the traders resorted because of the irresistible attraction that liquor held for primitive men, who were incapable of understanding its effects or of curbing their desire for it. The demoralizing effects of alcoholism are so well known that it is pointless to insist on them. Around the trading posts, the availability of intoxicating liquors very soon became a source of criminal disorders, which followed exactly the same course as the missionaries had recorded on the St. Lawrence, ending often in mutilation or murder.⁵⁸⁴ Alcohol became a corrupting element in native society, unsettling its morality and ruining its organization. Regarding the Ojibwa, S. H. Long tells us in 1823 that they had lost any kind of national cohesion through the effects of alcohol.⁵⁸⁵ Among the Woods Cree, vice and prostitution became general, and the Indians gave themselves to the worst excesses, abandoning all self-respect. In 1743 James Isham declared that it would be impossible to abolish the distribution of alcohol without risking the destruction of the fur trade, yet he deplored that drink had been introduced among these people who had no understanding of

crime, and he attributed to this cause the demoralization they suffered: "Now there are some few that drink none, what may be called virtuous women."⁵⁸⁶ The northern tribes soon succumbed to the contagion, but perhaps more slowly, because of the later penetration of the whites, for Isham in the same report contrasts to the abandon of the Cree the more seemly behavior of the "Northern Indians," among whom the ravages of alcohol had not yet spread.⁵⁸⁷ Yet when contact had become more broadly established and the competition between the trading companies had given the Indians the means of freely satisfying their passion, George Simpson could observe even among the Beaver the pernicious effects of alcoholism.⁵⁸⁸

Moreover, alcoholism added to the breakup of morality a physiological degeneration that immediately made its appearance among the coastal Cree, who were too intimately associated with the life of the posts they provided with victuals not to suffer more directly than other Indians the harm that resulted from drinking. Accustomed to asking for rations of alcohol in payment for their services, and to trade only for liquor the skins in excess of their needs in ammunition,⁵⁸⁹ the "Home Indians" were soon reduced to a state of debility that shortened their lives and weakened them to the point where they could no longer endure the rigors of the arctic climate.⁵⁹⁰ For this reason the Hudson's Bay Company soon imposed a limit on such excessive distributions.⁵⁹¹ The Woods Cree would have fallen to the same level if, instead of passing the greater part of the year at a distance from the trading establishments, they had lived in their immediate neighborhood, for their mentality was no different from that of the "Home Indians"; if they had a surplus of skins at their disposal, they would ignore the advice of the officers in the forts, and refuse to exchange their pelts for any goods but alcohol.⁵⁹² Though less gravely affected,⁵⁹³ they too suffered the usual effects of alcoholism on the human organism.⁵⁹⁴ It was the same with the prairie tribes,⁵⁹⁵ with the difference that the ravages of drink increased as the conditions of life became more precarious and periods of undernourishment weakened the body and made it more vulnerable. The Chipewyan and the peoples of the Barren Grounds would have suffered the effects of alcoholism more drastically even than the Cree by reason of their particularly difficult life if it had not been for their special circumstances. The former were too economically minded to give up valuable merchandise for alcohol and too sensible to submit to

the terms imposed by the Hudson's Bay Company,⁵⁹⁶ and the latter were less subjected to the disastrous effects of drink because of the smaller number of trading posts established in their unproductive territories.

The effects of alcoholism were augmented by those of the contagious diseases introduced by the whites, which were all the more virulent because of the Indians' lack of immunization; this combination of causes explains why European penetration resulted in a rapid fall in the populations of the indigenous tribes.⁵⁹⁷ Tuberculosis came first,⁵⁹⁸ and spared no tribe, but it spread most notably among the peoples who were weakened by intoxicating liquors or by the hazards of their material life: the Ojibwa and the Beaver, victims of their passion for alcohol;⁵⁹⁹ the Woods and Coast Cree, subject to pulmonary sicknesses and scrofulous tumours;⁶⁰⁰ the Chipewyan whose heavy death rate Samuel Hearne and Alexander Mackenzie both attributed to the same evil;⁶⁰¹ the Slaves, debilitated by their difficult conditions of existence.⁶⁰² There followed the sicknesses whose devastating epidemics on several occasions decimated the peoples of the West: measles which—accompanied by a terrible influx of whooping cough—cruelly attacked the tribes of the Edmonton region during the winter of 1819–20,⁶⁰³ spreading rapidly among the Cree,⁶⁰⁴ and reappearing in 1846, 1850, and 1853 on a more localized scale among the Indians of Norway House, the Saulteaux of the Red River and the tribes of New Caledonia over the Rocky Mountains;⁶⁰⁵ worst of all, smallpox, which, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, periodically ravaged the prairie tribes, as it had ravaged the black races,⁶⁰⁶ and reached its peaks of violence in 1781,⁶⁰⁷ in 1837–8⁶⁰⁸ (despite the precaution which the Company then took of vaccinating the Indians around the posts)⁶⁰⁹ and again in 1853, 1857, and 1870.⁶¹⁰ Peter Skene Ogden, in charge of Fort Vancouver, estimated in 1853 that in the last fifteen years the epidemic had carried off two-thirds of the warriors among the Indians in his district.⁶¹¹ Finally came the influenza, made particularly virulent by the sudden changes of summer temperatures on the shores of Hudson Bay,⁶¹² while whooping cough also exacted heavy tributes from Indians of all ages.⁶¹³

The native tribes slowly developed an immunity which helped them to re-establish the populations that were jeopardized by the first impact of the white race.⁶¹⁴ Until this happened, the only compensation they found for their own losses⁶¹⁵ was in the ap-

pearance of the Métis, who were favored like the Maori half-breeds of New Zealand⁶¹⁶ by a greater adaptability than the "specialized groups" from which they were descended.⁶¹⁷

At the same time, the native peoples in general experienced difficulty in adjusting their ideas to the religious concepts of the whites, while the Métis, though they inherited the Indian ways of thinking and responding, were able to adopt a great many of the European beliefs. For the western Indian, unaccustomed to metaphysical speculations, religion meant mainly a respect for the natural forces around him, in which he believed he could see a reproduction of his own conception of the human being. This consisted, in his view, of a body, a soul which was located in the heart and which he identified with the intelligence, and finally an "image," situated in the brain, which led the body in its wanderings and conveyed to the soul a perception of reality.⁶¹⁸ Trees, rocks, streams, all of them as living as animals,⁶¹⁹ possessed the same faculties as human beings, also deriving them from the Great Spirit, the dispenser of good and ill fortune,⁶²⁰ who determined the functions and the powers of all that exists. Thus, to avoid becoming alienated from the ambient forces of nature, men must treat them with discretion and mollify them where necessary, with offerings or with the intercessions of medicine men or conjurers.

Hence derived a set of practices that found their way into the most habitual aspects of existence. There were the precautions observed on killing an animal or eating the food it provided, such as the plea addressed to it before its destruction, not to cause the withdrawal of animals of its species and in this way reduce the children to starvation. There was the observation of special taboos among different tribes,⁶²¹ such as the prohibition among the peoples of Great Bear Lake, and also the Chipewyan, against killing and eating dogs.⁶²² The Indians would refuse to give up alive to Europeans the bison they captured, lest such a transaction should lead the whole species to leave their hunting grounds.⁶²³ When they had to shoot a rapids, they would be lavish with their votive gifts to avert the dangers they might encounter. They addressed invocations or made offerings to the spirits of trees.⁶²⁴ And they attributed a supernatural authority to the dreams they received, seeing in the vision of an animal or a bird the earnest of success in hunting or in battle.⁶²⁵

As a consequence of such beliefs, the Indian religion was burdened with superstitious notions and practices, from which no

tribe was exempt, though they were especially prevalent among the forest Indians.⁶²⁶ The custom of acquiring amulets or medicine bundles—miscellaneous collections of symbolic objects deemed to give protection and fortitude—was a general practice. The role of the shamans⁶²⁷ or medicine men with their incantations became most important among the peoples of the woods, the Cree and especially the Ojibwa, who were dominated by their shamanic confraternity, the Midewiwin,⁶²⁸ and among the northern peoples, whose medicine men combined the roles of religious and political leaders.⁶²⁹ Their prestige and influence could be strong enough, under the pretext of a personal communication from the Great Spirit, to unleash attacks on the trading posts established by the Europeans.⁶³⁰ The situation resembled that among the Mongols, where only among the forest tribes could the shaman assume the sovereign role that allowed him to add royal privileges to his magical powers, for among the herdsmen of the steppes he had always to contend with the presence of a powerful aristocracy.⁶³¹ This overweening power of the shaman can perhaps be explained by the daunting impression of the powers of nature that men developed in the forest. Fear of them led the Indians to protect themselves by appealing to supernatural protection against the threats concealed in their environment. Among the Ojibwa and even more among the Cree, the very struggle they had to maintain in their search for sustenance demanded constant propitiatory sacrifices designed to retain the favor of the animals on which they depended.⁶³² Their fear of starvation, magnified by the mysterious and oppressive atmosphere of the forest, became personified in a gigantic imaginary being, the "wittigo [wendigo], whose unheralded presence was always dreaded among the families scattered through the woodland areas."⁶³³ The appearance among them of a strange Indian or even of a shadow which they mistook for a man was enough to persuade them that they were seeing the frightful image of the "wittigo demon."⁶³⁴

Their submission to this multitude of natural forces, each of whose spirits they conceived as a separate deity,⁶³⁵ explains why, before the introduction of Christianity, only an evolved minority of the Indians had any conception of monotheism, and then only in an attenuated form. Polytheism in fact was general in the North West. If the peoples of the prairie were more definite than other tribes in assigning a supreme rank and an all-powerful role to the sun-god, under the name of Great Spirit, Manitou, or Wakanda,⁶³⁶

this did not mean that they abandoned their belief in the secondary deities who represented natural forces, each conceived according to its special image.⁶³⁷ They did not go as far as human sacrifice, but in the course of the sun-dance, which they celebrated every second or third summer,⁶³⁸ they did not hesitate to mutilate their own bodies in the hope of gaining for their tribes the compassion and favor of the Great Spirit.⁶³⁹ But even while they made an effort to stir his benevolence, they resigned themselves passively to his will whenever their enterprises were unsuccessful, and would attribute their failures indiscriminately to the opposition of Manitou,⁶⁴⁰ to the intervention of the guardian spirit of the animal who had escaped them,⁶⁴¹ or to the malevolence of an evil spirit who harassed them.⁶⁴²

Into their conception of a Great Spirit, or of a pantheon peopled with as many deities as there were natural forces, the Indians of the North West incorporated no moral principle. Incapable of distinguishing good from evil in the personality of their deity, they regarded him as the originator of both forces,⁶⁴³ and it was only under the influence of Christianity that in general they raised their thoughts to the notion of a Great Spirit who was exclusively the disseminator of good,⁶⁴⁴ though the Ojibwa had always juxtaposed such a benevolent spirit to a god of evil.⁶⁴⁵ Nor did the Indians conceive of the intervention of a moral principle in the fate of the soul after death. It is true that the Chipewyan established a difference between the final destinies of the good and the bad. Only the first would immediately reach the "kingdom of spirits" where they would find an inexhaustible abundance of game, while the rest would be cast into a river which they would have to find their way across in order to achieve their goal.⁶⁴⁶ Some of the Indians believed in the existence of two separate destinations after death, one reserved for those who had behaved badly in life and for sorcerers who had used their powers to harm their neighbors, and the other for those who kept their tribe's laws and followed its moral code. Others divided the realms of the afterlife more simply between the shamans and warriors of high fame on the one hand, and people of more modest achievements on the other.⁶⁴⁷ But the Christian idea that the good would certainly be rewarded and the evil inevitably punished merely caused confusion in their minds. Essentially preoccupied with life in the present, they were comparatively little concerned with the beyond, and attached at least as much importance to the prolongation of life here and now as to

the happiness mortals might find in an afterworld which they sometimes situated in the sky, sometimes under the earth, and sometimes toward the setting sun.⁶⁴⁹ Thus in the code of ethics which they preached to the Ojibwa, the Midewiwin taught that the good would be recompensed by living longer. They did not envisage them evading the normal contingencies of life or gaining a higher and more permanent recompense in a future life.⁶⁵⁰

Christianity triumphed only in part over these beliefs and practices and this limitation of its achievement was due to its encountering the resistance of the introverted Indian temperament,⁶⁵¹ too obstinately closed in upon itself to open easily to the teachings of the missionaries, whose success remained for this reason localized and incomplete. But if many of their original religious conceptions remained basically unchanged among the Indians, if the very notion of the Great Spirit, purified by the influence of Christianity, was never entirely disengaged from primitive ideas, the latter disintegrated entirely among the group of the Métis, and left with them only a marked inclination toward superstition which several centuries of contact with white society has not entirely overcome.

PART TWO

THE
PENETRATION
OF THE WHITE
RACE

IN THE PRIMITIVE BACKGROUND OF THE NORTH WEST, closer relations than elsewhere in Canada developed at an early date between whites and native peoples. The Métis group, which emerged there as the whites gradually spread out along the routes of penetration, was able—thanks to the isolation that long protected the West—to develop traditions of living and a collective personality that were paralleled nowhere else within the limits of the Dominion.

To any easy penetration the physical environment in fact interposed between the western plains and the western shore of Lake Superior—which was open of access to the St. Lawrence valley—a formidable barrier of glacially eroded land. Through this region parallel series of waterways began from the mouths of the Kaministiquia and Pigeon rivers and later, uniting in the wider basin of the Rainy River and the Winnipeg River, found a way down, through falls, rapids, and lakes, to the level of Lake Winnipeg. In this region the penetration of the country, so far facilitated by the unbroken succession of the Great Lakes, was impeded and slowed down by the obstacles the waterways offered to navigation. It was only beyond this rocky region barring the shores of Lake Superior that travellers once again encountered favorable conditions in the splendid network of rivers that spread out over the three North Wests.

In the prairie, just as much as in the crescent of woodland that marked its bounds, the watercourses multiplied in majestic meanderings or in irregular and broken courses, always oriented toward the west or the northwest, the direction which nature seemed to indicate for the penetration of the country from the St. Lawrence, but whose continuity was interrupted by the rocky hinterland of Lake Superior. For the prairie and the parkland this meant first the double system of the North Saskatchewan and the South Saskatchewan, which directly united the Rocky Mountains with Lake Winnipeg, and then the Assiniboine River and its tributary the Qu'Appelle River which, linking up with the Red River valley, complemented the Saskatchewan and filled the space within its immense loop. For the wooded zone of the Canadian Shield, it meant the great artery of the Churchill River, whose channel was much broken by lakes and rapids; beyond Portage La Loche or Methye Portage, the Churchill was replaced by the Athabasca

River, curving toward the northwest and in its turn extended by the Slave River and the Mackenzie; all three of these rivers were supplemented by ramifying tributaries, such as the Peace River, the Hay River, the Liard River, and the Peel River, all of which, resuming the dominant east-west direction, became entangled in the ranges of the Rocky Mountains.

This network of waterways, which traced the essential lines of penetration and were destined to guide the exploitation of the North West, was dominated by two routes of access, each of which fostered its own current of white expansion. To the south, the point of departure was formed by the two rivers that cut through the western shore of Lake Superior [the Kaministiquia and the Pigeon]; their valleys, singularly broken by falls and portages, linked them with Lake Winnipeg. This was the access used by the voyageurs and traders of French Canada; here the furs from the interior were transhipped and for a long time most of them reached the outside world through this narrow gateway.

To the north, access to the penetration routes was more widely based on the shores of Hudson Bay and James Bay, though the difficulties it at first presented were no less daunting. From this area a series of roughly parallel waterways extended into the hinterland, cutting their rocky channels through the Shield in a generally westerly direction. The Albany River, by which travellers reached the English River valley and the closely linked Berens River, gave access to Lake Winnipeg. The Severn River, the Hayes River, and the Nelson River formed another complex by which Lake Winnipeg and the banks of the Saskatchewan could be reached. From Chesterfield Inlet, the Churchill River and the Dubawnt River gave entry into the Barren Grounds. By these rivers, which were formed by glacial action, travel was often difficult. In some places there was not enough depth of water, or the channels were cluttered with sandbanks. Elsewhere rapids, alternating with reaches of calm water, frequently interrupted navigation and demanded from the boat crews an experience and a toughness which it took the Scottish or English personnel a long time to master as well as the Canadian voyageurs. Their success in penetrating the country suffered from this deficiency. With the exception of a few pioneers who quickly explored the routes into the interior without creating a current of trade, the whites—here represented by the employees of the Hudson's Bay Company—did not make effective use of their northerly base until the second half

of the eighteenth century. The southerly route, which was shorter but equally difficult to traverse, was known and followed from the last years of the seventeenth century by the more acclimatized Canadians.

Between these two main systems of waterways, transverse arteries of rivers and lakes formed great stairways [over the heights of land] that united the main penetration routes. Between the Churchill River, the principal artery of the Shield, and the Saskatchewan, which dominated the river system of the prairies, it was the Maligne or Sturgeon-weir River, the Montreal River, and the Beaver River, with the network of their tributaries, that offered the possibilities of cross-country connections. Between the Nelson River and the basin of the Red River and the Assiniboine, whose valleys ran through the southerly expanses of the prairie, Lake Winnipeg, supplemented by Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipegosis, extended like an inland sea, from which the active penetration of the hinterland vigorously radiated. Instead of being divided by rocky barriers that isolated them from each other, like the rivers whose narrow valleys stretched from James Bay south toward the Great Lakes, the rivers of the North West found their way through tangles of lakes and waterways. Favored by such geographical dispositions, penetration by the white race was concentrated along the two great currents dominated respectively by the rocky southern base [the western hinterland of Lake Superior] and the coast of Hudson Bay, whence, following directions traced for them by the natural network of waterways, the Canadians of the St. Lawrence valley, and afterwards the Anglo-Saxons of the Hudson's Bay Company, spread out among the native peoples of the North West.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SOUTHERN CURRENT

It was toward the end of the seventeenth century, when the Hudson's Bay Company had merely thrown up a few ill-favored forts on their northern coastline and had no thought of occupying the interior of the country, that the French Canadians set sail on the rivers which would open the southern verge of the Shield and give access to the western plains.

THE FRENCH CANADIANS ON THE WESTERN SHORE OF LAKE SUPERIOR

Even before this period the French Canadians had not, on their expeditions, neglected the tall and forbidding northern shores of Lake Tracy, later called Lake Superior, but for the most part they had turned toward its more welcoming southern shores and also toward Lake Michigan.

In that direction the licensed voyageurs had ventured toward the Mississippi basin,¹ and Canadians had already sought the passage that might lead them to the "southern ocean."² In the same direction the abundant beaver of the Illinois³ and the Lake Superior mines, which several pioneers had already begun to exploit,⁴ also promised notable profits, while in this region the missionaries found among the populations that crowded to the shores of Green Lake and into the upper Mississippi valley—the Illinois, the Saki, the Potawatamii, the Outagami, the Sioux—an abundant field for proselytization.

But though they were less visited, the opposite shores of the great lake were by no means unknown, and their prodigious wealth of furs had already compensated for the difficulty of access. Radisson's journey there, in the company of Chouart des Groseil-

liers, between 1654 and 1656, enabled the Jesuits to locate the habitat of the Assiniboine tribe as being to the northwest of Lake Superior and to the west of Lake Nipigon.⁵ Once the great indentation of Lake Nipigon—the base for future action against the English forts on Hudson Bay—had been explored, the topography of the northern shores of Lake Superior could in its turn be determined. Thus, on the map they inserted into their Relation for 1670–1, the Jesuits were able to portray with equal accuracy both shores of Lake Superior;⁶ doubtless they gathered their information from the *coureurs de bois* who had ventured into this region. To the north they noted the opening of Nipigon Bay and the lake that extended beyond it. To the west they indicated, near the two waterways that cut parallel courses through the edge of the Shield, the mouth of the Kaministiquia River which gave access to the country of the Assiniboine and which Radisson evidently knew already,⁷ though it is doubtful whether he had ventured into it, any more than the *coureurs de bois* who accompanied him or came immediately after him.

Shortly afterwards, with the intention of winning back the alliance of the Lake Superior tribes, whose trade the English posts on Hudson Bay had begun to divert for their own profit,⁸ Dulhut (Daniel Greysolon) established himself in a position commanding Nipigon Bay and Lake Nipigon, which was frequented by many Ojibwa and Cree Indians and which enabled him to tap the resources of the various tributaries of the Albany River. From the end of the year 1678, a “few Frenchmen”—whose exact location the letters of Dulhut do not enable one to determine—succeeded in diverting part of the cargoes of furs on their way to the Hudson Bay posts.⁹ Did Dulhut himself in the same year of 1678 establish a trading post at the entrance to Lake Nipigon which he expected would prevent the defection of the Cree [to the English merchants]?¹⁰ Did he also, thanks to negotiations conducted with the coastal tribes of Lake Superior to end the warfare that divided them to the detriment of trade, succeed in constructing a fort at the mouth of the Kaministiquia River, in what we now call Thunder Bay?¹¹

All that is certain is that the last location and that on Lake Nipigon—where the enterprises of Dulhut, seconded by those of his brother, Greysolon de la Tourette, were reinforced by a new post established on the Manne River¹²—became from this time onward especially active trading centres; in 1681 they were already

considered the meeting places of the *coureurs de bois*¹⁵ who spread out into the region of Lake Superior.¹⁶

THE CROSSING OF THE ROCKY RIM OF LAKE SUPERIOR

It was thus in the course of these years from 1678 to 1680 that the bridgehead for penetration provided by the channel of the Kaministiquia River was effectively opened to the explorers and traders from the St. Lawrence valley.¹⁷ Yet at first it was only scantily used by minor expeditions,¹⁸ which were discouraged by the difficulties of the route, "a gangway through wild-rice marshes and waterfalls,"¹⁹ and it is impossible to tell how far Dulhut's operations extended on the route leading to the Lake of the Assiniboines (Lake of the Woods).²⁰ He himself wrote in 1678 that the Assiniboines "were unknown" to him.²¹ He began, through the agency of messengers he sent out over this "road of the North," by winning over the Assiniboines to the idea of a general peace with the Sioux, whom he was personally trying to reconcile with the Ojibwa,²² and in September 1679 a treaty was concluded "at the bottom end of Lake Superior" between the Sioux and the Assiniboine in Dulhut's presence.²³ Then, while his brother remained active in the region of Lake Nipigon, he undertook trading operations along the Kaministiquia River which appear to have been successful, since in 1687 he advised Governor Denonville that he had been able to win over "the peoples who are in the habit of going to the English at Port Nelson."²⁴

We do not know whether exploration at this time went beyond the western coastal region of Lake Superior and reached into the basin of Lake Winnipeg. It is certain that the existence of waterways between Lake Superior and the Nelson River was suspected. In 1684, in fact, Dulhut, who was then somewhere near Lake Nipigon, received a commission to send to "Sieur Chouart" (des Groseilliers) who was "on the Nelson River," a message from the Governor of New France, Lefebvre de La Barre,²⁵ which showed that the Governor envisaged an advance toward the (Hudson Bay) coast along these same routes by reinforcements meant to support the victorious actions of his ships against the British posts.²⁶ Nevertheless, if one can judge from the maps made at the time, the notions then entertained of such ways of access were still vague and inexact. Confusion seems to have arisen between the routes

linking Lake Nipigon with the "Bottom of the Bay" (James Bay) and those that indirectly, by the detour through the Kaministiquia River and Lake Winnipeg or by difficult portages,²⁶ established a link with Nelson River and Port Nelson. When he thought of sending reinforcements overland in the direction of the Nelson River, the Governor of New France had no real idea of the length and difficulties of the route. A similar error may explain why the *Sieur Péré*, to whom *Lefebvre de la Barre's* message was confided, should have tried to reach James Bay by way of the Albany River where in good faith he expected to encounter the young *des Groseilliers*; *des Groseilliers* was then, in the company of *Radisson*, near Port Nelson and as a result he never received the message that was meant for him.²⁷

The route from Lake Superior to Lake Winnipeg, even if it was already in use, could not at first sustain anything more than a slight and intermittent current of penetration. *Jacques de Noyon* appears to have put an end to these uncertainties in 1688 when he reached *Lac des Cristinaux* (Cree Lake or Rainy Lake), and, establishing himself there with several men over the winter, established relations with the *Assiniboines* that enabled him to threaten, at least for the time being, the trade of Port Nelson.²⁸ The alarm this created at the time among the *Hudson's Bay Company* was such that its London Committee pressed Governor *Geyer* to oppose the initiatives of the *Canadians* with all the means in his power so that the *Company's* enterprise should not fail.²⁹ However, the activity of the French-Canadian traders was not sustained. The route to Lake Winnipeg was again neglected, apart from a few traders scattered among the Indian tribes,³⁰ and in 1695 when the *Sieur de Tonty*, with a weak escort of merchants and soldiers, went among the *Assiniboine*, he found that the very recollection of earlier relations with them had already evaporated.³¹ The furs gathered by the indigenous peoples followed their normal course toward *Hudson Bay*: those of the *Assiniboine* toward Port Nelson³² and those of the *Cree* and the *Saulteaux* either toward the same establishment or toward the fort the English had built at the mouth of the Albany River. The routes they went by were as difficult because of the obstacles they presented as because of the poverty of their resources of food,³³ and their utilization is evidence that the *Canadians* had abandoned the bases which earlier on had enabled them to intercept the currents of trade whose directions were shaped by the conformation of the *Hudson Bay* watershed.

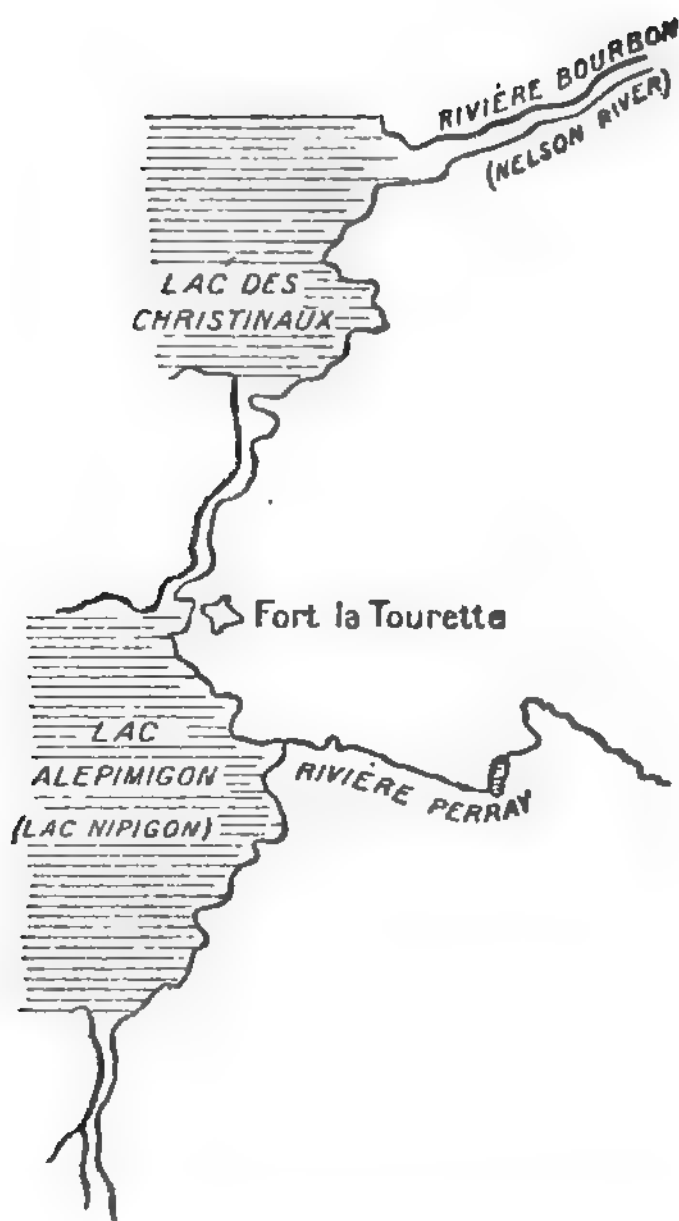


Fig 1 Fragment of L. Franquelin's map of North America (B.D.C.M. 4040B, no. 6 bis). The map shows several inaccuracies concerning access routes to Hudson Bay.

This abstention on the part of the Canadians can be plausibly explained by the threat of hostile action by the Iroquois, whose aggressions against the settlements of the St. Lawrence were renewed 1689 with increased intensity³⁴ and had spread out along the access routes of the Great Lakes. A few years later (1696) the reduction in the number of *coureurs de bois* brought about by the official suppression of trading permits created a new obstacle to westward expansion.³⁵ As a consequence the Governor of New France renounced the idea of diverting at its source the flow of furs toward Port Nelson, and instead organized the maritime expedition that attacked the British posts directly; its victorious issue in 1694 deprived the post on the Kaministiquia of its usefulness.³⁶ As late as 1710 it may still have been the nucleus of a small amount of activity.³⁷ But it must have disappeared shortly afterwards, since in 1718 Lieutenant de La Noue received a commission to establish at the mouth of the same river, near the present site of Thunder Bay, a trading fort that might serve as the departure point for the discovery of the Western Sea, and would attract the tribes in the vicinity of Lake Superior.³⁸ In the meantime, and despite the peace signed with the Iroquois in 1701, the Canadians discontinued their official expeditions into the country of the Cree and the Assiniboine. Once again, the western shore of Lake Superior marked the extreme limit of penetration, and, courted only by the posts on Hudson Bay, the native peoples reserved for them the whole product of their hunting. It would doubtless be an exaggeration to assume that trading along the route to Lake Winnipeg came to a complete halt. Protected by the vast distances and the scattered colonization of the St. Lawrence valley, the *coureurs de bois* from New France encountered no real difficulty in defying the ban on trading in the region of the Great Lakes, so that they did not resist the call of adventure and were far from renouncing their enterprises in this distant country.³⁹ Despite its imperfections, the map drawn by Guillaume de l'Isle in 1703 revealed a clear progress in knowledge of the possible routes beyond Lake Superior. The Bourbon River [Nelson River] was represented as being outside the basin of the Albany River. It ran, parallel to the Sainte Thérèse River [Hayes River], in the direction of the Bay of the North [Hudson Bay], making a westerly curve which diagrammatically reproduced the drainage system toward the exit of Lake Winnipeg.⁴⁰ This evidence attests to a steady and still anonymous process of penetration, probably the work of *coureurs de bois* evading

the official bans on their activities: the virtual re-establishment in 1710, after a brief abandonment, of the base at Michilimackinac, with a numerous population of soldiers and traders, must have favored their operations.⁴¹ Most important, it is certain that the Canadians did not cease to haunt the headwaters and tributaries of the Albany River, for in 1710 the Indians told the chief trader of Fort Albany of their presence and threatened him with French aggression in the near future.⁴²

But the Canadians seriously resumed their operations only when the restitution of Port Nelson to England in 1713⁴³ deprived France of the base it had established on the shore of Hudson Bay and revived both the need for an interior route and the activity that would establish it. While the English reoccupied their ruined post,⁴⁴ the Canadians set out once more on the route that would lead them to the discovery of the North West.⁴⁵ Fort Albany felt immediately threatened. In the autumn of 1715 it heard rumors of an imminent French attack,⁴⁶ and in 1716 the Indians asserted that the French—having made lucrative profits—were preparing to return in greater numbers.⁴⁷ In the same year the journal of York Factory, which had been silent on this subject in 1715, noted their activity in the interior.⁴⁸ No doubt, protected by the length and deviousness of its means of access, York was less vulnerable than Albany, which was barely seven days' paddling away from the nearest Canadian establishment⁴⁹ by waterways well provided with sources of food and relatively easy to navigate,⁵⁰ and even less vulnerable than Moose Factory, which traders from Montreal could reach by the direct route of the Ottawa-Abitibi, not to mention the other ways of access opening on to the Great Lakes. But in every case the Canadians threatened the English positions most effectively by relieving the Indians of the need to undertake long and exhausting journeys over territories poor in hunting and trapping,⁵¹ as well as of the uncertainties regarding trade goods which depended on the arrival of ships from England at the posts on the Bay, uncertainties whose likelihood the French traders were always exaggerating in the Indians' ears⁵² in order to gain their furs. In 1716, after having waited in vain for a fortnight at York Factory for the arrival of the annual ship, which did not appear until 4 September, the Assiniboine (?) had to depart without getting payment for their furs, and hastily regain their tribal habitat at the risk—so late in the season—of dying of hunger on the way back.⁵³ Disgusted with such disappointments and difficulties, many of the In-

dians had already given up their journeys to the Bay⁵⁴ when in 1717 the Canadians under the initiative of Governor Vaudreuil resumed the work of Jacques de Noyon and began to establish permanent posts beyond Lake Superior.

By this time, the route by way of the Kaministikwia, which the Canadians had first followed,⁵⁵ had been supplanted by that which followed the Pigeon River, whose estuary in Lake Superior was approximately seven leagues from that of the first river, and which contemporary reports described—despite its innumerable rapids and portages—as “the better way to go from Kaministikwia to Rainy Lake.”⁵⁶ Yet it was at the mouth of the Kaministikwia River that Lieutenant de la Noue was ordered to restore the fort that had already been built there on a site near Fort William, where the canoes of the Canadian voyageurs rested before starting out on the more southerly route which they now preferred. In embarking on this last stage of French penetration, which had not ceased to progress—however gradually—since their first arrival in the valley of the St. Lawrence, the Canadians continued to be governed by the commercial and scientific preoccupations that had animated their first explorers. But the urge to convert the primitive, which had been so central during previous years and which had brought about the stabilization of the white race in the Ontario peninsula, was now paralysed both by the remoteness of the country and by the difficult and still little-known character of the native peoples “to whom we are not accustomed.”⁵⁷ The missionaries did not venture here until later, and even then in small numbers; the failure of their early efforts, which left the white men open to the full influence of the primitive environment, removed all restraints on the free intercourse between the indigenous and the civilized races.

In July 1717, Lieutenant Zacharie Robutel de La Noue left the St. Lawrence valley, accompanied by thirty-two voyageurs in eight canoes, and provided with instructions ordering him, after he had re-established the fort at Kaministikwia, to proceed to the Lac des Cristinaux (Rainy Lake) and the Lac des Assiniboine (Lake of the Woods) and there erect two new posts which would be the staging points for an expedition intended to discover the “Western Sea”⁵⁸ and which would also appropriate the trade the Indians were carrying on at Hudson Bay.⁵⁹ La Noue realized only the first part of his mission. In the autumn of 1717 he re-established the post at Kaministikwia. Then, while the winter immobilized him on the threshold of the rocky barrier that edges Lake Superior, he de-

tached some of his companions on the route toward Rainy Lake, where they became established in sufficient numbers to carry out successful treaty negotiations with the allied tribes of the Assiniboine and the Cree. According to the Indians who still visited York Factory, the garrison at Rainy Lake seems to have been composed of some forty men, thanks doubtless to reinforcements from the base of Michilimackinac, which supplied the forts of the west with the supplies they needed.⁶⁰ Adopting a tactic already well used by the *coureurs de bois*, the Canadians proceeded to impose on the Indians by giving an exaggerated idea of their own actual strength and boasting that their numbers would soon be increased by some sixty more *voyageurs*.⁶¹ Well supplied with trade goods of sound quality, and willing to distribute alcohol unrestrictedly, they would certainly have succeeded in seizing the marten and beaver pelts⁶² that enriched the establishments of Hudson Bay, if the wars that divided the Indians had not forced the latter back on to the route to York Factory.

The area of Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods, situated on the boundaries of the respective territories of the Sioux and the Ojibwa, Cree, and Assiniboine tribes, was exposed to the incursions of these two hostile groups,⁶³ both of them provided with firearms by the Canadian traders and the British posts, and both impervious to the conciliatory efforts of the *Sieur de la Noue*, who had taken advantage of the idle winter months to try and convince the Indians of the need for a general pacification.⁶⁴

In 1718 he had sent Ensign Pachot as his representative in the hope of persuading the Sioux to conclude a treaty with their enemies, the *Cristinaux* (Cree) that would enable them [the French] to carry on with their projects of discovery.⁶⁵ But, though his envoy returned bearing a promise of peace,⁶⁶ the Sioux were quick to break it: far from keeping their word, in 1719 they attacked the Cree who happened to be in the neighborhood of Kaministikwia.⁶⁷ In the same year an attack was made on the Indians who, at the invitation of the French, had sent a number of their young men to Rainy Lake to trade their furs.⁶⁸ This attack seems to have been the work of the Sioux, whom the other Indians called *Poets* or *Pouelles*.⁶⁹ The natives expressed their anger to the Governor of York Factory, Henry Kelsey, and they reproached the French with having deliberately lured their fellow tribesmen into an ambush,⁷⁰ which seemed all the more plausible in view of the fact that in 1718, at the instigation of the *coureurs de bois*, the

Poets had indeed attacked Indians who were going via the Albany River to the posts on James Bay.⁷¹ In the eyes of the Crees and Assiniboine, both of whom had suffered from Sioux attack, the accusation they made against the Canadians was justified by the increase in French ventures into the territory of the last tribe. Violating the limitations laid down with regard to Louisiana by the letters patent of the king of France in 1712,⁷² they traded weapons with the Sioux for furs, and so strengthened them against their enemies. La Noue himself said that it would be in vain to think of mitigating the "pride of the Sioux" as long as there were *coureurs de bois* among them who traded in firearms.⁷³ Accusing all the French without discrimination, the peoples bordering on Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods refused to accept the commercial links with Lieutenant de La Noue's men which the latter had hoped to achieve, and it took many years and the clever policies of La Vérendrye before the Cree and the Assiniboine would abandon their prejudices. In the meantime, the French initiatives continued to be frustrated by the hostility of the natives. When he left his post, in which he was relieved by Captain Deschalon in 1721,⁷⁴ La Noue took back with him no ideas about the Western Ocean which he had been commissioned to discover, and contented himself with offering vague and discouraging information about the narrow rocky fringe of the Great Lakes which the Canadians had still not completely conquered. "The land is extremely cold, it is impossible to obtain any grain here, and the people live only by hunting; they meet only once a year, whether it is for war or to agree on the places where they may hunt."

At Kaministiquia a regular post existed, with a military garrison,⁷⁵ where voyageurs with official trading permits reported, and which the Marquis de Vaudreuil was resolved to maintain.⁷⁶ At Rainy Lake a less important establishment perhaps survived,⁷⁷ used casually by adventurers who were courageous enough to seek out the native tribes from whom they bought a portion of their furs in return for gunpowder, blankets, and kettles whose good quality the Indians contrasted to the shoddiness of English trade goods.⁷⁸ In any case, even if the post at Rainy Lake had disappeared, the Canadians continued to filter in small groups into the valley of the Rainy River and the Winnipeg River; in 1728 the governor of York Factory represents them as being involved *every year* in the wars of the various tribes, whom they reached, as in the past, by the two routes to Rainy Lake, but preferably, in spite of

its forty-seven portages, by the southern one.⁷⁹

Intervening with increasing activity in the quarrels that divided the Indians, they supported the attacks which were made on the Indians who traded at the English posts by their enemies. When these Indians complained to them about such repeated aggressions, the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company stubbornly continued to advise them to reach an understanding with their adversaries, and, accompanying their words with distributions of presents, exhorted them to devote themselves to activities more profitable than such fruitless war parties. But their advice had no effect. The Indians replied with contempt, comparing the English with the Canadians who betrayed them, when they were defenceless, to their adversaries,⁸¹ and who profited by the absence of the men during the summer to encourage the attacks of their "mortal enemies" on the women and children. Doubtless, resuming the tactics of preceding years, the Canadians attempted with the aid of the Sioux to intercept the current of trade that flowed toward Hudson Bay. Doubtless, thrusting more deeply into the basin of Lake Winnipeg, they participated directly in the wars that went on around the headwaters of the Nelson River. According to the rather confused texts that are available to us, it seems that in 1728 eight of them attacked the Indians who were in the habit of going to York Factory; in alliance with the latter's enemies, they won a decisive victory over them and slaughtered some of their families.⁸² Another massacre took place, again at the instigation of the Canadians, in 1730.⁸³

Nevertheless, enough Indians went to York Factory for the trade there to show no falling off, though at the same time the trade of Fort Albany, hard hit by the competition of Lake Superior and Lake Nipigon, did not cease to decline, to such an extent that the Hudson's Bay Company found it necessary for fear of eventual failure to re-establish in 1730 the post of Moose Factory that had been abandoned since 1686.⁸⁴ The [French] traders became so bold that they visited the Indians under the very walls of Fort Albany, and besieged the routes of access to it so narrowly as to prevent the passage of all the canoes proceeding toward the coast.⁸⁵ Sometimes even York Factory experienced the effects of this invasive competition: in 1728 its commandant was able to judge, by observing the clothes which the Indians wore, the importance of their trade with the Canadians.⁸⁶ For all that, York Factory temporarily enjoyed a continued prosperity, measured in the steadily

growing size of the cargoes of furs it sent to London: 43,891 in 1728, 47,656 in 1730, 52,000 in 1731.⁸⁷ It was only in 1732 that its trade suffered the first setback: only 37,000 pelts left the post for England.⁸⁸ The Canadians had in fact succeeded in September 1731 in reaching once again the shores of Lake Winnipeg, which the officers of York Factory recognized as the source of the Hayes and Nelson rivers.⁸⁹ Taking advantage of a treaty that appears to have been made between the mutually hostile tribes, and playing cleverly on the threat of breaking it and once again letting their enemies loose on the conquered people if the latter did not accept their conditions, a dozen Canadians had in September 1731 reached the points where the Indians were in the habit of gathering on the shores of the Lake before starting the long trip to the Bay, and they had seized the furs destined for their rivals.⁹⁰ That year, only sixteen canoes of Indians, against the sixty which the chief of York Factory expected, reached the coast. After several years of effort, the Canadians had finally broken through the obstacles which nature and peoples alike had put in their way.⁹¹

LA VERENDRYE'S ENTERPRISES

Plagued by interruptions after Dulhut's initiatives, but gaining more continuity following on the operations of La Noue, French penetration finally found in the policies of La Vérendrye, the vigorous and orderly direction which hitherto it had lacked. La Vérendrye (Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de La Vérendrye) arrived with fifty men⁹² at the mouth of the Kaministiquia River at the very time when the Canadians were reaching Lake Winnipeg. He took with him a program whose magnitude exceeded his financial means and looked beyond the epoch during which he undertook to realize it: even its partial success was enough to establish on a solid and permanent base the penetration of the white race into the great expanses of the West.

La Vérendrye's enterprise in fact quickly deviated from the aim set for him by the ministers of the French king, the aim to which all other activities were supposed to be subordinated, of achieving the discovery of the "Western Sea," that mirage which took so long to dissolve before the searching eyes of Canadians. Preoccupation with trading, and the difficulties encountered with native tribes, soon paralysed any possibility of realizing the initial project. But if the genuinely scientific side of La Vérendrye's enter-

prise was jeopardized by this shift in aims, and if discovery progressed only slowly, the intrusion of the French race into the primitive environment nevertheless became from this point both deeper and more forceful.

Instead of restricting itself to the rapid passage through the country of an expedition hastening to realize the objective that had been set for it, La Vérendrye's enterprise resulted in the establishment of a series of posts marking the various stages of penetration and spaced out as far as the prairie. They were well enough manned with troops who had no alternative but to remain for long periods in a single place. This for the first time made possible the assimilation of Canadians with the native tribes, and gave them an assurance of success among these primitive people that for a long time guaranteed their superiority over the personnel of the Hudson's Bay Company. With La Vérendrye, the French race ceased to appear as foreign to the North West. It acquired there the right of priority with which even today the French Canadians of the West like to challenge Anglo-Saxon pretensions. Henceforward, the current of penetration taking off from the Lake Superior route would continue with a persistence that even the occupation of Lower Canada by the English did not interrupt. This achievement is alone enough to excuse La Vérendrye for not having realized in all its details the original program of his expedition.

In this enterprise were combined all the motives that had inspired the first artisans of French penetration into the region of the Great Lakes. In the first place, there was scientific curiosity, dominated by the search for a passage to the Pacific Ocean. In that period this question was, more than ever before, on the order of the day. It had led to the journey of Father Charlevoix in New France during 1720;⁹³ to the establishment on the Mississippi in 1727 of a post—Fort Beauharnais—from which it was hoped the discovery might be achieved;⁹⁴ and finally in 1728 to the publication of the report of Father Gonner, "missionary to the Sioux," who gave an account, based on information from La Vérendrye (then charged with the command of the "northern posts"),⁹⁵ of the existence of a new water route of which the Indians had made him aware; its supposed orientation from east to west and the agitation of its waters by a movement of flux and reflux led to the conclusion that it would provide direct access to the ocean.⁹⁶

In the second place, the prospect of fruitful trading operations intervened in the projects of La Vérendrye, as it had done in the

earliest expeditions of discovery that set out from Lower Canada. The scientific work could only be accomplished at a cost which La Vérendrye was in no position to underwrite, and to which the king of France refused to contribute.⁹⁷ Instead, La Vérendrye received the monopoly of trading furs at the posts he intended to establish on the way to the Western Sea.⁹⁸ The profits resulting from this commerce were meant to defray the cost of his enterprise and repay the initial debts with which he had been forced to encumber his expedition so as to procure the necessary supplies and equipment;⁹⁹ they also served the cause of New France's economic expansion since, being made at the expense of the trade to Hudson Bay, they directed toward the St. Lawrence the furs that had hitherto flowed toward the British posts.¹⁰⁰ It was evidently this last consideration that most concerned La Vérendrye and the governor of New France, the Marquis de Beauharnais. Having at heart the expansion of the colony and the enrichment of its trade, both of them attached more importance to the establishment of an economic current that would increase the annual returns of the fur trade than to the discovery of the "Western Sea."

In this they differed from the Minister of Marine, the Count de Maurepas. Taken up with geographical and maritime questions and in agreement with the Jesuits who were concerned for the spread of the Gospel among the peoples whose existence would be revealed by exploration, the latter regarded the scientific aspect of La Vérendrye's expedition as its most important aspect. Knowing that Maurepas was opposed to the excessive dispersion of posts and to the scattering of the population of the St. Lawrence valley, Beauharnais gained his agreement by representing the posts which La Vérendrye proposed to establish as mere storehouses, unimportant depots on the way to the Pacific.¹⁰¹ In reality, La Vérendrye undertook his expedition less with the intent of searching for the "Western Sea" than to extend beyond Lake Superior the commercial operations of New France and the bridgeheads of the French race. He himself wrote to Maurepas on 1 August 1731, in terms that leave no doubt of his intentions: "Beauharnais has done me the honor of picking me out and sending me to establish myself on Lake Winnipeg with fifty men and a missionary . . . If he thinks fit to instruct me to go on into the West, I shall always be ready to leave with my nephew La Gemberaye, who is my second-in-command, and with my three children who are here with me . . ."¹⁰²

Contrary to the evident intentions of the Minister of Marine, but in the interests of New France, the concern for commercial profits, which officially was intended to further the realization of the scientific task, in fact supplanted it in La Vérendrye's mind. It was under this misunderstanding [between La Vérendrye and Maurepas] that the expedition—for which Father Gonner's memoir had served as the bait—was undertaken; the eventual consequence, in 1744, would be the disgrace of La Vérendrye.

At the same time, La Vérendrye was sincerely devoted to the idea of converting the Indians, and he attached to his expedition a Jesuit missionary who intended to carry on among the little-known tribes of Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods¹⁰³ the work so successfully accomplished among the Hurons of Lake Ontario.¹⁰⁴

Finally, convinced that a guarantee of the allegiance of the peoples he approached would be the presence among the tribes of young Frenchmen instructed to learn their languages, study their ways of life, and nurture their loyalties, he resumed, though on a smaller scale, the policy of Champlain, who a century and a half earlier placed among the Indians of the Great Lakes young men charged with encouraging their adherence to the French. Leaving two of his men to share for a year the life of the Mandans on the Missouri,¹⁰⁵ giving two of his sons to the Cree as advisors and permitting their adoption into the tribe,¹⁰⁶ he established between the two races a link of intimacy from which the French cause could greatly benefit.

But the realization of his various projects encountered in this region far more difficult conditions than earlier Canadian expeditions had experienced. Even supposing that La Vérendrye was committed to the work of discovering the Western Sea with all the diligence to which he had been urged by Minister Maurepas, it is certain that his ignorance of the topography of the North West and its real distances, which he had underestimated through accepting the accounts of excessively obliging Indians, would have exposed him to serious setbacks. If his informants were to be believed, once the journey had been made from Kaminitikwia to Lake Winnipeg¹⁰⁷ it would take only another ten days' march to reach the Western Sea,¹⁰⁸ by way of a "great river that flows directly toward the setting sun and broadens constantly as it falls,"¹⁰⁹ which was tantamount to ignoring the endless spaces of the prairies and the barrier of the Rocky Mountains. Not only did the difficulties connected with the character and the immensity of the country directly hamper discovery, but, whatever La Vérendrye's intentions

might have been, such obstacles would have relegated to a distant date the reaching of the Western Sea, since they would have made impossible the immediate profits needed to finance the very same expedition. It was when they undertook for the first time to exploit the resources of the North West on a major scale that the Canadians began to suffer from the handicaps imposed on their trade by two circumstances: first that they had to procure their trade goods in Montreal, which was two months' journey even from Kaministiquia,¹¹⁰ and, second, that more than five hundred miles of rugged and rocky terrain separated Lake Superior from Lake Winnipeg. La Vérendrye concluded that canoes could not travel from Montreal to Lake Winnipeg during the short summer period when navigation was possible.¹¹¹ He himself left Montreal on 8 June 1731 and reached the mouth of the Pigeon River only on 26 August; his crews refused to attempt its ascent, and, like Jacques de Noyon in 1717, he was forced to pass the winter on the threshold of the West.¹¹²

It was this combination of difficulties that in the end would enable the English of Hudson Bay to get the better of their adversaries. From the beginning, it seriously hampered La Vérendrye's projects. The provisioning of his posts was affected by the length of the route, by uncertainty as to when or whether the canoes would arrive, and by the obstacles created by the portages of the Pigeon River, which aroused the discontent of the crews and led them to increase their demands to the point where La Vérendrye was forced to improve the way of access to Rainy Lake.¹¹³ The members of the expedition consequently suffered the risk of famine in the unsympathetic Shield region where, apart from a few favored spots,¹¹⁴ resources were badly distributed and often insufficient,¹¹⁵ wild rice not being adequate compensation for the meagreness of the "clearings" around his posts which La Vérendrye assiduously tried to cultivate.¹¹⁶ These uncertainties regarding supplies were even more detrimental to trade with the Indians, since they annoyed the tribes who visited the posts,¹¹⁷ thus reducing the returns of the fur trade,¹¹⁸ which in turn hampered the construction of new establishments.¹¹⁹ Above all, the high wages resulting from the difficulties of navigation burdened the price of trade goods with extra charges, which proportionately diminished La Vérendrye's profits. On top of everything else, he had to keep the goodwill of the native people by burdensome distributions of presents,¹²⁰ and to pay the inflated costs of constructing spacious

posts, protected by bastions, galleries, and ranges of palisades,¹²¹ large enough to house relatively strong garrisons—forty men at Fort Saint-Charles¹²² and from twelve to twenty at Fort Saint-Pierre¹²³—and capable of entertaining considerable groups of Indians who gathered there to trade and to be instructed by La Vérendrye while they feasted at his expense.

The situation became worse in 1735 when the Marquis de Beauharnais deprived La Vérendrye of the franchise of the fur trade that had at first been granted to him, and instructed him to divide it between various middlemen in Montreal who would pay him a royalty from their returns. In this way Beauharnais hoped to bring an end to Maurepas' complaints about the excessively commercial character of La Vérendrye's operations and the way he was neglecting his program of discovery. He also hoped that by setting him free from seeking to gain directly from trade the funds he needed for his expedition, he might enable La Vérendrye to concentrate more fully on the latter aim. Unfortunately he acted at the very time when the fur trade, which for several years had been uncertain, was at last assuring La Vérendrye his first profits.¹²⁶ As for the Montreal merchants, they were indifferent to the success of La Vérendrye's enterprise and used for their gain the goods they furnished. For three years they neglected the provisioning of his posts; they haggled over the dispatch of merchandise that was necessary to further his Indian policy; and they provoked the disappointment of the Indians who complained of the "lack of everything" and were not slow to hand over to the English the furs they had at first intended for La Vérendrye.¹²⁷ They even went so far as to thwart his policy directly by inciting the warlike passions of the Indians.¹²⁸

Caught between the demands of his creditors whom he had been unable to repay the ever-increasing debts incurred¹²⁹ to sustain the loyalty of the Indians with ever greater presents, the ill will of the merchants on whom now fell the task of making sure that the posts on the way to the "Western Sea" were regularly provisioned, and the lack of diligence among the crews who transported the trade goods,¹³⁰ La Vérendrye exhausted himself in vain attempts to carry out the task of colonization he had set himself—a task which it was difficult to reconcile with the accomplishment of the more limited program that Maurepas had set him. In fact, La Vérendrye was at heart a colonizer rather than an explorer. The establishment of permanent and well-defended

posts, surrounded by clearings intended to provide at least part of the food needed for the personnel, the opening out of access routes by improving the portages that interrupted them, and the establishment of regular commercial relations with the Indians were manifestations of a philosophy of colonization rather than of discovery.

It was the same philosophy that gave birth to his ideal of converting the primitive peoples and to his Indian policy. Unfortunately, other difficulties emerged in this direction, which exceeded La Vérendrye's ability to deal with them, and which destroyed the illusions he had formed. The first attempt at conversion had failed by 1733. Father Messaiger, who accompanied the expedition, was weakened by privations and sickness, and perhaps also discouraged by the difficulty in keeping the attention of an essentially nomad population; he renounced his task and returned to Lower Canada.¹³¹ His successor, Father Aulneau, was slaughtered in 1736 by the Sioux on an island in the Lake of the Woods, and in this way the second attempt at conversion came to an end. The work of evangelization was resumed several years later, and without great success, by Father Coquart, who seems to have arrived in 1742,¹³² and, after a short stay at Fort la Reine, departed in 1744. His distant successor, Father La Morinerie, who served there in 1750-1, confessed his inability to make converts among the peoples of the West.¹³³

As to the Indian policy of La Vérendrye, it was inspired by a wish to mediate among the tribes who were constantly at war. But he had failed to take account of the inveterate dispositions of the peoples among whom he wished to intervene, of their conception of war and the place they gave it in their code of honor. At the time of his arrival the conflicts which the *coureurs de bois* had constantly provoked by their interference continued to keep the Indians of the region in a state of continued hostility—the Monsoni of Rainy Lake who were linked with the Ojibwa, the Cree of the Lake of the Woods, and finally the Assiniboine who inhabited the area west of the Lake of the Woods that bordered on the prairie. At the same time, the local conflicts that divided these peoples were overshadowed by their common hostility toward the Sioux in American territory.¹³⁴

In spite of the suspicion he first encountered among the Assiniboine, La Vérendrye, assisted by his son and his nephew La Jemeraie, set about winning them and their allies over to his pol-

icy of peace.¹³⁶ In view of the presence of Frenchmen in both camps, it was the most logical policy, and it also conformed with the views of the governor of New France who in 1732, with the same aim of a general pacification, had ordered the re-establishment by the *Sieur Linctot* of Fort Beauharnais in Sioux territory.¹³⁷ But the agreement which he sought to realize led merely to new conflicts. To win over the Monsoni, the Cree, and the Assiniboine, La Vérendrye had to increase his presents, particularly of ammunition and firearms,¹³⁸ which were so useful to these tribes of hunters. In this way he strengthened their offensive capability against the Sioux and, by reversing the situation of previous years, he created among the latter, even though they were equally well provided with firearms by the Canadians, the impression that they had been betrayed by the French in the interests of their enemies.¹³⁹ The impression soon became a reality, for to win the alliance of the peoples whose furs he wished to obtain, La Vérendrye—like Champlain in the past when he was involved with the Hurons—had to offer effective and personal help in the wars which they pursued and from which neither his counsels of moderation nor his distribution of symbolic collars and other gratifications succeeded in diverting them. When the Monsoni undertook an expedition against the Sioux, the need to keep their goodwill forced him, no matter what the cost, to assign them as counsellor his eldest son, Jean-Baptiste, whom they would have liked to make their chief.¹⁴¹ Similarly, in 1743, his son Louis-Joseph, Chevalier de la Vérendrye, who saw the Rocky Mountains from South Dakota, was obliged, despite his pacific intentions and exhortations, to join the warriors who asked him to help them against their enemies.¹⁴²

La Vérendrye's own attitude spread among the Sioux the conviction that the French were now their enemies, and they planned reprisals against them in the same way as they did against the Cree or the Assiniboine. Perhaps it was to support given them during their wars that the latter tribes were referring to when they told the commandant of York Factory that the French were their allies against the Sioux.¹⁴³ Certainly the massacre of 1736 on the island in the Lake of the Woods, when not only Father Aulneau, but also La Vérendrye's eldest son and twenty-one of their companions died horrible deaths, was more than anything else an expression of the change of mood that had taken place among the Sioux.¹⁴⁴ The incident provided a rude awakening from the illusions La Véren-

drye had been harboring, and placed him in a similar dilemma to that which a few years earlier Boishbriant, the French commandant of the Illinois country, had experienced in his relations with the peoples of the Missouri.¹⁴⁵ Far from intimidating the allied tribes, the massacre at the Lake of the Woods merely united them more firmly against the Sioux and involved them in a new war inspired by an animosity intensified by the desire to avenge the death of La Vérendrye's son, whom they had adopted as one of their own.¹⁴⁶

Drawn against his will into the maze of native politics, La Vérendrye had believed he could achieve an appeasement which the very psychology of primitive people condemned to failure, though he saw it as the condition for the success of his commercial operations and for the permanent establishment of the French race among the Indians. Only rarely would an Indian chief who had accepted La Vérendrye's contention that all the Indians regardless of tribe were the subjects and dependents of the French king show himself willing to plead the cause of peace in one or other of the gatherings of warriors La Vérendrye liked to call together at his outposts in order to distribute the presents meant to "bar the way of the Sioux."¹⁴⁷ He could not systematically oppose their enterprises, since this would have lost him their sympathy, which in turn would have impeded his access to new territories and paralyzed his commercial activity. So he preferred, at the risk of defying his official instructions, to consent to wars and at the same time to try and localize them. This happened in 1733, in 1734,¹⁴⁸ and finally in 1737; in that year, rightly estimating that he could no longer hold back the war party that had been formed to avenge the raid of the preceding year, he merely advised them not to attack the Sioux on the Mississippi, and to spare the lives of the Frenchmen whom they might encounter among the Sioux of the plains, against whom he agreed to an attack.¹⁴⁹

Yet La Vérendrye's efforts were far from remaining sterile. No more than the officers of the posts in Louisiana could he ever attempt to forbid warfare, which even the sedentary colonization of the prairies were able to bring to an end only after a long period. But at least he succeeded in reducing the incidence of aggressions, and it would be unjust to create the impression that his policy merely contributed to their aggravation.¹⁵⁰ Convinced of the sincerity of this man who appeared to be taking their part, the Indians accepted his exhortations to limit their raids. They even agreed, as in 1732, to the truce he asked them to respect.¹⁵¹ Doubtless these

were makeshift solutions, but they delayed aggression, they created a favorable atmosphere for trade and, without harming the good relations between the French and the native peoples, they created a fragile security in an area up to this time infested with war parties.¹⁵² Though he was unable to achieve a peace between the two groups of tribes he would have liked to reconcile, La Vérendrye was able to arrange a treaty between the Assiniboine and the Mandans of the Missouri, and in this way to open the route to that great tributary of the Mississippi, along which he sought the passage to the Western Sea.¹⁵³ He was adroit enough to dispel the hostility the Assiniboines had first manifested toward him,¹⁵⁴ and after concluding with them, at their request, an official pact of friendship,¹⁵⁵ he made them his assiduous allies, whose cordiality¹⁵⁶ made him remark, perhaps with some exaggeration: "While there are Frenchmen among the savages, they will not go looking for the English, whom they do not love . . ." ¹⁵⁷ He himself showed a concern for the Indians which emerged with particular emphasis in 1737, when the Cree of Lake Winnipeg were at the point of decimation by a smallpox epidemic; his care at this time reinforced the attachment they felt to him and his sons.¹⁵⁸ Such sympathy with the native tribes went hand in hand with the continuation of French penetration and the establishment of bridgeheads in the wooded zone and on the verges of the prairie by La Vérendrye and his countrymen.

In the first place, on the rapid-broken route to Lake Winnipeg and around the lake itself, three posts supplemented each other, marking indispensable staging points in the process of penetration. They were sited on the verges of lacustrine basins where alluvial terrain favored clearing and allowed modest agriculture, especially plots of wheat and peas, whose crops were supplemented by game, fish, and the wild rice that grew abundantly in the marshy beds of the creeks.¹⁵⁹ First there was Fort Saint-Pierre, which La Jemeraie and La Vérendrye's son constructed at the outlet of Rainy Lake, on the right bank of the river of the same name,¹⁶⁰ in the summer of 1731, when La Vérendrye himself was immobilized at Kamunistikwia.¹⁶¹ Next came Fort Saint-Charles, which La Vérendrye built the following year on the west bank of the Lake of the Woods, within reach of Assiniboine territory and at the beginning of the route which, following the portage of La Savanne and the windings of the Roseau River, gave direct access to the Red

River valley.¹⁶² Finally Fort Maurepas was constructed as late as 1743 not far from the mouth of the Maurepas River (now the Winnipeg River) on Lake Winnipeg.¹⁶³ Thus the Canadians utilized the strategic position Lake Winnipeg occupied between the Red River and the basin of the Nelson River; this was the beginning of the most important access route to the prairies, by the Saskatchewan River.

But already, even before they had occupied the mouth of the Winnipeg River, the French had spread out in directions radiating toward the south and the west. In one direction they had reached the valley of the Red River, near whose mouth in the autumn of 1734 they established the first Fort Maurepas,¹⁶⁴ and in 1738 Fort Rouge at the "grand forks" of the river, by which they meant the confluence of the Assiniboine and the Red River.¹⁶⁵ In the other direction, following the chain of Lakes Winnipegosis and Manitoba, which flanked Lake Winnipeg to the west, they built Fort Dauphin at the mouth of the Mossy River, which was the outflow of Lake Dauphin.¹⁶⁶ In this way they strengthened their contacts with the Cree and the Assiniboine, whose bands frequented the rich hunting territories concealed between the Park Land and the ranges of hills bordering on Lake Winnipegosis.¹⁶⁷

Perhaps before establishing themselves between these two lakes, La Vérendrye's men were already by 1735 in occupation of a post, whose existence the Indians revealed to the commandant of York Factory, on the north bank of Lake Winnipeg, which gave them the advantage of intercepting the fur convoys on their way to Hudson Bay.¹⁶⁸ But they did not establish themselves permanently on that shore until 1741, when they founded Lake Bourbon on the lower course of the Saskatchewan, at the point where it enters Cedar Lake.¹⁶⁹ The Indians spoke highly of the wealth of furs in this region, whose trees provided them with the framework of their bark canoes.¹⁷⁰ The positions gained by the French there narrowly constricted the routes of access to York Factory.

But La Vérendrye's enterprise was not restricted to the bases disposed around this series of lake basins. He also embarked on the Assiniboine River, whose curves meandered through the monotonous stretches of the prairies.¹⁷¹ In 1738 he built Fort la Reine on the left bank, not far from the "portage that goes to the Lake of the Prairies [Lake Manitoba]," and which the Assiniboine used to reach the series of lakes and waterways that led them to the

Bay of the North [Hudson Bay].¹⁷² Thus the French positions, from the Kaministiquia River to the Saskatchewan, traced out an immense arc, whose outposts were the points through which the Indians passed on their way to the North, so that the furs they carried with them were inevitably appropriated. If one adds, to the positions La Vérendrye established or consolidated, those which individual traders set up on the Albany River, the circle with which the Canadians invested the establishments of the Bay became even broader. Not only did they now control, as well as the Winnipeg River, the connected route of the English River and, as a consequence, the Albany River itself; thanks to their base on Lake Nipigon they also kept their hands on a number of the tributaries that united to form the southern branch of the Albany River. Finally, in 1742, they established themselves downstream from the meeting of the Albany's two branches; this was a mere hundred miles from Fort Albany, whose trade from this point slowly withered away.¹⁷³

The intention of establishing themselves permanently in their new situations which the Canadians now expressed seemed to threaten the early and entire ruin of the British trade.¹⁷⁴ From their posts ranged around Lake Winnipeg they strove, doubtless with new incursions in mind, to inform themselves on the true strength of their competitors by opening up, through Indian intermediaries, a correspondence with the factors of York and of Prince of Wales Fort in which they proposed to visit them in the hope of fostering mutual friendship and commerce.

The English were not deceived. Fearing the spectacle of their feeble forces would only encourage renewed attacks in later years, they were careful not to take up these overtures. They made clear their intention not to embark on any correspondence or to admit any visitors.¹⁷⁵ Their precautions were entirely justified by the resumption of hostilities between France and England and by the falling away of their trade after the expansion of the Canadian enterprise in the interior. At York Factory the remarkable figures we have noted for the years before 1732 stabilized themselves, from 1732 to 1739, at a lower level of between thirty and thirty-two thousand skins a year.¹⁷⁶ The decline would have been greater and more sustained if La Vérendrye had not been hampered in his operations by the irregularity of his supplies, and by the constantly renewed disputes with his associates and creditors. Because of

such difficulties, there were years when it seemed to him impossible to retain the allegiance of the Indians and to keep them from following the route to the north,¹⁷⁷ and for the same reasons he was sometimes forced to abandon even the most strategically placed of his posts.¹⁷⁸ But even allowing for these conditions, the fact remains that York Factory no longer experienced the prosperity of the preceding decade, and that the trade of Prince of Wales Fort in its turn began to show signs of weakening.¹⁷⁹ The Indians were attracted by the good quality of French trade goods,¹⁸⁰ and they became accustomed to the new tariffs which the Canadians introduced and to which the English were forced to adapt their rates of exchange.¹⁸¹ They saw in the French from Lower Canada allies who freely associated with them, who adapted admirably to their way of life and learnt their languages, while the English of Hudson Bay, isolated in their posts along the coastline, continued to appear as aliens.

In 1744, when La Vérendrye abandoned the posts in the West, where his state of health prevented him from undertaking new activities, he left the French there in a position that threatened to nullify entirely the trade which the English had organized with the Indians of the interior. He died five years later, impoverished and unnoticed, at the moment when he was preparing to take up again the work he had left incomplete. That the project for the discovery of the Western Sea had made little progress in comparison with the gains in penetrating the hinterland, if not yet in its colonization, was a logical consequence of the kind of activity on which La Vérendrye had dissipated all his means. Yet the discovery of the Western Sea was not entirely forgotten, though the results obtained in that direction were evident only in what is now American territory. They resulted from the journey which La Vérendrye undertook in 1738-9 across the plains of the Assiniboine and Souris rivers to the Mandans of the Missouri, and the expedition of his son in 1742 to South Dakota.¹⁸² In the first instance, La Vérendrye had to break off his journey, and it was his son, the Chevalier de la Vérendrye, who with an escort of seven men, reached the great river and established that it was not the sought-for passage to the West. In the second instance, the Chevalier and his two brothers sought in vain a way to the Pacific along the Big Cheyenne River; it led them to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, which they could not attempt to cross. These enterprises extended existing

knowledge of the American continent, but they also showed the impossibility of reaching the Western Sea by the routes the Indians had so confusedly described.

THE LAST PHASE OF CANADIAN PENETRATION

During the years following La Vérendrye's retreat, the Canadians pushed beyond the bases they had established around Lake Winnipeg, and embarked on the exploration of the Saskatchewan River, whose vast ramifications penetrated the nearest chains of the Rocky Mountains and whose lower reaches only had hitherto been known as the Deer River.¹⁸³ The ease of its navigation, which was impeded only where the land rose at the end of the first step of the prairies, combined with the state of peace resulting from the presence of the Cree as a homogenous population along the verges of the parkland to make the task [the ascent of the Saskatchewan] much less difficult than that of crossing the southern section of the Shield.

There is no doubt that the man who between 1744 and 1747 became La Vérendrye's successor, Nicholas-Joseph de Noyelles, was not imbued with the same sincere conviction as his predecessor, and certainly lacked the knowledge of the western tribes for which Beauharnais held La Vérendrye in such esteem.¹⁸⁴ He took over the direction of the enterprise at a moment when war between France and England had paralysed the arrival of goods in the colony and increased the price of imports;¹⁸⁵ this complicated the problem of provisioning the western posts.¹⁸⁶ So far as trade at these posts was concerned, it was a period of immobility, which explains the unwillingness of the merchants to accept responsibility for them.¹⁸⁷ It was also a troubled time in relations with the native peoples, marked by frequent attacks on French posts and canoes around Lake Superior, carried out by the very peoples whose confidence and devotion La Vérendrye had won.¹⁸⁸ These events were perhaps not unconnected with provocations on the part of the Hudson Bay traders, encouraged by discontent among the Indians over the lack of goods in the [French] trading posts.¹⁸⁹ In 1745, when the capture of Cape Breton had diminished the possibilities of provisioning New France itself, Beauharnais expressed a fear that Hudson Bay would gain the allegiance of "our savages."¹⁹⁰ But at the same time there is no doubt that a conciliatory but firm approach adapted to the nature of the primitive mind was

lacking. The burning of Fort Maurepas by the Indians¹⁹¹ clearly demonstrated the deterioration in the situation that began with La Vérendrye's departure. The retreat was equally evident on the Albany, where the farthest position the Canadians had reached, below the junction of the river's two branches, was abandoned for good, while activity on the north branch lapsed entirely¹⁹² and on the south branch it became at best intermittent.¹⁹³

Yet La Vérendrye's sons, Pierre and the Chevalier, did not hesitate to remedy the situation when in 1747 they were able to resume their father's work in the West.¹⁹⁴ With a devotion equal to La Vérendrye's own, they applied their means to the restoration of the forts that had been burnt down or were near ruin.¹⁹⁵ Then in 1749 they leapfrogged Fort Bourbon and, taking full advantage of their knowledge of the Cree language, ascended the Saskatchewan as far as the junction of its north and south arms. Here they not only acquired some interesting notions about the way to the Western Sea, whose access the river they were following seemed to control;¹⁹⁶ they had also established themselves in a key situation, for it was at the forks of the two rivers that the various Cree tribes of the plains and the woods came together to discuss in what direction they should dispatch their cargoes of furs.¹⁹⁷ York Factory's trade was immediately affected by this resumption of French activity. From 1747 onward, James Isham was concerned about the progressive anaemia of his trading, which now no longer attracted the precious marten pelts the Indians of the Saskatchewan had been in the habit of bringing him. That year they visited him in large numbers, but they brought only 300 martens compared with the 3,000 which in ordinary times half as many hunters had offered him.¹⁹⁸ The warning embodied in this situation was all the more serious since the Indians already saw themselves obliged, if they were to acquire the furs they needed, to seek out animals in ever more distant regions of the parkland and the prairie—and these were precisely the regions to be reached by the Saskatchewan River, along which the French had now laid hold of the most important strategic points.¹⁹⁹

Faithful to their old tactics, the Canadians—whom the officers on Hudson Bay were beginning to describe contemptuously as "pedlars"—endeavored to convince the Indians, in the hope of turning them away from the English, that they would very soon outflank and conquer the British positions.²⁰⁰ It appears, indeed, that De Noyelles had conceived the idea of recruiting the Indians

for attacks against the forts on Hudson Bay. Very soon, in fact, Fort Churchill, though it was less vulnerable because of its greater distance, began to feel threatened when, at the end of hostilities between France and England, the Canadians, again better provisioned, gave a new thrust to their trading operations. Round about 1750, presumably on the instructions of Pierre de La Vérendrye, a post was erected on the present site of the little settlement of Le Pas, at the point where the Saskatchewan swings back toward the southeast in the direction of Lake Winnipeg.²⁰³ This Fort Paskoyac further consolidated the position of the French within the network of waterways serving York Factory.

After the forced retreat of La Vérendrye's sons, Legardeur de Saint-Pierre (Jacques Repentigny Legardeur) and the Chevalier de Niverville exercised control over the western posts from 1750 to 1753 and were succeeded by the Chevalier Saint-Luc de La Corne from 1753 to 1757. Under these administrations the traders became ever more numerous in the region La Vérendrye had opened to their enterprises. In 1750 the Indians warned the officer of Prince of Wales Fort of the arrival in the interior of thirty Canadians in seven large canoes; amply supplied with trade goods, they were intercepting the furs of the Assiniboine.²⁰⁴ In 1751 a dozen men embarked²⁰⁵ on the henceforward classic route of the Saskatchewan, where they erected Fort la Jonquière on the borders of Assiniboine territory; it marked the extreme limit of French penetration.²⁰⁶ But they abandoned it shortly afterwards,²⁰⁷ and withdrew to their original bases on Lake Winnipeg. There Fort Paskoyac, flanked in 1753 by the advance post of Fort la Corne or Fort Saint-Louis, a short way from the junction of the two Saskatchewan, played the central role in their trading operations,²⁰⁸ because of the importance within the tangled network of the Shield's waterways of the passages which these sites dominated.²⁰⁹ At the same time, the Canadians resumed their activities on the tributaries of the Albany River: in 1750 they reached Carp Lake, where in 1752 they founded, half way between its shoreline and Lake Nipigon, a post which usefully supported the last base [on Lake Nipigon] and which, added to the presence the French had already established on the headwaters of the principal stream, limited more and more narrowly the commerce that flowed toward Fort Albany.²¹⁰

Yet the Canadians did not always find their task easy. The same difficulties La Vérendrye had experienced complicated their enter-

prises. Some of these were inherent in the land itself, and especially in the poverty of its resources of game, which forced the "pedlars" to practise strict rationing, as Anthony Henday observed when he visited Fort Paskoyac in 1754;²¹¹ the others were caused by the everlasting conflicts between the native peoples, and notably between the Sioux and the forest tribes. The *Sieur Marin*, who was detailed to work among the Sioux, as *Ensign Pachot* had formerly done, achieved some slight successes in his attempts at mediation between the Sioux and the alliance of Cree and *Saulteaux*.²¹² But *Saint-Pierre* was less fortunate, for he refused to lend himself to those generous distributions of presents without regard to cost which *La Vérendrye* had regarded as necessary.²¹³ No more than *de Noyelles* did he possess a knowledge of the psychology of primitive man,²¹⁴ and this lack was particularly serious at a time when the English seemed to be provoking the Indians against their enemies.²¹⁵

But the *voyageurs* from Lower Canada were accustomed enough to dealing with the native people to make up for their chief's inadequacies. Their easy manner, their ability to win the confidence of the Indians, made up for his scanty breadth of understanding.²¹⁶ Above all, the Canadians were so well positioned that they could not fail to intercept the furs of the Indian tribes which, on their way to the Bay, were unable to avoid Fort Paskoyac. This modest post, whose pitiful appearance and shabby poverty Anthony Henday described, was now the most vigorous centre of the pedlars' operation, Fort Saint Louis having been reduced to the simple role of an advance post.²¹⁷ From this stronghold originated the threat that henceforward hung over Prince of Wales Fort and deprived it of the security it had long enjoyed because of its isolation. In 1752 only the Indians whose northerly habitat sheltered them from the activity of the French posts brought in a total of furs equivalent to those habitually traded.²¹⁸ As for York Factory, neither in 1750, nor 1751, nor 1752 did it reach again the level of 30,000 skins at which its trade had stabilized itself during the preceding years.²¹⁹ On the other hand, the affairs of the French prospered greatly, as is shown by the value of the receipts in 1765 by the concession of the "Western Sea," which came to 9,000 livres for the year, against 4,000 livres for the concessions that followed immediately afterwards.

Being always courteous and sociable by nature, the Canadians once again did their best to enter into relations with the posts on

the Bay. Whether, as in the days of La Vérendrye, they saw in this a means of keeping informed about their adversaries' powers of resistance, or whether they merely wanted to gain some alleviation of their solitude, they were always asking the English for small favors, which were not often refused. For example, J. B. Proulx from his post at Le Pas asked the English to send him "a few fathoms of tobacco, a pair of double-soled shoes, a fiddle and some strings for it."²²¹ Sometimes, however, these amiable Canadians exposed themselves to a haughty refusal, as when some of them proposed to the governor of York Factory that they establish a clandestine trade in furs when they came to bring him in person the payment for services they had asked of him.²²² "You write a little out of character," he answered, "when you offer to bring the payment yourself."²²³

His suspicion was justified, for the joviality of the "pedlars" in no way relaxed their buildup of a state of siege in the hinterland to Hudson Bay, whose riches they exhausted and whose ways of access they blocked. They did not remain immobile in their posts. The shortage of food alone made this impossible. Fort Paskoyac could not have sustained a garrison of thirty men if its personnel had not often spread out among the Indians in search of supplies. Around the forts on Lake Winnipeg these peregrinations gave rise to the establishment of unimpressive and nameless advance posts, mere huts or shelters of logs which the Canadians put up on the waterways or on the lakeshores at points well placed to intercept the Indians. When the "pedlar" J. B. Larlée deserted the French cause for reasons of personal resentment and arrived at York Factory in June 1759, he claimed to be unable to give a complete list of the Canadian positions because, apart from the principal forts he enumerated, there existed a number of shelters scattered around the Indian hunting grounds which carried out intermittent trading. The English justly gave the name of "interlopers" to these humble and over-enterprising rivals whose operations were proliferating, in defiance of the commercial monopoly which the Charter of 1670 had conferred on the Hudson's Bay Company, all over the drainage basin of the great inland sea.²²⁴

Employing both threats and blandishments, the Canadians prevented the Indians from entering Hayes River: those hunters who persisted in taking their furs to York Factory had no alternative but to make a long detour through rocky country by way of the

most distant branch of the Nelson River.²²⁵ In the direction of the Severn River, they tried also to intercept the convoys of furs that were reaching the tributaries of the Hayes and Albany rivers, whose basins lay close by. In 1752 the commandant of York Factory warned the Hudson's Bay Company of their intentions.²²⁶ The following year the threat became even more obvious,²²⁷ and James Isham pressed the Committee in London to forestall their rivals by establishing a fort at the mouth of the Severn to be supplied by an annual ship.²²⁸ But the same year the Canadians blocked the upper course of the river with a post staffed by twenty men who were able from this central point to close off the currents of trade that flowed toward York Factory and Fort Albany.²²⁹ The establishment lay about six days' journey from the river mouth, roughly two hundred miles from the coast.²³⁰ It represented a new attack on the trade of York Factory. The whaleboat that went annually to the estuary of the Severn River to pick up furs returned empty to York that year, for the Indians, well supplied with French trade goods, announced their intention of going henceforward to the Canadians, with whom they had established a commerce.²³¹

The head of Fort Albany wrote that the "pedlars" guarded "all the tributaries and all the arms" of the Albany River, and that the Indians could no longer reach his post.²³² Little shacks with five or ten, or at most twenty men, were set up everywhere; in the spring the traders would abandon them to take their harvests of furs to Lower Canada, and in the autumn would reoccupy them so as to gather the high-quality winter pelts.²³³ Toward the "Bottom of the Bay" the Canadian incursions, strengthened by the nearness of their bases, continued with ever greater vigor. "I need not tell you the principal cause for the lack of furs," wrote the governor of Moose Factory, Thomas White, to James Isham in 1753, "for you know as well as I, and it is the same here or worse."²³⁴

The offensive had been well directed, considering the limitations of manpower, for it radiated in every direction around Lake Winnipeg. By a methodical progression it was eliminating the English from their rich hinterland and pushing them back toward the coastal fringe of Hudson Bay. Occasionally, indeed, difficulties arose with the Indians, for the pedlars did not hesitate to use violence to bring around those who obstinately rejected their advances. In this way hatreds were generated, and sometimes the In-

dians responded by massacring a few pedlars.²³⁵ This did not happen with the English, whose policy was prudent to the point of inertia, since it immobilized them in the coastal posts. Yet, on the whole, such events did not affect the good understanding that had grown up between the two races [French and Indians], and, despite everything, even when the pedlars imposed trading conditions more onerous than those of the English, they gained the preference of the Indians²³⁶ by their clever mingling of menace and conciliation.²³⁷ Everywhere they threatened new aggressions against the British posts; to these plans which they paraded before the Indians—justifying their legitimacy by appealing to the priority of French occupation in the interior—the destruction of Henley House in 1754 and again in 1759 by the common action of French and Indians gave a menacing import.²³⁸

The situation would have been even worse for the British posts if the conquest of Canada by England had not interrupted the operations of the French Canadians. Called to the defence of the colony on the St. Lawrence, most of them left the positions they had established, and as their activity gradually died away, they abandoned their posts, which either fell into ruin or were burnt or pillaged by the native people.²⁴⁰ In 1759 they were still active on the Severn River²⁴¹ and in the environs of the Churchill River.²⁴² But in the autumn of 1760, after trading lucratively with the Indians of the Saskatchewan,²⁴³ their canoes left Fort Paskoyac, and the winter passed without their returning. "Information the French Left Pasquca in the Fall and none of them has been seen this winter as usual."²⁴⁴

Once again, increased by groups who hitherto had never gone beyond the French posts, the Indians took their furs along the routes to York Factory and to the establishment the English had at last erected at the mouth of the Severn River.²⁴⁵ Yet the Canadians had secured in the West a position too well established for the recollection of their enterprises to be extinguished by the abandonment of their forts. Not only did that memory survive, but the Canadians left a few representatives in the West. Such men had in fact become incorporated into the native tribes and were more attached to the immensities of the prairie than to their native country, so that they refused to answer that country's call to intervene in a conflict to whose outcome they were indifferent.²⁴⁶ Isolated individuals, scattered in the primitive milieu, they nevertheless at-

tested by their presence to the survival of French penetration. When, after a break of some years, the latter was resumed with a new vigor, it was merely necessary [for the newcomers] to use once again the routes their predecessors had followed and marked out with trading posts. Then that renewed current of penetration was not slow in clashing with the other current that for some years had been timidly probing into the interior from the shores of Hudson Bay.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE NORTHERN CURRENT

The current of penetration that should have fed the shoreline of Hudson Bay never developed with as much vitality as that which emerged from the southerly base of the Canadian Shield. It had at its disposal access routes which were both more numerous and more practicable than the rivers that cut through the rocky plateau from Lake Superior, but it ventured on them only at a later period and on a limited scale. Yet on this northerly base was built the empire of the great Hudson's Bay Company, whose sovereign authority would in the end be imposed on the whole immense territory of the North West, and whose control over the exploitation of the fur trade, from the prairie to the Barren Grounds, would drain away all its profits for the benefit of the City of London. From this base also originated the first enterprise of sedentary colonization organized in the West, as a consequence of which agricultural products now flow from a region which for long years remained the exclusive domain of the fur trade.

Only after a long period of uncertainty and lethargy—beginning in 1683 and ending only in 1774—did the Hudson's Bay Company succeed in imposing its tutelage over those territories into which the Canadians had preceded it. Even the initiation of its enterprise, whose stagnancy for a long period seemed to foretell eventual failure, included an alien element. For it was Radisson and Chouart des Groseilliers, the two adventurers whose operations had extended to the extremity of the Great Lakes the economic domination of New France, who suggested to the King of England [Charles II] the double plan that resulted in the Company's creation; on the one hand, the search—by way of the inland sea called Hudson Bay—for a passage toward the Western Sea, a project which its promoters knew to be completely unrealizable; on the

other hand the establishment of a trade with the native peoples of North America whose possibilities they knew in advance to be unlimited. Responding to their suggestions, the King signed the famous Charter which confirmed the establishment and commercial privileges of the company. A mere two years later, the newly founded enterprise organized its first expedition to the shores of Hudson Bay and established "at the Bottom of the Bay" [James Bay] and on the delta of the Nemiskau River, henceforward known as Rupert's River, its first post of Fort Charles.¹ Soon forts multiplied at the mouths of the rivers that emptied into James Bay and Hudson Bay; in 1673 Moose Factory, at the estuary of the river of the same name, which in the beginning was the Company's principal stronghold and later was destined to hold at bay the final aggressions of the Canadians from Lower Canada;² in 1675, Fort Albany, at the mouth of the Albany River, whose headwaters were close to those of the English River;³ in 1682 Port Nelson or Fort Hayes, which was situated on the left bank of the Nelson River estuary, and in 1684 was flanked—and later supplanted—by York Factory on the opposite shore;⁴ in 1685 Fort Severn, which was built near the mouth of the New Severn River, about three miles from the coast;⁵ finally, Prince of Wales Fort which, after an abortive attempt in 1688, was erected in 1715 on the delta of the Churchill River, at the entrance to the Barren Grounds, for the purpose of draining off the furs which the Chipewyans brought from Great Slave Lake and Lake Athabasca.⁶

Taking possession in this way of the sterile shoreline of Hudson Bay, the Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay had no thought of embarking on a penetration of the country along the rivers that seemed to offer an entry. At the same time, the Company did not contemplate remaining entirely immobile along the coastline of the Bay. It had assumed that some of its personnel would venture into the wooded and rocky interior of the country, if not for extensive periods, at least long enough to develop a knowledge of the terrain, to gain the friendship and the trade of the Indians, and to persuade them to visit the coast in larger numbers. From the beginning, the governor of Port Nelson was urged to stimulate the goodwill existing in this region by increasing payments for services and distributions of gifts.⁷ When the Company learnt of the initiative which young Richard Norton had shown in his journeys among the Indians, it granted him the

monetary reward that he deserved.⁸ Similarly, the London Committee urged its employees to learn the languages of the native peoples, in the hope of making use of them in the expeditions of discovery which they planned.⁹ But such exhortations had no practical result. With a few isolated exceptions, the Company's personnel remained impervious to the lavish urgings of its directors, who were too far away for their initiatives to be really effective among the kind of men who formed the garrisons of the posts.

In fact the project of penetrating the hinterland, which turned out to be so easy to realize for the voyageurs of Lower Canada, presented—so far as the Hudson's Bay Company was concerned—a mass of obstacles that paralysed the chances of their achievement. The establishments first built on the shores of Hudson Bay long justified the reproach of being "paltry little forts" which Governor La Barre levelled at them in a document intended to demonstrate the priority of the Most Christian King's rights over the domain which the Company had arrogated to itself.¹⁰ They were in fact no more than wretched wooden houses, whose dilapidation is constantly attested in the correspondence of their officers; the thickness of the logs in their palisades could not even protect them from simple musketry fire, and the constant repairs demanded by the harshness of the climate were notably neglected.¹¹ The men who occupied them might at a pinch have been capable of performing the task of limited penetration which the Company expected without weakening the defences of the posts, but only if it had been possible, in case of emergency, to unite their forces at the especially threatened points along the coastline. Thus, when it was decided to establish Moose Factory, the Company assigned to it a first contingent of twenty-five men.¹² At Fort Nelson, the Committee first fixed at forty men the complement of its garrison.¹³ In 1686, when the 100-man expedition led by the Chevalier de Troyes seized in succession the forts established at the "Bottom of the Bay"—Moose, Rupert, Albany¹⁴—the entire force gathered in the British posts amounted to a total of about ninety men,¹⁵ of whom the majority belonged to the captured forts.¹⁶ In 1694, when the expedition of Le Moyne d'Iberville occupied Fort Nelson, it found there a garrison of fifty-three men.¹⁷ Ideally, such numbers might have provided for both the defence of the Hudson Bay forts and for enterprises of discovery in the hinterland.

But their effectiveness was greatly diminished by their fragmentation among posts isolated from each other and also by the mediocrity of the personnel they represented.

The isolation of the bases which the English had scattered along the coast of the Bay seemed from the beginning one of their main weaknesses. Not only did great distances separate them—384 miles from Albany to Severn, 150 from Severn to York Factory, 78 from Albany to Moose¹⁸—but the harsh character of the terrain made travel between the posts virtually impossible. Only the Indians and men who were charged with carrying mail faced its difficulties. Thus the Bay itself was the only feasible means of communication. But navigation was not easy, for the shallowness of the water and the ice that drifted about during the summer¹⁹ often made dangerous the access to this shifting coastline where ships were liable to run aground on the scattered shoals. Both the estuary of the Nelson River and the mouths of the rivers that emptied into James Bay were well known for their difficulties. "The seashores are very difficult, mariners finding themselves forced to keep more than three leagues out to avoid shipwreck."²⁰

As a result of this maritime situation, the English posts, which were always furnished with excellent pilots capable of overcoming the difficulties of navigation, were led to orient themselves toward exploring the coastline rather than discovering the hinterland. Right from the beginning, the officers of the Company pushed on with their discovery operations along the coast. In 1686, Michael Grimington in the sloop *Hayes* reached the mouth of the Churchill River, where he found two pieces of artillery which he supposed were the remains of expeditions by the Dutch or the Danes.²¹ In 1722, Captain Scroggs, accompanied by young Richard Norton, went north of the Churchill River in search of the copper mines whose existence had been indicated to them by the Indians.²² In 1750 and again in 1756 the sloop *Churchill*, commanded by James Walker, and later by James Wood, followed the coast in the same direction, with a view to charting it and penetrating Chesterfield Inlet.²³ At this period the Company had instructed the commandant of Prince of Wales Fort to undertake expeditions each year to render more exact the knowledge of the coastline and to establish commercial relations by water with the native populations.²⁴ But if the situation of the posts predisposed them to maritime enterprises, and if they contributed actively to the knowledge of the coastline which the French, for their part, neglected entirely dur-

ing their occupation of Hudson Bay, they also encountered, in this necessity of using the sea as a way to communicate with each other, an obstacle to the combination of their forces against their enemies.

The lack of solidarity among the chiefs of the various posts further aggravated this dispersal of forces. Instead of uniting their efforts and working together for the success of the Company's operations, the officers soon gave in to the desire to increase the trade of the establishments they directed to the detriment of neighboring posts. Between York Factory and Prince of Wales Fort, between Moose Factory and Albany, between Albany and its advance post, Henley House, the same spirit of competition was manifest and destroyed all community of action.²⁵ In this fragmentation of [the Company's] forces, the Canadians found their advantage: by exploiting it they were able, in 1686, to get the better successively of all the [British] positions on James Bay, which, to make matters worse, were badly defended by a personnel whose poor quality resulted from its indiscriminate recruitment in British towns and its failure to adapt to primitive conditions of living. What, in fact, could these British garrisons do against adversaries familiar with the guerrilla methods of native warfare, and accustomed to the extremities of climate and the difficulties of travel? The harshness of the climate had its effect on the English employees,²⁶ all the more because many of them were too old to endure the privations and hard toil demanded by life in these desolate lands,²⁷ which were often made even less supportable by the bad condition of the forts and other buildings.²⁸ From the very first years, there were open expressions of discouragement,²⁹ and discipline suffered as a consequence. At York Factory,³⁰ at Fort Albany,³¹ at Moose Factory,³² there were frequent refusals to obey; sometimes they went as far as mutiny.³³ The officers in charge complained to each other that the men too often neglected their duties and caused grave accidents through carelessness.³⁴ The worst propensities of the urban proletariat re-emerged among such a carelessly recruited personnel, who resisted all efforts to improve them.³⁵

At the same time, relations with the Indians called for a knowledge of their languages, in which the employees were completely lacking and which they had little interest in acquiring.³⁶ Their lack of experience unfitted them for fishing and hunting,³⁷ and the short term of their engagements, limited by contracts of two to five years,³⁸ prevented their gaining that experience of a primitive

environment which was built into the Canadian way of life.³⁹ They were paid fixed wages that were enough for their needs but not enough to encourage a spirit of enterprise,⁴⁰ nor, in compensation, did they possess that lively energy which so often flourished in frontier regions. They were qualified neither for the risks of expeditions in unknown regions which repelled them by their desolate appearance and by the tales of their tribal wars, nor for the perils involved in defending the posts. It would have been self-deluding to expect that such men, engaged as tradesmen or as unskilled laborers,⁴² would willingly leave the shelter of the posts to develop the Company's operations in the hinterland. Indeed, the latter often incurred their ill will when it stirred itself to a more energetic policy of expansion.⁴³ They were unfamiliar with the operation of the canoe, which was the only means of transport in the rocky terrain of the Shield and which demanded qualities of energy and endurance that the timid reconnaissance expedition organized on the Albany River in 1743⁴⁴ showed were beyond such men's capabilities.

Given the circumstances, it was natural that the personnel of the posts should long remain ignorant of the most elementary details regarding the hinterland of the country whose very coast they knew only fragmentarily. Their ignorance and their absence of curiosity came as an unpleasant surprise to the London Committee in 1750 when it decided to interrogate the men returning to England on the expiry of their contracts. The questions its members put on the nature of the country to the north of York Factory and on the distance of the French bases remained unanswered, and the Committee complained to John Newton, the officer in charge [at the Bay]: "We do find [your men] very ignorant in most things, Especially in knowing the true distances of places from the Factory . . . all the Information they can give us comes from the Indians who widely differ in their accounts of Distances."⁴⁵ According to Andrew Graham, as late as the eve of Anthony Henday's expedition of 1754, the Company's officers refused to believe in the existence of horses and horsemen in the hinterland.⁴⁶ It was precisely to remedy the poor quality of the garrisons that in 1710 the Company undertook the recruitment of its men in the Orkney Islands.⁴⁷ They were accustomed to boats, and this was regarded as qualifying them for the operation of canoes.⁴⁸ They appeared to be more conscientious in carrying out the tasks allotted to them. But in practice they somewhat belied the virtues that had been attri-

buted to them, since, faced with the difficulties of a type of navigation to which they were not accustomed, they showed no more skill than the rest in manipulating the fragile canoes that were entrusted to them.⁴⁹ It would have been equally self-deluding to count on their valor in defending the posts.

These vicissitudes in the history of the English establishments leave one with the impression that the failure of the Company's enterprises must have seemed imminent. It was only in 1713 that the coastal forts, definitely restored to England by the Treaty of Utrecht, gained at least a measure of security. Up to that time, their history had been an alternation of setback and success. The most striking setbacks were the loss in 1686 of the posts at the Bottom of the Bay, captured by the Chevalier de Troyes' men;⁵⁰ the failure in 1687-8 of the attempt by the English to reoccupy their base at Albany;⁵¹ the voluntary destruction of the post of New Severn in 1690 to prevent its falling into the hands of the French;⁵² and finally, in 1694, the abandonment of Fort Nelson.⁵³ The successes, which ended in the retaking of the posts at the Bottom of the Bay, remained incomplete, for the pride the Company felt in this achievement was immediately wiped out by the new humiliation inflicted by the victorious attack of Le Moyne d'Iberville on the key establishment of York Factory in 1694.⁵⁴

The fear of a sudden attack, rapidly carried out by groups of Canadians surging out of the forest and throwing themselves unexpectedly on posts that were unprepared, became a veritable obsession which one finds endlessly repeated in the monotonous journals of the posts. It was, indeed, justified by the isolated surprise attacks which, quite apart from the more important assaults culminating in the enterprise of 1686, the Canadians carried out periodically against the trading posts, such as the attack in 1709 on Fort Albany, which was fortunately warded off by Governor Fullertine's defensive preparations.⁵⁵ Only one establishment was exempt from these adventures, thanks to its isolation and the late date of its construction. This was Prince of Wales Fort, now Fort Churchill; situated on the edge of Chipewyan territory, which was equally inaccessible to the Canadian enterprises, it had nothing to fear from the encroachments of the Company's adversaries.⁵⁶

These attacks were not merely a matter of regular assaults, carried out according to the strategic rules of the period. The manner in which they were conducted was much more reminiscent of the wars between native peoples. They borrowed from such Indian

campaigns their sudden and unexpected attacks, their ferocity, and even the theatrical use of war cries. All of this was calculated to make an impression on the mixed array of recruits who undertook to defend the posts, and who were prepared neither for the methods which the primitive environment had taught their adversaries, nor for the ruses of which the latter made excellent use in seeking to capture the forts without exposing themselves to danger.⁵⁷ In 1686 the garrison of Moose Factory would have been the victims of the fury of the Chevalier de Troyes' men if de Troyes himself had not intervened. "Then I had a great deal of trouble dampening the ardor of our Canadians who, shouting as loudly as a crew of savages, asked nothing more than to give employment to their knives."⁵⁸

In such circumstances, what could be expected of men of whom most were artisans disgruntled with their fate,⁵⁹ whose only aim in accepting service under the Company was to escape for a while the life they had endured in the towns of England, and whose courage was in no way stimulated by promises of rewards and pensions in case they were wounded or incapacitated?⁶⁰ After the defeat of 1686, a witness declared to the London Committee that, in the forests of the North, five hundred of its recruits would be incapable of carrying as much as a hundred Canadians used to the country and its difficulties.⁶¹ And, if the Company placed on Henry Sergeant, the Governor of Moose Factory, the responsibility for the defeat that besmirched the national honor ("so extraordinarily tainted by the negligence and cowardice of Sergeant"),⁶² the Governor excused himself by blaming his men, claiming that their refusal to fight had been the cause of his capitulation.⁶³

Even when, after the long period of stagnation in which the Company was reduced to the single establishment of Fort Albany,⁶⁴ the Treaty of Utrecht at last stabilized its position on Hudson Bay, the threat of attack was not completely ended. Not only, as we have seen, were the operations of the pedlars a source of ever renewed anxiety, but, at the end of the eighteenth century, when the memory of the French exploits of 1686 and 1694 had died away, the threat reappeared suddenly in the expedition of La Pérouse, who in 1782 destroyed the walls of Prince of Wales Fort and completely burnt down the palisades of York Factory.⁶⁵

Thus the threat of a renewed French offensive long overshadowed the destinies of the posts on Hudson Bay. It is easy to understand how their officers, badly supported by their personnel,

with nothing to fall back on but these unconnected posts, and lost at the extremity of a continent that seemed intent on repelling them, should have systematically neglected the work of penetrating the country. They had no means with which to undertake it, and simple prudence advised them not to make the attempt. Moreover, in this prolonged inertia, which allowed the Canadians, without fear of competition, to develop freely their commercial operations among the tribes of the interior, there was something more than a mere concatenation of unfavorable conditions, whose blame rested neither with the Company, forced to recruit its personnel haphazardly in England, nor with the commandants of the posts, forced to accept the tactics which common sense suggested to them. Other elements intervened, which involved more directly their respective responsibilities.

The Company itself hampered the initiatives of its representatives by forbidding them to organize any expedition into the hinterland without its express authorization. Thus we see it on the one hand encouraging some enterprise that contributed to knowledge of the country and its people, and on the other hand disapproving the request of a young employee who wished to go among the Indians in order to learn their language.⁶⁶ Andrew Graham reproached the Committee for neglecting energetic young people who volunteered to establish useful relations with the peoples of the interior and for reserving its favors and its increases of wages for men who merely carried out the work of artisans.⁶⁷ The example of Anthony Henday, whose services in the domain of discovery remained unacknowledged by the Company, seems to justify Graham's criticisms.⁶⁸ James Isham also contrasted the Company's indifference with the attitude of the Canadians, who encouraged initiative among their men by giving them a commission based on the number of furs they acquired in trade,⁶⁹ whereas the Company manifested its recognition only by granting fixed increases in wages.⁷⁰ To the idea of annual expeditions of employees into the hinterland the Company came round only reluctantly. Even in 1769, refusing to accept the evidence of actual successes, it disapproved of this practice, and ordered the chief factor of York to discontinue it.⁷¹

It seems that having first looked favorably on such enterprises, the Company gradually turned away from them, and for a long period remained frozen in an attitude of immobility and in an inability to recognize the factors that were detrimental to the impetus

of its operations. Thus the manpower of the posts, sufficient in the beginning, gradually fell behind the needs of the service. This insufficiency was evident as soon as the Company resumed possession of its establishments. York Factory complained that it was unable to assure proper service with a personnel parsimoniously limited to twenty-four men, when a minimum of twenty-six was necessary.⁷² The post of Albany, reduced to less than fifteen men, saw itself obliged in 1743 to tolerate the crippling encroachments of the pedlars into its territory.⁷³ The Churchill River post, situated in a particularly desolate region, had to start operations with a garrison of sixteen men, many of whom could not adapt to the rigors of the climate, and this situation aroused Captain James Knight's indignation against the directors in London: "I wish . . . the Committee . . . was to take their Winter Quarters with us . . . then I believe they would sett a Little more value upon mens Lives."⁷⁴ Severn, where the work of construction required at least twenty employees, was even worse provided, with a garrison of five men in 1760.⁷⁵ And Moose Factory, threatened on all sides by the French enterprises, had in 1736 a complement of only twenty-three men.⁷⁶ When the Committee made up its mind to more vigorous efforts and raised to forty-eight men the garrisons of Albany (1751) and York (1758),⁷⁷ it was not exceeding the needs of its posts, for by that date the work of penetration into the interior had begun, and the resulting diminution of manpower rendered these establishments incapable of resistance in the ever possible eventuality of an attack.⁷⁸ If later on the staff of Fort Albany was stabilized at fifty men, the increase at York was intermittent, subject to the Committee's caprices and the difficulties of recruitment. From sixty-nine men in 1768, York fell to thirty-four in 1772, a number obviously insufficient for the double tasks of maintaining the post and carrying out expeditions into the interior.⁷⁹

The Company interposed a further hindrance to penetration by failing to adapt the quality of its trade goods to the demands of the Indians and the nature of their life. In this way, instead of giving its employees the means to struggle on equal terms with the Canadians, it paralysed any serious attempt at entry into the interior. To judge from the repeated complaints of officers at the posts, the Committee for many years ignored the real needs of its establishment. Undoubtedly the situation of its posts and the length and perils of the route that linked them with the homeland made their provisioning difficult and at times uncertain.⁸⁰ From this disability

the French during their occupation of Port Nelson suffered even more than the Anglo-Saxons. With even less adequate supplies,⁸¹ they allowed the trade they had established in the beginning with the Indians to fall into jeopardy, and had to tolerate their customers' departure in the direction of Albany as they waited for the treaty of 1713 to eliminate them from their coastal base.⁸² Thus it would have been equally difficult for them, relying on Port Nelson, to follow the waterways into the interior, and the years of French occupation were just as much a time of immobility as those of the English presence.⁸³ The English in fact suffered less from the difficulties of getting supplies than from the poor adaptation to native requirements of the merchandise that did arrive. For nomadic hunting peoples, lightness and solidity were as necessary in the other articles that were sold to them as good quality in muskets and ammunition. It was precisely in these directions that English goods were inferior to those offered by the Canadians. Even in the Committee's opinion, their gunpowder was of mediocre quality.⁸⁴ The kettles, needed for preparing the Indians' food, were too heavy and difficult to handle, and did not win their satisfaction.⁸⁵ On the other hand, the ornaments with which the Canadians always adorned the cloaks and tunics they offered increased their value greatly in the eyes of the Indians.⁸⁶ By the middle of the eighteenth century the Committee had still not entirely eliminated these inferiorities by systematically improving the articles they offered for exchange. Moreover, for a number of years the unrestricted distribution of alcohol gave the Canadians a real advantage.⁸⁷ In this direction, however, after an initial period of hesitation, the Company reconciled itself to imitating its competitors' methods, and shortly after the reoccupation of its bases, it resorted more widely to this practice, whose pernicious character had aroused the scruples the Committee showed in the beginning regarding its use.⁸⁸

In its struggle against the Canadians, the Company had only two appreciable advantages. The first was its ability to import by sea heavy merchandise which the Canadians could not easily transport over the inland waterways. Among other items, these included muskets, which the Indians could obtain more reasonably at the posts along the coastline and which they sometimes resold to the Canadians.⁸⁹ Even more important was the fine quality of the Brazilian tobacco the Company sent to Hudson Bay, with which the Canadians were unable to compete.⁹⁰ But the advan-

tages of these ready supplies of heavy trade goods disappeared in the interior, where the matter of transport became as crucial for the Company's men as it was for the traders from Lower Canada. Here it was only with their tobacco that the Anglo-Saxons could compete effectively with the pedlars, and this was not enough to neutralize the advantages the latter found in the better adaptation of the articles they offered to the needs of the primitive peoples whose customs they knew so well. As for the terms which the English offered to the Indians, in the earlier years these were sometimes easier than those of the Canadians. The Indians often complained to the officers on Hudson Bay of the greed which the pedlars showed. But even if the Canadians could not offer the heavier kinds of merchandise at rates so advantageous as their rivals, they often fixed better terms for other articles, which prevented their adversaries from ever gaining complete supremacy.⁹¹

The inequality resulting from this complex of factors prevented the current of penetration proceeding from the coast from rivaling for a long time that which was based on the Great Lakes. This was in spite of the superiority which logically should have accrued from its greater proximity to the base that sustained it as compared with that of the Canadians to their St. Lawrence base.⁹² Before 1774, what penetration took place consisted of a small number of individual initiatives that can have contributed only slightly to bringing together white and native. Given the mediocre personnel which the posts on Hudson Bay had at their disposition, it would have been impossible to undertake expeditions comparable to those of La Vérendrye. There were merely a few exceptional men, obeying their natural curiosity or a desire to broaden the Company's operations, who could accept the risks of a task so unfamiliar and attended by such unknown perils. In 1743, tired of listening to the reproaches of the Indians for not imitating the Canadians' activity,⁹³ the commandant of Fort Albany decided to erect a trading post on the river whose passage his rivals were intercepting. The attempt merely revealed the inability of his men to reproduce the pedlars' exploits, and it meant a setback of several years in collective enterprise.⁹⁴

The promoter of this enterprise, Joseph Isbister, was not the kind of man to remain content with a policy of immobility. Conscious of the gains to be made from broadening contacts in the hinterland, he devised a new type of craft, of shallow draft to enable it to ascend the rivers of the interior, of larger dimensions than the

canoe to allow for heavier cargoes, and built with a solidity that would resist the wear and destruction that the clumsiness of the employees was constantly inflicting on the canoes.⁹⁵ Under his direction, in 1743, eight men, accompanied by ten canoes of Indians, ascended the Albany River to the confluence of the two main arms, and there, on the southern branch, not far from the junction, they built an advance post called Henley House, which was well defended, like a mediaeval keep in miniature.⁹⁶ The journal kept on this expedition shows the difficulties that hindered the enterprise, the awkwardness with which the crews manoeuvred their craft against a current that was too fast for them, the sufferings due to heat and insects, the exhaustion caused by the what seemed such long distances (in fact only 120 to 125 miles) and by the need for the frequent use of the towrope.⁹⁷ When at last the post was completed and fortified, the danger of Canadian attacks reappeared, more urgently than on the coast. Operating from their bases on Lake Superior or Lake Nipigon, always ready to intimidate the natives by spreading rumors of their aggressive designs,⁹⁸ the Canadians were too numerous in the environs of Henley House to tolerate for long the post's existence. In 1755 the news reached Albany that the little garrison had been massacred by the Indians: a number of clues showed that they had acted at the instigation of the *coureurs de bois*. The following year, the latter burnt the post, whose handsome appearance had been the pride of the chief factor of Albany, and whose construction had marked the first attempt at penetration of any importance to be carried out by the personnel of the British company.⁹⁹

The experiment was resumed, not without misgivings, in 1759.¹⁰⁰ It ended even more wretchedly in the murder of George Clark, who had been appointed to the command of Henley House, and in the destruction of the post even before its garrison had arrived. The assault was carried out by a dozen Canadians, reinforced by an equal number of Indians they had won over to their cause.¹⁰¹ It was only in 1766 that the Company's men could overcome the fear these events had created, and would agree to make another attempt, this time more fortunate.¹⁰²

This isolated and relatively unimportant instance of collective penetration did not fall within the geographic framework of the true West, and it was individual enterprises that were responsible, during the first century of the occupation of Hudson Bay, for the establishment of a rudimentary trend of expansion into the in-

terior; in character it was radically different from the French method of penetration. Instead of fostering ever closer association between the primitive and the civilized, and of encouraging, as La Vérendrye had done, a rudimentary form of colonization, these isolated travellers rapidly followed the routes of penetration, pausing merely to establish short-lived commercial relations with the new tribes they encountered. But, though they remained only temporarily among the Indians, they nevertheless contributed more actively through their mobility to the discovery of the country than the Canadians had done. This tradition was established with the first such individual enterprise, that of Henry Kelsey, in 1690: henceforward, it was among the Scots and the Anglo-Saxons that the discovery of the West found its most convinced and enterprising pioneers.

When the Canadians had not yet reached Lake Winnipeg, the young Henry Kelsey, whose curiosity of mind and partiality for the company of the Indians distinguished him from the ordinary Company employees, had penetrated as far as the lower reaches of the Saskatchewan.¹⁰³ Then, plunging into the prairie itself, he reached the neighborhood of the Touchwood Hills.¹⁰⁴ Encouraged by the increase in salary which Governor Geyer had granted him,¹⁰⁵ but above all impelled by the desire to develop his knowledge of native languages and to clarify his notions regarding the interior of the continent,¹⁰⁶ he lived among the peoples of the prairie and the park land, the Assiniboine and the Cree, from 1690 to 1692, and, having asserted himself to dissuade them from their incessant warfare, he returned to Fort Nelson, accompanied by a flotilla of canoes abundantly loaded with furs.¹⁰⁷ That initiative, which ended in the discovery of a region still unknown to the traders of Lower Canada, should have assured to York Factory the domination of a vast hinterland. Unfortunately, and despite the hopes the Company expressed that his example would soon be followed,¹⁰⁸ Henry Kelsey's achievement remained isolated. He himself was promoted to the charge of York Factory, and became too much absorbed in his duties to absent himself for a long enough period to repeat his journey, and the memory of his expedition faded gradually away. Andrew Graham seemed unaware of it in 1792, when he gave Anthony Henday the credit of having been the first to winter among the native peoples.¹⁰⁹ And in fact it was only with Henday's initiative that the work of Henry Kelsey was really taken up again.

During the interval, though individual initiatives were not entirely lacking, they were limited enterprises of no great scope which added merely to the knowledge of the immediate environments of the posts on the Bay. It is in this context that one must consider the 1690 expedition of Chouart des Groseilliers and Elie Grimard, then in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, who ventured without great profit some two hundred miles from York Factory;¹¹⁰ or the enterprise of William Stewart who, at the instigation of the governor of York Factory, accompanied a group of Cree in 1715 to the territory of the Chipewyan and tried to reconcile the two peoples with a view to facilitating the exploitation of the supposed mineral wealth of the region.¹¹¹ Similarly limited was the task confided in 1718 to the apprentice Richard Norton, of visiting the Indians of the Churchill River to exercise a conciliatory influence among them and to direct their furs toward York Factory.¹¹² Perhaps more important, but with little bearing on the real problem of penetration, were the initiatives of Moses Norton, who, in the first years of Prince of Wales Fort, stayed for long periods among the Chipewyan to lead them in greater numbers toward the post on the Churchill River.¹¹³ None of these enterprises could in fact be compared with those of Henry Kelsey or of Anthony Henday.

In 1754, disturbed by the progress which the Canadians were making, Henday put an end through his courageous initiative to the Company's immobility. Taking off on a higher level from the achievements of Henry Kelsey, he inaugurated the series of individual enterprises which, however intermittent, constituted the first stage in the occupation of a territory that was on the point of passing under the domination of the traders from Lower Canada. Anthony Henday, whose clouded past detracted in no way from his qualities of energy and disinterestedness, offered on his own accord to hold the excessively bold Canadians at bay by establishing direct contact with the peoples of the prairie.¹¹⁴ In June 1754 he left York Factory with the Cree who had come there to trade their furs, with the intention of pushing as far as the territory of the Blackfoot.¹¹⁵ In 1755, having passed the winter on the prairie, he returned to York merely to guide the Indians whose allegiance he had gained, and departed at once for the country of the Assiniboine and the Blackfoot.¹¹⁶ His example immediately gained converts. In 1756-7 and in 1757-8, J. Waggoner and Joseph Smith in their turn penetrated to the boundaries of the prairie,¹¹⁷

followed soon by George Potts and Isaac Batt in 1758-9,¹¹⁸ who were joined in 1759 by Henday and Smith.¹¹⁹ From this time onward the current continued without interruption, augmented in 1761-2 by Henry Pressick, and in 1764-5 by Joseph Taylor.¹²⁰

Usually employees would depart at the beginning of summer and return the following year with the Indians who were willing to accompany them. Sometimes, however, they reappeared at York Factory only after an absence of two years.¹²¹ Their activity was entirely commercial. The work they set out to accomplish was neither a scientific enterprise, with a clearly defined aim of geographical discovery, nor a program of evangelization. Its aim was nothing more than the establishment of broader economic relations with the native peoples, intended to prevent the exhaustion of the Hudson Bay trade through the invasive action of the Canadians. Yet these men who sought to form an economic link with the parklands and the prairies involuntarily made a more effective contribution to the discovery of the interior than La Vérendrye, whose efforts, theoretically limited to the search for the Western Sea, had been dispersed in commercial operations, in the foundation of posts that might ensure the effective occupation of the land, and in his interventions in native quarrels. Instead of attempting to take possession of the land, the Hudson's Bay Company's men went rapidly along the routes of penetration and so they reached far beyond the limits that were attained by their rivals.

The itinerary they followed was invariably based on the waterways uniting Lake Winnipeg with York Factory.¹²² Having reached the great lake, whose approaches were guarded by the Canadians, they used either the artery of the Saskatchewan River, or the series of interconnected lakes—Winnipeg, Winnipegosis, and Manitoba—and by such routes they could reach the most remote sections of the prairies and the parkland. Anthony Henday, following the lower reaches of the Saskatchewan, came to the Carrot River, and, having traversed that extreme edge of the prairie where saline lakes abound and the trees disappear, he reached the South Saskatchewan, went on to the Red Deer River without giving even a thought to consolidating with outposts the route he had followed, and there he found himself in the country of the Blood Indians, where he spent the winter of 1754-5 within sight of the Rocky Mountains.¹²³ In 1756-7 Joseph Smith and J. Waggoner decided to circulate in the neighborhood of Lake Winnipegosis, among the clearings and wooded stretches of the Porcupine River

and Duck Mountain, where in December the bison found their natural refuge. Their aim was to broaden exchanges with the Sturgeon Indians.¹²⁴ In 1763-4, they probed more deeply into the prairie, as far as the South Saskatchewan and the Birch Hills.¹²⁵ In 1757-8 Smith followed the coast of Lake Manitoba to the Assiniboine River; he ascended its course and spent the winter among its inhabitants.¹²⁶ Finally, Henry Pressick resumed Anthony Henday's work among the Blackfoot.¹²⁷

Thus the expeditions of the Hudson's Bay Company's men into the prairies extended over a far greater area than those of the French Canadians. The Canadian positions, solidly established at the entry to the western plains and on the borders of the parkland, were well enough placed to spare their garrisons from the need of such journeys. The Canadians had little to fear from the operations of their rivals. The very superiority of their positions neutralized the effects of such competition. Since they could not carry any appreciable amount of trade goods, the Hudson's Bay Company's men were reduced to urging the Indians to accompany them to the coast, which meant asking of them a useless effort that aroused the aversion of those peoples who were accustomed to the easy existence of bison hunters and poorly trained in the use of canoes. Thus the Bloods and the Blackfoot replied by offering, as pretexts for their refusal, the length of the journey Henday asked them to undertake, the risks of starvation it involved, the impossibility of abandoning their horses during their absence. All these inconveniences they could avoid by visiting the nearer bases of the Canadians or letting their beaver skins go to the Assiniboine who resold them to the pedlars.¹²⁸ It was by similar arguments that the Assiniboine, whose way of life differed in no respect from that of the Blackfoot, justified their refusal to go to the distant posts on Hudson Bay.¹²⁹

To this disadvantageous situation, due to the Company's tardy entry into the hinterland and to the hold of the Canadians on the travel routes of the native tribes, must be added the insufficiency of the Anglo-Saxon personnel. Only a few men were active in the interior—a mere dozen for example in 1759¹³⁰—apart from the leaders of the expeditions, who often found themselves entirely isolated, without any kind of support among unfamiliar populations whom they did not know how to manage with the ease the Canadians showed in such circumstances. If the group known as the Sturgeon Indians, to which the posts on the Bay were more

accessible, replied favorably to the persuasions of the newcomers,¹³¹ the prairie tribes showed little eagerness to change their ways.¹³² Yet many of them were willing to hand over to the posts on the Bay the furs the Canadians did not want,¹³³ and undoubtedly, contrary to the opinions Andrew Graham would express on these early enterprises,¹³⁴ the trade of Hudson Bay showed at this time a modest increase. Thus York Factory, having failed to reach a total of 21,000 pelts in 1754,¹³⁵ received after Anthony Henday's first expedition more than 24,000 furs in 1755¹³⁶ and nearly 27,000 in 1756.¹³⁷ But this revival of activity was not harmful enough to the pedlars' interests to arouse in them a real hostility toward these competitors who were so evidently incapable of stabilizing their positions. It was not until the pedlars disappeared, recalled to Lower Canada by the demands of war against England, that the stores of pelts in the establishments along the coast were notably augmented.¹³⁸

It is this inoffensive character of the Anglo-Saxon attempt to penetrate the hinterland that helps to explain the cordiality of the relations that were formed in the hinterland between the two groups of traders. The indifference shown by some of the Canadians toward the war which set France and England at each others' throats¹³⁹ was just as much an expression of this state of affairs as it was of the meagre interest which they sustained, in the West that had become their fatherland, toward events in the colony on the St. Lawrence. It is true that Anthony Henday was greeted with distrust in 1754 at Fort Basquea by the Chevalier de la Corne, who went so far as to demand from him papers establishing the legality of his enterprise and threatened to take him prisoner and send him under guard to France.¹⁴⁰ But on his return, Henday was well received at both Fort Basquea and Fort la Corne.¹⁴¹ In subsequent years, though the war between France and England became increasingly violent, good relations persisted between the pedlars and the Anglo-Saxons. In 1757 Smith and Waggoner expressed to the chief factor of York Factory their satisfaction with the great civility of the welcome shown to them by the French.¹⁴²

At the same time, without entirely abandoning their precautions against the Canadians, the officers of the posts on Hudson Bay became reconciled to the idea of making use for the Company's benefit of their experience and their superior knowledge of primitive people. The possibility of an attack was, of course, always to be feared, and the officers did not lessen their vigilance.¹⁴³ The

Committee continued to view the *coureurs de bois* as "enemies and spies,"¹⁴⁴ and urged that they should be forbidden access to the Company's forts.¹⁴⁵ Yet it did not hesitate to have recourse to them if the opportunity arose, and to accept their offers of service. When J. B. Larlée presented himself to Humphrey Marten, the governor of York Factory, in 1754, he was courteously received in recognition of the cordiality the French had shown in the West toward British employees.¹⁴⁶ And as soon as the Committee was convinced of Larlée's possible usefulness in establishing relations with the Indians, it instructed the commandant of Fort Albany to incorporate him in the fort's staff and to admit him to the officers' table.¹⁴⁷ A few years later, in 1764, a Canadian named Louis Primeau who had refused to leave the West at the time of the collapse of New France, also found his way to York Factory and was engaged for two years in the Company's service. He was given instructions to return to the interior and entice new groups of Indians toward Hudson Bay, to interpose as peacemaker between mutually hostile tribes, and to keep an eye on the movements of his compatriots who, once the French were defeated, had resumed their activity in the West.¹⁴⁸

Thus, in that preliminary phase of Anglo-Saxon penetration, relations between the Canadians and the personnel of the British posts remained peaceful. Too scantily represented to clash in those vast expanses where the Company sent merely a few men, and also too poorly equipped to develop an effective competition, the two parties pursued without hostility their trading operations in a country which, up to the conquest of Canada by England, remained an appanage of the men of New France. But, as soon as the confusion provoked by the occupation of the St. Lawrence valley had died down, the Canadians who had temporarily abandoned the West appeared there in greater numbers than ever before, and they were now animated by a less conciliatory spirit. Finally convinced of the need for a more energetic policy, the Hudson's Bay Company abandoned at the same time the sluggishness of its initial policy. It undertook to assign greater manpower to expeditions into the hinterland, to establish posts there that would be permanently occupied, and to thwart by a more resolute program of expansion the designs of the opposing camp. Not that it immediately implemented its decision. It persisted in its traditional system of isolated enterprises until the day it became evident that the return of the pedlars looked like resulting in the annihilation of

its trade. Only in 1774 did it finally rally to a new policy. In the struggle which then began, the weaknesses that for so long had paralysed its expansion were now brought into the daylight and threw into greater relief than ever the superiority of its adversaries. But for all that, the two currents of penetration did not cease their parallel progress along the main routes to the interior, where from this time onward they contributed in a more equal way to the establishment of relations of crucial importance between whites and natives.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE MEETING AND CONFLICT OF THE CURRENTS OF PENETRATION

NEW ELEMENTS IN THE PROCESS OF PENETRATION

As we have said, the Canadians never completely deserted the West. A number of isolated individuals, virtually incorporated into the primitive milieu and too attached to the fur-trader's life to care greatly about events in Lower Canada, had continued to live among the Indians. The best example is Louis Primeau, an illiterate braggart of a trader who was nevertheless a past master in Indian dialects. After a few years, tired of a lengthy contact with the life of the savages and the sufferings it involved, he became engaged at York Factory and from that time onward he defended the interests of the Hudson's Bay Company in the prairies.¹

Thus, between the two phases separated by the English conquest of Lower Canada, the suspension of continuity was never complete. Moreover, the withdrawal of the Canadians did not last for long. The traders were not slow to take once again to the road for the West in considerable numbers, using the same routes as their predecessors, and once again they established the numerical preponderance of the southern route.

But while, in the years preceding the conquest, the traders from Lower Canada had been essentially of French origin, henceforward they were less homogenous, and among the more enterprising of their organizers figured men who were entirely alien to the Canadian race and its traditions. They were, largely, an acquisitive group, formed of that adventurous and cosmopolitan section of humanity which enters a conquered country in the wake of victorious armies and in the quest of commercial profits. But there

were also men moved by higher motives, who had vowed an unchanging loyalty to their country and had abandoned the dissident United States to seek a refuge on British soil. It was this last category, the group of United Empire Loyalists, augmented by some of their compatriots who had entered Canada in the ranks of Wolfe's army,² who henceforward provided the fur trade with its most famous and most active representatives. Mainly Scottish, with a high proportion of Highlanders, they soon became the masters of this industry which offered their ambition a lucrative outlet: the names of the McGillivrays and the McTavishes are as inseparable from the period opening in 1763 as the name of La Vérendrye had been in earlier years.

Alongside them came Americans who brought with them the emergent variety of their races and the rough ways of frontier life. Among these were old soldiers, like James Tute, who had served as captain in Rogers' Rangers during the Seven Years' War and afterward had followed the fur trade in Illinois,³ and specialized merchants, like Peter Pangman, of German origin, who had developed his operations in the Mississippi region.⁴ William Bruce had also been formed in the rough school of fur traders among the Indians of the Mississippi, where he had gained a repute for violence.⁵ Alexander Henry the Elder originated in New Jersey, and had been associated since youth with the fur trade; at the age of twenty-one he followed General Gage's army to Canadian territory and set out immediately on the way to the West with a stock of merchandise he proposed to exchange with the natives.⁶ There were talented explorers, like the New Englander Peter Pond, whose natural curiosity led him to an especially brilliant role in the discovery of the unknown spaces of Athabasca, and whose participation in the campaign against Montcalm's troops and long experience among the Indians of the Mississippi had prepared him for the difficulties of living in the North West.⁷ Finally, there were some unlucky merchants who had been reduced to failure as a result of their involvement in weighty affairs in the Albany [New York] region and had come to try their luck in Canada, where the fur trade offered them the kind of resources in which American territory was now impoverished.

These elements formed a mosaic of humanity, in which the American of Anglo-Saxon ancestry mingled with the Israelite, and the Scot worked side by side with the Swiss or the German; their collective outlook, often shaped by the American frontier, differed

profoundly from that of the French Canadian. Moreover, to their adventurous and unscrupulous attitude, most of them added a knowledge and experience of business, of which the men of New France had been deprived by the more humble level of their upbringing. Because of this they were able to take control of the trading operations. They reconstituted them into organizations that in size equalled the Hudson's Bay Company, but excelled it in activity, in spirit of enterprise, in methods better adapted to the demands of the primitive setting, and above all in the subordinate personnel they were careful to recruit from among the men of Lower Canada, who had experience that was indispensable to success. A distinction was thus established between the true Canadian population and the newcomers, which was a living expression of the conditions the conquest had created in the colony of the St. Lawrence; to the Scots and Anglo-Saxons, the McTavishes and Frobishers who headed the enterprises, were added the Canadians who, as voyageurs, as petty traffickers, as simple post employees, formed the greater part of the trading companies' personnel. As well as the Scots, there were indeed a few Canadians who occupied directive positions, such as Nicolas Montour and Maurice Blondeau, but they represented only a tiny minority, which was dominated by the strangers whose antecedents qualified them for important roles.

This merchant aristocracy was far from confining itself to the passive role of distant administrators, unaccustomed to the harsh conditions of the trader's and the explorer's life. If a few remained in Montreal to look after the direction of the enterprises they had created, many of them set out in person for the primitive hinterland and themselves carried out some of the most daring projects. In this way they shared the hardships of the lesser personnel. A reciprocal esteem developed as a result, which prevented the birth and development of the kind of national hatred that, after the conquest of Canada, might have seemed inevitable between the representatives of the victorious power and the subject population. Making their own the struggle which the governors and intendants of New France had so long pursued against the posts on Hudson Bay, the Scots newly established in Canada became champions of the cause of the St. Lawrence against the ascendancy over Rupert's Land of the great British company. They brought to the direction of the trade a unity of views, a sureness of judgment, and an energetic impulse that the French enterprises had not

displayed. The process of penetration lost the somewhat fragmentary character of its earlier years. Instead of dissipating itself in commercial, religious, and scientific endeavors, it henceforward obeyed entirely commercial objectives, to which the scientific side of the enterprises was strictly subordinated. The duality of aims that had weakened La Vérendrye's enterprises gave place to a single orientation, directed toward the realization of lucrative operations, which ambitious men were resolved to make successful without allowing themselves to be embarrassed by scruples affecting their choice of ways of action.

A new mentality also began to spread in the organizations directed by the adoptive Canadians: a violent, harshly acquisitive mentality, which aimed at the elimination of their rivals, contested openly the legality of the charter held by the Hudson's Bay Company, and the right the Company invoked to sole occupation of the territories to which it held the official concession. It demanded of the subordinate personnel a merciless effort, a struggle without truce against the difficulties of existence in the most inhospitable areas of the North West, but it recompensed them liberally after their effort. The will to succeed and the impressive results of the new enterprises served as excuses for the extravagances of behavior in which the spirit of the American frontier was revived at the same time as the warrior mentality—not without its own nobility—of the Highlanders.

Regarding this new spirit, so distant from the inclinations of the French Canadians, the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company expressed their alarm from the beginning in terms that have become classic to the historians of the West. In 1761 the commandant of Moose Factory communicated his apprehensions to the Committee in London.

Those you will find however are already encroached upon to the Southward and s^e by Interlopers who will be more Destructive to our Trade than the French was. The French were in a manner Settled, Their Trade fixt, Their Standard moderate and Themselves under particular regulations and restrictions, which I doubt is not the Case now. The Consequence of which is this, every Party in view of increasing Their Trade and Interest amongst the Indians, will endeavor to draw them from each other, by the allurements of considerable Presents

and Trading with them upon easier Terms than their Neighbours. The Indians perceiving this, the Trade will become an Auction.⁹

In 1768 the chief of Fort Albany called the attention of Major Rogers, commandant of the garrison at Michilimackinac, to the new methods of the pedlars, whose encroachments excelled those he had observed during the whole eighteen years he had passed in the Hudson's Bay Company's service: ". . . for many Traders not only Build Huts & small places of Defence on the Company's Lands but also use force to Hinder the Natives from Coming to trade with us."¹⁰

Conducted in this way, the fur trade led to some imposing results, from which science profited as well as commerce. Up to this time only the eastern verges of the vast North West had been explored, but now the whole country was traversed from the prairie to the Barren Grounds. The Arctic region at the mouths of the Mackenzie River, the ridges of the Canadian Rockies, and the crests of the system of the mountains bordering on the Pacific, as well as the deep valleys that traversed these ranges on their way to the ocean, passed under the economic domination of the organizations which the Scottish entrepreneurs had built up. In obedience to the initiative of these leaders, the French Canadians spread in ever greater numbers through this country of the West over which, since La Vérendrye, they had maintained a notion of preemptive right. The occupation of the West continued virtually without interruption. It followed a plan that depended in no way on already devised projects, but took shape on the spot and grew through its contacts with realities whose details emerged out of the very geography of the land and the possibilities it opened to the traders' ambitions. The new penetration began from the initial bases that the earlier pedlars had established; these were quickly reoccupied, and afterward the process developed simultaneously along the waterways of the prairie and across the rocky zone of the great northern forest, by way of which it reached the hitherto unexplored region of the Athabasca River.

THE RESUMPTION OF THE PENETRATION OF THE WEST

The process of penetration along the southern routes was resumed

again in 1761, and it continued without pausing to take note of the restrictions which the Imperial government made a show of imposing, between 1763 and 1768, on the free pursuit of trade in the so-called Indian Territory.¹¹ Moose Factory was an immediate target, because of its situation. All the routes that came together at the "Bottom of the Bay" were reoccupied, from the Nottoway River where the pedlars, according to one Indian chief, swarmed in 1761 "as thickly as mosquitos,"¹² to the Rupert and Abitibi rivers, which the Canadians, favored by the closeness of their bases, embarked on in the spring of 1761 and ascended as far as the coast before the breakup of the ice.¹³ From the posts they built, five or six days by river from Moose Factory, they provided amply for the needs of the natives, and those who presented themselves at the Fort on James Bay went there only in search of a few articles they had not been able to get from the pedlars.¹⁴

Fort Albany enjoyed a somewhat longer respite. The Indians were still gathering there in considerable numbers in 1763-4 and the trade with them was satisfactory.¹⁵ But in 1764, when its officers were beginning to think themselves safe from the attacks of the *coureurs de bois*, the pedlars reappeared.¹⁶ To begin with, they encountered difficulties with the Indians,¹⁷ but they persisted in establishing themselves on the routes of access to Fort Albany. In 1766 they were reported as being only a short distance from Henley House and the Indians complained they were forcibly seizing their furs.¹⁸ The trade of Fort Albany began to show a notable decline.¹⁹ From their base on Lake Superior, where they were once again established, the pedlars reached the waterways that came together in the southern branch of the Albany River. Thence they were able to get to the English post (Henley House) by way of the Pic or Michipicoten River with an ease facilitated by the presence of a few old hands sufficiently familiar with the topography of the Shield to guide the newcomers.²⁰ As in the past, they provoked the Indians to attack Henley House, which they themselves were constantly threatening to destroy,²¹ and they were quick to exercise a disruptive influence on the Indians. One by one, the most important among the latter deserted the post and transferred their loyalty to the "damned pedlars" from Lower Canada,²² whose numbers were such, the Indians said, that they could not pass through their ranks without being stopped and forced to let them have their furs, either willingly or under duress.²³ Everywhere, their shacks were set up among the outcrops of the Shield, and

along the borders of the lakes, creeks, and other waterways.²⁴ In 1783, by way of the Nipigon River, they reached St. Joseph Lake, which commands the Albany River proper;²⁵ they even went beyond it and to the north established themselves on Cat Lake, while to the west they settled on Lac Seul and reached Lake Winnipeg by the Berens River or Pigeon River.²⁶ In 1764, the year in which the rumor of their return reached Fort Albany, they had pushed far beyond the shores of Lake Superior. Following the classic route, which was as well remembered as the way to Moose Factory or Albany,²⁷ they proceeded with considerable bodies of men toward the bases disposed around Lake Winnipeg. At their head were two Anglo-Saxons who had returned from the interior, Isbister and John Patterson; these two men had deserted the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, and probably took charge of the expedition at the head of Lake Superior. The enterprise was unsuccessful, for quarrels broke out among the men, and this prevented them from continuing on their way and forced them to halt over the winter.²⁸ They may have run into difficulties with the Rainy Lake Indians, whose hostility paralysed the expeditions undertaken in subsequent years. In 1765, 1766, and 1769-70, the natives, who had long been deprived of merchandise, pillaged the canoes that were trying to reach Lake Winnipeg,²⁹ and it was only after the year 1779 that the pedlars gained control over them with the support of a well-known native chief.³⁰

Yet, despite these violent encounters, the adventurers of Lower Canada succeeded in retaking possession of their old bases. By 1765 they had reached them. During the winter of 1765-6 they resumed their trade with the Indians. In June 1766 the latter took only a small number of furs to York Factory, and those of poor quality.³¹ In the same year, letters from Prince of Wales Fort reported that the "Quebeckers" were committing new trespasses in the interior.³² An experienced fur-trader, Maurice or Barthélemy Blondeau, took over Fort la Reine, which had been abandoned for several years.³³ Near him, another trader, François le Blanc, well known to the Indians who nicknamed him Sasswe, arrived at Fort Dauphin and probably gained the lower course of the Saskatchewan.³⁴ In June 1767 the traders departed with the products of their trade, and returned in September to resume their operations.³⁵ François le Blanc, with an escort of ten or so Canadians, went to Paskoyac for the winter,³⁶ and perhaps also to Fort Dauphin and Fort la Prairie near Nipawin,³⁷ while Blondeau

reached either Fort la Reine or Fort Dauphin.³⁸ Some of their men were already familiar with the Indian tribes in these rich territories, and their trade goods were soon circulating among these peoples as in the past.³⁹

In this preliminary phase of the pedlars' return, the preponderant role thus belonged to the French. Meanwhile the Anglo-Saxons were quickly penetrating into the North West, guided by the Canadians themselves. In 1766 Forrest Oakes ventured there, thanks to an agreement he had made with the trader Charles Boyer, whose activity during the French regime had centred on Rainy Lake, and from 1766 to 1768 he traded there with the Indians of the Red and Assiniboine rivers.⁴⁰ In 1768, James Finlay ascended the Saskatchewan and established himself at Nipawin: thence he extended his operations toward Paskoyac, where he had an advance post guarded by a small garrison of five Canadians,⁴¹ while a dozen lived with him in the principal post,⁴² which was merely a modest log house.⁴³

By this time the old positions had all been reoccupied. The central base of Lake Winnipeg was furnished with a series of posts, which saved the Indians from making the long journey to York Factory or Severn.⁴⁴ Beyond that, the pedlars controlled the lower course of the Saskatchewan. The Assiniboine, which the French had hardly embarked on, now became a highly active commercial axis; its course was punctuated by new posts, such as Fort du Milieu or Middle Fort, and Fort des Epinettes or Pine Fort, which flanked Fort la Reine.⁴⁵ The heart of the country through which the Indians had borne their tribute to Hudson Bay now sustained the enterprises of the Canadians.

THE ENCIRCLEMENT OF THE ENGLISH POSITIONS

In the following years, the invasion of the traders from the St. Lawrence continued to expand. They were favored by the repeal, in 1768, of the restrictions which the Imperial government had first imposed on trade with the native populations,⁴⁷ and also by the gradual re-establishment on the Great Lakes route of the security that had been disturbed temporarily by Pontiac's uprising (1763). They benefited at the same time from the development of more conciliatory attitudes among the Indians of Rainy Lake.

In 1769 many traders found their way to the Assiniboine River,

including Forrest Oakes and Charles Boyer, Maurice Blondeau, and J. B. Adhémar; new posts were built there, and its commercial importance was reinforced.⁴⁸ In 1770 the two Frobishers, Joseph and Benjamin (well supplied with trade goods by Montreal businessmen) inaugurated their brilliant career in the country of the West by founding Lake Fort on the Red River,⁴⁹ a post intended to fulfil the double roles of providing furs and dried buffalo meat, two products that would soon be complementing each other in the extension of trading operations and expeditions of discovery. Shortly afterward, the trader Thomas Corry built a post on the shores of Cedar Lake, near La Vérendrye's old Fort Bourbon, in an area where prime furs were especially abundant,⁵⁰ and from there Blondeau penetrated into the valley of the Red Deer River.⁵¹ These initiatives served to complete the network of positions which surrounded Lake Winnipeg and which, by way of the Saskatchewan and the Assiniboine, cut deeply into the parkland and the prairie. In this way each year showed more clearly the importance of the commanding position which the great lake of the West and its series of interconnecting lakes continued to confer. By means of the establishments they had created in increasing numbers from the Saskatchewan to Grand Portage, the pedlars had once again achieved the almost total encirclement of the Hudson Bay seaboard.⁵²

Their activity was manifest in the numbers and the dispersion of their men, who spread out to all the thoroughfares used by the Indians. In 1772 François Le Blanc set out for the West with ten canoes, which meant at least forty men.⁵³ In 1773 he disposed of fifteen canoes, which he divided among the various transit routes or sent in pursuit of Indians on their way to York Factory.⁵⁴ In 1774 the Indians estimated at forty the number of canoes that had reached Lake Winnipeg, whence they swarmed into the neighboring waterways.⁵⁵ Often the men dispersed in very small groups among the natives. They received provisions of meat from them, and also the furs which they would afterward transport to the more important posts,⁵⁶ where twenty or thirty men might come together.⁵⁷

Their forts were not so permanent as in La Vérendrye's time. They were more mobile and shifted frequently in response to Indian migrations or to the exhaustion of furs in the locality. Thus, abandoned posts were numerous along the penetration routes. Some of them predated the conquest and had not been reoccupied;

others were more recent structures that had already been abandoned,⁵⁸ or merely temporary shelters erected to last a year or two.⁵⁹ At this period, in any case, few of them were permanently occupied. The pedlars would arrive at the beginning of autumn, spend the winter in the forts, and depart in the spring to transport their crops of furs to Michilimackinac or Montreal.⁶⁰ Because of this great mobility of their posts and the dispersion of their men, the pedlars were able to spread their trade goods in profusion everywhere.⁶¹ The Indians not reached by them were usually intercepted at the crossroads occupied by the principal posts of Pas-koyac and Cedar Lake, customary halting points on the road to Hudson Bay.⁶²

Faithful to their traditional habits, and hostile to the idea of undertaking the journey to Hudson Bay when they could be supplied directly by the traders from the St. Lawrence, the Indians awaited placidly the arrival of these convenient providers, and the Hudson's Bay employees found it hard to stir them out of their lethargy. To the bitter remarks of the officers who accused them of ingratitude, reproaching them for not remembering the presents that had been distributed to buy their fidelity, the Indian chiefs remained indifferent.⁶³ A few of them, more attached than the rest to the governors of the English posts, did their best to keep their tribesmen from deserting, but they ran up against the ill will of the younger people, who were too easily tempted to trade with the ever-present pedlar⁶⁴ and to keep for the Hudson's Bay Company only the furs which the Canadians did not want.⁶⁵ Importuned by the competing groups, the Indians became more and more mercenary in their attitude. They only respected the European when they could expect considerable benefits from him.⁶⁶ If they were sometimes willing to go as far as Hudson Bay, they did so with greater claims than ever before, either to demand presents which—despite the excess of their requests—would be given to them,⁶⁷ or because particularly advantageous trading conditions were being offered.⁶⁸ But neither presents nor the most favorable terms of exchange could be relied on to divert them from their dangerous alliance with the pedlars.⁶⁹ Unaccustomed to ideas of emulation, the Indians would make no attempt to regain the esteem or favor of the commandants of the posts by a resumption of activity.⁷⁰ They continued to offer them their worst-quality furs and to answer with insults or threats when these were refused.⁷¹

In such conditions, the trade of the posts everywhere on Hud-

son Bay entered a new phase of decline. From Moose Factory to York Factory, the figures sank to ever lower levels. Albany, whose vicinity was infested with pedlars, received 7,516 furs in 1769⁷² against 9,104 in 1768.⁷³ Severn recorded only 3,000 pelts in 1773.⁷⁴ York at last saw its operations completely paralysed, as much by the excessive demands of the Indians⁷⁵ as by the encirclement of its hinterland. From 31,640 pelts in 1767, the trading figure fell to 18,324 in 1768, and sank to 8,037 in 1774.⁷⁶ In a letter to the governor of the fort in 1772, the pedlar Thomas Corry informed him ironically of the decision of a particularly important chief not to visit Hudson Bay that year, since he preferred to accompany Corry to Grand Portage, where copious distributions of alcohol were awaiting him.⁷⁷

But the Canadians were not content with this policy of encirclement. Becoming more and more aggressive, they even began to approach the Indians attached to the Hudson Bay posts and tried to gain their alliance. They gave the Indians of Albany whose duty it was to provide the game necessary for sustaining the post, presents whose generosity astounded the Hudson's Bay Company men; they offered to enter into personal bonds with them,⁷⁸ and take them into their service.⁷⁹ They infiltrated the tribes in the hinterland to York Factory,⁸⁰ displayed openly their intention of establishing relations with the natives at Prince of Wales Fort,⁸¹ and, by gradual stages, they wound around the coast itself the same kind of besieging circle as they had already achieved in the hinterland. The prospect that they might soon take over the Home Guard Indians of York Factory, of whose wavering loyalty and idle temperament they were well aware, made the governor of the fort, Joseph Colen, fear the total ruin of his trade.⁸² His fears were all the more justified by the fact that the pedlars had gained a definite superiority through their ability to adapt their trade goods to the needs of the primitive life, which gave their merchandise a special value in the eyes of the native people. To a kettle or a light blanket, sold at roughly half the Hudson's Bay Company's price, the Indians naturally gave their preference, to the detriment of the cumbersome and expensive articles offered by the English posts.⁸³

THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S ATTITUDE

Instead of countering the Canadians' vigorous efforts by a more enterprising policy, the Company defended itself clumsily by

measures that were no more than expedients whose efficacy remained doubtful so long as the organization delayed the decision to send into the interior stronger contingents capable of ensuring effective possession of the land.⁸⁴

What in fact did it present in opposition to its rivals' initiatives?

Distributions of presents to the Indians who were willing to visit its factories? Such measures resulted merely in tempting the natives to new demands, which even when they were granted did not seem to compensate for the inconveniences of the journey to the Bay. [As one officer of York Factory remarked]: "The great favours we give them only induce them to ask more."⁸⁵

A lowering of the tariff? A simple expedient, but it could not overcome the advantage the Indians gained from the quality of Canadian goods; to such expedients, in any case, the pedlars responded, after an initial reaction of annoyance, with identical measures.⁸⁶

The invocation of the privilege of exclusive trade which the Company held by reason of the charter under which it was founded? To this argument the pedlars paid no more attention than they did to useless and inconsequent gestures enjoining them to leave the Hudson Bay territory.⁸⁷

To the approaches which the pedlars made, in imitation of the Canadians' former practice, with a view to entering into trading relations with the Hudson Bay posts, the Company's officers replied by rejecting any dealings with them. Thus Peter Pangman, who dared to appear in person at York Factory, was quickly shown the door and had to suffer the confiscation of his furs, in doing which the officer in charge departed in no way from the standards of courtesy which the Company urged upon its agents.⁸⁸

But the practical activity of the Hudson's Bay Company reduced itself to enterprises that in the beginning were modest, consisting of the journeys into Indian territory of small groups of men who did not settle among the Indians. The failure to create permanent establishments meant that the best was never made of the personal qualities of the men involved, which were often very great, or of the wide scope of their enterprises. Isaac Batt and the Canadian Louis Primeau set out in 1765-6;⁸⁹ Isaac Batt went again in 1766-7, accompanied by William Pink, James Dearing, Edward Luttit, and James Allen; in the following year Louis Primeau joined them on his renewed wanderings, which he continued in 1768-9.⁹⁰

Among these men, none of whom hesitated, for a modest salary, to return year after year on their enterprises, some stand out in especial relief. One of them was William Pink, who carried on without interruption from 1766 to 1773 the ungrateful task of sustaining the loyalty of the peoples in the interior against the solicitations of the pedlars.⁹¹ In the company of a group of Indians he wandered over a region extending from the western banks of the South Saskatchewan to the Edmonton parkland and the Beaver River; he got as far as the headwaters of the Churchill River, close to the watershed from which the streams run down to the Athabasca River.⁹²

No less remarkable were the expeditions of Matthew Cocking. In 1772 and 1773 he travelled widely in the territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy; he observed their cultivation of tobacco and their deer pounds, he described their dexterity in the use of bow and arrow, their skill in riding their fast and restive horses, admired their endurance in periods of want, and praised the quality of their hospitality.⁹³ In 1774-5 Cocking limited himself to the less distant region of the Red Deer River and the Assiniboine; he wandered over the prairies of this region, which were a theatre of energetic activity on the part of the pedlars, against whom he found himself practically defenceless.⁹⁴

And then there was William Tomison, whom the factor of Fort Severn sent toward Lake Winnipeg in 1767 to hinder the progress of the pedlars.⁹⁵ He travelled to the lake by one of the rivers that break through its eastern shore, from which he reached the mouths of the Red River and the Winnipeg River. Once again, in 1769-70, he followed the same itinerary, but this time he pushed as far as Lake Manitoba and the Assiniboine River, returning afterward to York Factory.⁹⁶

In the domain of discovery the Company's employees were once again superior to the pedlars. Their work was all the more remarkable since it was carried out with scanty resources. This insufficiency of support explains why their initiatives did not end in establishing new currents of trade and left the Canadians free to exploit the rich territories of the Athabasca, from whose threshold William Pink had recently turned back. If the Hudson's Bay Company's men had been able to create permanent posts, if they had disposed of the kind of system of provisioning which later on was so adeptly organized by the Scots from Lower Canada, they would perhaps have robbed their rivals of the honor of discover-

ing and reaping the trading profits of the extreme North West. Left to themselves, poorly supported in these vast solitudes, they succeeded merely in keeping up a scanty movement of furs in the direction of the coastal posts.⁹⁷ In spite of all their arguments designed to win over the Indians, the cargoes they brought back were often slight. Now and again, indeed, more impressive flotillas of canoes would appear. In 1767 Louis Primeau on his own brought in thirty-six, and in the same year, Batt, Pink, Dearing, and Allen returned at the head of a small fleet of a hundred and fifty-six canoes.⁹⁸ But as soon as the pedlars reached the interior in larger numbers and intensified their operations, the success of the Hudson's Bay men declined, and by 1770 William Tomison with difficulty persuaded four canoes to accompany him.⁹⁹ Very occasionally a member of the confederated [Blackfoot] tribes would be seen arriving at the coast, but his fellow tribesmen, unaccustomed to travelling by canoe, would refuse to follow him.¹⁰⁰ It was growing evident that the trading which the posts on Hudson Bay sustained with tribes who were provided with everything by the Canadian traders was becoming too artificial to survive for long by means of isolated initiatives in competition with enterprises that were constantly expanding.

Forced by the exhaustion of fur supplies to go beyond their original bases, the Canadians pressed forward and threatened the trade of Prince of Wales Fort, which Ferdinand Jacobs, the chief of York Factory, had still thought invulnerable as late as 1769. "The Pedlers," he then wrote, "are in different parts of the country all the way between Albany & York fort but they can never get so nigh Churchill as to harm its Trade."¹⁰¹ But in 1771 the volume of furs at the fort showed a definite wavering, which the officer in charge attributed to the influence of the pedlars among the Cree, whose territory to the south of the Churchill River they had reached.¹⁰² In 1773 the threat increased, and the governor of the fort became alarmed at the growing diversion of trade to the profit of the Canadians.¹⁰³ Finally in 1774 he admitted that, without the supplies of furs from the Chipewyan, the "Indians of the North," his fort would soon be ruined.¹⁰⁴ He had just, in fact, received a message from Joseph Frobisher, whose presence in the proximity of the Churchill River marked the first stage of the great offensive which the pedlars were preparing to direct toward the basin of the Athabasca River. In this way they intended to complete their out-

flanking movement, extending from Grand Portage to the Mackenzie, against the posts on the Bay.¹⁰⁵

THE WEAKNESSES OF THE BRITISH OFFENSIVE

The situation was lost for the posts along the coast of Hudson Bay unless energetic measures were taken to redeem it. It was only at this point that the Hudson's Bay Company, finally renouncing its policy of immobility, responded to the suggestions which those who were aware of the problem had been making for several years. Embracing the idea of founding permanent posts in Rupert's Land, it actually inaugurated the current of penetration that, setting out from Hudson Bay, would mingle with that created by the Canadians. In 1768, Andrew Graham formulated a plan for the occupation of the interior, which was in his eyes the sole means of abating the audacious offensive of the Canadians. He had already urged on the Committee the advantages the Company would discover in the lesser distances its men would have to travel, compared with those the pedlars from Montreal had to cover; in the greater ease of navigation compared with the obstacle-ridden journey by way of Rainy Lake; and finally in the friendly character of the Indians in the hinterland to York Factory.¹⁰⁶ Aware of these circumstances, Matthew Cocking had suggested that the incapacity to manage a canoe, which he himself shared with the Hudson's Bay employees, might be overcome by having recourse to the services of the natives.¹⁰⁷

The Committee veered toward Andrew Graham's views. In 1773, in consultation with Ferdinand Jacobs, it decided to authorize the establishment of the first permanent post in the interior.¹⁰⁸ That year Jacobs organized a rather modest expedition composed of a number of experienced men who decided to hire from the Indians a few canoes to transport men and merchandise and to spread the news of the projected enterprise. This plan was realized in the following year, under the direction of Samuel Hearne, whose expedition in the Barren Grounds made him an obvious choice for the Company to make.¹⁰⁹ Hearne left on 21 June 1774 with two men and an Indian chief, whose loyalty had been bought with generous presents. Five men followed a short way behind them.¹¹⁰ Hearne went past the site of Paskoyac, for the Indians did not favor the locality, and he established his post a

hundred miles beyond, on the shores of Cumberland Lake, at an important crossing which many Indians used on their way to York Factory and the Churchill River.¹¹¹ The initiative took place in the nick of time; in 1774 more than fifty pedlars' canoes had spread out into the interior, and the Indians had almost completely abandoned York Factory.¹¹² The foundation of Cumberland House marked the first stage of a new policy, the starting point for the creation of a series of posts that would act as stages on the penetration routes radiating from the shores of Hudson Bay in an area that had hitherto been merely the scene of individual enterprises.

This new policy was far from being conducted with the energy that the pedlars deployed on their side. Its aims were pursued with the usual dilatoriness, and with the aid of men of little consequence whose weakness was thrown into relief by the strength of their adversaries. There, for a long time, lay the inferiority of the northern current of penetration; at the beginning it seems as though the posts in the interior, like those on the coast, would have difficulty in defending themselves against the rival enterprises. Cumberland House began its career with an establishment of three men.¹¹³ In the years that followed the increases in their establishments granted to the posts along the Bay were too niggardly to allow the organization of well-manned forts in the interior. In 1775 Albany disposed of no more than fifty-eight men,¹¹⁴ and York of sixty-one,¹¹⁵ of whom sixteen were allocated to the service of Fort Severn. In 1778, to meet the growing needs of penetration, the staffs of the two posts were each increased to seventy men.¹¹⁶ In 1784 the entire personnel of the Hudson Bay forts consisted of 294 men, divided between Churchill, York, Albany, and Moose Factory,¹¹⁷ and it was only in 1785 that the establishment of York Factory was raised to a hundred men, a level slightly exceeded in the following year, when it reached 112.¹¹⁸

This insufficiency of manpower paralysed operations in the interior. In the vast expanse of its hinterland, York Factory in 1776 maintained no more than sixteen men.¹¹⁹ In 1778 it was not in a position to detach more than twenty, though the bitter competition and the needs of trade would have justified at least four times as many.¹²⁰ By 1780, the figure had risen to round about thirty men.¹²¹ But the rivalry had also intensified, the enterprises of the pedlars had become even more invasive, and a hundred men would have been needed to keep them in awe.¹²² Even in 1780, as we have seen, York Factory disposed in all of a hundred men, of

whom only sixty-five could be seconded to operations in the interior.¹²³ Not until 1791, the epoch in which the brilliant initiative of Alexander Mackenzie extended Canadian enterprise to the basin of the great Arctic river, that York Factory was in a position to detach ninety-six men for activity in Rupert's Land.¹²⁴

This shortage of manpower was the cause of many disadvantages which remarkably complicated the task of penetration. The Hudson's Bay Company's men were often at the mercy of the Indians. For lack of sufficient personnel, they had to rely on the latter's services, and expeditions undertaken on the basis of their co-operation were liable to come to nothing because of their negligence or desertion.¹²⁵ If the Indians betrayed those they were supposed to protect and guide, the Company was powerless to deal with them, having insufficient forces for any rigorous action, and also to provoke the resentment of culprits who might still be valuable auxiliaries in their trading activities. Such a case occurred in 1775, when one of the Company's employees, Robert Longmoor, was robbed of his trade goods and roughly handled by the Indian who accompanied him, and afterward abandoned without provisions on the trail to Cumberland House; the governor of York Factory refrained from remonstrating with the Indian who had acted in this way, knowing all too well how valuable was his commercial allegiance. "But we, for want of strength, are obliged to suffer insults tamely," the journal of York Factory noted on this occasion.¹²⁶ Because of their lack of numbers, the Company's men had sometimes to abandon part of their cargoes of furs in the interior,¹²⁷ and on other occasions it was found impossible to transport the necessary trade goods to the Company's post.¹²⁸

But it was above all in the struggle they had to sustain against the pedlars that their numerical inferiority handicapped the Hudson's Bay Company's men. The disproportion of forces was enormous. It was evident in every sector, in the hinterland of Albany,¹²⁹ in the hinterland of York Factory,¹³⁰ and above all in the region of the Athabasca River and Lake Athabasca. This sector offered an exceptional abundance of furs, but the vigor of competition and the difficulties of material life there would have demanded an upsurge of effort the Company was then unable to muster. At the moment, indeed, there were nearly a hundred men in the interior. But success would have been possible only with forces at least twice as strong.¹³¹ What could the Company's scanty personnel do, when their numbers grew only by a few men

each year, against the pedlars' forces? In 1779 Humphrey Marten excused the somewhat unsatisfactory methods of trading at Cumberland House by pointing out that the twenty employees who had passed the winter there were faced by two hundred or even three hundred Canadians.¹³⁸ The men's own impression was that they were fighting one to fifteen.¹³⁹ The disparity did not diminish in succeeding years. The Company's forces showed a slight increase, but those of the Canadians grew more rapidly. To the fifty-nine men divided among the Company's posts in the interior, the Canadians in 1786 opposed round about four hundred,¹⁴⁰ of whom nearly two hundred were in the Saskatchewan sector, which left them ample reserves for the more distant regions of the North West.¹⁴¹ Later, when the operations of the Canadians had been centralized in powerful commercial organizations, the earlier figures were notably exceeded. In 1788 the North West Company alone employed nearly a thousand voyageurs, not counting a score of guides, forty-five clerks, and seventy interpreters. In 1796 it disposed of more than sixteen hundred men.

It would no doubt be unjust to blame the Hudson's Bay Company alone for a neglect that in part can be explained by the economic insecurity created by the war with revolutionary and imperial France and by the difficulties of recruiting manpower. Faced by a reduction in the demand for furs, the Company hesitated to increase its personnel and gave up filling the vacancies created by the departure of employees on the expiration of their contracts. At the same time, it certainly seems to have shown a marked indifference to its officers' appeals.¹⁴² Without regard for the difficulties it was creating for them, and carried away by its wish to economize, it recalled men who were indispensable to the service,¹⁴³ or forbade its representatives to renew the contracts of the personnel at their posts.¹⁴⁴ In 1799, James Bird complained of the gaps created by the exodus of his employees,¹⁴⁵ and in 1811 William Auld declared that he had lost round about a third of his best qualified men.¹⁴⁶ The Governor of York Factory advised one of his subordinates, in the hope of staving off this manpower crisis, to keep his men whatever the cost by giving in to all their demands;¹⁴⁷ this was contrary to the Company's official instructions, which it consented to modify only after many years.¹⁴⁸ Here was an element of weakness that had been evident from the beginning. The policy the Company now adopted did nothing but aggravate it. And other weaknesses which had manifested them-

selves in the early years became even more evident when the Company set out to stabilize its positions in the interior, for the competition developed between the pedlars and the Anglo-Saxons gave the two parties occasions for confrontation, and this threw into even greater relief their respective qualities and deficiencies.

From the beginning it was evident that the struggle had begun under unequal conditions, not only because of the numerical disproportion between the participants, but also because of the poor quality of the personnel the Company opposed to its competitors, who soon became its adversaries. The situation resembled that which we have observed in connection with the coastal posts. Owing to the serious difficulties it was now experiencing in maintaining the recruitment of employees, the Company made use, in the interior as on the coast, of men transported into an alien environment whose conditions of life imposed on them sufferings which most of them sustained with difficulty. There was the harshness of the climate. There was the martyrdom inflicted in summer by a combination of insects and overpowering heat, especially at the portages.¹⁴⁶ There was the need to accept the luck of the road in terms of shelter.¹⁴⁶ There were the unexpected complications arising from association with the native people, which were aggravated by the lack of flexibility in the Anglo-Saxon temperament and by ignorance or insufficient knowledge of the native languages.¹⁴⁷ "If a man can write his name and knows ten words of the Indian Dialect," wrote the commandant of Fort Churchill in 1799, "we will put him to trading with Indians whom he has no idea how to soothe or to intimidate."¹⁴⁸ The handling of canoes, that problem which had discouraged the first efforts at penetration, was perhaps the area in which the lack of experience among the Company's men was most clearly manifest, above all on those waterways whose shallowness often made it necessary to substitute the pole for the paddle.¹⁴⁹ They constantly showed themselves inferior to the voyageurs of Lower Canada in the practice of navigation and were even more incapable in undertaking the construction of canoes.¹⁵⁰ It is true that in the long run they showed perceptible progress, so that the journal of York Factory could represent them in 1781 as navigators with skills that equalled and sometimes exceeded those of the Indians,¹⁵¹ but the uncertainty due to lack of experience was never completely overcome. Not only did the post continue to suffer a shortage of men capable of making canoes,¹⁵² but often the guides were incapable of con-

trolling their crafts in the rapids and allowed them to founder with their cargoes,¹⁵³ so that they had to avoid the reaches of waterways that were too broken by obstacles.¹⁵⁴ How could one expect such personnel to disperse among the Indians during the winter months as the Canadians did, following them step by step to make sure of their furs? Such a procedure presupposed an exceptional training in the conditions of life in a primitive country. Only a few employees were able to adapt themselves to such a nomadic existence.¹⁵⁵ While the Canadians constantly hovered around the hunting tribes, the Company's men had all too often become set in the routines of daily existence in the trading posts.¹⁵⁶

Forced into a way of life to which they were not well adapted, such men could not fail to feel a dissatisfaction that was prejudicial to the enterprises assigned to them. Only considerable material advantages might have helped to overcome their fears or their indifference. But they were mainly wage-earners who had often been led by poverty to emigrate and who were now poorly paid and inclined to compare their meagre returns with the considerable rewards that the Canadians dispensed to their voyageurs. In its scale of salaries, the Company does not seem to have taken account of the difficulties which service in the interior involved. In 1768 William Tomison renewed his contract of engagement at a scale of £10 per annum, while the carpenter at York Factory received a salary of £30.¹⁵⁷ Yet Tomison was treated relatively favorably. Despite his unceasing activity, James Allen was reduced to £8 a year, many others earned barely £6 a year,¹⁵⁸ and in 1776 Humphrey Marten pressed the Committee to raise to £10 the salary of men detached for work in the interior of Rupert's Land.¹⁵⁹ At the same period, the Canadians involved in the operation of canoes received pay according to their functions at the following rates: the guides, 1,000 livres; the steersmen, 800 livres; the pedlars in the middle of the boat, 600 livres. These were considerably higher figures than the wages of their rivals.¹⁶⁰ In spite of all this, the men might have accepted more willingly the idea of existence in Rupert's Land if they had felt for it the kind of attachment which many of the Canadians formed. But the brief term of their engagements, and the habit they had acquired of returning to their own country as soon as they had accumulated sufficient savings, did not give them enough time to become familiar with the primitive environment and to feel its attraction.

Hence arose the discontent which the heads of the posts noticed

among their employees, and which led to frequent occasions when the latter refused to obey their officers when they were detailed for inland service. The experience that had marked the foundation of Henley House was thus repeated on a large scale. It was when the Company turned to the desolate Athabasca country that acts of indiscipline became especially frequent. The shortage of means of subsistence, the need to remain content with a diet consisting entirely of fish,¹⁶¹ was discouraging to the men. In 1796, and again in 1799, many categorically refused to return there, and openly mutinied.¹⁶² The officers sometimes forced the men to return against their will, which can neither have stimulated their activity nor made their work more effective.¹⁶³ Ill will was general,¹⁶⁴ and the pedlars profited from it to encourage defaulting and desertion among their competitors. The wages they offered were a potent weapon.¹⁶⁵ While the company considered a salary of £12 very high,¹⁶⁶ James Finlay offered up to £25 to the men he wished to tempt into his service.¹⁶⁷ Isaac Batt deserted the Hudson's Bay Company and went into the pay of a pedlar who gave him a salary of £30.¹⁶⁸ Louis Primeau was not slow to go back on his engagement with the governor of York Factory and accept the repeated invitations of the Canadians.¹⁶⁹ An exceptional man like David Thompson did not hesitate to abandon the Company and join the ranks of the Canadians, though it is true that he was moved more by personal resentment than by the attractions of gain.¹⁷⁰ Edward Umfreville, well known for his attempts to find an alternative way from Lake Nipigon to the Winnipeg River, and other more obscure employees were equally willing to be won over by their enterprising rivals.¹⁷¹ Threatened by this spreading epidemic of desertion the Hudson's Bay Company should have resolved to make concessions to the demands of its personnel, who were uniting in a general refusal to obey that would bring matters to a head.¹⁷² Even the officers spontaneously acted in contradiction to the orders of the London Committee,¹⁷³ and they gave in to demands for increased wages, knowing all too well that a strict application of their instructions would have ruined trade in the interior.¹⁷⁴ London rebuked them but finally, in its turn, surrendered.¹⁷⁵ In 1778 the men were granted salaries of between £10 and £12 a year and the more qualified received as much as £25.¹⁷⁶ Yet these increases were not sufficient to eliminate every trace of discontent and overcome the men's indocility.¹⁷⁷ As late as 1780 Humphrey Marten could write to the Committee: "Not one of

your inland servants think they are properly encouraged."¹⁷⁸

Other flaws appeared in the ageing organism of the great Company. There was first of all the constant fragility of its position on the shores of Hudson Bay; La Pérouse's exploits at the end of the eighteenth century showed how much it was still at the mercy of maritime attacks.¹⁷⁹ Then there was the lack of solidarity among its posts, whose disadvantages we have already observed. In the interior it led often to conflicts which were detrimental to the attempts at penetration. The expansion zones of York Factory and Fort Churchill, whose waterways ran so near each other that they almost united, were extremely liable to mutual trespasses. The expeditions which the factor of York despatched in 1795 toward the upper reaches of the Nelson River and as far as Reed Lake immediately provoked recriminations from Fort Churchill, for they impinged on the route used by its Indians.¹⁸⁰ According to the chief of the latter post, these encroachments were planned deliberately to divert the trade that was destined for him. He accused the rival factor not only of soliciting the Indians' trade, but also of slandering him publicly before them.¹⁸¹ On the other hand, Joseph Colen, the officer in command of York Factory, reproached his colleague in 1796 with not limiting himself to the territory of the northern Indians, which bordered the Churchill River, but deliberately sending his men into the basin of the Nelson River to infringe on York Factory's enterprises rather than opposing those of the Canadians.¹⁸² The conflict between York Factory and Fort Churchill reappeared in Athabasca where the two posts endeavored to organize expeditions that competed with each other.¹⁸³ By these incessant struggles, Humphrey Marten argued, the trading forts were condemning themselves to common suicide.¹⁸⁴ As soon as it was established, Cumberland House became the rival of York Factory, which had conceived it, as Albany had conceived Henley House, as a simple advance post whose mission was to protect the Indians against the pedlars' enterprises and not to establish an independent trade with them.¹⁸⁵ Between York Factory and Fort Severn, between Albany and its advance post of Swan River, the same equally paltry rivalries emerged and destroyed all sense of fraternity.¹⁸⁶ They were complicated by personal contests, even more troublesome than the struggle of economic interests. Such rivalries, it seems, were not unconnected with David Thompson's desertion and with the failure of at least some of the attempts at penetration into Athabasca.¹⁸⁷ They were aggravated by conflicts

over precedence,¹⁸⁸ which ended in weakening the Company in relation to the Canadians, who were more assiduous in their efforts, better organized, and above all better equipped.

Instead of learning the lessons of its early experiences and eventually adapting its trade goods to the preferences of the natives, the Hudson's Bay Company persisted in offering them merchandise designed for the needs of a European clientele. It neglected those small items, such as rings, bells, needles, and vermilion, which so seduced the natives and which the Canadians let them have for a pittance and often for nothing.¹⁸⁹ At the same time the Committee, generally so careful about the quality of its merchandise, appears to have sacrificed it to that policy of economy which it practised in the last years of the eighteenth century, and which followed closely on its program of penetration. On many occasions, the officers complained of the bad quality of the muskets that were sent to them and the refusal of the Indians to accept them in exchange for their furs.¹⁹⁰ Sometimes it was the knives, articles of primary need to these hunting tribes, that provoked Indian discontent.¹⁹¹ At other times it was the hatchets, or even the cloth, that they refused to accept, saying that they were better served by the Canadian pedlars.¹⁹² Yet, with an inexplicable blindness, the Committee refused to yield to the evidence. "We are persuaded," it replied to its agents' protests, "whatever you may think to the contrary, that the Goods either of the old or New Canadian Company are not near so good as ours."¹⁹³

At the same time the quantity of trade goods diminished, just when the realization of new enterprises called for an increase. Undoubtedly the Company suffered from the war with France. From the beginning of 1796, the constantly growing cost of exports by sea, the failure to sell furs on the European markets, and the limitation of their sales in the British market which alone remained open combined to impose on the Company ever narrower restrictions and these were reflected in the poor provisioning of the posts on the Bay.¹⁹⁴ In 1797 York Factory did not have at its disposal half the articles that would be needed to supply the interior posts. Yet there again the Company seems to have been guilty of negligence, for the dilatoriness with which it had provisioned its posts even before the war had made shortages inevitable. For their part, the establishments of the interior suffered from this insufficiency of merchandise, which compounded the scantiness of personnel.¹⁹⁵

But did the Hudson's Bay Company, as it has often been said,

gain from the more advantageous prices it offered the Indians? The witness of its officers constantly attributes to it a real superiority in this respect. Thus in 1780 the journal of York Factory declared that the Company had the advantage because of the reasonableness of its tariffs, which, for example, gave a hatchet for two beaver skins, while the Canadians demanded four.¹⁹⁷ But one cannot generalize from such examples. There were often times when even the Company's agents admitted that the pedlars offered better terms. In 1777, the commandant of Moose Factory called the attention of the factor at York to his exorbitant trading terms, which exceeded the more moderate tariffs of the canny pedlars,¹⁹⁸ and even before the difficult years of the war with France, the Company actually changed the scale of its tariffs in ways that were prejudicial to the Indians' interests. On the Saskatchewan in 1790 it refused to give more than six rings for a beaver pelt, while the Canadians would give a dozen for nothing; it ceased to stimulate the Indians' activity by sufficiently generous distributions of muskets;¹⁹⁹ finally, it lowered the value of a wolfskin from two beavers to one, which was detrimental to the prairie tribes, among whom the wolf constituted an important item of trade.²⁰⁰

Most of all the pedlars had the advantage over the Hudson's Bay Company of using more adaptable price scales, which were often left to their personal judgments, and which they could consequently modify according to the circumstances; they frequently offered at half price items whose slighter solidity justified the more moderate terms yet at the same time made them more easy to manage and more fitting for the nomad existence of the native people.²⁰¹ It is true that when they reappeared in the interior, they offered terms whose severity repelled their customers. The Indians complained of it to the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company; it was only the actual presence of the Canadians in their midst, and the convenience this assured them of trading their furs without making the journey to the Bay, that compensated for this inferiority. But the Canadian traders did not persist in a policy that was contrary to their interests; not being tied to rigid scales like their competitors, they did not hesitate to make whatever sacrifices were necessary. "The pedlers seemingly have no fixed standard of cloth and such like," wrote Matthew Cocking in 1775, "Trading them at various rates according to the natives they have to deal with."²⁰² In the course of his expedition of 1772-3, he heard the favorable testimonies the Indians themselves offered regarding the

liberality of the trader Thomas Corry.²⁰³ Such liberality could only be an advantage during the opening of the rich territory of Athabasca, which the Canadians were able to exploit as masters for several years, and whose profits often allowed them to offer their goods at rates that astonished their rivals. "It is surprising," noted the journal of York Factory in 1792, "that these go-between traders can sell at such reasonable prices the goods they bring so far. Several of their articles are much cheaper than ours."²⁰⁴ The officers of Cumberland House had made the same remark in 1778.²⁰⁵ Even in 1813, when the North West Company had passed the crest of its most prosperous years, it was prepared to offer particularly low rates in competition with the Anglo-Saxons, and its men declared that the means to do so were provided by the profits of Athabasca.²⁰⁶ If we add that the pedlars never stinted on presents, particularly when they were meant to gain the favor of a renowned chief,²⁰⁷ then we can understand why Joseph Colen, the chief factor of York, could in 1794 write in his journal: "The very number of the Canadians imposes itself on the natives, their influence broadens from day to day, and they assure themselves of the Indians' esteem by the generosity of their presents."²⁰⁸

In fact, whatever superiorities the Hudson's Bay Company had shown in its trading operations were eventually dissipated. The advantage it had drawn from the ease of shipping heavy merchandise was notably reduced once it had to be transported over the waterways of the Shield. Its former monopoly of the famous Brazilian tobacco, whose quality attracted the Indians as much as the Canadians' alcohol,²⁰⁹ disappeared in turn as soon as the Scots took over the direction of the enterprises in Lower Canada, for they were quick to introduce the "bewitching weed" among their trade items,²¹⁰ a move whose effect was all the greater since it coincided with the reduction of the Company's exports from England and with the undeniable lowering of the quality of its tobacco, as of all the other goods,²¹¹ to the point that even for this item the Indians sometimes preferred to trade with the Canadians.²¹²

THE SUPERIORITY OF THE CANADIAN ENTERPRISES

Undoubtedly the Canadians had to confront notable handicaps. In the rivalry that set them against the Hudson's Bay Company, their

role was far from being an easy one. In certain respects it incurred even more difficult problems than any faced by the English company; in fact, once the latter finally decided to overcome its inferiorities by imitating the organization and methods of its rivals, it quickly triumphed over their opposition. But, for the moment, its rather outworn conceptions left it in no position to fight on equal terms and take advantage of the difficulties that hindered the Canadians' operations.

For the latter, the main obstacles were created by the distances they must cover in travelling from Montreal to Lake Winnipeg or Red River. The problems confronting the pedlars' flotillas were the same that in the past had faced La Vérendrye. They were complicated by the need to cross the rocky barrier that hemmed in the head of Lake Superior, where the great number of falls and portages fatally slowed down the movement of canoes, and where in the beginning the Indians had not welcomed the return of the pedlars.²¹³

At the same time, if solidarity was lacking between the Hudson's Bay Company posts, the pedlars appeared—as soon as they resumed their operations in the West—to be divided into a great number of pools. These rival organizations, animated by a competitive spirit even more bitter than that directed against the Hudson's Bay Company's officers, went to extraordinary lengths of violence against rival personnel in the conflict that set them against each other. It was this acceptance of merciless struggle aimed at the elimination of trading competitors²¹⁴ that constituted the famous North West spirit, a direct emanation of the mentality born in frontier societies in contact with the primitive environment and the exaggerated behavior it encouraged. It quickly characterized the relations of the rival companies between which the forces of the pedlars were divided.

The violence which they directed to detaching the Indians from each other by a policy of competitive underbidding,²¹⁵ and to erecting in the same territories posts that were predestined to mutual combat,²¹⁶ could go as far as murder, and the traders did not hesitate to have recourse to that extremity against a rival they wanted to get rid of. The murders of Jean-Etienne Waden and John Ross by Peter Pond or at his instigation in 1782 and 1787 respectively,²¹⁷ and that of the pedlar Thompson in 1795²¹⁸ were examples of the violence with which the traders pursued their undertakings and of the hostilities that divided them. It is hard to im-

agine La Vérendrye indulging in such excesses against his competitors, and it is undeniable that the onset of such behavior corresponded with the appearance of the Scots and the Anglo-Saxons, or American frontiersmen, in the country of the North West. It was with them that the opposition of interests degenerated into an open war, emphasized by murderous acts of violence, such as were recorded neither among the Canadians from the St. Lawrence, when they were masters of the interior, nor among the men of the Hudson's Bay Company.

But these inferiorities among the pedlars, from which the rival organizations equally suffered, quickly came to an end. Soon they were able to impose themselves on the hostile Indians of Rainy Lake through the prestige of a chief they succeeded in winning over to their side. But it was above all the large number of Canadians they recruited into their organizations that formed the best guarantee of the allegiance of the primitive hunters; such men were as adept at gaining the Indians' confidence as they were at making themselves feared. Thus the two brothers Michel and Charles Boyer, once they were established at Rainy Lake, preserved the fidelity of the Indians by their tactful behavior, which compelled the admiration of their adversaries. Certain of the leading traders, such as Thomas Corry, Simon McTavish, William M'Gillivray, themselves understood instinctively the psychology of the native people,²¹⁹ and they brought to the manipulation of Indian reactions an adroitness comparable to that of their employees. In them, the good nature of the Canadian²²⁰ seemed to exist side by side with the aggressive and calculating temperament of the Scot. It is significant that on his very first contact with the natives the methods and the attitudes of Thomas Corry should have won him their goodwill.²²¹

At the same time, the pedlars gradually abandoned the policy of dispersing their forces which was so harmful to their respective interests, and they came round to the idea of an increasing concentration of the modest organizations which disputed the exploitation of the fur trade. They overcame the fragmentation of their manpower by the formation of great commercial companies. Among the eight associations which first apportioned between them the pedlars' enterprises, there was one that rose quickly to predominance over the others. In 1779, by the absorption of isolated groups and merchants, it assumed an importance that was strengthened in 1783 by its reorganization under the supreme au-

thority of the Scot Simon McTavish, soon afterwards reinforced by the Yorkshireman, Joseph Frobisher.²²² This was the starting point for the North West Company. There followed a period of struggle with three rival companies, of which the New North West Company or XY Company, established in 1798, became the most dangerous enemy owing to the strength it acquired from the adhesion of Sir Alexander Mackenzie in 1802. The North West Company emerged victorious in 1804, and from this point maintained sovereign power over the commercial exploitation of the West.²²³ Ably directed by William M'Gillivray, the nephew of Simon McTavish, it now entered the decisive phase of its expansion. By rational organization, knowledgeably based on the essential features of the geography of the North West and on the way the resources of the prairie and the Shield complemented each other, it succeeded in triumphing for the time being over the obstacles that had hindered the development of its policy of penetration.

The North West Company's organization depended on the bringing together of the two extremities of Canada, the first concentrated around the St. Lawrence valley, the centre of urban life and of commercial and financial activity; the other concentrated in the North West, whose expanses opened out beyond Lake Superior, and whose entire economy consisted for the present of the exploitation of the fur trade. On the group of financiers and merchants who were the agents of the new company in Lower Canada devolved the task of providing the capital and the merchandise needed to carry on the trading operations; they were also responsible for assuring the disposal of the furs in foreign markets. The men entrusted with the direction of the posts and expeditions in the North West, under the various titles of "bourgeois," "partner," and "proprietor," had the mission of producing the furs whose profits would feed the company's coffers.²²⁴

To enable trade goods to reach the most distant regions of Athabasca, it was important to perfect the technique of transport and provisioning on the long route from Montreal. In this respect, the North West Company had no need to innovate, for the principal lines of the system it adopted had already been traced by the more modest "pools" that had anticipated its formation. But from this point an unprecedented impetus was given by the speeding up of the fur brigades, and the synchronization on the routes in the

interior of the prompt arrival of foodstuffs and the rapid passage of canoes loaded with trade goods or furs.

Their transport system in fact merely reproduced on a larger scale that whose functioning John Cole had described to Andrew Graham in 1772. Leaving Montreal, the merchandise destined for the fur trade was directed to Grand Portage, and then, after 1802-3, to the mouth of the Kaministiquia River, in craft capable of transporting crews of between seven and ten men and cargoes of four tons. They were then transshipped into lighter canoes, the canoes of the North, whose dimensions, less by a half those of the *canots de maître* which traversed Lake Superior, allowed for crews of only four or five men, or six at most, and cargoes of half a ton.²²⁵ The *canots de maître* were constructed in the neighborhood of Trois Rivières in the St. Lawrence Valley, according to the traditions transmitted from father to son; the canoes of the North were made in the locality of Lake of the Woods or Rainy Lake,²²⁶ where the trader Charles Boyer distinguished himself by his talent for building them.²²⁷ To avoid the overloading of craft that embarked on the difficult navigation of the Shield, the Company reduced the quantity of heavy goods and for preference substituted articles of little bulk. Such articles were doubtless not so valuable, but they responded to the desires of the native people—especially alcohol, which the pedlars distributed without restraint (unlike, in the early years at least, the Hudson's Bay Company),²²⁸ and the multicolored trumpery of their ribbons, beads, and rings. Yet heavier objects were not completely eliminated. The Canadians' muskets, as we have seen, were well enough appreciated by the natives. The canoes were able to transport them because the Company confided their care to that special class of hands who were so easy to recruit in Lower Canada; its members, the well-known voyageurs, were divided into the *mangeurs de lard* or pork eaters, and the *hivernants* or winterers.²²⁹ The endurance of the latter was proverbial. It aroused the admiration of the Hudson's Bay Company's officers, who described them as a select group of men, inured to exhaustions which their own hands would not have been able to endure, and able to put up with long periods of privation.²³¹ The occupation of voyageur was a trade to which the young Canadian was apprenticed from childhood. Apart from the degree of endurance it demanded, certain other aptitudes were necessary. The voyageurs must be able to live in almost constant contact with the na-

tive people, among whom they had to spread out as soon as they reached the wintering posts in order to make sure of getting their furs.²³² They also needed certain manual skills, to pack the furs and make baskets and boxes to contain the trade goods; the weight and size of these had to be calculated carefully to fit them into the canoes.²³³ These simple voyageurs, men without ambition and accustomed to the simplicity of Lower Canadian life, would become the most effective machinery of the North West Company, the indispensable instrument for realizing its most audacious enterprises, the element that enabled it to conquer the length and difficulties of the most arduous routes and always to bring its goods on time to their destinations. From 1801 onward, a number of Iroquois worked beside them;²³⁴ they also were excellent at handling canoes,²³⁵ but the Company relied on them mainly to increase the input of furs.²³⁶

This system by which the canoe brigades came and went on their ways depended on the existence of an equally rationalized system of victualling. There again, the ground had been prepared already, by the initiatives of Joseph and Thomas Frobisher. In 1770 they had established a fort on Red River, near the locality of the bison herds. Its purpose was to provide pemmican for those of their associates who had assembled their furs near the mouths of the Saskatchewan and were now leaving Lake Winnipeg to confront the barren Shield that separated them from Lake Superior.²³⁷ This Fort Frobisher, or Lake Fort, was soon abandoned in favor of posts set up, in 1773-4, near Portage la Prairie, and on the Saskatchewan, downstream from the junction of its two branches. The function of these posts was to send provisions of dried meat, in the first case to the mouth of the Winnipeg River, and in the second to the region of Cumberland Lake or Paskoyac, where they supplied the canoes entering or leaving the Churchill River.²³⁸ This ably conceived system, by which the meat-producing zone made up for the shortage of food resources in the fur-producing forest, became the basis for the new organization. Put into practice on a broader scale, supported by new provisioning depots, it could be adapted to the growing magnitude of the trading expeditions that were now setting out for Athabasca.

At the head of Lake Superior, first at Grand Portage and later at Fort William, considerable stocks of corn, brought from Detroit or Michilimackinac, awaited the brigades, either on their entry into the North West or on their return toward the Great Lakes.²³⁹

Thence the canoes embarked on the route of Grand Portage and the Pigeon River or, beginning in 1802-3, on that of the Kaministiquia River, which now supplanted the earlier access route.²⁴⁰ Often on the way they added to the provisions with which they had been supplied an additional stock of wild rice which was sold to them by the natives of Rainy Lake.²⁴¹ After crossing Lake Winnipeg, they found, scattered along the route to Athabasca, which was equally deprived of necessary resources, posts that were provisioned with food by consignments from the prairie: Bas de la Rivière,²⁴² Cumberland House,²⁴³ Ile à la Crosse, and finally Fort Chipewyan, which lay on Lake Athabasca and was the farthest of the depots, supplied with pemmican from the herds on the Peace River park lands.²⁴⁴ Nowhere, in the wooded solitudes through which the Churchill River traced out the way to Athabasca, were supplies lacking for the North West Company's brigades. In Athabasca itself, the rich territories of the Peace River, wisely exploited, removed the threat of famine. The precision with which this system, conceived in the lucid minds of the Frobishers, functioned under the impetus of the North West Company, and the remarkable qualities of the men charged with the transportation of merchandise in one direction and furs in the other, are enough to explain how the brigades of northern canoes, proceeding rapidly at a speed of five or six miles an hour, were able to set out, reach their destinations, and effect their encounters at Lake Superior with the canoes that brought the trade goods from Montreal and carried away the cargoes of furs from the interior, "almost with the regularity of oceanliners."²⁴⁵

The canoes left Montreal at the beginning of May; reaching Grand Portage or Fort William in the early days of July, they returned to Lower Canada with the furs they had collected.²⁴⁶ On their side, the northern canoes left Athabasca round about the same date, reached Rainy Lake in mid-July, and regained the final destination of Lake Athabasca and the Peace River (Fort Dunvegan) respectively in the first week in September and the first ten days of October.²⁴⁷

However remarkable this feat of organization may seem it would still not have been sufficient to achieve the fulfilment of the task attempted by the North West Company if it had not been guided by a spirit of solidarity and a sense of emulation that animated all levels from the heads of the enterprise down to the ordinary personnel.

The spirit of solidarity took the place of the attitude of aggressive competition that for so long had divided the traders. It showed itself first of all between the partners and the agents. Despite the differences between the conditions under which they lived, there was neither jealousy nor resentment, but a complete community of view and interests assured by the sharing out between them of the Company's stocks.²⁴⁸ Shareholders in the same enterprise and entitled to participate in its profits, they were all equally interested in the success of its operations. For sharing in the profits was not the privilege of a single group of men, but the reward destined for the most meritorious and active officers, and granted to new members of the establishment as their seniors retired.²⁴⁹

From this situation there resulted a healthy emulation that spread among the lower officers or clerks, who had the possibility of acquiring the dignity of shareholders and wished to elevate themselves in this way;²⁵⁰ it led to a close unity between them and their bourgeois like that between the latter and the agents. Each year this solidarity was given expression and reinforcement in the rendezvous at Grand Portage or Fort William, where the bourgeois and the agents came together. The details of their operations were discussed in a convivial atmosphere, and the accounts were balanced. At this point of contact between the primitive wilderness and the region of the lakes, the men who by virtue of their occupations represented the greatly different economies of those two halves of Canada fraternized in a solidarity that already symbolized the union of these regions so distant from and yet so complementary to each other.

The same kind of attitude animated the Canadian voyageurs, whose profusion spread into all parts of the West the warmth and simplicity that were characteristic of the province of Quebec. Between the voyageurs and the bourgeois, sympathy was sustained by the cordial relations which the latter established with their subordinates, and also by the care with which they catered to the voyageurs' taste for pomp, their delight in spectacular arrivals at the trading posts, and their pleasure in relieving the monotony and hardship of their labor by periods of merrymaking, with dancing and feasting, which took place at the wintering posts or at Grand Portage during the annual rendezvous,²⁵² when the most highly placed of the directors joined in the general gaiety.²⁵³

Such cordiality, which explains the devoted attachment of the

voyageurs to their bourgeois, did not mean an end to discipline. Yet the discipline was not rigid and formalized; rather, it took the form of a spontaneous docility which the voyageur undertook to observe when he entered the Company's service, and which he respected in the most trying moments; this was partly a result of the principles the Church inculcated among the people of Lower Canada, but it was also because a discipline of this kind accorded well with the natural tendencies of the voyageurs.²⁵⁴ Besides, any shortcoming would result in appropriate penalties.²⁵⁵

As for the emulation which stimulated these subordinate personnel, it was, like that which arose among the superior officers, the outcome of the material advantages which the service provided, from the regular provisioning of the brigades with food supplies, to the higher scale of wages paid to the men and the bonuses granted those who distinguished themselves by their activity or by important achievements. Alexander Mackenzie received a grant of £300 as a reward for the discoveries he had made, and each of the men who accompanied him was given £100, without prejudice to their usual pay.²⁵⁶ To the value of these emoluments must be added that of the equipment in the form of blankets, body linen, tobacco, knives, beads, and vermillion,²⁵⁷ from which the interpreters and clerks benefited in addition to their salaries,²⁵⁸ in the same way as the simple voyageurs.²⁵⁹

Finally, the activity of the men charged with gathering furs directly from the Indians was carefully encouraged; furnished with a stock of trade goods that did not exceed the value of their wages, they were expected to bring in a fixed number of furs and hand them over to the bourgeois of the post, but they could use any surplus to buy whatever articles they saw fit. "I cannot help thinking, was your servants permitted to trade in the same manner," Humphrey Marten wrote to the London Committee in 1777, "it would have a good effect." It became possible, without imposing a humiliating discipline, to ask a great deal of the men. The advantages guaranteed to them were accompanied by threats of sanctions that merely increased the efficiency with which they worked: the voyageur was responsible for the merchandise he transported and for any damages it might sustain,²⁶⁰ and if he did not bring his bourgeois the expected quantity of furs, he might lose his pay.²⁶²

Yet in this admirably conceived pattern there was one weakness; it was the enormous costs imposed by long distances, by the large number of personnel, and by high rates of pay. The Company was

partly compensated by the profits it could expect from the veritable mine of furs it had found in the Athabasca region. It also gained from the high prices which it charged its men for the various articles they needed. In describing the system, the Hudson's Bay Company's employees showed all the acrimony of traders who were jealous of their competitors as they delightedly exposed the other side to the advantages the Canadians guaranteed their personnel. As soon as it entered the North West, the price of merchandise was in fact marked up by as much as 100 per cent above the Montreal rates.²⁶⁵ Thus the men stood the risk of quickly spending their wages on purchases of rum or clothes,²⁶⁶ and the Company had no interest in taking into its service voyageurs who were animated by too great a spirit of economy; this did not present a great difficulty, since the people of Lower Canada were hardly economical by nature.²⁶⁶ Some critics even claimed, not without malice, that three pints of rum were enough to absorb the whole of a voyageur's salary.²⁶⁶ Yet, without attempting to deny that the North West Company found in this way a means of recouping part of the money it laid out in the wages of its personnel, one must say in its favor that it did not exploit its men as thoroughly as its adversaries claimed, since the system that had been devised responded to the Canadians' preferences.²⁶⁷ Even if there had been a better balance between pay and the price of goods, their slight inclination toward economy would have led them to spend their wages quickly.²⁶⁸ Yet the exceptional men among them, who had a greater inclination toward saving, could in the end accumulate a certain amount of capital as a result of their journeys.²⁶⁹ In the final calculation, the material advantages enjoyed by the voyageurs exceeded the losses they might incur from the excessive prices of the merchandise. If this had not been the case, why would the Canadians have hesitated to enrol in the Hudson's Bay Company's service because of the poor conditions it offered them? And why should an officer of the same company have had to fight against his men's desertion when the prospect of better and more complete outfitting attracted them to the rival organization?²⁷⁰

All things considered, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the Hudson's Bay Company, in trying to realize its new policy, remained in a state of real inferiority in relation to the traders from Canada. Its position in the interior must have been for many years as fragile as it had earlier been on the coast.²⁷¹ Before it proceeded

in 1811 to an entire recasting of its methods, it succeeded at most in achieving a few improvements which slightly narrowed the gap that separated it from the enterprising Canadian traders. First of all, there were two kinds of improvements in its personnel. One, which had at best a middling effect, was the introduction into its service of young Orkney men in the hope of raising the poor quality of the personnel generally recruited. The higher rates they were offered, £20 to begin, and up to £25 and £30 for the pilots of the craft, allowed for a better selection of men, more vigorous and more prepared for the hardness of the life. Devoted to the British Company and its protocol-ridden apparatus, docile, with few demands,²⁷² they still could not rival the men of the opposing camp in endurance and in their knowledge of river navigation.²⁷³

It was precisely by making an appeal to the latter that the Hudson's Bay Company transmitted to its personnel part of the qualities in which it was lacking. At the time of his tour in 1774-5, Matthew Cocking had voiced the feeling of the Indians in this direction: so far as it affected them, penetration could succeed only with the support of the Canadians.²⁷⁴ Though he was personally hostile to the idea of engaging them,²⁷⁵ Cocking came to the conclusion that such a move might have its limited usefulness, since it seemed the only way of bringing an end to that mercenary attitude, insensitive to any thought of gratitude, which the struggle between the traders had developed among the native peoples.²⁷⁶ Andrew Graham expressed himself similarly,²⁷⁷ and experience was amply to justify the hopes that were pinned on the Canadians.²⁷⁸

Not that matters proceeded without difficulties. Between Canadians and Orkney men or Scots, there was little fellow-feeling. The prejudices of the latter were strongly manifested, revealing a narrowly clannish spirit among them. It was laughable to see them refusing to embark in canoes with the Canadians, their sole excuse being that they did not belong to the same country.²⁷⁹ If, by chance, a Canadian were promoted to a position of command, the men would refuse to accept his orders under the pretext that they did not understand them,²⁸⁰ and in two instances at least their hostility provoked the Canadians to desert. Toward these newcomers, employees and even the officers themselves showed an obvious aversion, whose bitterness is projected in the remarks made by Edward Umfreville in his description of Hudson Bay.²⁸¹ Furthermore, the Hudson's Bay Company's lower rates of pay,

the slighter value of the equipment it allotted to its men,²⁸² the less cordial relations between chiefs and subordinates, the more formal character of the service, and the length of the contracts which the Company customarily expected²⁸³ were all displeasing to the French-speaking personnel.

Finally, when Canadians were engaged, there was the ever-present risk of corruption by the pedlars. The inevitable inclination of men from Lower Canada to mingle with each other, and the sympathy aroused by a common language, soon exposed the Canadians to the intrigues of their compatriots and weakened their fidelity to the British company.²⁸⁴ The example of Louis Primeau, who deserted the Hudson's Bay Company's service, despite his contract, as soon as the pedlars returned to the West is significant.²⁸⁵ No less significant was the attitude of a number of Anglo-Saxons who had transferred their allegiance to the Hudson's Bay Company, but returned very soon to the service of the pedlars,²⁸⁶ or the conduct of François Maugenest, who stayed for a brief time at Fort Albany and improved its trading methods, but then renounced the Company's service.²⁸⁷ There is no doubt that the Company experienced many disappointments with its Canadian personnel. In 1791 Edward Jarvis wrote from Gloucester House that it would be advisable to reduce the number of men engaged from Lower Canada; they were difficult to manage, and their refusal to accept contracts of long duration was harmful to the stability of the service.²⁸⁸ But since it was obliged to turn to them, the Company had to adapt itself to their customs, and it was able to incorporate into its personnel a certain number of voyageurs²⁸⁹ without attaching them seriously to its cause. Some of them were tempted by the less exacting labor which the Company demanded;²⁹⁰ others, impelled by some passing grievance or personal grudge, offered their services impulsively, but these were not always accepted.²⁹¹ Yet even though they appeared as aliens among its personnel, the Canadians were still precious auxiliaries for the Hudson's Bay Company. Henceforward the navigation became more reliable, contact with the Indians was facilitated by the use of Canadian interpreters,²⁹² and the Company was eventually satisfied enough by the voyageurs' attitude to undertake on its own account the direct recruitment of voyageurs in the parishes beside the St. Lawrence.²⁹³

It is true that at the same time the Company had recourse to an innovation which was well adapted to its slowish methods and to the character of its personnel, and also made the employment of

Canadians less necessary.²⁹⁴ It was the utilization on the inland waterways of a type of craft different from the light, swift canoe which only the men from Lower Canada were able to navigate with such ease. Known as the York boat, this flat-bottomed bateau was curved upward like a canoe at both ends. The first model was built in 1788, and it was brought into general use in 1797.²⁹⁵ That year two of these new craft reached York Factory without experiencing any difficulty; they carried 180 packs of furs, against the mere twenty to twenty-five that constituted the usual load of the northern canoe.²⁹⁶ Soon they were circulating regularly on the routes through the prairies and on the waterways that led to York Factory and Fort Albany, canoes now plying only on rivers with obstacle-ridden beds.

As a result, the Company was able to economize on manpower and, as a consequence, to reduce its costs. Most important, since the handling of the York boat was so much more simple, only two of the nine-man crew, the bowsman and the steersman, need be specialized personnel.²⁹⁷ Finally, the means of constructing these boats was nearer than that of the northern canoes to the methods with which the Orkney men were familiar. At Cumberland House a supply depot was established to provision these heavy craft.²⁹⁸

Thanks to these few improvements, which it conceived only when it began to expand its progress into the interior, and thanks to the much easier access which the routes available to it opened out toward the prairies, the Hudson's Bay Company was able slowly to develop a policy of expansion with the help of a handful of devoted men, such as William Tomison, John Mackay, James Sutherland, Peter Fidler, and Philip Turnor. Of course, the Company was still far from measuring up to its powerful rivals, and its achievements remained very modest in comparison with the brilliant successes of the North West Company. But it never renounced the objective it had set itself after a century of hesitation and the two great currents of penetration, branching out on the southern and northern routes, henceforward proceeded along parallel lines.

THE SIMULTANEOUS PROGRESS OF THE CURRENTS OF PENETRATION

The Canadian Offensive

While the pedlars used the main arteries of the prairies and the in-

tersecting waterways of the Shield to pursue their progress toward the West and the North West, the Hudson's Bay Company docilely followed them; it established itself beside them on the routes which they had traced out for it, thus preventing the encirclement of its essential positions and obtaining its share of the fur trade.

Proceeding from the bases where they were solidly entrenched around Lake Winnipeg, the pedlars' initiatives fanned out simultaneously over the three great zones into which the West was divided.

Over the prairie and on the southern fringe of the parkland we see them extending up the great river valleys the gains they had won in the preliminary phase of their offensive. The grand lines of the hydrographic network tempted them to this action, but it was the rapid exhaustion of the supplies of furs, which they sought without restraint so as to reap the profits necessitated by their enormous costs, that made it necessary.²⁹⁹ In 1774-5 they occupied Lake Winnipegosis, the valley of the Red Deer River, and that of the Swan River, the region of Fort Dauphin and the Red River valley.³⁰⁰ Thence they advanced toward the Assiniboine valley while, apart from Pascoyac, they retained several establishments in the neighborhood of the Fort la Corne of the French period and of the fort known as Isaac's House, which Alexander Henry the Elder called Fort la Prairie.³⁰¹

In 1776-7 they went beyond the junction of the two arms of the Saskatchewan River, and established themselves on the north branch at the inflow of the Sturgeon or Net-Setting River, where they built Sturgeon Fort, which they also gave the name of Lower Settlement.³⁰² In 1778 they went on from Lower Settlement to establish, at an important junction of routes frequented by the forest Indians, Middle Settlement or Middle Fort,³⁰³ whence they reached the Eagle Hills and, pushing close to the confluence of the Battle River, established Upper Settlement, or Pangman's Fort, on the left bank of the Saskatchewan.³⁰⁴ Later on, after an inactive period, they resumed their assault on the North Saskatchewan; in 1784 they established themselves in strength at Pine Island Fort near the present frontier of the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta,³⁰⁵ and in the succeeding years they pushed even closer to the headwaters of the great river, built Fort George in 1792,³⁰⁶ and, last of all, the remote outpost of Fort Augustus near the inflow of the Sturgeon River of present-day Alberta in 1795, and Rocky

Mountain House near the junction of the Clearwater River in 1799.³⁰⁷ In 1801 Fort Augustus was replaced by a post built on the present site of Edmonton.³⁰⁸ Now the North Saskatchewan was completely occupied, and this assured the Canadians a rich harvest of furs from the wooded zone that extended along its left bank.³⁰⁹ Every year the establishment of a hundred or so men they maintained there extracted from it some 8,000 beaver pelts and an equivalent number of bear and wolf skins.

At the same time as they occupied the North Saskatchewan, the pedlars embarked on its southern branch. In 1785-6 on its lower course they established the Fort of the Isles,³¹⁰ and in 1800 at the junction with the Red Deer River they founded two adjoining posts,³¹¹ leaving unoccupied a vast area, which was deserted in winter by the bison and scantily populated by fur-bearing animals.

At the same time the pedlars multiplied their enterprises on the more southerly rivers; on the Assiniboine, where their posts succeeded each other from the area of Portage la Prairie as far as Fort Alexandria; on the Qu'appelle River, whose lower course they controlled from Fort Hope; on the Red River where, since before 1789, the junction of the Pembina River was dominated by a trading fort,³¹² and where Fort Gibraltar would be built in 1808-9 at the inflow of the Assiniboine.³¹³ From these last groups of forts, sited in a region favored equally by abundant bison herds and by fur-bearing animals, particularly prevalent in the parkland and in the clusters of hills that extended it into the plain,³¹⁴ the pedlars encroached on American territory. There they extended their operations, establishing advance posts in Minnesota and North Dakota³¹⁵ and developing an active current of trade with the Mandans of the Missouri.³¹⁶ The post situated at the junction of the Souris and Assiniboine rivers played the most important role in these developments.³¹⁷ From the Mandans the Canadians bought furs, especially wolf and lynx, and found among their herds the horses they needed for their operations.³¹⁸ Red River was the ultimate terminus of the Crow Wing Trail, by which the traders from Prairie du Chien, in American territory, reached the Assiniboine; it was a very dangerous route because it ran through the *no-man's-land* which the Sioux and the *Saulteaux* unceasingly disputed.³¹⁹

But the prairie was not the Canadians' only field of activity. Their enterprises proliferated in every direction, with a boldness encouraged by the need to keep on finding new sources of furs.

Thus, early on, they penetrated into the zone of woodland that clothed the rocky soil of the Shield, and invaded the hinterland of Fort Albany, where their posts were scattered along the basin of the English River and as far as Cat Lake on the upper course of the Albany River.³²⁰ Later they spread into the hinterland of York Factory, where they quickly reached the principal waterways, such as Grass River and Minago River, that flowed into the Nelson River. By 1774 they had set foot in the basin of the Minago, which drained partly into Lake Winnipeg and partly into Hudson Bay, and in this area from 1783 onward a struggle to maintain their influence brought the pedlars and the British company into conflict.³²¹ Thence they penetrated David Thompson's Muskrat Country, from whose heartland between the branches of the Nelson and Churchill rivers they hoped to gain important cargoes of furs.³²² York Factory's journals and letter-books reveal how much these encroachments troubled its officers,³²³ at a time when the post had only limited manpower at its disposal.³²⁴

It was in the direction of the Churchill and Athabasca rivers that the pedlars' most active and fruitful enterprises were developed. In 1774, by way of the Maligne or Sturgeon Weir River, Joseph Frobisher reached Trade Portage, where the summit of the divide separating the basin of the Saskatchewan from that of the Churchill formed an essential stage on the route used by the Indians on their way to Fort Churchill.³²⁵ Louis Primeau, who by this time had deserted the Hudson's Bay Company, constructed a rough shelter there in which Joseph and Thomas Frobisher spent the winter of 1774-5, in particularly difficult conditions, with the threat of starvation never far away.³²⁶ For this reason, they picked for the following winter a better-supplied spot on Beaver Lake,³²⁷ where the abundant fisheries enabled them to await the reopening of the waterways so that they could continue their operations in the direction of the Churchill River.³²⁸ Thence they returned in the spring of 1776 to Trade Portage, where they accumulated a stock of exceptionally fine furs. Then Thomas Frobisher crossed the watershed and, following the Churchill River, reached Lac Ile à la Crosse before the winter set in; his brother rejoined him there in the spring of 1777.³²⁹ In this way the pedlars reached the threshold of Athabaska; from here onward the country remained temporarily unexplored, since Thomas Frobisher, doubtless from lack of sufficient supplies, had to abandon the idea of going beyond the lake beside which he had spent the winter.³³⁰

The decisive step was taken in the following year by Peter Pond when he crossed Methye Portage, and, by the henceforward classic route of the Clearwater and Athabasca rivers, reached the shores of Lake Athabasca, where he erected the first post that had yet been founded in that distant region.³³¹ Here he was able to intercept the rich cargoes of furs which the Cree and the Chipewyan were in the habit of trading to Hudson Bay by the very route which he had followed in the other direction.³³² Thanks to the proximity of the Peace River, he was able to get as many victuals as he required from the local Indians.³³³ This achievement opened to the Canadians the limitless possibilities of the North West. Masters of the main access route and assured of finding at Lake Assiniboine the provisions of food needed for their enterprises, they saw the promise of new explorations opening out indefinitely.

In the following years Peter Pond continued his activities in the same region. In 1781-2 he seems to have been delayed by an early freezeup, and had to spend the winter at Lac la Ronge.³³⁴ He reappeared in Athabasca in 1783-4 and did not leave the region for several years. During this period, on the basis of his personal observations and of information gained from the Indians whom his lively curiosity led him to question, he drew up a map which with remarkable prevision linked the vast extent of the Arctic regions with the world as it was then known.

New positions were soon added to those he had occupied as the traders poured into Athabasca in ever greater numbers. John Ross and Laurent Leroux established themselves beside Peter Pond, and Laurent Leroux went on to Great Slave Lake.³³⁵ Alexander Mackenzie and Patrick Small, quickly followed by Roderick Mackenzie and Duncan M'Gillivray, established themselves at Ile à la Crosse.³³⁶ Peace River in its turn was invaded, and two posts were built there.³³⁷ From Ile à la Crosse expeditions were organized toward the south. Advance posts were established on Green Lake and Moose Lake, and along the Beaver River; thence David Thompson was able to reach Deer Lake, the upper course of the Athabasca River, and Lesser Slave Lake, while, by way of Moose Lake, it was easy to reach the Upper Saskatchewan at the point where Fort George was established.³³⁸

By this radiation of their operations, the Canadians became the masters of Athabasca. The North West Company, whose profits continued to increase, now enjoyed its most prosperous years. Yet the progress which the Canadians had up to now realized was only

the prelude to enterprises which, though less profitable than those of Peter Pond, outstripped them in the range of discoveries to which they led.

First of all, there were the famous explorations of Alexander Mackenzie, northward toward the Arctic coastline, westward toward the Pacific Ocean, explorations whose results Peter Pond had already foreseen and whose main directions he had traced out on the map he compiled. Pond himself had moreover outlined orally in Montreal the plan he had conceived of following the river system, whose upper course he had discovered, as far as Alaska, whence he hoped to reach the coast of Asia, and thence return to England.³³⁹ It was in the hope of reaching the Pacific Ocean that Alexander Mackenzie set out in the summer of 1789 on the exploration that led him, by way of Slave River and the waterway that bears his name, to the shores of the Arctic Ocean.³⁴⁰ However commercially advantageous this voyage may have been because of the new breadth it gave to the North West Company's operations,³⁴¹ it disappointed the hopes that had been raised of reaching the Pacific Ocean.³⁴² So Mackenzie resumed his search in a westerly direction. This was the aim of his expedition in 1792, during which, ascending the Peace River, he found his way through the Rocky Mountains and, by way of the Parsnip, Fraser, Blackwater, and Bella Coola rivers, reached the Pacific in the locality of Elcho Harbour.³⁴³ Mackenzie was the first man to succeed in crossing the full breadth of the American continent: drawing the conclusions from his journey, he now thought of substituting the Hudson Bay route for that, beginning in Montreal, which the North West Company now used. He proposed to send the furs from the interior via Hudson Bay or the Pacific rather than taking them to the St. Lawrence by a route whose length made it impractical for the export of furs from the Rocky Mountains, and to inaugurate between Canada and the countries of the Far East a commercial link that would be a new source of profit for England.³⁴⁴

These ambitious projects soon inspired the men of the North West Company. Following the example of their great predecessor, they set out to reach the shores of the Pacific, but by different routes. The first was Duncan M'Gillivray, who vainly attempted the journey in 1801, probably abandoning his project at Kootenay Lake in the valley of the same name, which he had reached by way of the Bow River.³⁴⁵ Simon Fraser was more fortunate in 1807-8. Leaving the Peace River, on whose upper course he had estab-

lished two posts that served him as reconnaissance bases, he ascended the Parsnip River, and quickly reached the waterway which henceforward bore his name, and which led him to the Pacific in July 1808.³⁴⁶ The route he thus discovered, despite its almost rectilinear appearance on the map, was difficult to use because of the falls by which its course was broken.

It was David Thompson to whom fell the honor of finding the easier way of the Columbia River. From the North Saskatchewan, by way of the Howse Pass, he reached the Columbia valley in 1807, but for several years he dissipated his efforts in trading operations, in comings and goings that hindered the progress of his discoveries. It was only in 1811 that he seriously re-embarked on them: ascending the upper course of the Columbia River, he went over into the valley of the Kootenay, which he followed in American territory to the extremity of its southern curve. He then travelled westward over land, and re-entered the Columbia valley at Kettle Falls in American territory; he descended the river to its mouth, where he arrived on 15 July 1811.³⁴⁷

The Americans had got there before him. They had already taken possession of the mouth of the Columbia by the construction of Fort Astoria. This would have turned Thompson's excessively slow expedition into a failure if the war of 1812 had not soon put the Americans in a position of liquidating their enterprise and giving up their fort to the North West Company,³⁴⁸ which at last had a maritime base and an easy way of access to the Pacific. The Rockies, where trading posts in the meantime had proliferated, passed in their turn under the economic domination of the pedlars of Lower Canada. In spite of the growing complications which the problem of distances created for the North West Company as it extended its operations farther from its base on the St. Lawrence, it had nevertheless achieved some impressive exploits, of which the parallel enterprises of the Hudson's Bay Company seem only a weak echo.

The British Offensive

Since the day Samuel Hearne established the post of Cumberland House, the Hudson's Bay Company's progress continued, slowly perhaps, but with an obstinacy that does it credit, and which in the end would enable it to seize from its rival the exploitation of the North West. Its policy of penetration, like that of the pedlars, was

developed simultaneously across the prairie and the Shield. There was no general plan, but a series of tentative moves as each officer organized his isolated expedition, acting in response to the enterprises of his competitors without any consideration for the orientation of his neighbor's expeditions. Because of the rivalries that divided them, of their excessively narrow conceptions of their posts' immediate commercial interests, and of their ignorance of the geography of the hinterland, the governors of the forts on Hudson Bay would have found it difficult to co-ordinate the efforts of their men or devise for them a methodical plan of penetration.³⁴⁹ Yet some of them, like Humphrey Marten, the governor of York Factory, were devoid of such narrow prejudices, giving good guidance to the initiatives of their employees and suggesting to them new fields of exploitation.³⁵⁰

Cumberland House, the departure point for the offensive, experienced some painful setbacks. Its weak manpower, consisting of only eight men, was surrounded on all sides by the superior forces of the "pedlars," some 160 men, and this meant that in the beginning they were unable to carry out very lucrative operations.³⁵¹ Yet from this modest base, which did not seem to have much chance of survival, Matthew Cocking, who succeeded Samuel Hearne in 1775, dispersed his men in tiny groups, instructed to follow the pedlars and to intercept the Indians before they joined the Canadians, or to escort them to his post.³⁵² But it soon became clear that such sporadic enterprises were not enough, and that it was necessary to found new and better-equipped posts, since the Canadians' establishments were already sited too far up the Saskatchewan for Cumberland House to gain any appreciable profits.³⁵³

Thus the progression began, sometimes in docile response to the Canadian advances, sometimes more boldly conducted by men who rebelled against this cautious policy. In 1778 William Tomison led out from York Factory a small expedition, not even a dozen men, but still a little larger than usual and supplied with better-chosen merchandise. He ascended the Saskatchewan and established himself beside Sturgeon Fort. Then the expedition moved on erratically to Middle Settlement,³⁵⁴ and succeeded in building, upstream from it, a post called Upper Hudson House, which was soon abandoned.³⁵⁵ In 1759 Tomison constructed, somewhat downriver, the post of Hudson House, which he was able to build before the Canadians returned; this enabled him to

carry out an active and profitable trade with the Indians.³⁵⁶

These initiatives opened a contest in speed between the competing traders. On the routes across the prairie it became a matter of who could overtake the other and build his post first on a well-chosen site, far enough away to intercept the Indians on their journeys. As soon as the pedlars embarked on the South Saskatchewan, Tomison hastened to imitate them and to construct a fort beside their establishment.³⁵⁷ To the building of Pine Island Fort on the north branch near the present frontier of Alberta he answered by constructing Manchester House,³⁵⁸ whose site was outflanked by one of his more active competitors.³⁵⁹ Not only did the Hudson's Bay Company witness its possibilities of trade widening gradually in this direction, but it gained positions in the neighborhood of pasturelands that could provide meat, and near to wooded zones that offered the raw materials needed for building canoes. Soon, in their turn, its men set foot in the Assiniboine valley, within immediate reach of the bison herds. There they constructed Brandon House in 1793 as an outpost of Fort Albany, whose men had recently reached the basin of Lake Winnipeg and the Red River valley. Forewarned of the arrival of their enemies, the pedlars had taken the precaution of diverting the Indians from the locality of Brandon,³⁶⁰ but the newcomers did not let themselves be evicted. In fact, between 1794 and 1796, they added Marlborough House to Brandon House; it lay at the other end of the Assiniboine valley, near the source of the river. Carlton House was then built near Alexandria, and Albany House took the place of Marlborough House; as well, a series of positions in sight of Canadian ones were occupied between Brandon House and these more distant posts. The zone of wooded hills and humid valleys extending to the west of Lake Winnipegosis, whose wealth in furs had early attracted the pedlars, was also occupied, between 1790 and 1794, by posts set up in the Swan River valley.³⁶² Here the Hudson's Bay Company gained results similar to those of the pedlars and in its turn acquired good bases on the principal penetration routes and in the fur-producing areas.

The difficulties that at this time arose with the Indians, affecting the pedlars' enterprises just as much, led to the abandonment of the posts on the South Saskatchewan, which were replaced by new establishments on the north branch: Buckingham House which from 1792 onward stood beside Fort George,³⁶³ and Carlton House which in 1796 was built upstream from the inflow of Stur-

geon River and close to the Canadians' Fort la Montée, on a site that fitted it for the role of a provisioning post.³⁶⁴ When, after the exhaustion of furs around the positions they already occupied, the pedlars built Fort Augustus, the Hudson's Bay Company imitated them and established Fort Edmonton beside it;³⁶⁵ in 1801 this was transferred to the site of the existing town of Edmonton, where once again it stood near to the Canadians' post.³⁶⁶ Beyond that, near the mouth of the Clearwater River and facing the Canadians' Rocky Mountain House, Acton House constituted the farthest point of the Company's expansion on the North Saskatchewan.³⁶⁷ Thus the river was studded, along its entire course, with rival establishments which often, in the case of both companies, were merely temporary structures, condemned to abandonment through the rapid destruction of the fur-bearing animals. Sometimes, on the other hand, the competing traders resumed possession—often simultaneously—of the bases they had earlier abandoned, in the hope of finding there once more the resources their more recent posts no longer offered. Thus in 1800 they reoccupied the South Saskatchewan, which had never been a major objective, and on its upper course, at the junction with the Red Deer River, founded three neighboring posts, the English company's bearing the name of Chesterfield House.³⁶⁸

By these enterprises, radiating over the boundless spaces of the prairie, and along the multiple limbs of its waterways, York Factory promoted a renaissance of its former prosperity, and once again it was able to ship to England cargoes of furs that recalled the figures of earlier days: nearly 50,000 pelts in 1794, nearly 43,000 in 1795, more than 47,000 in 1797.³⁶⁹ The fur trade which in the first years had been concentrated on the shores of Hudson Bay was now carried on in the interior of Rupert's Land; in terms of activity the posts there eventually exceeded the coastal factories, and some of the Company's officers even advised the pure and simple abandonment of the shoreline, which had ceased to be productive and tied up too many men.³⁷⁰

If the Hudson's Bay Company successfully carried out in the prairie enterprises whose undramatic character did not reduce their effectiveness, in the zone of the Shield it remained at a disadvantage in relation to the Canadians. No doubt it succeeded in combating the encroachments that threatened to outflank its establishments on the shoreline, and it developed in their hinterland a resistance that broke the besieging circle of the pedlars. But it

could not vie with them in the more distant spaces of Athabasca, to which it brought neither the number or quality of personnel nor the trade goods that the nature of the country demanded.

When York Factory in 1774 inaugurated its policy of expansion, the other posts on Hudson Bay had already set about breaking the blockade in their hinterlands. Thus it was only in the later years of the eighteenth century that these establishments began to show an interest in the regions for which they formed the outlets. In 1776 the factor of Albany was surprised to learn that in a few days he could reach the post of Michipicoten on Lake Superior, which was an important departure point for Canadian expeditions directed against his post.³⁷¹ In 1773 the personnel of Moose Factory undertook the "discovery" of the Nettaway River,³⁷² and embarked on the straight waterways that fanned out toward Lake Superior, Lake Huron, and the Ottawa River.³⁷³ Posts began to be built in that barren region,³⁷⁴ where the lack of food supplies, the difficulties of navigation, and the often unfriendly dispositions of the Indians hindered operations.³⁷⁵ By way of Albany River, which opened direct communication between James Bay and the basin of Lake Winnipeg, the Company reached the Red and the Assiniboine rivers, after consolidating on the way several staging points, such as Henley House, Gloucester House, Osnaburg House, and Rocky Valley.³⁷⁶ In 1777, George Sutherland reached the shores of Lake Winnipeg. The route was long, difficult, and did not seem to favor the establishment of useful relations with the Indians; and it was only from 1780 onward that the offensive was effectively developed.³⁷⁷ Posts were then built on Red Lake and English River.³⁷⁸ In 1793 James Sutherland and John Mackay penetrated as far as the Winnipeg River by the classic route of Portage de l'Isle, close to which they founded the fort of the same name. From this important junction of trails they were able to reach, on one side the Rainy Lake area, and on the other the region of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, where, as we have seen, several forts were soon established.³⁷⁹

Finally, from York Factory and Fort Churchill, expeditions were organized to counter the enterprises which the pedlars were conducting in the basin of the Nelson River. Joseph Colen, commandant of York Factory, distinguished himself in this situation by his activity and his spirit of initiative. To the intrusions of the Canadians he replied by putting up numerous shelters, placed mostly around the lakes with which the region is scattered, and

shifting them frequently so as to prevent his rivals staying too long in another place: Lake House on Split Lake in 1790, Chatham House on Wintering Lake in 1791, Sipiwesk House on the lake of the same name in 1792.³⁸⁰ Not only was the pedlars' invasion slowed down, but the distances the Indians had to travel were shortened by the interposition of posts where they could trade their furs without going as far as Hudson Bay.³⁸¹

More striking expeditions were directed toward the Barren Grounds and Athabasca. Across these desolate spaces in the direction of Coppermine River, where he expected to find an actual copper mine, Samuel Hearne made the celebrated journey of exploration, his account of which communicates an interest comparable to that of the wanderings of David Thompson. It led him from Fort Churchill to the mouth of the river in question and to Great Slave Lake, but its results were not very positive. Hearne did not find the vein of copper he was looking for. His expedition in fact did little more than reveal a commercial link between the Indians of the Slave River and Fort Churchill through the intermediary of the Dene tribes living on the outer edge of the forest and the barren land surfaces of the far North.³⁸² This current of trade provided a convenient source of profit for Prince of Wales Fort, which in part compensated for the losses inflicted on it by Frobisher's enterprises. Samuel Hearne set about making the trade more active, and perfecting its organization. Under his direction, groups of northern Indians went as far as the tribes of Great Slave Lake, commissioned to trade with them for furs, and Hearne could congratulate himself on the results he obtained.³⁸³

But this policy soon seemed insufficient, and the idea was developed of eventually discovering a new access route that would make it easier to reach the area that provided the coveted pelts.³⁸⁴ The reconnaissance and surveying expeditions carried out during 1780-2 in the Athabasca region by Philip Turnor, Peter Fidler, and David Thompson³⁸⁵ had ended by showing that the pedlars' route was too solidly occupied to be profitably used. The enterprise [of finding an alternative route] was difficult and looked too ambitious for the personnel of the Hudson's Bay Company,³⁸⁶ whose posts moreover were insufficiently stocked with merchandise and provisions.³⁸⁷ Fort Churchill and York Factory made concurrent attempts which merely resulted in postponing the realization of the idea. After three years of uncertainty and fruitless efforts,³⁸⁸ the project was realized in 1796 by David Thompson.

who reached Lake Athabasca by Reindeer Lake and the Fond du Lac River.³⁸⁹ The trail turned out to be rough and unprofitable. Thus the Hudson's Bay Company had to renounce its ambition to maintain a route guaranteed against the inroads of its competitors. Here, as on the prairie, it had to resign itself to the limited policy that consisted of docilely following the initiatives of the Canadians in order to reap the best possible share of profits. The Committee facilitated the task by deciding in favor of Prince of Wales Fort the dispute that had set it against York Factory, and confiding to the governor of the post that guarded the mouth of the Churchill River the mission of organizing the necessary expeditions.

In 1799 the York boats reached Ile à la Crosse. A post was built there, from which a series of offensives was directed against points already occupied by the Canadians—Green Lake, Essex House, Lac la Biche (Greenwich House), Lesser Slave Lake.³⁹⁰ Next, the operations were extended in the direction of Lake Athabasca, where in 1802 Peter Fidler built Nottingham House a short distance from Fort Chipewyan, and in the direction of Peace River, where the post of Mansfield House assured the victualling of the personnel in Athabasca;³⁹¹ Great Slave Lake was also reached.³⁹² Thus the Hudson's Bay Company had everywhere succeeded in establishing itself beside the Canadian traders, and this was done in spite of the disproportion in manpower, which was particularly pronounced in Athabasca, where the hard life discouraged its employees.³⁹³ It was in the numerical insufficiency and also the poor quality of its personnel, who would refuse to set out on routes where the Canadians had overcome every obstacle,³⁹⁴ that the Hudson's Bay Company's principal weakness was still to be found. The pedlars expressed their view of the situation with irony when they observed that the Company always held to its old maxim: "Sleep and take your rest."³⁹⁵ Thus, although the Hudson's Bay Company did succeed in carrying out lucrative trading operations in Athabasca, it still seemed to retain a rather precarious hold over its position there, which aggravated the increasingly aggressive attitude of the Canadians.

The Clash of the Currents of Penetration

At first, the hostility which these rival enterprises could not fail to arouse had taken the form of a commercial rivalry, sometimes accompanied by reciprocal courtesies and by a promptness to help

each other in difficult situations. Of that comparative cordiality which mitigated the bitterness of competition there were many examples. There was the hospitality Matthew Cocking received on several occasions from François le Blanc.³⁹⁶ There was the generous attitude of Andrew Graham, who sent medicines and food to Joseph Frobisher when the latter suffered a disastrous setback to his trade after embarking on the Churchill River.³⁹⁷ During the long wintering period, it was customary for the staff of the Canadian posts to pay the traditional visit to their competitors on 1 January. In 1779 the pedlar Holmes, in residence at Sturgeon Fort, invited the Hudson's Bay Company's officers to spend Christmas in his company.³⁹⁸ And in 1783, when his rivals could not be supplied from York Factory, which had been abandoned in 1782 because of La Pérouse's attack, the same Holmes provided them with enough food to enable them to reach Hudson House.³⁹⁹ When Robert Flett was the victim of attack by an Indian on the way to Cumberland House, Frobisher gave him the most courteous of welcomes, and provided all the material succor he needed.⁴⁰⁰ Sometimes the pedlars called on their competitors to lend them assistance in catching men who deserted after stealing merchandise.⁴⁰¹ On other occasions they went among the Mandans together with the Hudson's Bay Company's men, and in practice the good relationship sometimes went as far as building a common palisade around the rival posts to protect them from the possibility of surprise attack by the Indians.⁴⁰²

Yet soon enough indications began to appear that the traders from Lower Canada were now resolved to manifest their opposition with a brutal intransigence which the French Canadians in their time had not displayed. The language used by James Finlay revealed early on the changed nature of the struggle that would soon begin. In 1769 he made the flat declaration to his enemies that he would go within fifty leagues of the posts on the shoreline and that fifty men would not be enough to stop him.⁴⁰³ Openly denying that the Charter of 1670 had any legal validity, the pedlars affirmed that they had the right to go anywhere they wished.⁴⁰⁴ Undoubtedly the harsher temperaments of the new leaders of the enterprise, their state of mind, at once more mercenary and less conciliatory than that of the Canadians from the St. Lawrence, was bound to introduce methods of violence such as, in earlier years, had been manifest only sporadically on occasions like the affair of Henley House. It was certainly the new arrivals, the High-

landers and the American frontiersmen, who took the initiatives leading to the worst instances of violence. The Canadian, naturally more sociable in his inclinations, tended to return quickly to his habits of courtesy and generosity. Charles Boyer, the well-known trader from Rainy Lake, always did his utmost to get the better of his competitors, but at the same time showed them a courteous hospitality which they themselves recognized.⁴⁰⁶ And Charles Chaboillez, despite the "devilish" methods he used to intercept the Indians, was never lacking in kindness toward the men at Brandon House.⁴⁰⁶

The more aggressive methods of the newcomers were first manifested against Cumberland House. The Hudson's Bay Company's post was immediately besieged by the pedlars, who carried off by force the canoes which the Indians had built for its personnel,⁴⁰⁷ and did not stop short of assault in hindering the natives from taking to Cumberland House the furs they intended to sell there.⁴⁰⁸ Intercepting the arrival of victuals,⁴⁰⁹ seizing furs from Indians on the trails in order to ruin the trade of the rival enterprise,⁴¹⁰ openly bribing them with presents and alcohol to refuse help to the officers of the British company,⁴¹¹ and finally using their numerical superiority to threaten with reprisals the Indians who had dared to make canoes for their enemies,⁴¹² or themselves cornering all the available supplies of birchbark,⁴¹³ the pedlars did their best, by all these methods, to isolate the establishments of their rivals and to force them to abandon their positions. Edward Umfreville, who had deserted the Hudson's Bay Company to join the ranks of the Canadians, appears to have played among them a role especially harmful to his old masters, and, led perhaps by the resentment he nurtured,⁴¹⁴ to have known no limit in the spiteful actions he performed against them.

Alcohol was distributed in profusion, to lure the Indians so that the trade goods they accepted from the English company with the promise of repayment in furs would be lost to the latter.⁴¹⁵ In this way any spirit of honesty vanished among these primitive people. They became accustomed to receiving merchandise from one of the competing enterprises and giving their furs to the rival group, from whom they received a second time over the reward for their hunting.⁴¹⁶ Going even farther, the pedlars directly attacked the canoes of their adversaries to pillage them,⁴¹⁷ took advantage of the temporary abandonment of posts to appropriate their contents,⁴¹⁸ and egged on the Indians to make open attacks on the

trading forts.⁴¹⁹ In these circumstances, it is not surprising that William Tomison should have come to dread Canadian attacks and the theft of the furs he acquired by trading.⁴²⁰ If, during the period of growing vexation, one observes frequent interludes marked by courteous gestures,⁴²¹ it was not long before these gave way to a continuous and increasingly violent hostility. When Tomison in 1796 asked the bourgeois of Fort Augustus to hand over to him the Indians who had murdered three of the Hudson's Bay Company employees, the reply he received from this Scot showed clearly that any thought of mutual aid had by now been banished. "That it was not for the paltry Consideration of the loss of three of the Hudson's Bay Company's Servants that he would lose the Trade of so valuable a tribe of Indians."⁴²²

Against the Indians, who sometimes resisted the demands of the pedlars because they found competition among the traders advantageous to them, there were more frequent attacks,⁴²³ and the assaults became more aggravated, sometimes going as far as murder.⁴²⁴ In order to turn the native peoples away from the Hudson's Bay Company, the pedlars, who had used calumny from the beginning, now turned to derision. Its success was infallible among the Indians, who in their own society customarily employed it as a disciplinary measure. Whenever the British company's employees appeared, fewer in numbers and poorly equipped, they were attacked with sarcasm. Their awkwardness and their inexperience were openly turned to ridicule, and the Indian feared discredit among his own people if he dared to take them his furs.⁴²⁵ But it goes without saying that the violence to which the pedlars so often gave way in their treatment of the native peoples provoked the latter's resentment, despite their instinctive preference for the French Canadians, and led to reprisals, especially since the diffusion of firearms, as a consequence of the growing number of trading posts,⁴²⁶ had put them in a position to take their revenge and thus aggravated the state of war that prevailed in the prairie. The haughty and suspicious temperament of the nomads rebelled against the proceedings of the pedlars, which bore no comparison with the moderate recourse to the tactic of intimidation hitherto practised by the Canadians. From the beginning, the Indians began to learn from the pedlars' example, leading them into ambushes and lying in wait at the rapids in order to pillage their merchandise.⁴²⁷ Alcohol also had its demoralizing effects, and violence often ensued when the Indians were drunk.⁴²⁸ Assaults and mur-

ders became increasingly frequent.⁴²⁹ As a consequence of this situation, the Hudson's Bay Company's men found themselves the objects of a resentment which was due both to the tendency of the Indians to apply their thoughts of revenge to all the whites who moved among them,⁴³⁰ and to the annoyance they felt whenever their demands, inflated by competitive bidding, were refused.⁴³¹ The destruction of Manchester House in 1793, and the attacks on the English and Canadian posts on the South Saskatchewan in 1794, showed in its clearest form the hostility which many of the Indians nurtured without distinction toward all the representatives of the trading companies.⁴³² In such moments, danger would draw together the personnel of the rival enterprises, and then the solidarity that had once united the competing traders re-emerged.⁴³³ But it lacked the conviction of the earlier years, and there were numerous exceptions, exemplified in McDonald's attitude (at Fort Augustus) in 1796, and confirmed by the complaint of James Bird when he was commandant of Fort Edmonton in 1807-8.⁴³⁴

Thus there developed that merciless competition which the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company had foreseen when the traders of Lower Canada returned to Rupert's Land with a controlling personnel of Scots and Anglo-Saxons in place of the Canadians of the first epoch.⁴³⁵ It was above all when the two great rival Canadian companies, the North West Company and the XY Company, began their struggle that violence and the will to annihilate were given free play. At that time the traders developed the habit of recruiting veritable shock troops from Lower Canada, whom they employed against each other in the regions where rivalry was most active, each side trying to ward off the competing troop and carry off by main force the Indians' furs. These are the "bullies" whose actions Lord Selkirk publicized in his *Sketch of the British Fur Trade in North America*.⁴³⁶

The desperate struggle which the two companies waged against each other led them into conflict with the Hudson's Bay Company as soon as, in 1804, they had merged in the great North West Company. The latter, under the direction of bellicose Highlanders,⁴³⁷ resumed against its adversary organization the practices that had now become general. Athabasca became the main theatre of conflict. There was no longer solidarity of any kind, nor even common human feelings among the rivals struggling for possession of the last territory where furs were still abundant. On his ar-

rival at Deer Lake in 1799, Peter Fidler remarked on the animosity which his enterprise aroused among his rivals. "The Canadian master is enraged at our coming."⁴³⁸ The hostility increased when it became evident that the Anglo-Saxons were determined to hang on to their positions. In order to eliminate them, every kind of operation was used in succession: posts too weak to defend themselves were robbed,⁴³⁹ the men were molested,⁴⁴⁰ and the greatest ingenuity was used to cut them off from all possibility of sustenance.⁴⁴¹ Battles were fought between rival groups, and these acts of violence, though they were especially conspicuous in Athabasca, were not confined to this central point of conflict. Everywhere, the same episodes were repeated, showing the intention of the North Westers to put an end to their enemies.⁴⁴² Murders were committed on both sides.⁴⁴³ But it was evident that the Hudson's Bay Company, given its numerical inferiority and the demoralization of its personnel, could not at that time sustain the struggle in Athabasca. In 1805, faced by his men's refusal to return to Athabasca and failing to receive support from his headquarters, Peter Fidler was forced to retire and leave the field free to the North West Company.⁴⁴⁴

The Hudson's Bay Company in Control of Rupert's Land

Yet the North West Company had not won a final victory. The very fury of the fight it had put up was aimed at making up for the defects that were beginning to show themselves in its ageing organization. Buying furs excessively in a ceaseless effort to increase the profits that enabled it to meet its ever-growing costs, and quickly exhausting the districts it occupied,⁴⁴⁵ it was forced to extend itself farther and farther beyond its original bases. When it found in Athabasca the resources whose exploitation allowed it to survive, it was forced to take stock of the disadvantages which the length of its penetration routes had imposed upon it. Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Duncan M'Gillivray, and Simon McTavish had all understood how useful to their company would be the possession of a nearer base, and they initiated negotiations aimed at gaining a right of passage through the ports of Hudson Bay.⁴⁴⁶ When the negotiations miscarried because of the Imperial government's refusal to abolish the Hudson's Bay Company's monopoly, the North Westers were forced to seek a solution in a policy of more severe economies,⁴⁴⁷ in an attempt to create a port for themselves

on the Pacific nearer to the theatre of their operations, and finally in the merciless struggle they waged with their enemies in order to forbid them access to Athabasca and force them to make the concessions they themselves were seeking.⁴⁴⁸ But the policies by which, from 1810-11 onward, the Hudson's Bay Company set out to remedy its deficiencies and narrow the gap separating it from its rival meant that this supreme effort on the part of the Canadian organization would finally be in vain.

By the plan of reorganization which it adopted at that time and brought to completion in 1814, the Hudson's Bay Company established a system of rigorous supervision over the posts and commercial operations in Rupert's Land, under the direction of two superintendents, later augmented by a governor-in-chief assisted by a council.⁴⁴⁹ In this way, by the inauguration of a regime of rational co-ordination, the fragmentation of efforts that for so long had characterized the policy of the various establishments came to an end. The creation of additional chief factors, appointed to direct interior posts and gather under their control the less important establishments, reduced the excessively large jurisdictions of York Factory and Fort Albany, and allowed for an organization at once more vigorous and more in sympathy with enterprises devoted to penetration. The officers' activity was stimulated by the introduction of a system of shares, imitated from that used by the North West Company, which allowed them to partake, according to their efforts and achievements, in the general profits of the London organization. Finally, the morale of the personnel was transformed by a growing appeal to the energetic populations of the Hebrides and the west coast of Scotland, as well as to recruits from the St. Lawrence, and by the abandonment of that policy of conciliation which, in its excessive concern for legality, the Company had unceasingly recommended to its men as a response to the worst violences of their enemies.⁴⁵⁰ Into a structure still dominated by sluggish attitudes, ill adapted to the demands of frontier life, the Committee inculcated a new spirit, nearer to that of the North West Company, and finally rid of that egotistical attitude which so often had paralysed all community of intent and achievement among the posts of Rupert's Land.⁴⁵¹

Thus reorganized and better equipped for struggle, the Hudson's Bay Company could resume in Athabasca the efforts which it had temporarily abandoned. This last endeavor definitively concluded the history of the penetration by the white race into the

zone of the Shield. The two currents which had first resulted in the occupation of the great routes of the prairie by the ethnic groups which used them simultaneously, finally mingled in the basins of the Athabasca and the arctic rivers, which, despite their stubbornness, the pedlars were unable to subject to their exclusive monopoly.

The Hudson's Bay Company's penetration into Athabasca was resumed in 1815, under the energetic leadership of a veteran of the fur trade, the American John Clarke, whose past experience, in the service of the North West Company and later of the Pacific Fur Company of John Jacob Astor, had made him familiar with life in the most distant regions of the North West, with all its difficulties and its violence.⁴⁵² Instructions were given by Colin Robertson, who had been shaped in the same school of the North West Company, and the personnel was mainly recruited among Canadians from the St. Lawrence.⁴⁵³ Despite the poor organization of its system of supplies,⁴⁵⁴ the expedition reached Lake Athabasca in October 1815. It erected there Fort Wedderburn, facing the North West Company's Fort Chipewyan, and occupied it with a garrison of fourteen men.⁴⁵⁵ Deciding against immobilizing himself in a place whose provisioning was so unreliable, Clarke detached a group of thirteen men in the direction of Great Slave Lake to build a post there. He himself took the lead in the most important expedition and, at the head of fifty-four men, ascended the Peace River with the aim of establishing a series of posts to provide supplies of meat, while a smaller group of voyageurs was sent to establish the post of Berens House upriver on the Athabasca.⁴⁵⁶ The North Westers immediately replied by a counter-offensive that was favored by the scarcity of provisions in the more desolate areas. Before Clarke's expedition succeeded in reaching the hunting grounds of the Peace River, it was forced by starvation to capitulate and give in to the North Westers. The expedition to Great Slave Lake met a similar fate. Only the positions of Fort Wedderburn and Berens House remained in the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company.⁴⁵⁷

A further expedition, in 1816-17, was even more unfortunate: it ended in the capture of its principal leaders, whom the North West A. N. McLeod, henceforward celebrated for his violent tactics, arrested by pleading the commission of Justice of the Peace which he held under the terms of the Canada Jurisdiction Act of 1803 and which allowed him to color with a pretext of legality the

arbitrary detention he conducted.⁴⁵⁸ The Company's posts on Lake Athabasca and Lesser Slave Lake, together with its establishments at Ile à la Crosse, Green Lake, and Reindeer Lake, were also seized, and it was only in 1818 that J. Clarke reappeared in Athabasca with superior forces, under the command of Colin Robertson, who personally assumed direction of the enterprise. Though Robertson was arrested and made prisoner by the Canadians, Clarke's energy and tenacity enabled him to establish a series of forts as well as to reoccupy the lost positions, thus giving stability to the Hudson's Bay Company's situation in Athabasca. Colville House and St Mary's House on the Peace River, Fort Waterloo on Lesser Slave Lake, and Fort Wedderburn on Lake Athabasca, confirmed the success of the attempts at penetration which, for so many years, the Hudson's Bay Company pursued in the rich domain which Peter Pond's initiatives had in the past opened to the pedlars of the St. Lawrence.⁴⁵⁹

Without having formulated any new or spectacular ideas for the future, without having imagined any of the brilliant improvisations that remained the privilege of its rivals, the Hudson's Bay Company had in the end succeeded in establishing itself everywhere beside those who had preceded it. It had succeeded by its thoroughly British stubbornness, by its refusal ever to give up, without hope of returning, the fragile positions it had successively established in the direction of Athabasca, not to mention its utilization of the routes and methods of its rivals and predecessors. When it finally remained the only power in the vast North West and undertook on an even greater scale the exploitation of its resources in furs, it adapted for the circulation of its own brigades the ingenious procedures which the pedlars of Lower Canada had invented. But it added to them its economical bent, and the procedures of strict financial management inspired by the City of London. In that at least it had always shown itself superior to the North West Company; it was the latter's financial difficulties, as much as the impossibility of carrying on an effective struggle in the far-off regions where it found itself engaged, that explained the decision to which its directors resigned themselves in 1821; union with the powerful British organization,⁴⁶⁰ which had reached the threshold of the most important phase in its history.

The North West Company suffered the fate which in the past it had imposed on the XY Company. It was absorbed into the Hudson's Bay Company, whose name it accepted, and contributed its

posts, its personnel, its bourgeois, and the inestimable prize of its experience.⁴⁶¹ The North West, which hitherto had always been linked to Lower Canada, where the Company recruited its men and from which it was administered, passed henceforward under the influence of the English metropolis, manifest in the Hudson's Bay Company; its great representative, Sir George Simpson, who had revealed in Athabasca his qualities of energy and adaptability, would administer its interests in Rupert's Land for more than forty years. From now onward it was no longer a question of the North West. That term, which for Canadians meant the area extending beyond Lake Superior and northwest of the St. Lawrence, as distinct from the region of Michilimackinac and Lake Michigan, fell into disuse and was replaced by the term Rupert's Land, which evoked the all-powerful ascendancy of the Hudson's Bay Company. The charter that had presided over the Company's birth was no longer contested, and Parliament extended its range by granting a trading licence that conferred on the Company, for a period of twenty-one years, the monopoly of commercial exploitation of land not included within the limitations of the Act of 1670.⁴⁶²

The framework of law and administration within these immense regions was then laid down. They were divided into two departments, themselves subdivided into districts. At the head of the Northern and Southern Departments, which covered the whole stretch of land between the Rocky Mountains and the Montreal region, there were two governors, each assisted by a council, which usually met at Moose Factory for the Southern Department and at York Factory for the Northern Department. In fact, from 1826 onward, Sir George Simpson exercised the function of governor-general of both departments. Within the structure that was now imposed on the old North West, a whole hierarchy of officers was built up: the chief factors appointed to direct the more important establishments; next the chief traders; then the clerks allocated to accounts and correspondence; the postmasters entrusted with the management of the outposts, who could be either clerks or simple employees ("servants"); and finally the interpreters and voyageurs.⁴⁶³

Such was the simple and effective organization that for the half century leading up to its entry into the Canadian confederation would rule over the West. When it came into force, the white race had extended the network of its positions from the prairie to the Barren Grounds and from Lake Superior to the basin of the

Athabasca and Mackenzie rivers. The history of penetration would be enriched by no further developments, except for the slow progression in the direction of the Arctic Ocean by means of the posts which the Company set up during the ensuing years along the Slave and Mackenzie rivers. Elsewhere it was led to create a few new posts, but these were balanced by the disappearance of forts that had no further use. Knowledge of the prairie and the forest increased without changing the basic routes the Company had adopted from the Canadians, and except for isolated remnants, there was no discovery of hitherto unknown territory.

At the same time the two original bases of penetration on Lake Superior and Hudson Bay changed in character. There again, the situation of one deteriorated to the benefit of the other, an inevitable result of the victory of Hudson Bay over the St. Lawrence basin. Undoubtedly, the northern route retained for several years a demographic importance, for this way came the men from Lower Canada on whom the Company still relied to a large extent to fill the ranks of its voyageurs and employees. Nor was it entirely lost to commercial activity. As late as 1858 George Simpson tells of heavy craft, with a displacement of a hundred tons, which arrived loaded with merchandise from Lower Canada and dropped anchor at the mouth of the Kaministiquia River, where their loads were transhipped to the lightest of canoes, drawing eight to ten inches of water.⁴⁶⁴ But Great Britain inevitably became the principal supplier of articles necessary for the fur trade, and as a consequence the northern route was substituted for the route by the Great Lakes, where, for so many years, the canoes had plied to the quick rhythm of their paddles. The old distinction between pork-eaters and winterers vanished, and with it went the picturesque quality of their annual rendezvous at Fort William. On the trails of the interior the canoe lost the primordial role it had once filled. Though it continued to circulate in many waters, the more massive framework of the York boat was preferred wherever conditions of navigation allowed it. The Canadian voyageur gradually became a forgotten man, while a new ethnic group emerged in the West and in its turn became the personnel entrusted with the management of the boats. This was the group known as the Métis, formed during the last stages of penetration. The history of the western provinces bears their image as clearly as it does that of the voyageurs from Lower Canada.

PART THREE

THE BIRTH OF THE METIS GROUP

THE BIRTH OF THE MÉTIS GROUP COINCIDED WITH THE appearance of the white race in the West. But it was only at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in the years of decisive conflict between the two rival companies, that it emerged for the first time as a truly individual entity. The earlier years had been the period of its gestation, during which it appeared gradually on the scene of history in the West, without as yet standing out in prominent relief. No clear analysis of its birth exists, nor are there any precise numerical estimates, as if its double origins endue it from the beginning with an ill-focused image as it stands equidistant between the two societies from which it emerged, neither of which absorbed it.

Nowhere else was the Métis group called to a role so sharply defined as that it eventually assumed in the region that begins with the western shore of Lake Superior. Nowhere else did it become detached so clearly as in those provinces of the Canadian West whose economic exploitation the rival companies so long disputed: neither in the valley of the St. Lawrence and its vicinity; nor in the region of the Great Lakes; nor even in the plains of the American Midwest, even though the *coureurs de bois* and later the regular merchants and the employees of the Canadian and Anglo-Saxon trading companies had disseminated at an early stage the practice of mixed unions and had created either important groupings of Métis or a floating population of Franco- or Anglo-Indians.¹

The opportunity that events gave them to play a historic role, and the claim they laid to constituting an independent nation endowed with a tradition and a glorious past allowed the collective personality of the Métis to develop more vigorously in the Canadian West than anywhere else. This personality, in which primitive elements survived alongside the civilized ones, could only have been developed in the prolonged isolation of the West and in the unbroken contact between whites and the native peoples during the eighteenth century. The Métis group thus came into existence around the two bases of the penetrative process which we have already described and along the routes opening out from them toward the interior. Thus two nuclei can be defined, marking with their ethnic diversity the formation of the new race. The first corresponded to the southern routes, in which the French-

Canadian element played the preponderant role, alongside a minority of Scots whose descendants soon merged into the dominant group; this was the most important and the oldest nucleus, giving birth to those Métis who were best known for their active role, so that one is often tempted to limit to them both the definition and the origination of the mixed-blood group, whose image was certainly most clearly defined among them. The second nucleus took shape around the Hudson's Bay Company's posts; it developed more slowly and its members, fewer in number, remained for a long time detached from the West proper and also from the Métis of French origin, with whom they were never to establish a complete solidarity.

CHAPTER SIX

THE SOUTHERN NUCLEUS

From the beginning the southern nucleus outweighed in numerical importance that which came into existence on the shores of Hudson Bay. It was also distinguished by its broader scope, for it was less narrowly limited to the environs of its original bases; by the deeper involvement of its representatives with the primitive tribes; and above all by their more intimate incorporation into the native environment. The tendencies and antecedents of the French Canadians themselves offer an explanation for this degree of assimilation, which contributed an undoubted element of strength to the group resulting from it, but also left a source of weakness from which even today it is far from having detached itself and which it is doubtful that it will ever escape.

THE DISPERSION OF MANPOWER

The numerical superiority of the nucleus of mixed breeding that emerged around the southern bases was inevitable. We have already, indeed, noted the disproportion between the men using the northern trails and those who followed the southern routes. So far as the early years are concerned it would be difficult to establish that superiority in precise numerical terms. Already, however, during the intermittent expeditions preceding La Vérendrye's vigorous effort at penetration there is mention here and there of quite numerous groups, of which the most important, composed of thirty to forty men, not counting those who infiltrated the hinterland of Moose Factory and Fort Albany, appears to have accompanied the *Sieur de la Noue* in 1777-8.

With La Vérendrye, the figures increase somewhat. Slightly larger groups of Frenchmen begin to establish themselves in some

of the forts he built on the threshold of the prairie, and it is likely that at this time a more perceptible interpenetration of races and cultures began. In 1731 La Vérendrye set out for the West with a complement of fifty,² but as some of them returned to Montreal in the following year, he was left with about thirty men.³ In 1733 Fort Saint-Charles, the central point of his operations, boasted a garrison of thirty-six, and the more modest Fort Saint-Pierre disposed of a mere thirteen men.⁴ In 1736-7 the garrison of Fort Saint-Charles was of the same strength, while five men wintered at Fort Maurepas.⁵ La Vérendrye does not appear to have disposed of more than fifty or so men, of whom the greater part lived in Fort Saint-Charles, and the remainder were divided among the various forts he had established in the parkland and the prairie. If one adds the personnel engaged by the traders to whom Beauharnais had granted the exploitation of the territories originally allotted to La Vérendrye, one reaches a slightly larger figure, but not notably higher than the earlier level.⁶ In 1743 the register of trading permits established at Montreal, with which every trader who wished to enter the West was supposed to conform, recorded the departure of fifty-three employees for the "post of the West" and eighteen for Kaministiquia.⁷

Over the following years, despite the fluctuations owing to vicissitudes in the process of penetration, the same register shows a steady increase which reached its highest point in 1791 with ninety-one entries for Grand Portage and the "Western Sea."⁸ It seems likely that these data give less than an exact idea of the reality, for to the official figures must certainly be added those unidentifiable individuals who went into the West from the St. Lawrence valley, from the nearer base of Michilimackinac, or from the posts on Lake Superior, either to trade illegally or to spare their forts the risk of shortage owing to the uncertainty of provisioning. It should also be remembered that the personnel of the forts was necessarily renewed in its entirety every year, and that the licences issued in Montreal sometimes added new recruits to existing garrisons. Thus it is impossible to know exactly what balance to strike, but one can hardly estimate at more than 150 to 200 men the number of scattered Canadians who lived permanently in the West. No doubt this was an unimpressive number, but it seems more significant when one compares it with the number of men the Hudson's Bay Company then maintained in the interior, and its volume increased immeasurably after the conquest of Canada,

when commercial operations entered on the decisive phase of their development.

The existence among the Indians of groups of twenty or thirty men, often mentioned in the journals of the Hudson's Bay Company, was sufficient to lead to contacts between the whites and the native peoples that were numerous and lasting enough for us to assume that the first fusion of races took place during the preliminary stage of French penetration.⁹ With the return of the pedlars—that is to say, after 1763—the numerical superiority of the southern nucleus was more clearly revealed. Once again, the Canadians spread among the native peoples, not singly like the employees of the rival company, but in groups of ten to twenty men,¹⁰ and their numbers grew rapidly, particularly among the posts on the Saskatchewan, where the aggressive disposition of the Indian tribes required a greater concentration of forces. The modest garrisons of La Vérendrye's time were now increased to complements of as many as sixty or eighty men.¹¹ In 1786, according to William Tomison, the total strength was already more than four hundred men.¹² After the great North West Company was definitively organized, with its hierarchy of personnel, it reached between 1,000 and 1,600,¹³ spread over the country from Lake Superior to Athabasca.

This profusion of personnel, which David Thompson contrasted to the Hudson's Bay Company's parsimonious resources,¹⁴ favored the reconciliation of the civilized and the primitive ways of life. This was due less to the considerable numbers of men involved, than to their extreme dispersion among the native tribes. This in turn was a consequence of the dispersion of the posts which the Canadians scattered along the waterways, even in the most remote parts of the Shield and whose effect they extended by means of temporary outposts; even more it was a consequence of the fact that the men were accustomed to moving around outside the trading posts.¹⁵ As we have seen, far from letting themselves be tied down to the day-to-day tasks of the posts,¹⁶ the employees of the Canadian companies, as soon as they reached their wintering places, provided themselves with trade goods and scattered among the Indians in the hope of securing their furs and gaining their allegiance through the mutual sympathy that was born of such a shared existence.¹⁷ Even before the struggle that divided the rival companies had made such diligence a pressing rule, the Canadians already had recourse to this procedure, which they

found to their advantage as well as to that of the Indians.¹⁸ In all this there was a kind of natural inclination that is perhaps best explained by the conditions under which the men from Lower Canada had lived. The practice was universalized when furs became a stake which the opposing companies bitterly disputed. The "coureur de drouine," as such an employee-trader was called, became the essential cogwheel in a trading post.¹⁹ Many of the Canadians shared in its most elemental form the life of the natives, choosing to live over winter in their tents, next to their families, without caring about the rigorous cold or the uncomfortable quarters.²⁰ At the posts situated in the more desolate areas, such a dispersion might have an added importance as a means of conserving the fort's scanty resources of food.²¹

Even in the most favored districts, though of course less frequently, this might also become a necessity. Hunting might be fruitless and the post find itself unable to sustain all its garrison, or the Indians might neglect to gather the usual provisions of meat and the men would be forced to accompany them to stimulate their activity. On such occasions it was not uncommon for one of the trading fort's employees to take over the leadership of a group of native hunters.²² Only the posts situated among the most warlike peoples of the prairie maintained a greater strength, so as to ward off possible attacks. Thus the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company had the impression of a veritable swarming of Canadians among the Indian tribes,²³ and it goes without saying that the multiplication of contacts resulting from this situation brought the two groups into a relationship of growing intimacy.

Yet such circumstances would not have been sufficient to create such close links if the Canadians had not brought with them a combination of factors singularly favorable to the kind of fusion that took place in the West. These included the manner of life to which they had been accustomed from infancy, their long-lasting familiarity with native peoples, and their very temperament, whose characteristics were largely determined by the influence of the natural setting of the St. Lawrence valley and the kind of existence it imposed upon them. They showed too many affinities with the Indians for harmony not to develop spontaneously in a living situation where nothing was really foreign to the men from Lower Canada. The latter fact was noted by observers who had the opportunity to see colonies of native peoples and of Canadians

living side by side.²⁴ The reasons must be sought in the conditions of Lower Canadian life and the mental attitude that evolved there.

THE CANADIAN OF THE ST. LAWRENCE: HIS CONDITIONS OF LIFE, MENTAL ATTITUDE, AND FIRST CONTACT WITH NATIVE PEOPLES

The colony of the St. Lawrence, a narrow populated fringe extending beside the river, never came so far under the influence of native societies as to abandon, in favor of a primitive life, its initial culture. If in its early years and again in the eighteenth century it presented the image of a frontier society, it maintained, despite its remoteness, a close enough relationship with the homeland to make it at least partially obedient to the controlling factors that attached it to the latter.

Its early social structure, directly inspired by the French seigneurial system, and the tone of refinement introduced from the beginning by a number of bourgeois families (and which the Swedish traveller Peter Kalm contrasted in 1749 with the more uncouth character of the New England colonies),²⁵ at least partially counteracted the influence of the frontier and the licence of behavior it encouraged. Moreover, the form of government, which from 1647 and especially from 1663, was dominated by monarchical absolutism, saved it from the kind of politically weak regime, with no well-defined authority, that the West was to know under the direction of the Hudson's Bay Company.²⁶ The more intimate, and notably effective, control of the church, exercised over the whole of society by the official authority it enjoyed from 1647 onward²⁷ and by the activity of its missionaries and parish priests,²⁸ also contributed to mitigating the excesses of the frontier and forestalling a too rapid transformation of the French culture. From the beginning it seemed as if New France, like the Dominion of Canada today, sought its centre of gravity outside itself.²⁹

From these various directions, the colony on the St. Lawrence was not favorable to the interpenetration of unequally evolved cultures, and the fusion of the white and native races does not appear to have played more than an insignificant role in the formation of its population.³⁰ Yet it is no less true that, transplanted into an environment where the conditions of existence were profoundly different from those of the homeland, and where the Indian was constantly at the white man's elbow, the Canadian population was

subjected to certain adaptations and necessities that conferred on it a very distinctive personality. If the upper classes of society, and to a certain degree also the people of the towns, were able largely to escape the influence of an environment which one feels even today is very close to the life of French Canada, this was not the case of the classes less solidly attached to their original culture, or of the rural population which was obliged to modify its customary attitudes through contact with primitive nature and the indigenous inhabitants.

New France in reality offers the contrasts of a society apparently arranged on the model of French society, whose institutions it imitated and whose structure it reproduced, but in fact deeply impregnated with the manners and outlook of a frontier world, of which from the beginning it possessed the popular elements.

It can hardly be denied, of course, that the colonists were relatively well selected, and certainly more rigorously than in many new territories, since the church was called upon to take part in their choice at the point of departure from the homeland as actively as on their arrival in New France.³¹ Champlain himself had inaugurated this policy of selection by doing his best, from the earliest years, not to retain elements that seemed doubtful to him, and Colbert, on the advice of Monseigneur de Laval, endeavored to get rid of colonists who were reputed to be "poor workers" or "lacking in religious zeal."³² Thus the colony received a majority of well-chosen immigrants, essentially recruited from among the artisans and the rural classes, and, in a lesser proportion, from the urban middle class.

From the beginning, however, even at a time when control was made easier by the colony's small population, poorly selected elements found their way in, especially since the trading companies, who had little concern for the quality of the inhabitants and were almost exclusively preoccupied with their material interests, were not exacting in their choice of clerks and interpreters.³³ The example of the interpreter Marsolet is significant enough.³⁴ If one can judge from the complaints of Père Le Jeune in 1637,³⁵ and Marie de l'Incarnation in 1644,³⁶ and again in 1662,³⁷ his case cannot have been an isolated one. In the same way, the outpost of Montreal, whose initiation responded to a genuine spiritual impulse,³⁸ quickly deviated from its original character. Less than twenty years after its foundation, Maisonneuve, who had promoted the enterprise, found it necessary to initiate rigorous measures against

the threat of widespread disorder.³⁹ Later on, the implementation of the colonization plan of Louis XIV and the Intendant Talon, and especially the arrival of the Regiment of Carignan-Salières in 1665, could not fail to change the character of the population by directing toward New France groups of colonists too numerous to be seriously chosen,⁴⁰ and of soldiers whose recruitment was guided by no principle of selection.⁴¹ The contagion was not confined to the people of the towns.⁴² Outside their bounds, undesirable elements were not lacking, as was shown by the harsh remarks of Governor Denonville, who attributed to the young people of the country districts, and more especially to gentlemen's sons, a standard of conduct that was less than edifying.⁴³ Even if the growing rigor with which justice was administered during the eighteenth century and the development of a parochial organization contributed to a tightening of public control over the undisciplined elements in the population, society was far from adopting the moral attitudes which the clergy would have liked.⁴⁴

One should not, of course, exaggerate the extent of disorder in a population that, in spite of everything, was still better adjusted and less turbulent than that which emerged with the advance of American colonization.⁴⁵ Let us merely remark that, like all frontier countries, it was hardly homogenous in character and its moral quality was somewhat uneven; indiscipline on the part of many people tempered the apparent rigidity of its political and social structures, and the dignity of life among the respectable modified the teachings of the clergy.

Thus there existed in New France an element, foreign to factors of control, that the colony absorbed into the very structure of its society and its government, which were naturally predisposed in the long run to submit to the influence of the frontier. The way of life which primitive nature along the St. Lawrence imposed on the Canadian colonists also tended in the same direction, and perhaps with even greater efficacy, since its resemblance to the existence of the native people made it easier for the two groups to approach each other, and even, to a certain extent, created a common mentality. Thus to this process of drawing together two factors contributed: a social factor, limited to the presence of elements that resisted imported constraint but were ready to make ample concessions to a new culture in which their instincts of liberty and indiscipline might have free play; a natural factor, whose influence extended to a larger portion of society, if not to the whole of it,

represented by the unavoidable operation of the conditions of existence to which the colonists of Lower Canada had to adapt themselves.

As soon as he was established in New France, the colonist was subject to the impact of primitive nature, manifested in the vast forest that unfolded from the Canadian Shield to the St. Lawrence,⁴⁶ and in the difficult life it imposed. The clearing of the forest was a superhuman toil.⁴⁷ The heat of summer, made even more burdensome by the swarms of mosquitoes which the forest nurtured,⁴⁸ increased the hardness of the task. Winter came early, with its five and a half months of rigorous cold,⁴⁹ during which, for many years, the insufficiency of cultivation made food supplies precarious. Grappling with this desolate natural environment, the people became quickly resigned to effort and accustomed to severe privations; in this way they acquired the powers of endurance which Intendant Champigny and Governor Denonville, little disposed as they were to exalt the worth of the Canadian, recognized unreservedly.⁵⁰ The clearing of the forest, restricted by the short period of summer, proceeded slowly,⁵¹ and the clearings did not extend very deeply from the banks of the river.⁵² Thus, unable to rely on the resources of farming alone, the habitant sought to gain the necessities of living through a diversified economy, including hunting and fishing, which the St. Lawrence and the forest offered in plenty.⁵³ As late as the eve of the British conquest, the colony still had to accept this necessity, for, even though the soil was relatively rich, poor harvests were an ever-present danger in New France.⁵⁴

In the forest, the colonist soon became used to seeking a little profit in addition to his subsistence: he found it in the fur trade, the basis of a relatively lucrative commerce whose gains exceeded the more prosaic returns of the earth itself, and attracted young people of every class.⁵⁵ Thus there emerged a semi-nomadic way of life which soon, for many people, became the dominant pursuit. The Canadian found in it an excellent training school which prepared him for the fatigue and privation involved in wars against the indigenous people.⁵⁶ At the same time he acquired the inconstant mentality of the nomad, in which the Intendant Duchesneau thought he recognized the attitude of the Indian;⁵⁷ the habit of irregular effort; the careless state of mind which made the idea of diligent work unattractive to him,⁵⁸ and which led him to seek in nature the resources which a poorly developed agriculture could

not supply him. In this life of constant wandering, he also imbibed the taste for adventure. An inclination in this direction many of the immigrants probably brought with them; according to W. B. Munro, it was a reflection of their Norman heredity. But it increased on the threshold of this primitive and mysterious natural world in which the habitant also acquired a strong leaning toward superstition.⁵⁹ On top of everything else, the great freedom found in this way of life developed in him a "naturally undocile character,"⁶⁰ "a spirit alien to subordination,"⁶¹ the essential manifestation of every frontier society.⁶²

This "disposition toward the free and independent life" was intensified in the isolation to which, for many years, the localization of their holdings condemned the Canadian colonists. Responding to the temptation offered by the long stretches of the St. Lawrence to disperse their farms along the river, the habitants were not inclined to cluster together. From the beginning, even when it consisted of no more than two or three hundred inhabitants, the colony broke up into inconsiderable groups separated from each other by great empty spaces,⁶³ the "numerous and scattered nuclei" which were still being described at the beginning of the eighteenth century,⁶⁴ and which did not begin to grow until after 1713.⁶⁵ The settlement of the country continued to organize itself, as it were, "entirely in length"—in elongated fields with narrow frontages, bounded by the curves of the St. Lawrence and the dark line of the forest, "there being nothing but woodland in the far ends of the homesteads," a mere quarter of a league from the river.⁶⁶

The extreme scarcity of roads forced the inhabitants to use the river for their journeys, which—following the Indian methods—they made by canoe, sleigh, or snowshoe.⁶⁷ This excluded the possibility of any real concentration of population,⁶⁸ and meant that the colonists, like planters in Virginia, lived for long periods in the isolation of their lots.⁶⁹ In such a situation they surrendered instinctively to all the reflexes associated with life on the frontier: at an early stage they were manifesting an "independence like that of savages,"⁷⁰ which both travellers and intendants in the eighteenth century contrasted with the greater docility of the "peasants in France."⁷¹ Such independence was encouraged by the infrequency of pastoral visits,⁷² and by the weakening, through contact with this primitive land, of the seigneurial regime and the principle of authority it embodied.⁷³ In such ways society was permeated by

the atmosphere of liberty, which everyone "breathed from childhood," and which the young gentry, "fickle and ill-disciplined," shared with farmers' sons.⁷⁴ Thus developed the colonist's habit of relying on his own initiatives, of looking to himself for the defence of his holdings, of developing a closed economy, and of making up through his own ingenuity for the absence of colonial industries.⁷⁵ All these qualities, even if they expressed the emigrants' innate inclinations, could only blossom in the kind of environment in which the colonist found himself. They prepared him for that ease of adaptation which the voyageur, like the legendary Daniel Boone,⁷⁶ must display in the more desolate regions of the North West.

From these admirable pioneer qualities, the French-Canadian race would derive a notable power of expansion. But as a result of it the colony lost cohesion and the habitants lost discipline. Canadians refused to submit to regulations intended to protect the general interest.⁷⁷ Dividing their activity between fishing, hunting, and fur-trading,⁷⁸ too cut off on their holdings to think of increasing their crops, they often gave scanty attention to cultivating the land. After a while they would abandon their barely cleared fields to the thistles that threatened to wipe out their early labors.⁷⁹ They would practise methods of clearing the forest that destroyed important reserves of fuel.⁸⁰ Often, because he had failed to increase his provisions of forage, a peasant would have to sacrifice part of his cattle at the onset of winter.⁸¹ Yet to the thought of tilling new lands he showed a passive indifference.⁸² The yield of his holding remained less than half that of the French countryside.⁸³ The stimulus to his energy and spirit of enterprise was lacking, and it could not be provided either by the closed economic system in which he was confined, or by the absolute liberty of his existence "close to his woods and fields and without witnesses to his conduct,"⁸⁴ or by the situation in New France where markets were too small and external outlets too uncertain.⁸⁵

Such conditions of life could only encourage heedlessness regarding the future. They naturally awakened in the colonist the pride usually found in a man accustomed to the absence of discipline, guided by his own impulses, and dominated by self-love and the kind of excitability that made commanding him a ticklish task. Thus, by his independent habits, by the irregularity of his activities, by his inclination to "run in the woods like a savage,"⁸⁶ by his unlimited powers of endurance, and his easily awakened irrita-

bility, the Canadian colonist was remarkably close to the Indian.

His unavoidable association with the latter helped to develop the tendencies and habits the colonist already derived from his manner of existence. Not only could the public authorities do nothing to prevent the contacts to which in the first few years the presence of a large number of Indians exposed the much smaller number of newly arrived colonists, but they encouraged the coming together of the two groups. With a degree of illusion which events would soon destroy, Champlain and the Récollets had hoped to absorb them all, without distinction between nomad and settled people, into the colonial society.⁸⁷ Champlain had even promised the Hurons that the French would go into their country and marry their daughters, and he did not shrink from the material sacrifices that allowed him to welcome and give lodging to a number of Indians whom he hoped in this way to win over to civilization.⁸⁸ Talon even believed that the population would be enriched more by the incorporation of natives than by the immigration of colonists,⁸⁹ and Louis XIV shared the same idea when he instituted the "king's gift," a pecuniary subsidy for mixed marriages.⁹⁰ The Church naturally supported the action of the civil authorities; by conversion and co-education they hoped to Gallicize the natives "in language as well as manners," and in 1633 the Jesuits laid the foundations of a modest Indian school, an institution they would later expand.⁹¹ Finally, without openly favoring a policy of mixed marriages, whose realization would encounter many obstacles, the church sustained from the beginning the hope that Indian women raised in its schools would be inclined to enter into unions with French men and to adopt more completely their religion and their culture.⁹²

Thus, early on, there emerged in New France a mingling of the primitive and the civilized which the public authorities themselves regarded with favor. Doubtless the Church's efforts at the moral transformation of the Indians ended in great disappointment. Despite the reproaches of Colbert and the lay authorities who persisted in their utopian vision of mixed marriages,⁹³ the clergy soon had to renounce its policy of assimilation,⁹⁴ and reconcile itself to isolating the natives from the whites, penning the former in "missions," veritable reserves separated from civilized society and subjected to the superintendence of their pastors.⁹⁵ But the complete mutual isolation of the two groups was no more possible than the ideal of their fusion, as the Church envisaged it, had been realiza-

ble. If cases of mixed marriages remained exceptional,⁹⁶ the two societies were too often led into establishing prolonged contacts for them to remain for long alien to each other. Apart from the accidental and inconsequential mingling between colonists and natives at religious ceremonies,⁹⁷ often through the widespread practice among whites of acting as godparents to converted Indians,⁹⁸ a closer association resulted from the needs of commerce and of war.

Every year the fur trade attracted many native tribes to the colony, and, outside the more important centres, it was carried on in private dwellings;⁹⁹ this developed among the Canadians a deeper knowledge of the Indians, their customs, and their mentality. This experience was further broadened by the pursuit of war against the Iroquois. To carry on an effective struggle, it was necessary to learn from the aggressors' practices, and, to a certain extent, from their state of mind. Until 1701 the danger of Iroquois attacks, interrupted only by brief truces, remained always latently present in New France. Thus the habitant had to adapt himself to the tactics of his adversaries. When the practice spread of associating Indians and colonists in the same warlike expeditions, the Canadians in the end became permeated with the customs of their primitive companions.¹⁰⁰ In this way they were trained in a warfare of ambush and immediately improvised defences, using the lie of the land and the scanty cover provided by the forest; they acquired the qualities of watchfulness, guile, and agility.¹⁰¹ When a regular army threatened the town of Quebec in 1690, they opposed it with an action that was undisciplined "in the manner of savages," but well adapted to the difficulties of the terrain and also both elusive and deadly.¹⁰² In such wars, they also contributed their share of ferocity, which the cruelty of their adversaries exacerbated; the habitant did not hesitate to finish off the Iroquois he captured with torments imitating the tortures which the latter inflicted on their prisoners.¹⁰³ The colonists' habits of independence, their mental resistance to unusually prolonged discipline, found expression and encouragement under such conditions, for these were wars conducted by surprise attacks in which everyone, immediately the action was over, became his own master again, and in which individual qualities of guile, bravery, and initiative were usually more important than discipline. Of this kind were the expeditions which the Canadians and their native allies directed in 1690 against the settlements of Corlard and Salmon Falls in New England. In these

two cases it was a matter of simple expeditions of looting and ambush, using practices very much like those of Indian wars and ending in the devastation of crops and the systematic massacre of those people who let themselves be surprised. Afterward both Canadians and Indians dispersed at their leisure and resumed their ordinary lives.¹⁰⁴ Categorical orders and general instructions had no influence on either group. To command the Canadians called for the kind of discretion for which officers from the homeland were ill prepared. A leader was successful only if he let it be known to his men that he was not their master, if he flattered their self-esteem, winning them over if necessary by the distribution of rewards,¹⁰⁵ and if he recognized each individual's temperament.¹⁰⁶ This was what commanding meant among the Indians, and the Canadian accepted such an attitude because it suited the viewpoint he had acquired from his way of life, from the extreme freedom he demanded, and from his association with the native peoples.

Like the Indian, the Canadian also left his children free to follow their own inclinations, not attempting to change their habits of indolence; unaccustomed to any regular activity, many of the sons of the gentry waited until they reached the age to carry a gun, when trading and hunting would provide them with a living.¹⁰⁷ French-Canadian society in general was gradually influenced by the "savage temper," for many of its ways came to resemble those of the Indians,¹⁰⁸ but this tendency spread more noticeably in the marginal areas where the people were in closer contact with primitive folk, for the Indians in their vagrant wanderings tended to haunt the more remote seigneuries.¹⁰⁹

Thus, by the conditions of living it introduced in the valley of the St. Lawrence as much as by the habitual contact with the Indians to which it led, the primitive environment exercised on Canadian society a pervasive influence that changed its original character and gave it, despite the strictness or refinement that lingered among certain sections of the population, a rougher tone, marked sometimes by disorders and acts of violence that were not limited entirely to those individuals who, because they had been badly selected, seemed fated to submit to the influence of the frontier. It would of course be an exaggeration not to make allowances for the part played by natural tendencies in forming the attitudes of the people of Lower Canada. Their vivacious spirit,¹¹⁰ their love of jesting and conversation, not to speak of boasting, their easy affability, their predilection for somewhat ostentatious lux-

ury¹¹¹—all these arose from their natural inclinations. Perhaps they were spontaneously resistant to the idea of discipline and control. Nevertheless, the characteristics generally recognized among them—which were sometimes very remote from those distinguishing the French rural classes of the same period—revealed themselves only in the natural setting of Lower Canada, with the kind of existence it involved and the contact with the native peoples it encouraged.

This familiarity with primitive existence prepared them for the intimate relations between them and the Indians that emerged once they left the colony and embarked on the task of penetration which, step by step, would lead them as far as the country of the North West. As soon as they entered the region of the Great Lakes, where there existed, to keep them in order, "neither priests . . . nor fathers, nor governors,"¹¹² the French of Lower Canada showed a great ease in adapting their way of life to that of the Indians, in imitating their customs, and in becoming incorporated in their tribes. When, beyond Lake Superior, they reached the last stage of their expansion, they carried with them not only the state of mind necessary for the fusion of cultures and races, but also the tradition of more than a century of mutual intercourse and mixed marriages.

THE FIRST FUSION OF RACES

One cannot argue that the unions contracted in the colony itself between whites and native people under the form of regular marriages were anything other than exceptional occasions. The Indian women themselves had not welcomed the idea with any great favor.¹¹³ They could not easily lend themselves to unions that implied on their part a new state of mind, the abandonment of a traditional culture, and entry into a society whose concepts were obviously different from those of the native tribes. But, even if regular marriages remained isolated episodes,¹¹⁴ it is probable, if not certain, that free unions between the two groups were more common. The disproportion of the sexes which, as in all new countries, favored the males, could only encourage such unions,¹¹⁵ and the presence in the colony of individuals of no great moral worth was bound to result in a promiscuity with the Indians of which evidence is to be found in the *Relations* of the Jesuit Fathers and in the letters of Monseigneur de Saint-Vallier.¹¹⁶ Governor Vaudreuil

in 1709 recognized the presence in the colony of the beginnings of interbreeding. He regarded its effects with misgivings: children born of such unions, he said, "have turned out to be as idle as the savages themselves."¹¹⁷ As the phenomenon naturally evades statistical reckoning, it is hardly possible to measure its importance. But, since most of the children were absorbed into the mother's tribe, they remained outside the French-Canadian population and the latter was not seriously affected biologically.¹¹⁸

Contact was established more freely outside the colony, among the peoples inhabiting the shores of the Great Lakes, particularly the Hurons and the Iroquois and, to a less extent, the Algonquin of the Ottawa River. There we find the first groups of Frenchmen living alone among the native peoples, obliged to share their life, and inevitably prone to absorption into their families.

In that first fusion of races the initiative rests with Champlain and the trading companies. In 1610 Champlain entrusted to the Algonquin of the Ottawa "a young boy who has spent two winters in Quebec," partly to maintain their commercial allegiance and partly to satisfy his own curiosity and his desire for knowledge of the native peoples.¹¹⁹ This was the beginning of a practice that spread over later years. It led to the formation of that class of interpreters who became so useful to the first trading companies; their role was not limited to the functions their title suggested, but also included the tasks of assuring, at the end of winter, the regular arrival of furs, and of mobilizing the braves of the allied tribes in case of need, and also the duty of intervening as mediators in Indian wars. Some of them eventually co-operated usefully in the work of penetrating and discovering the country. This was the case with Champlain's "young boy," Etienne Brulé,¹²⁰ and with Jean Nicolet, "interpreter and agent for the Gentlemen of New France" from 1618 onward.¹²¹ As well, there were certain men whose roles were less definite but who were nevertheless useful in establishing relations with the native peoples: Thomas and Nicolas Vignau, specialists in the language of the Algonquins of the Ottawa,¹²² Olivier, who was fluent in the Montagnais and Huron languages,¹²³ Jean Richer, adopted among the Algonquins of Lake Nipissing,¹²⁴ Nicolas Marsolet, "dragoman to the Montagnais."¹²⁵ To these young clerks, led by their functions into permanent contact with the native peoples, one must add the Frenchmen whom at an early date the opening of the missions led among the Hurons of Ontario¹²⁶ and those whom in 1629 Cham-

plain himself entrusted to the Hurons and the Algonquins to lessen the risk of famine in the town of Quebec, which was threatened by siege.

Forty or so Frenchmen, in groups of ten or fifteen living in villages of "200 to 300 households,"¹²⁷ were scattered in this way among the native peoples living close to the colony, passing several consecutive years among them. Jean Nicolet stayed with the Algonquin for ten years,¹²⁸ and Jean Richer consecrated two whole years to his training as an interpreter.¹²⁹ From 1610 onward, Etienne Brulé spent his life among the Indians, and in 1619, when the Récollets resumed their missions in the country of the Hurons after having abandoned them for two years, they encountered once again five or six Frenchmen who had virtually established themselves there.¹³⁰

A similar phenomenon developed among the Iroquois. Here the warfare which the latter waged against the colonists of the St. Lawrence was the determining factor. Often, at the request of families who wished to make up for the disappearance of one of their members by adopting a stranger, the Iroquois spared the prisoners they captured. Such gaps in families were a frequent occurrence among these warlike tribes, who were in conflict not only with the Canadian colonists but also with the native tribes of the Great Lakes, whose economic monopoly they coveted. The gaps were filled by the process of adoption, which absorbed many individuals of different races into the Iroquois families, including both Canadians from New France and Anglo-Saxons or Dutchmen captured on the frontier of the American colonies or brought among the tribes by the necessities of trading. In no other tribe was adoption practised on such a wide scale. The families themselves decided the prisoner's fate: the resentment or grief they felt for the losses they had suffered might be assuaged either by the captive's immediate destruction,¹³¹ or by his pure and simple adoption by the relatives of the dead man, whose name and rank he immediately assumed,¹³² or, more rarely, by his reduction to slavery.¹³³ The substitution took place without the age or sex of the captive necessarily justifying the title that was accorded him. Young people of fifteen could thus take the place of fathers to men of thirty.¹³⁴ The example of Mary Jemison — captured in childhood on the borders of the English colony and raised among the Seneca tribe by two Indian women whose dead brother she replaced, and then married successively to two Iroquois by whom she had seven

children, or the experiences of David Hunter, shows the extent of a practice which ended in the complete absorption of the adoptees into their new families, and which alone could save prisoners from the tortures it was customary to inflict upon them. It was to such a situation that Radisson in 1653 and Joncaire in 1692¹³⁵ owed the salvation for which they had ceased to hope. The families immediately overwhelmed the newcomers with the utmost affection.¹³⁶ When peace was concluded in 1701 between the Iroquois and New France, some of them were too sincerely attached to the Canadians they had received among them to do other than reject the proposal made by the governor for a reciprocal exchange of captives.¹³⁷

Mingling in this way, whether willingly or by force, among the native peoples neighboring the colony on the St. Lawrence, a fair number of French from Lower Canada quickly adopted not only the Indians' way of life, but also their reactions and their mental attitude. Their own culture, which had already been perceptibly changed by contact with the natural environment and with the peoples inside the colony, receded even farther in this first stage of penetration into the hinterland. The interpreter or clerk who established himself among the Hurons according to the instructions of the trading companies, would seek to gain their confidence by avoiding the look of a stranger, and to achieve this he quickly familiarized himself with their language,¹³⁸ adapted himself to their customs, and even adopted their dress.¹³⁹ Some had recourse to native medical practices and sought in the sweat-houses, "pellmell among the savages," a means of "fortifying their health and avoiding certain sicknesses."¹⁴⁰ Finally, there were others like Etienne Brulé who even denied their religious upbringing, losing "almost the semblance of a Christian," ridiculing the teachings of Christianity in the presence of native people,¹⁴¹ and not hesitating to make offerings to pagan deities or to solicit from the spirit of a rock the promise of a good voyage.¹⁴² In such lasting contact with the Indians, men sometimes forgot their loyalty toward New France; how fragile it had become among some of them was shown when the English captured Quebec in 1629.¹⁴³ They also surrendered quickly to that looseness of native morals which Jacques Cartier had already observed in 1535 among the nomad peoples of the Saguenay,¹⁴⁴ and which existed also among the Huron, despite their more advanced social organization and the greater degree of cohesion that it involved.¹⁴⁵

As a consequence, the Hurons did not take offence at the lack of self-control among the French.¹⁴⁶ The free sexual relations that immediately developed between the two groups accorded with the conceptions of the natives, which the strict notions of the missionaries aimed to divert in the opposite direction. The Hurons could admire Champlain's irreproachable conduct, but they rejected the idea of regular marriages with the French which he sought to put into effect. They replied that "it was not necessary to stand so much on ceremony, and that those among the French who had made up their minds to marry were at liberty to take wives wherever that seemed good to them."¹⁴⁷ It was in these unions, whose free character spread to the boundaries of New France, that the first origins of the Métis emerged. In such primitive societies, where Christian concepts were still alien, regular marriages could only contribute in a very minor way to such a result, especially since the types of men who lived scattered among the tribes were attracted to adventure and independence and cared little about moral principles.

In the beginning, Frère Sagard had recommended that the Frenchmen destined to go among the Hurons should be carefully chosen, and the Jesuits reproached those who went for hindering by their "bad conduct" the impetus of Christianization.¹⁴⁸ There was a rapid increase in the disorderliness of life, which testified to the excessively abrupt transition from one culture to another; for the European, transplanted into a milieu where, as far as he could see, there were no constraints on liberty, did not perceive the curbs on freedom that arose from the operation of primitive institutions. It was at this time, according to Frère Sagard, that venereal diseases were introduced among the Huron, and the contagion spread so violently that the medicine men tried to check it by isolating infected people from the villages.¹⁴⁹

Sometimes disorderly conduct became so excessive that the Indians' resentment was aroused. In 1624 a Frenchman died as a result of it—victim of the disapproval his bad conduct had aroused.¹⁵⁰ It was perhaps similar factors that led to the slaughter of Etienne Brulé by the Hurons whose confidence he had so long enjoyed.¹⁵¹ Doubtless one should not exaggerate the importance of such extreme instances. Many Frenchmen seem to have been content with temporary unions regulated by Huron customs—marriages characterized by that "reasonable licence" of which Sagard speaks,¹⁵² and which the missionaries were obliged to tol-

erate so as to avoid disorders that would have been prejudicial both to the cause of Christianity and to French expansionism. It is possible that the increase in the number of missionaries among the Huron—one can count eighteen of them out of a total of forty-two Frenchmen in 1648¹⁵³—resulted in more complete supervision and reduced the licentiousness of earlier years. But it is doubtful whether the Jesuits would have been able to eliminate the practice of temporary unions in a region whose entire area the missionaries did not control and in which the French moved around too often to be subjected to rigorous supervision.

Among the Hurons, the practice of adoption also favored mixed unions. Sometimes it was no more than a formal adoption, whose only practical effect was to ensure the material subsistence of the guest allowed to share the life of the family that adopted him (an institution from which the missionaries profited in furthering their evangelistic aims),¹⁵⁴ but occasionally it took the form of a more genuine adoption, which—as among the Iroquois—incorporated the newcomer completely into the family and made it easy for him to contract an alliance among the native people.¹⁵⁵ Yet precise instances of such genuine adoption are lacking. While the texts reveal the existence of the custom, they are expressed in vague terms which prevent us from seeing here a habit as widely spread—and as germane to the origins of interbreeding—as adoption became among the Iroquois.

In admitting into their families the individuals whom they had captured on the frontiers of New France, the Iroquois tribes absorbed them into the structure of their society, and in this way subjected them to the disciplines that ruled it. The social organization of these tribes, dominated by a matriarchy linked to the essential role of agriculture in their economy, involved a degree of rigidity of which the nomad peoples of the west were wholly unaware. A hierarchy of tribes, clans, and maternal families took the place of the basic cellular family, and constituted a network of political unities destined for the defence of collective interests and resistant to the impulses of excessive individualism.¹⁵⁶ The group sustained its cohesion only if the individual subjected himself to certain moral standards: sexual relations in such circumstances demanded, outside the generally accepted polygamy, a discretion which the Hurons did not observe to the same extent.¹⁵⁷ By imposing the same limitations on strangers, the procedure of adoption prevented the disorders to which the whites so quickly aban-

doned themselves among the native peoples. This was all the more so since most of the whites in this position were prisoners of war, and their situation implied a narrowing of their personal freedom and a more complete submission to the disciplines of the society that had welcomed them. In entering it, they automatically sacrificed their original culture, took native wives, and from this point found themselves bound to the primitive milieu. It is possible that some of these captives, uprooted against their will from the life of Lower Canada, sought to evade this "perpetual concubinage" which the Iroquois conception of marriage represented in the eyes of the Jesuits.¹⁵⁸ But it is hardly to be doubted that most of them regarded it as the natural consequence of the status they had accepted and of the incorporation into Indian society which it implied.

The economy of that society was not alien to the newcomers. In telling a group of French who had been captured near Montreal in 1643 that they were taking them to their homes so that "together" they could work the earth of their country,¹⁵⁹ the Iroquois were giving them to understand that there would be no absolute break between the two ways of life. The existence of these tribes, half way between the exclusively nomad economy of the Algonquins of the Shield ("notably more beggarly than the Hurons")¹⁶⁰ and that of the more developed societies to the south,¹⁶¹ was divided between farming and hunting. Europeans accommodated easily to the conditions of life in which extreme freedom, accompanied by the relative stability introduced by an agricultural economy, compensated for the privations inherent in native life. Even the government of the Iroquois society, which Aubert de la Chesnaye compared to that of "the republics of Europe,"¹⁶² imposed no change on the prisoner's habits. Thus assimilation was effectively achieved. Many even forgot their maternal language.¹⁶³ Some were willing to join in the warlike expeditions of their adoptive tribes; this set the seal on their assimilation into Iroquois society, in which war constituted one of the basic activities.¹⁶⁴ The women themselves, once they had married among the natives, mingled with the squaws and joined in the loud expressions of joy with which the Iroquois customarily saluted the return of victorious warriors.¹⁶⁵

For many of these captives, their fusion with the society that had accepted them was complete. In 1698, when the question of the restitution of prisoners to New France was raised, most of

them refused to abandon the families they had established or to sacrifice the greater freedom of their new existence.¹⁶⁶ Thirteen French—five men and eight women—returned from the country of the Iroquois, a figure which certainly did not tally with the great number of prisoners taken by the warriors of the Five Nations.¹⁶⁷ Restitution was in fact feasible only under the promise of leaving a free choice of action to those who did not want to abandon their adoptive country,¹⁶⁸ and even that concession could not have softened the unwillingness of the captives or the stubbornness of the families who had received them if it had not been for the mediation of a couple of the best known among the adoptees, Joncaire and Maricourt.¹⁶⁹ Their intervention revealed the political role which the custom of adoption might play in relationships between the French and the native peoples.

So long as he did not completely deny his own country, the adoptee could in fact use the mediative position conferred by the confidence of both whites and Indians to intervene usefully between the two groups. Sometimes called upon to act as counsellor for his conquerors, he could use his situation to consolidate the position of France in the region of the Great Lakes and foil the intrigues of the English among the Iroquois. It was to this task that Philippe Chabert de Joncaire devoted himself successfully. Joncaire, a sergeant of the guards under the Count de Frontenac, was captured by the Iroquois in the course of their last offensive and adopted by the Senecas, among whom he eagerly took a wife under romantic conditions reminiscent of the adventures of Radisson.¹⁷⁰ In a similar way Charles Le Moyne, an "habitant of Montreal" who had been promoted to the rank of squire and seigneur of Longueuil, was also "taken in war" and then "carefully preserved and led away" by the Iroquois.¹⁷¹ He disposed of a separate cabin in the principal village of the Onondaga tribe, which he occupied when he lived among them.¹⁷² His family was admitted to the privilege of adoption, and his sons, the Baron de Longueuil and Captain Maricourt, were able to assume among the Iroquois the dignity of counsellor which their father had enjoyed.¹⁷³ Using their knowledge of the native languages, they did their best to prevent the breakdown of the fragile equilibrium which Iroquois neutrality, constantly threatened by the economic advantages offered by a British alliance, maintained between the English and the French.¹⁷⁴ Thanks to Joncaire's personal influence, France was able in 1720 to obtain Iroquois consent to the construction of the first

Fort Niagara, which barred access for the English to the hinterland and drained off its furs to the St. Lawrence.¹⁷⁵

Regulated by the procedures of adoption, the unions which the Canadians contracted during the seventeenth century with the Iroquois tribes had a relatively orderly character.

The contact between the two peoples, which for so long had consisted of no more than the captors' relations with prisoners of war, very soon began to expand, through the sporadic appearance during the intervals of peace of traders—usually in the employ of the Flemings at Fort Orange—who tried to create commercial links with the Iroquois,¹⁷⁶ and by the fleeting appearance of men appointed to defend the missions which the Jesuits tried to establish in this region toward the middle of the seventeenth century.¹⁷⁷ But it was only when the pacification of 1701 had given security to the St. Lawrence route that traders penetrated in greater numbers among the Iroquois. Immediately, disorders appeared, as they had previously done among the Hurons. Adoption lost its effectiveness, and unions began to be consummated more freely, with no respect for the limitations which the native social structure had hitherto imposed upon them.

It goes without saying that as the French race advanced more deeply into primitive country, it would be called upon to establish increasingly close relations with the native tribes. This occurred around the positions situated at the junction of Lakes Superior, Michigan, and Huron, where the currents of trade divided, in one direction toward the Mississippi basin to the southwest, in the other toward the posts on Lake Superior to the North West. It was here that Bigsby, visiting the village of Sault Ste. Marie in 1823, decided on the basis of the preoccupations and manners of the inhabitants, and especially through seeing a woman who hid the scar on her scalp under a silver plate, that Indian country was near.¹⁷⁸ Not only was the environment less inviting geographically, but the civilizing influences of Lower Canada were more distant, and the Canadians here had been recruited in a way that predisposed them to surrender more readily to the lure of the frontier and of its limitless freedom. The missionary's influence was still active and relatively stable within the confines of the colony, but it was only intermittently effective on the kind of men who went on to Michilimackinac or established themselves there among the native people.

From 1641 onward the Jesuits were aware of the importance of

the positions that commanded access to the basins of the three great lakes. It was there that they laid the foundations of the mission of Sault Ste Marie, which they occupied from 1669 onward and fortified in 1671, and of the mission of St. Ignace, established on the island of Michilimackinac and on the southern tip of the peninsula that faced it.¹⁷⁹ But the mission at the Sault disappeared in 1689.¹⁸⁰ The Michilimackinac mission, soon transferred to the southern shore of the narrows, became from this time onward the extreme vanguard of Christianity on the threshold of "savage country."¹⁸¹

On the peninsula of Michilimackinac and around Sault Ste. Marie, the voyageurs and coureurs de bois had—for their part—quickly formed settlements among the Algonquin and Huron peoples. At Michilimackinac they concentrated in particularly large numbers because of the fertility of the soil and the abundance of fish and game. The region formed the centre for provisioning the most distant posts and became an obligatory halting place for the voyageurs who obtained here the stocks of maize they needed to reach their destinations.¹⁸² Here the traders were no longer content merely to sustain the commercial loyalty of the Indians. They had come to seek furs among the hunting tribes themselves, and this meant that they must spread out either among the peoples of the Mississippi or among the groups who lived around Lake Superior.¹⁸³ And for them the influence of the missionary was no more than an empty word. It could not prevent their adaptation to the life of the native peoples, whose dwellings they copied and whose pattern of activity they imitated, composed as it was of hunting game or fur-bearing animals, fishing, and a little agriculture.¹⁸⁴ The missionaries indeed disapproved of the undisciplined ways of the traders who came into these distant regions, but they were less numerous here and were often called on to make excursions among the native tribes, which led them to be absent for long periods.¹⁸⁵

It was here, in fact, that the coureurs de bois, men coming from the most contrasting social origins and forming a highly mixed group in moral terms, became the essential moving force of trade and of penetration. They were the first to venture on the waterways leading to Hudson Bay, threatening the trade of the English posts and, in the region of Rainy Lake, preceding La Vérendrye's enterprises. Their importance dates above all from the creation of new conditions, in the second half of the seventeenth century,

through the abolition of the monopoly granted the commercial companies, who at first had assumed the exploitation of the fur trade to the exclusion of local merchants,¹⁸⁶ and through the dispersion toward the shores of Lake Superior of the Hurons and Algonquins driven back by the Iroquois. Deprived of the pelts which these peoples customarily supplied them, the traders of the St. Lawrence were obliged to follow them into their new territories. Soon, they were bypassing them to reach the more distant hunting peoples with whom they now traded directly.¹⁸⁷ In assuming this intermediary role between the fur-gathering tribes and New France, they supplanted the Indian nations who up to now had served as middlemen between the wilderness and the St. Lawrence valley.

The *coureurs de bois* attained their highest importance during the period when the Intendant Talon, anxious to draw on the help of all the elements useful to his program of imperial expansion, and aware of the effective role of the *coureurs*, treated them with a favor his successors did not hesitate to imitate, often in defiance of "monarchical institutions."¹⁸⁸ Everywhere, from this time onward, the *coureurs de bois*, like the squatters in Australia, acted as the forerunners of civilization. Often they intervened with the native tribes, as the adoptees had done with the Iroquois, to sustain their loyalty to the French cause and to hold in check the adverse manoeuvres of the English. Everywhere, they pushed forward penetration and discovery.¹⁸⁹

This movement revitalized the nomadic inclination, the taste for adventure, and the imperious need for independence of the people of Lower Canada,¹⁹⁰ and gave expression to the traditional ways of the fur trade which, in the beginning, had supported rural activities and which now developed into an occupation in its own right, distinct from the life of toil with which it had first been associated. It offered a source of profit whose reliability was guaranteed for a number of years¹⁹¹ by the stabilization from 1675 onward of the price of beaver skins in the royal warehouses,¹⁹² and which provided a solution for the poverty that was so widespread at all levels in the society of New France. Young people who had no vocational training and for whom in any case few occupations were available;¹⁹³ young noblemen; officers or their sons, unaccustomed to "the plough, the mattock and the axe,"¹⁹⁴ and often ridden by prejudices which did not fit the realities of a frontier society;¹⁹⁵ all these groups, lacking the kind of wealth that could be

gained in a country where land was the only real foundation for prosperity¹⁹⁶ and where the spirit of economy was little evident,¹⁹⁷ found in the fur trade the means of realizing attractive profits¹⁹⁸ and at the same time asserting the qualities of their race in the general framework of an activity that suited their inclination toward irregular effort. Thus all social conditions were brought together in the ranks of the *coureurs de bois*: young noblemen,¹⁹⁹ officers' sons,²⁰⁰ relatives of members of the Sovereign Council of New France,²⁰¹ habitants or their sons²⁰² led on by the example of the gentry, soldiers released from the Carignan regiment, even artisans (though not many of them),²⁰³ and finally vagabonds, men with no occupation, described as "volunteers,"²⁰⁴ who wished to escape from the disciplines of the colony. In such a varied recruitment, neither intelligence nor moral values were absent, but there was an abundance of dubious elements, drawn by instinct to the hinterland so as to evade the control of the missionaries; youth was the essential characteristic shared by them all, "for age was not capable of enduring the hardships of such a trade."²⁰⁵ Permeated by the ways of the frontier, most of them started out with a propensity to share the existence of the Indians with whom the fur trade forced them to associate.

Alongside them, the military garrisons spaced out along the Great Lakes provided an element that was selected with no greater strictness and lent itself with equal ease to relations with the Indians. Few in numbers—a score of men on an average at Michilimackinac despite the record figure of 143 reached there in 1690,²⁰⁶ the soldiers did not stay immobilized in the posts to which they were assigned.²⁰⁷ Some of them had no hesitation about deserting and going off to swell the ranks of the *coureurs de bois*.²⁰⁸

Under the influence of this haphazard recruitment and of the more primitive environment, where association with the native peoples was unavoidable at the same time as the civilizing influences of Lower Canada grew ever more distant, relations between primitive and civilized man became all the closer. The trader willingly adopted the custom of cohabitation with Indian women, whose presence now seemed necessary for the process of trafficking and to meet the very necessities of his material existence. For him the Indian woman pounded Indian corn, prepared sagamite, dressed the furs he collected, cut out from mooseskin the moccasins he used in travelling over the frozen soil, and repaired his canoes.²⁰⁹ She intervened personally in his transactions with the

Indians, and, if the need arose, she warded off the plots that threatened the trader.²¹⁰ And this diversity of roles the Indian women would assume on an even broader scale beyond Lake Superior.

Against the generally accepted custom of irregular unions of this kind, the missionaries' invective was unavailing.²¹¹ The native tribes, who in these regions lacked the organization that characterized Iroquois society, behaved among themselves with an equal freedom.²¹² If the practice of adoption persisted and still served to fill the gaps caused by death,²¹³ it was less widespread than the custom of the trader acquiring an Indian woman who would be his helpmate by purchasing her father's complaisance with a little merchandise.²¹⁴ In this way the custom of polygamy spread among the whites, and the extreme looseness of relationships was accompanied by frequent outbreaks of violence, aggravated by the traffic in alcohol.²¹⁵ The witness of the missionaries is confirmed by that of La Motte Cadillac. Though he was always ready to argue with the Jesuits and deny the supposed evils of alcoholic drinks, he himself recognized that their distribution was one of the sources of disorder, and Dulhut supported the same accusations with the authority of his long experience.²¹⁶ All constraint vanished in the relations between Canadians and Indians. Irregular unions increased, often with the connivance of the officers themselves.²¹⁷ Though Governor Vaudreuil had expressed his resolve to prevent the mingling of "bad blood with good," he does not seem to have thought of imposing his will in these regions, which in any case were too far away to feel the effects of his legislation.²¹⁸ A reading of the baptismal registers of Michilimackinac shows how the limitations which the missionaries sought to impose on the free association of the races were frustrated.²¹⁹ Even the village which the traders had built in Michilimackinac beside the Indian village offered an example of the promiscuity which became even stronger beyond Lake Superior and of which Sault Ste. Marie offered a less extreme version. Numbers of Indians had chosen to live among the traders in Michilimackinac, halfbreed children wandered constantly from one village to another, the people of the two settlements often gave each other assistance, and the whites themselves often went to live among the Indians.²²⁰ If it had not been for the presence of the missionary and the officer in command of the post, the two villages would soon have become indistinguishable.

On reaching the threshold of the West country, the Canadians thus found themselves predisposed, as a result of their antecedents, to a close union with the native populations. Their mental attitudes and those of the Indians showed analogies that were sometimes astonishing; their living practices were often influenced by methods and devices invented by the Indians; and in those regions of the West which were completely isolated from Lower Canada their long familiarity with the primitive life and the tradition of the free fusion of races and cultures which they had developed made possible their almost immediate assimilation with the Indian peoples. In this zone which they entered at the end of the seventeenth century, the *coureurs de bois* found nothing that was foreign to them—neither the country nor its peoples nor their economy, and the same applied to the later arrivals who, under different names—employees or *voyageurs*—imitated their activity and perpetuated their social type.

CANADIANS AND NATIVE PEOPLES IN THE COUNTRY OF THE NORTH-WEST

The Canadian's Powers of Endurance

To the difficulties inflicted by nature, the Canadians opposed the qualities of endurance which they had acquired in Lower Canada, following the examples of their fathers. Life in the still unknown West at the beginning of the eighteenth century was, in a more extreme form, the same as life on the St. Lawrence. The privations were indeed harder, the primitive environment was bleaker, and, because of its vastness, it was less susceptible to domestication. The peoples were less familiar to the Canadians than those on the verges of the colony. Sometimes, indeed, the Canadians were eventually repelled by the sufferings involved in the existence of the primitive peoples of the West: after a few years of mingling with them and sharing their lives, there were some who decided not to prolong the experience and surrendered to the attractions of an easier life in the trading post.²²¹ Nevertheless, in Lower Canada, they had already become inured to vigorous effort and harsh conditions:²²² they had adapted themselves to the constant struggle which desolate environments demand, to the semi-nomad life of the fisherman and the hunter which in the West became the customary pattern of existence; they had become skilled

in the navigation of canoes whose manufacture—taught them by the Indians—they had perfected;²²³ they had learnt to move around in the forest with the sureness and ease of savages. "I have learnt," Edward Jarvis wrote admiringly to the London Committee in 1776, "that the Canadians when they hear an Indian is well gooded, will take a sled load of goods if in winter and a Canoe if Summer, and go 100 miles or even more, being all excellent hunters and travelling thro' the Woods with the facility of an Indian."²²⁴

In the West, in fact, the Canadian immediately revealed the effectiveness of his training. He showed himself at once to be a superb canoeman, the man for whom the navigation of the frail craft that must take him to the most distant parts of the North West held no secrets and who did not shrink from any of the efforts it imposed on him. Skilful enough to steer between the rocks which, at times of drought, obstruct the waterways, he was also vigorous enough to endure the hard toil of the portages, which the Indians themselves often found too much for them.²²⁵ He crossed these at a smart pace,²²⁶ with a tumpline around his brow that enabled him to transport goods without exposing himself to the accidents that a strap around the chest might incur.²²⁷ Plunged in water to the waist,²²⁸ he would hold the canoe when an excessively rapid current threatened to carry it away, or would free it from the rocks that were holding it, an extremely dangerous procedure, as was shown by the number of crosses beside the rapids, perpetuating the memory of humble voyageurs who had lost their lives in such spots.²²⁹ He could easily overtake the Orkneymen, who were more methodical but also slower,²³⁰ and thanks to a stronger will or to a pride peculiar to the "northern men" who embarked on the most sterile regions of the Shield,²³¹ he demonstrated an evident superiority over the Indian, who was always the victim of his natural indolence. His energy seemed to be redoubled in the difficult moments when, exhausted by his toil, he had to navigate in heavily loaded and dilapidated canoes, rivers that were both low in water and scattered with obstructions.²³² On such occasions his pride prevented him from complaining openly,²³³ and he was ready, if his honor were challenged,²³⁴ to undertake the most difficult tasks or negotiate the most challenging rapids.²³⁵

One can judge the extent of his endurance and pride from Alexander Mackenzie's account of the life of the "Northern men." At the beginning of May, as the rivers opened, they left Athabasca,

and travelled in haste to the post of Rainy Lake, where they left their furs and then, supplied with trade goods, they returned toward their destination, paddling without rest, and allowing themselves at night only a few hours of sleep. Mackenzie saw them, when they reached the end of their journey, starting on the construction of their own dwellings, in a cold so intense that it broke the axes like glass, and continuing, without complaint, two months of exhausting labor. "Such is the life," he concluded, "which this people lead; and is continued with unremitting exertion, till their strength is lost in premature old age."²³⁶ They were mostly descendants of those men of "great toil" whose qualities the intendants of New France had recognized and praised.

They were also thoroughly familiar, from having practised it in Lower Canada, with the use of the sleigh and the snowshoe, and they brought to splitting the wood from which they made their sleighs and prepared the frames of their snowshoes the same skills as they used in making their canoes.²³⁷

Even the most extreme temperatures did not discourage them. Often, in the most rigorous weather, they were content with improvised shelters resembling those made by the Indians.²³⁸ Even the trading posts themselves offered no more than indifferent comforts. Only the most important of them were spacious and well-furnished dwellings, protected by wooden palisades.²³⁹ Thus Matthew Cocking in 1773 described the post of François le Blanc at Nipawī as a squared-off dwelling, divided into two rooms of which one served as a kitchen and the other made do as both bedroom and shop, where the Indians gathered, with a garret above that provided storage space for furs. Three smaller houses, built of logs and separate from the main building, provided lodging for the men.²⁴⁰ The post he visited on the Red Deer River in 1774 was also a log building with a loft, divided into three rooms—a kitchen, a meeting hall, and a bedroom-cum-shop, protected by a bark roof, and supplemented by separate huts for the men.²⁴¹ But how many more modest dwellings were raised in the North West which—like so many of the Métis households today—consisted of no more than rough structures of logs, the gaps between them filled with mud, with a roof of earth held together by the grass that quickly took root there, and no better windows than the undressed skins of deer or moose, merely stripped of their hair!²⁴² Yet the Canadian accepted this lack of comfort without flinching, with a legendary good temper that contrasted with the frequent

fits of discouragement among the competing personnel.²⁴³

Perhaps he did not endure the privations involved in the nomadic way of life with quite the same degree of resignation as the Indians themselves.²⁴⁴ At the same time, he knew how to remain content with short commons.²⁴⁵ Whether he followed the native tribes in their wanderings through the forests or the Barren Grounds, where he excelled in capturing hares;²⁴⁶ whether he set up his lodge like the Indians, either to be nearer the buffalo herds²⁴⁷ and gather the meat necessary for the personnel in the posts, or to find his living by chance in the wilderness and so spare the scanty provisions in the fort,²⁴⁸ he was rarely at a loss for sustenance. He knew the vegetable resources of the wilderness as well as the Indians. If he could not obtain the food he preferred, the wild rice of which he made a thick and nourishing broth,²⁴⁹ he made do with the berries, roots, and tubers whose uses the Indians had shown him, with wild pears or saskatoons, rosehips, and in the desolate regions of the north, with reindeer moss, skunk cabbage, or marestails.²⁵⁰ No more than the Indian did he despise the exclusively fish diet which the Hudson's Bay Company's men rejected.²⁵¹ If game were lacking, horsemeat could take its place, or dog, whose flesh was for him—as for many of the Indians—a choice dish which they appreciated as much as pork.²⁵² In the Edmonton journal, James Bird paid homage to this extreme flexibility on the part of the Canadians, whose earlier existence had prepared them for periods of frugality;²⁵³ "They can feast with pleasure on Horses, Dogs, or any Substance whatever that can yield Nourishment to a human Being, and even support a Deprivation of all Food a greater length of time and with less concern than any other men on the Face of the Earth."²⁵⁴ But as soon as abundance returned, even in the posts where the supplies of food were often precarious,²⁵⁵ the Canadian abandoned himself without restraint to the excess of feasts where everything was eaten, which recalled the characteristic irregularity of Indian behavior, and which also, as an expression of badly disciplined desires, echoed the violent extremes of nature on the North West, where famine always hovered near to profusion.²⁵⁶

Affinities with the Natives and Conceptions of Life

In the country of the West, closed to the ways of New France and its civilizing influences, the affinities in character between Cana-

dian and native were strongly revealed and blended the two groups in a veritable community of life and feeling. The habit of irregular effort, which we have already observed in Lower Canada, here became the rule of life for the Canadian, in the same way as it governed the Indian's actions. To periods of almost superhuman effort, especially apparent in the regions of the extreme north, succeeded long intervals of idleness. It is true that the Canadian did not share the passive courage which the Indians manifested in the more difficult moments of their existence. Yet the Anglo-Saxons recognized his energetic nature, and judged him to be capable of "seeming impossibilities."²⁵⁷ But, once his task was completed, he lapsed into idleness, varied by the undemanding pastimes of the western posts which Alexander Henry described.²⁵⁸ Only Athabasca, where the material conditions of existence were more severe, demanded periods of relatively prolonged activity. It is true that this was especially the case in the early years when the need to build the trading posts, and even before that to hastily improvise temporary shelters from the excessive cold, imposed on the voyageurs who had barely arrived from Rainy Lake a toil that seemed endless and debilitated their strength. Once the country was occupied and the posts built, life—though it remained more difficult than elsewhere—took on a great resemblance to existence in the more favored areas. The longer he stayed in the West, the more accustomed the Canadian became to this intermittent pattern of activity, so near to that of the Indian, and this tradition he would transmit to his Métis descendants.²⁵⁹

The very necessities of trading only increased this tendency contracted in Lower Canada. The man who left the trading post to live in moveable camps among the Indians was exposed to great physical sufferings. He had to travel endless distances with heavy loads and often without dogs or horses, and to be content at night with whatever shelters the Indians improvised.²⁶⁰ But there again, if game were abundant, idleness made its appearance and continued until provisions were exhausted. Sharing the native's existence, the Canadian showed the same ill-regulated ways, the same lack of ambition, the same heedlessness of the future; all these tendencies had been hatched in Lower Canada, but they developed in the West through contact with the nomadic peoples.²⁶¹ These men who were capable of such vigorous efforts and proud of the feats they accomplished in navigating their canoes, were equally liable to lapse into the idleness of the native peoples, and then they al-

most ceased to care for their own subsistence.²⁶²

The idea of saving, hardly developed in New France, diminished even more in the company of the Indians and in the general fecklessness of a day-to-day existence. Imitating the Indian, who was incapable of overcoming his desire for whatever tawdry trinket might be dangled before him,²⁶³ the Canadian gladly sacrificed the fruits of his work to satisfy any passing caprice or to buy the objects that flattered his taste for ostentation. Doubtless there were many Canadians who accepted engagements for the West in Montreal with the sole intention of bringing back a nest-egg that would set them up in Lower Canada.²⁶⁴ But certainly, in the nomadic life they led in the West, their desire for economy encountered conditions that were hardly favorable to its fulfilment. George Simpson, who knew as well as the North West Company their inclination to spend, recovered in this situation much of the costs he had laid out in his voyageurs' wages.²⁶⁵ Less mercenary than the Europeans, they accepted cuts in their pay more willingly,²⁶⁶ and pecuniary rewards had little effect on them.²⁶⁷

In their conversations and amusements the general fecklessness of their character was revealed. Often devoid of education, and accustomed to the unpolished life of the Canadian countryside, they took pleasure in abandoning themselves in the Indians' company to puerile amusements or to interminable narrations of their adventures, concerned especially with the exploits of sturdy fighters, with the virtues of their dogs or horses, with their success among the Indians.²⁶⁸ All this surprised and disconcerted Anglo-Saxons like David Thompson and Daniel Harmon, who were too educated to adapt themselves to an atmosphere so removed from their tastes and their breeding.²⁶⁹ With the Canadians' fecklessness a certain fatalism was mingled, the reaction of simple natures who resigned themselves, like the Indians, to the privations inherent in the environment that dominated them, awaiting patiently the moments of pleasure that it afforded, and remaining innocent of any thought of improving their condition. This state of mind was an element of weakness in the Canadian. Yet it was also, in the way of life he had chosen, a kind of strength, for his lack of concern for the material difficulties to which he was always exposed saved him from discouragement and vexation, and his exhaustion would immediately vanish in the distractions of jesting, talk, and shallow amusements.²⁷⁰

This cheerful simplicity was also accompanied by a tendency

toward superstition that had already manifested itself in Lower Canada, that increased in the region of the Lakes, and manifested its complete form in the West, where it became a pale reflection of the Indian belief in the constant intervention of the supernatural. There the Canadians would conform to the rites the Indians practised to obtain a favorable wind;²⁷¹ they would view a natural phenomenon as the realization of a mysterious influence;²⁷² they were reluctant to accept David Thompson's explanations when they surprised him in his observations, since they were convinced that his instruments were meant to read the future in the stars or to raise a wind that would be favorable to hunting.²⁷³

Their Christian upbringing, attenuated alike by the absolute freedom of the North West and the company of Indians, was not powerful enough to hinder this propensity, which was constantly encouraged by the beliefs of their primitive neighbors.²⁷⁴ For here the influence of the missionary vanished and "Do what you will!" became the rule.²⁷⁵ Moreover, the religious convictions of the employees and voyageurs, recruited among individuals deeply attracted to the free life of adventure, were too fragile not to suffer inevitable diminution in the West. Whatever the Church might do to improve the selection of voyageurs,²⁷⁶ it could not prevent the Canadian, left to his own devices and mingling with the Indians, from abandoning himself to an immoderate licence in which his religious sentiments inevitably foundered. Observers often remarked on the violence of language among the Canadians.²⁷⁷ Under the influence of drink, they would be overcome by veritable paroxysms of savagery, almost as extreme as those of the Indians.²⁷⁸ And the answers that some of them gave to the moralistic observations of Daniel Harmon—that "there is no Sabbath in this country, and, they added, no devil"—show that in the West their religious scruples were reduced to a mere vestige,²⁷⁹ even in circumstances, such as the feast of Christmas, when their religious upbringing might have overcome their intemperance.²⁸⁰ They retained no more than a confused religiosity,²⁸¹ liable to be awakened by the feeling of danger,²⁸² or a vague consciousness of the wrongs they committed against the conception of Christian morality. Gabriel Franchère, for example, tells of voyageurs who had taken wives in the West and were attached to their Métis families but dared not return to Lower Canada, where their conduct would arouse strong reprobation.²⁸³

But in general they lost the feeling of constraint from which

they had suffered in the colony. Inevitably, the "wild disposition" that had been observed in the Canadian on the St. Lawrence was magnified in the liberty of his new existence. Even more circumspection than ever was needed in handling the "Northern man" than in handling the Canadian of the St. Lawrence. His natural pride was accompanied by an extreme touchiness which, though it did not proceed from the same causes, was as liable as that of the Indian to be aroused by the least offence; it made him prompt to reject the discipline of an authority that was too strict and the bonds of an engagement that lasted too long.²⁸⁴ Thus, like the officers of Lower Canada with their soldiers, the bourgeois had to avoid bruising the pride of the voyageur, and instead to flatter his self-esteem²⁸⁵ and to be content with that spontaneous discipline which was established by the personal attachment of the man to the chief who was capable enough to win his confidence or admiration.²⁸⁶ The relations that were established between the bourgeois and his subordinates resembled to a considerable degree those which united the Indians to the chief they had chosen.²⁸⁷ In both cases, the leader who had neither the prestige that commands respect nor the confidence that creates attachments was neither followed nor obeyed.²⁸⁸ But if the Canadian avoided binding himself by excessively long contracts, it was not only out of aversion for the idea of constraint; it was also a manifestation of that strongly individualist and quickly changeable temperament which he had manifested already in Lower Canada and which the Anglo-Saxons so held against him. "Obedient, but not faithful," "fickle dispositions," "volatile, inconsiderate race," such were the terms in which Daniel Harmon and George Simpson described his nature, indicating yet another point of resemblance, even though it sprang from different origins, with the temperament of the Indian.²⁸⁹

Can one push the comparison farther, and see in the Canadian's nature an element of duplicity that finally aligned him with the Indian? Perhaps the Anglo-Saxons have exaggerated that flaw.²⁹⁰ But if one can judge from the procedures he sometimes followed in abusing the credulity of the Indians, by spreading calumnies against trading rivals²⁹¹ or adroitly depriving the native of his furs,²⁹² one must perhaps admit that he was not entirely exempt from the faults for which he has been blamed.

In sum if we ignore for the time being the Canadian's propensity to generosity and helpfulness,²⁹³ which reflected a great natural goodwill as much as it did a character whose fecklessness

excluded egotism, we reach the conclusion that there existed real affinities between the two groups which their almost identical conditions of life in the West had brought together in a permanent association.

At the same time, one cannot omit the differences that separate them from each other. One does not find in the Canadian the instinctive ferocity of the Indian, most strongly manifest among the warlike peoples of the prairie, nor that indolent temperament that rendered the Indian unfitted for prolonged effort, even within an irregular, ill-disciplined pattern of activity. His temperamental excitability did not involve the tenacity with which the Indian would nurse his resentment until the appropriate moment for revenge.²⁹⁴ It was in fact impossible for him to experience the reactions natural to the self-enclosed Indian mentality, for his open and affable temperament projected the radically different inclinations of extrovert natures. The reserve under which the Indian concealed his passions was transformed in him into an accessibility and a spontaneous courtesy which David Thompson contrasted with the Orkneyman's rigidity,²⁹⁵ and which survived the influence of the most desolate environments.²⁹⁶ Even in the posts that were most poorly supplied with trade goods and food, the Canadian would always display those qualities of extreme civility which contrasted with the harshness and crudeness of western ways.²⁹⁷ Always expansive,²⁹⁸ addicted to endless conversation, he would often abandon himself to the excesses of the imagination, whether in telling of his own exploits which he wilfully exaggerated, or of the routes he had followed and the regions he had travelled.²⁹⁹ Perhaps this exuberance of word and attitude concealed a certain timidity,³⁰⁰ which became evident in his relations with the Indians of the prairie, whose aggressive ferocity he feared.³⁰¹ Yet this did not make him incapable of heroic or even rash acts; he displayed a fortitude on perilous journeys or in unknown regions which the explorers appreciated,³⁰² and a remarkable control of his feelings in the presence of Indians.³⁰³ If he still showed a volatility of temperament that deprived him of the confidence of the Anglo-Saxons,³⁰⁴ it never led him into the sudden and repeated shifts of mood characteristic of the Indian, nor did it deprive him of a respect for contracted engagements³⁰⁵ or of the energy needed to carry out the tasks he undertook.

But these differences did not diminish the affinities that brought the Canadian close to the Indian. It was natural that, once trans-

planted into the primitive environment which begins at Lake Superior, the Canadian from the St. Lawrence should have spontaneously adapted his commercial methods to the psychology of the Indians, and that he should have seemed at home among them.

Knowledge of the Indian Psychology

To communicate with the Indians, the Canadian possessed first of all that incomparable instrument of reconciliation, the mastery of native languages. Accustomed from childhood to their intonations, he acquired the ability to converse in the tongues of the western peoples without having, like the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel, to commit himself to sustained study.³⁰⁶ It is true that many of the voyageurs were poorly educated, if not illiterate,³⁰⁷ and the bourgeois of the forts, if they wanted an employee who could read and write, must sometimes turn to the personnel of the English company.³⁰⁸ But the voyageurs' insights into the nature of primitive people, and their lively power of observing the country, its resources, and all its manifestations of human life made up for their lack of education.³⁰⁹ They were aware of the Indian's wavering will-power, of his resistance to continuous effort, of the capricious changes of his mind that might be provoked by some passing displeasure³¹⁰ or by the excessive toil involved in the task confided to him. They knew that, to avoid his defection for such reasons, they must either win his attachment or hold him by fear.³¹¹

In assimilating themselves to the daily life of the Indian, whose dialects they spoke like their own language and whose reactions to a certain degree they shared, they usually awoke in him a confidence which was strengthened by their participation in his warlike expeditions; this was the decisive step in which the western people, like the Iroquois, saw the essential sign of the incorporation of the Canadians into their tribes. But they had recourse also to intimidation and even violence. Often, by playing on the superstitious terrors of the Indians of the woods, they prevented them from going to the enemy's posts. It was this mixture of familiarity, confidence, and fear that best assured the Canadian's success with primitive people. The approach succeeded because the native saw in the Canadian a man separated from him by no profound differences and because he recognized his fearlessness and powers of endurance and—perhaps unconsciously—accepted

his superiority. With the prairie Indians, who were less inclined to bow before others, the recourse to intimidation was no longer effective.³¹² But here the Canadian increased his precautions, and, while maintaining his customary affability, he treated the Indian with respect. If he gradually fell—less from a natural inclination than as a result of accelerated competition—into excessive violence toward the Indian, or even into a policy of unrestrained duplicity (of which examples are fortunately rare),³¹³ he still knew better how to guard himself from the reprisals of his victims than the personnel of the Hudson's Bay Company, who were less aware of possible reactions among the native people. Witness the attacks by the Gros Ventres, in 1794, on the English and Canadian posts on the South Saskatchewan. They ended in the destruction of the English post, but failed against the Canadian fort which, despite the intimacy that reigned here between the personnel and the local Indians, had been well fortified against a surprise attack.³¹⁴

Adept at exploiting the superstitious fears of the Indians of the forest, the Canadian also knew how to make use of the general credulity of these primitive people, and also of their propensity for thieving. He could exploit his talents as a conjuror to convince the Indian that he worked miracles and in this way charm his furs from him. Sometimes he would leave lying about a few of the petty objects which infallibly tempted the Indian, so as to draw him into his store and seize his best furs at the moment when he was about to take the bait that had been offered him.³¹⁵ At other times, exploiting the respect which the native people harbored for the relics of their dead, the Canadian would carefully preserve the bones of one of their relatives to induce them to pay him a visit from which his trade would benefit.³¹⁶

To gain the alliance of a chief whose prestige was high among the native people could also be a factor in the Canadian's success. He would flatter his vanity by habitually using the title of captain, win him over by appropriate presents, and might also confide to him, in the presence of his adherents, the defence of their interests.³¹⁷ But it was rarely that the familiarity and confidence which drew him near to the Indian allowed the Canadian to forget the latter's natural duplicity. His confidence was never blind. When he advanced on credit the goods for which he expected repayment in furs, he was careful to demand pledges,³¹⁸ and prepared, if need be, to seize the furs of his debtor, so that the latter should not evade his obligations and profit from the rivalry be-

tween companies and posts.³¹⁹ He would obey an impulse of generosity only if he was sure that it would not result in an excessively demanding attitude on the Indian's part.³²⁰ Thus his commercial methods were adapted to his knowledge of the primitive mind; like his extravagant familiarity, they could succeed only because he was generally able to control the Indian's reactions and did not let himself be duped by the latter's abrupt changes of attitude.

Above all, the breadth of his experience was shown in the adroitness with which he took advantage of the indolent temperament of the native people—their tendency to avoid work while trying to get the best possible prices which, under the pressure of immediate necessities, were generally related to the needs of their families.³²¹ To stimulate their energy, the Canadian would freely distribute objects of little value to win them over, and did not hesitate to encourage their love of alcoholic drinks. By his constant practice of trading among the Indians directly and by locating his posts on their travel routes, he spared them any effort that went outside the normal framework of their activity.³²² In this situation he could trade on his own terms,³²³ and limit his choices to the most select furs, for which he offered, moreover, terms that were often superior to those of the Hudson's Bay Company.³²⁴

All this demonstrated a knowledge of the country and its people, whose empiricism made up for the absence of education among the majority of Canadians; Daniel Harmon considered it their strongest quality. It justified the excesses to which the Canadian often abandoned himself with the primitive people, and allowed him to regulate his relations with them on the basis of the greatest intimacy.

Familiarity of Relations

Of such familiarity the posts in the West offered an early example to the employees of the Hudson's Bay Company. Thanks to the informality which reigned in their forts,³²⁵ the Canadians talked and drank with the Indians, joined in their songs, whose intonations they incorporated into the voyageur repertoire,³²⁶ adopted their nonchalant attitudes,³²⁷ and sometimes took advantage of their sorcerers' talents for divination.³²⁸ Toward well-known chiefs they showed a deference which the Indians did not encounter among the English; they welcomed them to their tables,

entertained them in their posts, and offered them lodging as they would to one of their own people.³²⁹ Access to their forts was freely open to the native people. The Canadians did not worry about the consequences that might follow if an Indian got drunk, nor did they take offence at his indiscretions.³³¹

Matthew Cocking was astounded that François le Blanc took no precautions even at night against the Indians who were gathered in great numbers around his fort; no watch was kept within the post, whose rich assortment of merchandise was thus exposed to the covetousness of the native people.³³² It was only in the forts on the prairie that the Canadians regarded it as prudent to safeguard themselves against the depredations of the nomads. Elsewhere the need only arose after several years, when excessive distributions of alcohol³³³ and the bitterness of competition had destroyed the confidence of the Indians increased their desire for gain,³³⁴ and modified the familiarity of earlier relations.

The Anglo-Saxons haughtily disapproved of the Canadian attitude. Matthew Cocking criticized their chiefs for not maintaining toward their men or toward the Indians the distance which it was the custom to keep in the Hudson's Bay Company's posts.³³⁵ But the imperious and independent temperament of the Indians found this absence of protocol more congenial than the reserve shown by the officers of the British company. Edward Jarvis recognized that in this spontaneous intimacy lay one of the principal strengths of the "Quebec traders,"³³⁶ and the observations of Alexander Henry on the astonishment Indians showed at the houses enclosed by palisades [in the Hudson's Bay Company's forts], and on the violation of their nature involved in restrictions on their coming and going freely, which had been their habit since childhood,³³⁷ in every way justify the tactics adopted by the Canadians.

In the forts thus thrown open to their access, the Indians encountered men who showed little sign of embarrassment at being in contact with them. These men were almost "savages" in appearance,³³⁸ simply dressed in capotes of coarse wool that resembled the Indians' own habitual garments; trousers of leather or corduroy with, in summer, neither shoes nor stockings, and, in winter, moccasins made by the Indians; and finally a shirt of striped cotton with long sleeves which in winter was reinforced by a vest or wool or leather, drawn in at the waist by a ceinture fléchée, a speciality of the weaving shops of Lower Canada.³³⁹ It was a garb of little formality and unlikely to deter a primitive man,

for whom it contrasted with the stiffer welcome he received at the Hudson's Bay posts.³⁴⁰ It is significant to compare the rigid attitude of Alexander Henry, after a long period of contact between Anglo-Saxons and Indians, with the ease the Canadian Charles Chaboillez showed among the Gros Ventres tribe; the first felt only revulsion and did not hide his feelings, and the other behaved like the Indians, seated familiarly in their midst, and smoking without any sign of repugnance the calumet that circulated from mouth to mouth.³⁴¹ Yet Alexander Henry had spent many years in the service of the North West Company among Canadians and their Métis descendants. But he never succeeded in overcoming the rigidity of his attitude. There is no need to be surprised, in such circumstances, that the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel always appeared as strangers among the Indians. This fact was remarked by Miles Macdonell in 1811, long after the British company had established in the interior of Rupert's Land a network of posts as close-knit as that of the rival company.³⁴²

Amazed at the intimacy which united the two races, the Hudson's Bay Company's men never succeeded in clearly dissociating them. If they distinguished the true Frenchmen from both the native and the Canadian, they wilfully confused the latter with the Indian. For them, the Canadian was embodied in the epithet of "coureur de bois" or "woodrunner," which they qualified by the terms "Franco-Indian"³⁴³ or "half-French naturalized Indian."³⁴⁴ An exaggerated description no doubt, particularly in that absolute form, but not without some justification. Not only, in fact, was the Canadian assimilated with the Indian by the community of existence and temperament which he offered as an example to the Anglo-Saxon, but he had realized already, at a time when his rivals still did not dare to cross the threshold of the wilderness, the actual fusion of his race with that of the western Indians through the widespread practice of mixed unions.

The Fusion of Races

As soon as it becomes possible for us to glimpse the various aspects of existence in the country of the West, a familiar tableau begins to appear on the monotonous trails of the prairie and the forest: that of a Canadian going from place to place accompanied by his squaw or his Métis children. In 1732, Joseph Adams, the governor of Fort Albany, shows us the Canadian Joseph Delestre

arriving at his post, followed by his "Indian slave woman."³⁴⁵ When William Tomison undertook his first journey into the interior, in 1767, he described the pedlar François installed with his squaw and his child in the middle of a canoe, preceded by a native guide who was also transporting his wife and child in his craft.³⁴⁶ Dressed like an Indian, imitating the gestures and the appearance of primitive folk, this man of mediocre appearance seemed to impose himself on everybody around him.

When he set up his tent among the Indians to join them in the hunt, when he went in search of provisions needed at his fort, even when he joined the personnel of an expedition of discovery, the Canadian was generally accompanied by his native spouse.³⁴⁷ The spectacle of trading posts crowded with the wives and children of the employees was as familiar as the tableau presented by William Tomison.³⁴⁸ But in fact the Indian woman was not merely the habitual companion of the Canadian. In the wilderness she was his indispensable auxiliary, able if necessary, like the squaw of the voyageur Bourassa in the time of La Vérendrye, to save him from attack by her own people.³⁴⁹ She alone was capable of carrying out in the white man's service the material tasks to which her rude upbringing had accustomed her since childhood. The role she played in relation to the traders in Michilimackinac became broadened in the North West. Radisson, and later on La Vérendrye, had in turn realized that it was necessary, as the Indians themselves advised, to add to their expeditions a certain number of squaws to carry out the various tasks for which the men were not trained. Even the day-to-day operations of the posts needed the support of their skills.

In July and August the Indian woman went off to pick berries and wild fruits, which were greatly appreciated by both Indians and voyageurs, who usually incorporated them in the pemmican destined to feed the canoe brigades.³⁵⁰ In the spring she extracted from the maple and birch trees the sap needed to make the sugar the posts consumed in large quantities.³⁵¹ She excelled especially in dressing bison skins, and her patience was not daunted by this laborious and tiresome work. When the tanning was done, she softened the skin by exposing it to the smoke of a slow fire; then she cut it into strips which she used for lacing the bags into which she pressed the pemmican until it formed a compact mass.³⁵² After that came the work of making snowshoes, of which the posts were constantly in short supply, of moccasins, mittens, and leggings,

and of gloves which the women laced and stitched with sinews neatly extracted from the muscles of elk and moose.³⁵³ Such services were particularly valued and only the Indian woman or her Métis daughter could carry them out with the necessary competence. In their absence, posts were lacking in snowshoes, and the bourgeois declared that they could not do without the squaws, if only to carry out this relatively small task.³⁵⁴

The assistance of the Indian woman was particularly useful in the struggle against the Hudson's Bay Company. With their help, the Canadians could intercept the passage of their enemies' customers and persuade them to give up exchanging their furs at the English posts;³⁵⁵ through the intervention of these women they were able to provoke desertions among the rival personnel,³⁵⁶ to persuade natives even within the Hudson's Bay forts to pay them visits,³⁵⁷ and to appropriate without any scruple the carefully concealed consignments of meat which the Indians had intended for their competitors.³⁵⁸

Thus, far from opposing unions between their men and Indian women, the chiefs of the posts actually encouraged them; they themselves would in fact provide the trousseaux for the weddings.³⁵⁹ They even set examples by choosing for themselves Indian women who were particularly useful or influential.

There were yet other functions expected of these wives "according to the northern fashion." They were expected to gather the pitch needed for waterproofing roofs,³⁶⁰ and to prepare the wattap needed to join the sheets of bark from which canoes were made.³⁶¹ To complete such tasks before freeze-up they often worked in large groups of thirty or more.³⁶² When the men left the post for hunting encampments in the prairie, their squaws accompanied them to help in skinning the animals and also to gather the by-products that were indispensable for winter provisions.³⁶³ And if the men went on long journeys, the women would follow the caravan with the customary mission of setting up the camp, and then folding the tents in the early morning and organizing preparations for departure while the men still slept.³⁶⁴ Often, also, the task of carrying or dragging the baggage was imposed on them; it was in stressing the importance of such services that several of the Indian chiefs urged La Vérendrye to recruit a certain number of Indian women for his operations.³⁶⁵ Nevertheless, such usage remained exceptional on the part of the whites. Accustomed to the merciless effort which their society demanded of them, the Indian

women found themselves in a privileged position among the Canadians, and this situation was not unrelated to the favor with which their people regarded alliances with the whites.

Undoubtedly life with Canadians was not always entirely harmonious. There were times when they did not spare their companions bad treatment, and then it might happen, at least among the Ojibwa, that after quarrels and assaults the Indian woman would voluntarily put an end to her days, as she might also do under the effect of grief caused by the loss of a child.³⁶⁶ But if one discounts acts of violence provoked by drink, such episodes were too infrequent to diminish the enviable lot which the woman enjoyed in her new situation. Once she had become a white man's companion, she ceased to behave like a slave. Even in the prairie, where life was less hard for the Indian women and her circumstances less inhumane, she appreciated the difference.³⁶⁷ The Cree chief who begged Daniel Harmon, newly arrived in the West, to form an alliance with his daughter, hoped she would find a better life among the whites than in her own tribe: "My wish is to have my daughter with the white people, for she will be treated better by them than by her own relatives."³⁶⁸

Without abandoning the live affection she felt for her family, and without giving up the habits of endurance she had acquired during her training,³⁶⁹ the woman would go to live in the trading posts and reject her origins to the extent of adopting Canadian garb.³⁷⁰ In the farthest zone of the forest, where women were reduced to a state of servitude so degrading that some of them would kill their daughters at birth to save them from a life of want and suffering,³⁷¹ the contrast between the two situations was even more evident. James Mackenzie described to us, at Fort Chipewyan, one of those mixed unions which in practice loosened and even overturned the pattern of relations native society had established between man and woman; in this case the woman was happy to carry her child, while her Canadian companion willingly took care of the enormous bundle of moss which, according to a custom that is still respected today, was meant to serve as diapers for the infant.³⁷²

It was natural that such concessions, in which the Indian saw the man lowering himself to the level of the women, as well as the prospect of an easier life to be enjoyed in a trading post, should have beguiled the Indian woman and tempted her to abandon among white people the inferior status to which her own society

reduced her. Profoundly moved by the loss of a child, the Indian woman would accept passively the death of the husband of her race who had tyrannized her, and would hasten, immediately after his disappearance, to contract with some Canadian a union that promised her a better existence.³⁷³

Other elements than the certainty of a more easy life made her open to such alliances. There was, to begin, the custom of adoption so widely practised among the Iroquois nations. Examples of it were more rare in the West, and, above all, less well known. But cases were not lacking of adoptions carried out in circumstances identical to those of the first years of penetration: either, as in the case of Alexander Henry the Elder,³⁷⁴ or John Macdonell,³⁷⁵ to make up for the disappearance of a brother or a son, or, as in the case of the American mentioned by Daniel Harmon who was kidnapped as a child in Illinois by the Ojibwa, to incorporate a new element into the tribe.³⁷⁶ John Long likewise tells of his own adoption as a "brother warrior" by the tribes of Lake Superior.³⁷⁷ Among the same peoples Radisson had to lend himself to a ceremony similar to those he had undergone among the Iroquois, and the hospitality which the Indian in the West customarily offered to traders in his lodge was equivalent, when the white man accepted it, to a veritable adoption.³⁷⁸ The event had less significance than among the Iroquois since the adoptee, because of the absence of a political rivalry similar to that which existed between France and England in the region of the Lakes, did not assume so useful a role as a Joncaire or a Maricourt. Nevertheless adoption did form an element of reconciliation between the white and the native, and it notably favored the alliance of Indian women with the men their families had admitted into their ranks.

The Indian women were also led naturally toward such alliances by that extreme ease of behavior which we have observed in native society, and which the dissolution of the original culture tended to increase year by year. The tribes who were most jealous of their independence, and even those who appear like the Blackfoot to have retained up to the present a great racial purity, had the custom of offering to Europeans, for brief or lasting unions, their slaves, their sisters, their daughters, and even their wives.³⁷⁹ A refusal could offend them, and sometimes a trader found it prudent to allay the eventual consequences by making extra gifts.³⁸⁰

Prostitution was practised equally freely among the peoples of the prairie and those of the forest; among the Assiniboine who had

the custom of exchanging their wives among themselves for minimal gains:³⁸¹ among the confederated tribes, the Blackfoot, Bloods, and Piegan, who appeared to have considered it a law of hospitality toward strangers and whose importunity Alexander Henry the Younger described with contemptuous harshness.³⁸² Without forming an exception to the rule, the Sarcee showed somewhat more modesty than the Blackfoot or the Piegan,³⁸³ whose customary severity toward their women relaxed abruptly in their relations with the whites and gave place to unbridled licence.³⁸⁴ Yet the Gros Ventres went even farther,³⁸⁵ a few inches of tobacco being the price for which they gave their women to the Europeans: in such unbelievable looseness of behavior, they equalled the tribes of the Missouri, among whom the Mandans distinguished themselves by an unlimited lewdness.³⁸⁶ The peoples of the forest gave in to the same temptations. The Cree particularly would rent their women to passing voyageurs for whatever period was convenient to them, and those who refused to lend themselves to such practices risked the censure of their fellow tribesmen.³⁸⁷ The greater modesty of the Chipewyan, for which Samuel Hearne had vouched, did not stand up long to their contact with white men.³⁸⁸ The Ojibwa appear to have been less eager to allow the prostitution of their women.³⁸⁹ But only the small group of Beaver Indians completely refrained from that general custom of the tribes in the North West.³⁹⁰

For his part, the Canadian was little disposed to follow the example of a man like Daniel Harmon who was concerned for the duties his upbringing had inculcated, and for a long time evaded the invitations that were offered to him.³⁹¹ On the contrary, being always too ready to sacrifice his means and position to the satisfaction of his passions, he was no less willing than the Indian woman to accept the union which she sought.³⁹² Thus he came to be incorporated increasingly closely into that native milieu to which his way of life and his character had already drawn him, and he was glad to accept the kind of union that fitted in with Indian conceptions which were reflected in the custom among the Canadians of taking to themselves women whose very youth portended the early loss of any affection they might develop for their partners. Alliances with Indian girls of ten to fourteen were usual in the North West.³⁹³ Alexander Henry the Younger even mentions an extreme case of marriage with a child of eight.³⁹⁴ The same conceptions, on a somewhat mitigated scale, were also reflected in the

development of a modified kind of polygamy.³⁹⁵ If the Canadian had the rank of a bourgeois, or even if he merely occupied a position above the average level of the employees, the natives regarded it as an honor if he accepted, according to his rank, a second or a third wife;³⁹⁶ they regarded it, moreover, as indispensable for the satisfactory execution of the material tasks incumbent on the Indian woman.³⁹⁷

Often, following the example of the natives but with less discretion, the Canadian reduced to a simple principle of venality the unions he contracted in the country of the West. For voyageurs who wished to acquire a companion, the formalities were simple: a few presents, some trade goods, and especially alcohol, were enough to gain the approbation of the relatives, and the alliance was concluded, without the choice of the Indian girl—too young in any case to have an opinion—having been taken into account.³⁹⁸ Sometimes a ration of alcohol was enough to gain the parents' consent,³⁹⁹ but the price could be higher. Daniel Harmon cites as if it were a fabulous figure the sum of \$200 in various articles with which his Canadian interpreter bought the Indian woman he desired.⁴⁰⁰ The bids could go even higher; the Canadian who was unable to put up the sum needed to buy a squaw would not hesitate to give up his freedom by binding himself for an indefinite term to the service of a bourgeois who, at such a price, would advance whatever was needed.⁴⁰¹ Sometimes a man would acquire an Indian woman for one or two horses, which to the native people, today as in the past, is the manifest and always appreciated sign of wealth.⁴⁰²

But the Canadian might have need neither of goods nor of a formality of any kind when, learning from the example of the natives, he found in the practice of slavery a convenient means of securing a companion. Not that the Canadians instituted—as Matthew Cocking accused them of doing—a regular traffic of slaves which they bought in the West for resale in Montreal.⁴⁰³ But they often did acquire among the Indians women who had been captured in warlike expeditions, had been reduced to slavery, and in this way became their property.⁴⁰⁴ Such women, however, did not fall into the servitude which the term might seem to imply. To prevent the slaughter of her husband by the Sioux, the squaw of the voyageur Bourassa told them that he had saved her from slavery and from that time onward had never failed to treat her with consideration.⁴⁰⁵ If abuses occasionally occurred and justified the

hesitation of some Indian chiefs to entrust their daughters to strangers,⁴⁰⁶ the Canadians in general demanded of the slaves whom they bought no more than the customary tasks. Thus they raised them to a higher level of existence, except for the fact that, while they remained free to dispose of such women at will, they did not allow the women a choice of breaking the union that had been imposed upon them. Yet this was not a real sign of inferiority. For union with a white man did not always efface the subordinate role in which the Indian woman had grown up; if the alliance came to an end with the reciprocal agreement of the partners, the woman was often less free than the man to announce its rupture, and her father would sometimes himself take her back to the Canadian she had voluntarily left.⁴⁰⁷

Such a conception of marriage, reduced to the formality of a purchase, was not of the kind that created very solid alliances. In any case, when they were concluded it was usually with a tacit understanding that limited their duration to the presence of harmony among the partners. As soon as disagreement emerged, both of them resumed their respective freedoms, without the presents that had constituted the price of the purchase being restored to the parents.⁴⁰⁸ It was easy for the Canadian to marry again, given that in their own society the Indians did not admit that marriage could survive reciprocal disagreement.⁴⁰⁹ In that law of purchase and separation, there was indeed a potentiality for disorder that nothing, in the conditions of life in the West, could neutralize; neither the tottering religious convictions of the Canadians who took up their engagements in this distant country, nor the fragile discipline which was all the bourgeois expected in the trading posts, and which left the men, on the level of morals, on untrammelled freedom. There are often mentions of odious transactions in which Indian women were taken and exchanged without scruple, being sold to the highest bidder,⁴¹⁰ without the chiefs of the posts making any effort to halt deals that sometimes offered them the unexpected means of recuperating, from debtors who were otherwise insolvent, the sums they had advanced to them.⁴¹¹ Nowhere in the forts erected by the Canadian companies did there exist any official regulation of the licentiousness whose development the tacit or open complicity of the chiefs encouraged. Even the Scottish or Anglo-Saxon partners or agents were hardly interested in formulating moralistic rules. Many of them were as free in their ways as the men, and even those among them who

lived in an unusually edifying manner imitated their subordinates in finding a wife for themselves among the native people. The bourgeois appointed to the control of posts in the West—men like Charles and Roderick Mackenzie, Alexander Henry, William M'Gillivray, and Patrick Small—were untouched by any racial bias and were in fact convinced of the advantage their trade and the progress of their forts could gain from mixed alliances; it was seldom than one of them failed to have, like the Canadians, a native companion and Métis children.⁴¹² It is true that some of them adopted an exemplary attitude to their wives "in the Northern manner," and refrained from abandoning their families in the solitudes of the West. Daniel Harmon himself, shaped in the severe school of New England puritanism, overcame the hesitation he had first experienced at the thought of introducing his wife, a Canadian Métis he had married when she was barely fourteen years old, into the civilized society of his homeland, and he treated her to the end of his days with the most sincere affection.

It was not until the year 1806 that the North West Company, whose affairs had by then begun to decline, became troubled by the excessive cost to its establishments caused by the presence of a numerous personnel of women and children. At that time the squaws and the Métis families were forbidden to live in the posts. Henceforward it would be the responsibility of employees of all grades to maintain the native families with which they had encumbered themselves.⁴¹³ Financial penalties were applied;⁴¹⁴ the result of this was perhaps to reduce the number of families which lived in the posts, but not to hinder the practice of mixed alliances against which the rules were not in fact directed,⁴¹⁵ nor to limit the disturbances which that custom could engender. Licentiousness continued on a considerable scale in the posts of the North West. Sometimes, it even provoked the resentment of the native people against the excesses of the Canadians.

If the debauchery to which the latter abandoned themselves with the complicity of the Indians aroused no disapproval, if they could take advantage with full freedom of the encouragement the Cree and the confederated tribes offered them in the hope of easy gain or with the thought of enriching their families with white offspring,⁴¹⁶ they could still not commit with impunity, against the will of the Indians, all the excesses that tempted them. But, even before the distributions of alcohol and the deliberate violence introduced by the rivalry of the trading companies had become

general in the North West,⁴¹⁷ the Canadians seem already to have been guilty of brutalities against the native women that merited harsh reprisals. Such a situation seems to have given rise to the massacre of part of the garrison of Fort Phelipeaux, which the French, during the years when they occupied Hudson Bay, erected at the mouth of the Nelson River. According to the witness of the Indians, the men were certainly not, as Nicolas Jérémie, governor of Fort Bourbon, claimed, victims of a passion of destruction provoked by the famine that was decimating the native people.⁴¹⁸

Later on, abuses became even more frequent. The Chipewyan were especially victimized, perhaps because of their more timid nature or because of the freedom which the violences they committed within their tribe seemed to allow the white men. The Canadians did not hesitate to carry off their women by main force, in defiance of the elementary rights of the relatives, who tried to interfere. As a consequence, in the last years of the eighteenth century, according to Philip Turnor, a strong resentment developed among the Chipewyan against the personnel of the Canadian companies.⁴¹⁹ The spread of alcohol, while it increased the moral depravity of the primitive people, at the same time aggravated the disturbances that ensued. The code of morality freely accepted in their society lost all its effectiveness in an epoch when the tribes of the Columbia River, still unaffected by the pernicious action of alcoholism, had not yet denied all its principles.⁴²⁰ For the Canadians, every excess became possible.⁴²¹

It was inevitable that this unbridled licence should exact its tribute in the growing infection by venereal diseases that took place.⁴²² Doubtless one cannot attribute to the whites who haunted the West, as was done in relation to the Huron country on the strength of a text by the Récollet Sagard, the responsibility for the introduction of sicknesses which Alexander Henry and Daniel Harmon tell us were universally spread among the native tribes of the North West at the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁴²³ But, as prostitution became general, contamination by venereal diseases was bound to assume an impetus that was all the more disastrous because many of the tribes knew no remedies for it. This seems to have been the case with the Cree,⁴²⁴ the Assiniboine,⁴²⁵ the confederated tribes,⁴²⁶ and most of all with the Mandans, whose consummate immorality exceeded the licence of all the other peoples.⁴²⁷ The Saulteaux, who knew how to make use of the medical properties of certain plants, suffered less.⁴²⁸ As for the

Canadians themselves, there is every evidence that they were often affected by the same sicknesses. The difficulties they experienced in this primitive country of taking proper care of themselves retarded their cures and aggravated the gravity of their condition.⁴²⁹

Yet an emphasis on this unlimited freedom does not give a full view of the kind of relationship that developed between the groups we have been considering. The observers who have left us their pictures of the manner of life in that early epoch have especially retained in their memories the episodes that caught their attention or provoked their indignation, at the cost of neglecting the more humble and habitual events of an existence that was not wholly dominated by excess. Many Canadians became sincerely attached to the squaws who shared their lives and their work, and the latter's more privileged condition constituted a guarantee of their fidelity.⁴³⁰ It is not uncommon for the Indian woman to wait patiently in the company of her relatives for the return of the Canadian who was called upon, during the summer months, to undertake the journey to Fort William or Grand Portage.⁴³¹ Sometimes one is made aware of the joy which a Canadian felt on leaving the trading post to take up his life among the Indian lodges where his wife waited for him.⁴³² Some of them showed toward their native spouses an attachment whose intensity⁴³³ could lead them into acts of intemperate jealousy.⁴³⁴ And when Alexander Henry enumerated the Canadian employees who set up house around his Fort Vermilion, he gave us the impression of men living in excellent harmony with their wives and children and carrying out peacefully their daily tasks.⁴³⁵ Most of the Canadians, moreover, were provided with families too numerous for the affection they bore toward their children to be anything other than a guarantee of the solidity of the household. Married to a white man, the Indian woman felt the same attachment to her Métis children as she would have shown within the tribe to her indigenous progeny: in such depth of feeling there existed a link strong enough to prevent the breakups that happened so often in unions based merely on venal considerations. Unconsciously the Canadian who prolonged his stay in the West allowed himself to be dominated by the affection which a life in common and the creation of a family established, and if the disorders that tainted the relations of the two peoples played a great part in the birth of the Métis race, at least as important an element was contributed by such regular and well-cemented alliances. Why should not the

Canadian be attached to his Métis spouse in the same way as he might be attached to a woman of his own race, particularly in a country where only the Indian woman could endure the rigors of existence,⁴³⁶ and at a period when white women were not yet represented in the West? And how can we explain, if the relations between the two societies amounted only to the excesses we have been describing, that the Indians—even the most ill treated among them—should have felt toward the Canadians that attachment and confidence which George Simpson would note with astonishment and which proceeded from the genuine assimilation of the two groups.

At the same time, if we discount the temporary employees who went back to Lower Canada after a few years without the expectation of returning, the Canadians developed for this land of the West where they had established their families an attachment that could not develop in alliances without a future. Their unions with the native women were in reality the beginning of an increasingly close fusion between the two races of which the almost unavoidable consequence was that the Canadians were drawn rapidly toward the primitive way of existence. In spite of the various and well-sustained ties that they retained with Lower Canada, such Canadians were exposed to this process by the nature of their employment, which too often called them to the wandering life of direct trade with the Indians or to the nomadism of the buffalo hunt, since many of them were occupied with pursuing the animals needed for provisioning the trading forts.⁴³⁷ During the winter months, when the bourgeois called on his men to resort to the prairie so as to avoid an excess of personnel during the slack season, the life of the Canadian, accompanied by his squaw and his Métis children, became similar in every respect to that of the native people. The families gathered in their conical teepees, where they formed groups of ten to fifteen people, leading during the winter months a life of abundance or scarcity according to the luck of the hunt on which they depended.⁴³⁸ Sometimes they returned to the fort, even though it might be several days' march away. More often, they stayed away from it among the Indian groups—also occupied in hunting the buffalo—who would visit their lodges; sometimes they even organized common hunting expeditions with them. Returning to the post, where various tasks had to be completed before the brigades departed for Lake Superior, the Canadians found themselves once again in a native milieu, for

many Indians were then attracted to the fort, some to carry out their habitual fur trading, and others to await—from the generosity of the whites—the subsistence which, in old age, men without families were unable to obtain for themselves.⁴³⁹ Add the women and children whose husbands were away on war parties, and the numerous Indians who came to visit their relatives living with Canadians,⁴⁴⁰ and it will be evident that contact with the natives was an everyday event in the life of the employees.

Of the sedentary agrarian economy they knew no more than the meagre gardens which were cultivated around the posts and occasional tasks, like haymaking, that recalled those of the St. Lawrence farmer.⁴⁴¹ These occupations of short duration weighed little, in the balance of their lives, against the operations of trafficking and hunting. Contact with Lower Canada was renewed only on a few days in the year when, from the different sectors of the North West, the men found their way to the shores of Lake Superior and met once again the "pork-eaters" who had come from the St. Lawrence with their cargoes of merchandise. This was a time for the awakening of memories that would be just as quickly obliterated. It was a time when the moral union with Lower Canada was re-established—a union that would not last. Other links now attached the men to the primitive country, and if some of them remained indifferent to it, many, on the other hand, renounced the hope of returning to Lower Canada, whose life had become alien to them, and abandoned service in the trading posts to establish themselves in the solitudes where they finally merged into the native society.

THE FREEMEN

From among these individuals who henceforward were dedicated to the primitive existence, a new class of men emerged in the West which, under the name of "*gens libres*," "*hommes libres*," or "*freemen*," established between white and native the last and most complete link in their unification. Nearer to the Indian than to the employee in the post, more intimately associated with his nomadic ways, the freeman let himself be absorbed irrevocably into the country where the voyageurs were often content with temporary residence. He even developed confused aspirations of local patriotism of which the first settlers in Manitoba would soon experience the effects. To the regions in which he wandered, surviving

by his own resources, independent of the trading companies, he was not attached merely by the modalities of his existence, but also by the Métis family he had created, by the blood relationships that united him with the native tribes, and finally by the nature of the country whose majestic spaces or wooded horizons he had come to love.

Origins

The origins of this class of men are as old as those of French penetration, for, to judge from the ease with which the *coureurs de bois* established themselves in primitive settings, it is logical to suppose that isolated individuals—of whom Louis Primeau serves as an example—found their place quite early on among the native peoples. If Primeau was eventually repelled by the excessive sufferings which the primitive life involved, others appeared to have endured it more valiantly. The observations recorded here and there in the narratives of employees of the Hudson's Bay Company reveal the presence among the Indians of a few Canadians who, by deliberate intent or under the spur of personal resentment, had abandoned their masters to adopt the native way of living. This would lead us to believe that the phenomenon first occurred during the French regime, certainly by its last years, and probably in the middle of the eighteenth century.⁴⁴² We need not go back as far as La Vérendrye, for his detailed narrative would have mentioned such cases of desertion if they had occurred. Nor need we accept the sweeping assertions of certain officers of the Hudson's Bay Company that a great number of Canadians put down roots at an early date in the vast spaces of the West merely because of their propensity to surrender to the lure of the native peoples' nomad existence.⁴⁴³

All the evidence shows that the phenomenon could not have existed to any great extent until the trading companies had introduced into the West a personnel of employees numerous enough to disseminate, on an appreciable scale, the custom of mixed marriages and thus create the Métis family as the essential factor of attachment to the primitive setting. Thus, in the years following the conquest of Canada by England, we begin to witness clear breaks with their pasts in Lower Canada on the part of a fair number of such employees who, after leaving the St. Lawrence with every intention of returning there, soon lost the memory of their home-

land.⁴⁴⁴ A few letters from the relatives they had left behind followed them at long intervals to Grand Portage or Fort William. But in the isolation of their new existence they regressed so far into illiteracy that they could no longer understand the meaning of these communications.⁴⁴⁵ While this process of separation went on, the West enchanted and captured them. The instinct of freedom that had propelled them toward the career of voyageur developed vigorously in this setting, where the resources of the land were available to them without any limitation, and they experienced something approaching a feeling of sovereignty over these spaces that they traversed without any challenge to their enjoyment of them. Others hesitated to return to Lower Canada, fearful of the disapproval they would incur because of their long absence and the bonds they had formed with native spouses.⁴⁴⁶ Yet others, who had deserted their company or their bourgeois in defiance of the contracts of engagement they had signed, had no other place of refuge than the country of the West. Sometimes, in such circumstances, they would leave the Mississippi region where their contract should have kept them and seek asylum in the Canadian West. Sometimes they would migrate in the reverse direction, and seek refuge in the plains of the Mississippi, where the possibilities of subsistence were not lacking,⁴⁴⁷ and where the possibility of trading with the Mandan would favor their escape.⁴⁴⁸

But most of these freemen were employees who could not make up their minds to leave their families and so, at the end of their contracts, stayed on with their children.⁴⁴⁹ In 1789, William Tomison traded with two such men, near the territory of the confederated tribes, for a stock of pelts and buffalo meat. Although they had only recently left the service of their bourgeois, they preferred to trade their furs at York Factory.⁴⁵⁰ The dissolution of the XY Company appears to have led to a considerable disbanding of personnel, which appreciably increased the number of freemen living in the West. Alexander Henry remarked on the appearance of such men beside the Pembina River in 1805, and complained of their turbulent character.⁴⁵¹ The North West Company in turn released many of its employees, either at the end of their contracts or when their infirmities made them no longer useful.⁴⁵² But to forestall their defection to the Hudson's Bay Company⁴⁵³ and to prevent them from setting up as competitors to their former masters, it did not grant them complete freedom. Alexander Henry, in the same way, avoided the formal liberation of his men in the country of the

West.⁴⁵⁴ But the Canadians who were released in this way from service in the posts in fact enjoyed little less than total independence,⁴⁵⁵ since the few restrictions imposed on them were more apparent than real. The freed men in fact arranged their lives as it pleased them, sometimes entering a new and temporary arrangement with their former bourgeois and at other times preferring to hunt big game or fur-bearing animals.

The Freeman's Occupations

Once he was set free, the employee usually devoted himself to hunting, in which he was at least as skilful as the Indians. Here and there on the prairie groups of two or three freemen, with or without their families, installed themselves in their teepees, like the employees who wintered in the prairie, and hunted the large animals that provided their food.⁴⁵⁶ Around the confluence of the Red River and the Assiniboine they gathered in larger numbers to live on the resources they found in the wilds; when these were insufficient, they offered their services to the Hudson's Bay Company's staff.⁴⁵⁷ Many of them spent months on end in isolation, far removed from all human contact, and gathered rich stores of furs which they would take to exchange in the forts of their former bourgeois.⁴⁵⁸

Everywhere, from the Red River to the Peace, they scattered in search of beaver or bison,⁴⁵⁹ or erected dams in the prairie waterways that in the spring enabled them to capture the sturgeon migrating from Lake Winnipeg.⁴⁶⁰ Sometimes they mingled with independent traders, unconnected with the companies, who had suffered setbacks and took to hunting animals themselves and exchanging their pelts at the trading posts.⁴⁶¹

Conceived and practised in this way, the activities of the freeman could become a source of profit for the post from which he had been liberated, all the more to be appreciated because the Canadian hunted his animals with a discrimination which the Indians did not equal.⁴⁶² In fact, the custom spread of confiding to the freemen the task of procuring the provisions that the trading post needed for its subsistence,⁴⁶³ and according to the officers at Edmonton it was these freemen who assured to the North West Company its most abundant supplies of furs.⁴⁶⁴

Yet this was by no means the sum of their occupations. A certain number of them appear as minor traffickers who cleverly

exploited the caravans of various kinds that passed through the country. These were the "petty traders" whom Alexander Henry never ceased disparaging. Some set up their booths along the brigade routes, and traded their merchandise for the winterers' possessions. They baked bread for the passing voyageurs in improvised ovens and accepted payment in buffalo robes or leather garments.⁴⁶⁵ They operated taverns or restaurants where the fare was similarly priced.⁴⁶⁶ They prepared slabs of bark and resin with which the voyageurs could repair the rents in their canoes,⁴⁶⁷ and dug up at the sources of the Carrot River the salt with which the brigades supplied themselves before reaching the interior regions where it was lacking.⁴⁶⁸ They offered travellers the sugar they had made from the sap of maple and birch.⁴⁶⁹ They traded the horses which they had raised or bought from the Indians, and in exchange they received merchandise that would allow them to carry on a grassroots trade in furs whose products they could sell at a profit to the nearest post.⁴⁷⁰ They would ask the bourgeois for temporary engagements that would allow them to increase their modest means, and for this purpose several of them would always be following the convoys in their bark canoes, in the hope that their services would be accepted.⁴⁷¹

Others, who were more enterprising, took on the role of intermediaries between the Canadian posts and the native tribes of the Missouri: well supplied with trade goods which they obtained from the forts, they would travel among these people, buying up horses, buffalo robes, and pelts, which they would afterwards barter at the trading posts, gaining a profit from such deals that would enable them to increase their stock of merchandise. A typical example was the Canadian René Jusseaume; accepted by the Mandans after long residence among them, he carried on a regular traffic between the posts of the North West or Hudson's Bay Company and the villages of this sedentary tribe on the Missouri.⁴⁷²

Some of the freemen arrogated to themselves the complete exploitation of a district in the prairie or the parkland. Lakes or rapids provided them with fish, while the wooded banks offered them game or fur. In 1814, on the verge of Lake Winnipeg at the point where the Saskatchewan breaks into its celebrated rapids, Gabriel Franchère found an old Canadian who, in token of the sovereignty he claimed over the sturgeon fisheries, called himself "king of the lake."⁴⁷³ On the shores of Deer Lake, surrounded by a

forest of conifers, the family of the freeman Antoine Desjarlais exploited on its own the profusion of resources which—in that area which in our days has become so desolate—the diversity of fish, the abundance of water birds and their eggs, and the wealth of beaver assured them at all seasons of the year.⁴⁷⁴ It was the true example of the simple and happy life, satisfied, like that of primitive man, with resources offered by a nature that seemed inexhaustible; its anachronistic image would be transmitted to the Métis descendants of these former masters of the West.

When the animals had been exhausted in an area which they had hitherto frequented, the groups of freemen would undertake veritable hunting expeditions that led them to districts which were still unspoilt. Already, in the early years of the nineteenth century, scarcity began to appear in the country of the West.⁴⁷⁵ Only Athabasca offered a real wealth of resources, and in consequence an appreciable number of freemen abandoned the environs of Lake Winnipeg to betake themselves to this last refuge of the fur-bearing animals.⁴⁷⁶ Some of them would spend the winter at Red River, then travel to the most distant sites in the Edmonton region and around the Paint River in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, where they searched for beaver. In one of these groups, in 1808, was to be found one of the most famous of these freemen, J.-B. Lagimodière, accompanied by the first Canadian woman who appeared in the spaces of the North West, Marie-Anne Gaboury. Not wishing to impose on her the difficulties of the hunter's existence, he confided her that year to the commandant of Fort Edmonton, James Bird, who agreed to give her shelter while she awaited her husband's return.⁴⁷⁷ Thus, as soon as the first explorations had traced the road, the freemen were looking toward the Pacific slopes of the Rocky Mountains, where they glimpsed great wealth to be exploited,⁴⁷⁸ and where many of them were already establishing their winter camps.⁴⁷⁹

A more or less pronounced form of nomadism thus remained the habitual life-style of these freemen. Most of them, exclusively occupied with hunting, were forced to move constantly and to seek out temporary places of residence which they would occupy until the game disappeared.⁴⁸⁰ Helped by their families, they knew no other activity, in the encampments they formed on the prairie, but hunting the buffalo. During winter they would erect before their tents a wooden scaffold on which they accumulated the meat of the slaughtered animals. Inside the teepees, around a central

hearth whose fire emitted a bitter smoke that curdled into a low cloud, haunches of meat would be roasting on wooden spits, while other cuts, suspended from a conical framework of intertwined branches, would be slowly drying and preparing the provisions to serve as food during the summer. As soon as they had slaughtered an animal, the men would hasten to skin the "robe" which would serve them instead of a blanket, and to cut up the carcass before the cold could freeze the flesh into axe-breaking hardness. The fat was immediately buried in the snow, the quarters of meat were disposed of on the scaffold, and the skins not used as blankets were cut into strips meant for use as rope and harness, which the women gave the necessary suppleness by soaking them in warm water and stretching them tightly between two trees until they had completely dried.⁴⁸¹ Once the animals in the area were hunted out, the families abandoned the camp they had set up and went in search of them into new territories.

Among these freemen there were some indeed whose adaptation to the native life was not decisive enough to have stifled all notions of a sedentary economy. In places that were more favorable to cultivation, such as the junction of the Red River and the Assiniboine, where several families seem to have settled by the end of the eighteenth century,⁴⁸² or the areas surrounding trading posts such as Fort William,⁴⁸³ they organized little agricultural communities, whose activities are recalled in the primitive gardens around Métis settlements which today form one of the most familiar images of the West. The potato was the basic element in such cultivation.⁴⁸⁴ It completed a diet that was essentially composed of game, since in the last resort hunting remained the principal activity of all the freemen, whether they formed themselves into little agrarian communities or accepted the completely nomadic life.

The First Settlements

In these communities, which were given a certain stability by the rudimentary agriculture they practised, we glimpse the birth of the first freemen's settlements. Apart from the concentrations around Fort William and at the junction of the Assiniboine and the Red, there was a steady flow of freemen into the valley of the latter river; game and fish were not lacking there, the soil lent itself to cultivation, and in its marshy areas produced the forage which the freemen used, following the example of the North West Com-

pany, to nourish the horses they had formed the habit of rearing.⁴⁸⁶ In 1814 their numbers, including women and children, had reached 200 souls.⁴⁸⁶

A similar concentration of freemen assembled near the confluence of the Pembina River. The Canadians were drawn to this spot by the abundance of animals that inhabited the neighboring hills. On the Pembina River in 1807 Alexander Henry counted forty-five of them, many accompanied by their families, and along the Hair Hills, a short distance from the Red River, he noted several groups of them established near the habitual gathering points of the buffalo herds; here they put up their first dwellings in 1801–2.⁴⁸⁷ All of these were semi-nomad encampments, well provided with the horses needed for hunting the buffalo. The men were often away in search of food, and the women and children were left to protect the animals and their other possessions in a region where the terrible attacks of the Sioux were always to be feared. During the summer these various groups, who lived scattered in the rich hunting grounds of Pembina Mountain, gathered at Alexander Henry's fort at the junction of the Pembina and Red rivers: they brought with them the carcasses of the animals they had killed, which were used for the fort's subsistence and for the preparation of pemmican.⁴⁸⁸

Shortly afterward they settled at the fork of the two rivers, where they set up their log shacks which from this time formed the nucleus of the Pembina settlement, one of the Métis centres of population most dominated by prairie ways. In the wooded zone on the edge of the Red River parkland, on the enclaves of fertile soil that fringed the shores of Rainy Lake, a little colony of freemen was similarly installed in 1817. Apart from the wild rice that grew in the marshy bays, which they gathered by the same methods as the Indians, they exploited the migrations of the sturgeon, cultivated a few wheat fields of no great size, and raised the inevitable crops of potatoes.⁴⁸⁹ At the other extremity of the parkland, where important Métis villages survive to this day, derived from the groups of freemen who first came together around the watering points, the emergence of the earlier embryonic settlements was hardly perceptible at the beginning of the nineteenth century. There certainly existed, in the neighborhood of Edmonton, a considerable population of Canadians, liberated employees,⁴⁹⁰ but they had not yet come together in definite concentrations, and it is hardly possible to interpret in terms of settlement

the presence of a few isolated freemen around the posts at Lac la Biche, Lac Sainte-Anne, or Lesser Slave Lake, where they do not appear to have established any kind of stable life.⁴⁹¹

The dwellings these freemen began to erect were invariably constructed of logs or roughly squared and caulked planks covered with a bark roof, plastered with a whitish clay that made them look neat, and lit, like the more modest trading posts, by small windows protected with scraps of skin which had been turned into parchment by prolonged exposure to the slow smoke of a wood fire.⁴⁹²

Association with the Native People

It is not surprising that Alexander Henry should have felt concerned over the formation of this class of men who were more nomad than sedentary. Apart from the competition it was likely to offer the organization he represented, he doubtless feared the disorderly behavior which many of the freemen developed in an existence that in the end always propelled them in the direction of native society. When such men were reduced to living in isolation or in contact only with primitive people, their habits tended to copy those of the Indians too faithfully for them not to experience the same kind of reactions to existence. On those who hunted in the company of the native tribes⁴⁹³ and were content to appear at the posts only after long intervals with the furs they wished to trade for merchandise,⁴⁹⁴ the influence of white society was too remote to prevent their falling to the level of the Indians.

Their existence was dominated by the same irregularities as that of the Indians, and, even more than the employees who were exposed to it only occasionally, they suffered an alternation of abundance and scarcity. This was particularly so in the remoter areas of the Shield where, as easily as the Indians, the freeman who hunted beaver could succumb to an excess of privations.⁴⁹⁵ Whenever game abounded, they fell into the habit of wasting it like the Indians. If they went in for raising horses, it was in ways directly imitated from the Indians, who did not take the trouble either to provide nourishment for their animals or to prolong their lives or improve their performance by protecting them from injuries or bad treatment. When he arrived at Red River, Alexander Henry described this primitive way of rearing. Merely hobbled, the half-wild horses grazed the prairie pasture. To find grass in the

winter they had to break the ice that covered the ground. Their badly-made saddles galled them without the Indians or the freemen showing any concern; with their usual indifference they rode their horses in this condition, and paid no attention to the exhaustion resulting from the pain which the animals endured.⁴⁹⁶ On their journeys the Indian travois either took the place of or was used as well as the prairie cart, that two-wheeled vehicle roughly assembled without the use of metal, which made its appearance in 1803 in the Red River region.⁴⁹⁷ Alexander watched one of these parties of freemen who had piled their possessions on to travois and carts, and, followed by their women burdened with infants, were smoking their calumets with the impassive reserve of the native people; he compared them to a procession of Assiniboine crossing the prairie.⁴⁹⁸

From the Indians they also borrowed their habits of marauding and pillaging. It was logical that this tendency should be manifested early on among the kind of employees who deserted the service of their masters and had no scruples about deliberately breaking their contracts of engagement. From the end of the eighteenth century, the Hudson's Bay Company's journals contain many allusions to these vagabonds always on the lookout for opportunities to make raids on the herds or the merchandise of the trading posts. "The Canadians which we meet below was not good men that they run away from their masters in the Mississippi River and take some goods from their Masters & went to the Mississippi River & now lives like Indians among them."⁴⁹⁹

But the duplicity of the Indian and his propensity for thieving appeared even among those whose links with the trading companies had been broken in a regular way but who had been affected by several years of life shared with the Indians. Indeed, these tendencies seem to have been exaggerated among them so that they behaved toward the whites with an insolence and a cynicism encouraged by their greater familiarity with Europeans and a lack of uncertainty in their presence.⁵⁰⁰ Alexander Henry condemned their ignorance of all principles of "honour and honesty," and reproached them with having done more harm in the prairies than the Blackfoot.⁵⁰¹ For its part, the journal of Brandon House accused them of resorting too often to the practice current among the native people of taking goods on credit in one post and reserving for a rival trader the skins they should have provided in settlement of their advances.⁵⁰²

In fact, when the freemen could be seen selling the favors of their native wives to the Hudson's Bay Company's employees for supplies of meat,⁵⁰³ when like the Indians they mutilated the women who had deceived them,⁵⁰⁴ one is obliged to admit that this class of vagabonds, whom Alexander Henry derisively called "the meadow gentry," were different in no way from the Indians. Once detached from the occupations of the trading posts, whose regularity imposed on them a certain habit of work, the freemen largely abandoned themselves to the fatalistic indolence of primitive man. They accepted privations passively; thanks to the horses that transported their goods and enabled them to overtake large animals with ease, they avoided excessively arduous effort;⁵⁰⁵ if their needs were not pressing, they abandoned themselves to interminable gambling and talk in their lodges or their log shacks; they showed little inclination toward the energy of the Canadian voyageurs, which seemed to evaporate in this setting.⁵⁰⁶ The example of René Jusseume, sharing the life of the Mandans, leaving his Métis children to the influence of their Indian mother, sharing her superstitions, adopting the Mandan habits of duplicity and devoting them to important and insignificant matters alike, reveals the extent of the regression which the Canadians underwent if they were limited to the company of primitive men.⁵⁰⁷ To them one can apply the severe judgment W. J. Snelling made of the freemen: "It would seem . . . that ten civilized men degenerate into barbarism, where one savage is reclaimed from it. Metaphysicians may speculate upon such a propensity as long and as much as they please . . . but the fact is thus, and it is believed, always will be."⁵⁰⁸

But one must be careful not to confound under a simple description all the individuals who composed the class of freemen, and identify them without distinction with that type of vagabond humanity whose regression toward primitive societies was as complete as that of the poor whites in the Union of South Africa. In the country of the West, there existed a series of gradations among the freemen, from the inferior group of marauders against whose depredations the posts tried to protect themselves, to those who kept up more sustained relations with the trading posts, whether they accepted temporary engagements in their service, co-operated with them in active fur trading, or took charge of providing buffalo meat.

Between these two extremes one can place the petty traders who

set up along the routes of the convoys; those who, provided with a few Red River carts, organized transport enterprises in the interest of the trading posts,⁵⁰⁹ and among whom one finds former chiefs of posts who had decided to stay in the West;⁵¹⁰ and the families who established themselves in areas well provided with natural resources and lived withdrawn existences in a peaceful atmosphere, with no other ambition than to tend to their immediate needs,⁵¹¹ but without declining to the level of the primitive. In spite of the scantiness of their contacts with white society, which may be considered the first step toward adaptation to the native society, many such families manifested the same qualities of harmony and honesty as the rural classes of Lower Canada, except that they were even more heedless. Their qualities of cordial amiability, their taste for conversation and jesting, their courteous way of welcoming strangers, whom they immediately greeted with songs from Lower Canada, beguiled John McNab when in 1816 he experienced the hospitality of one of these families of buffalo hunters living simply in its lodge deep in the prairies of the Assiniboine.⁵¹² The freeman Lagimodière offers an equally good example of one of these honest families whose sincere attachment to the customs and religion of Quebec, sustained by the presence of a mother recently arrived from the St. Lawrence, kept them closer to the whites. Even among those who shared the existence of the Indians and made habitual companions out of these primitive people, there were some who refused to give in completely to their freedom of behavior and risked their lives for the scruples they had about allowing their children to be dishonored.⁵¹³

Between these individuals and the class of vagabonds who lost all sense of personal dignity when they came into contact with the Indians, there was nothing in common but a denomination. Generous, far removed from any thought of egotism, they were always ready to help each other, and, like the Indians, they freely welcomed into their abodes the wives and children of those who were absent. Groups of twenty or twenty-two people might be gathered under a single roof, in a heterogenous kind of mingling of which, even today, the Métis families have not lost the tradition.⁵¹⁴ In the same spirit, Gabriel Franchère describes the freeman Nadeau, himself weakened by several days of hunger, offering to share with strangers the game to which an unexpected stroke of good fortune had led him.⁵¹⁵

At the highest level, the freemen who kept up regular contact

with the posts showed a degree of activity which was still close to that of the voyageur. Not that they were capable of as much energy, or obeyed the same feelings of emulation and pride, but they raised themselves clearly above the native people by the greater enterprise and activity they devoted to their occupations and by the ambition that animated them. The laziness of the Indians, the indifference to personal gain that neutralized in them all will for action—and which also manifested itself among the inferior kind of freemen—had not extended their effects to those who supplied game or furs to the trading posts. More motivated than the Indians, desirous of satisfying the inherent needs of more evolved societies, they generated an energy that it would have been vain to expect of primitive men.⁵¹⁶ They excelled over the Indians not only in the zeal they displayed but also in the punctuality with which they carried out their instructions.⁵¹⁷

This fact is verified constantly in the journals of the Hudson's Bay Company. These grant such freemen the merit of putting more energy into their search for fur-bearing animals,⁵¹⁸ and of avoiding the idleness that prevented the nomads of the prairie, whose material needs were all provided by the bison, from responding to the requests for victualling which the chiefs of the posts urged them to fulfil.⁵¹⁹ The richest consignments of furs that reached the Canadian posts were the outcome of hunting by this class of freemen, and the most reliable provisioning was the result of their activity. It was to them or to their sons that the North West Company confided the responsibility of carrying out in the Rockies the hunting that the Indians there refused to undertake.⁵²⁰ Some of them appear even to have been animated with a certain sense of economy and these planned eventually to use the small capital they accumulated to establish themselves in the Red River colony.⁵²¹

Must we conclude that these groups who occupied the upper level of the class of freemen escaped the dissolvent action of association with native society? In reality, none of them was completely exempt from it. All underwent its effects, in varying degrees, but in every case more so than the employees in the trading posts. It was among them that Canadians came closest to Indians in the way they reacted to existence. Permanent contact with a primitive environment, and the carelessness and freedom of the nomad life created the most immediate repercussions. When Miles Macdonell undertook to convert the freemen to the sedentary life of farming,

he soon gave up the hope he had first entertained of attracting them in large numbers to Lord Selkirk's colony. "They have followed so long the Indian manner of living that it will not be an easy matter to wean them from it."⁵²² The links that the employees still retained with white society were broken or weakened in the group of freemen, whose various categories, whether or not they completely renounced their original culture, imitated more faithfully the customs and the outlook of primitive man.

THE BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF ASSIMILATION

Thus, more than any other race, the French Canadians were destined to become assimilated into the indigenous populations of the West. Here one can find the special character of that nucleus of interbreeding—deriving directly from the French-Canadian population—which developed around the southern routes of penetration. In that fact of assimilation appeared the principal strength of the men of Lower Canada among the primitive tribes of the North West. The same element was correspondingly lacking in the relations of the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel with the native people. Assimilation explains the sincerity of the attachment which, even under the domination of the British company, the Indians continued to show toward the Canadians, despite the excesses of which the latter had been guilty toward them.

But it cannot be denied that the Canadians, and especially the freemen, paid certain penalties for the benefits which assimilation brought to them in terms of their relations with the primitive tribes and the profit their commercial relations derived from it. Here we face a situation similar to that in which, during the first years of penetration, their excessive intimacy with the Indians placed the *coureurs de bois*.

In identifying themselves with the native peoples and making nomadism the rule of their existence, the freemen found themselves exposed, even more directly than the personnel of the posts, to the depredations which the nomad peoples were in the habit of carrying out, either to their reciprocal disadvantage, or to the detriment of strangers who ventured into the prairie. The personal possessions of such people, however meagre they might be, were coveted by the Indians, who did not hesitate to rob them as they robbed people of their own race,⁵²³ and who would go to the ex-

tent of slaughtering them in order to seize their goods.⁵²⁴ The horses they kept were particularly tempting to the native tribes,⁵²⁵ and conflicts often broke out between freemen and Indians, provoked by thefts that could originate equally with one or the other side.⁵²⁶

At the same time, quarrels between the tribes unavoidably led the freemen to side with one or other of the rival clans. Because of the alliances they had formed with these groups, they often had relatives or friends among the Indians who, in the course of war-like adventures, succumbed to their adversaries,⁵²⁷ and at such times the freemen associated themselves with the resentment of the families with whom they were allied. The mere fact of marrying an Indian woman belonging to a certain tribe might involve a freeman in enmity with a rival tribe,⁵²⁸ as a kind of counterpart to the security which his spouse had brought him within her own tribe. Furthermore, the very fact of sharing the Indians' way of life exposed him to the frequent attacks of the war parties that roamed the prairie, and it was not uncommon for a freeman, or even an employee of one of the forts, to be killed in an ambush intended for the group with which he was travelling.⁵²⁹ Such attacks were especially frequent on the verges of American territory, for freemen related to tribes from Canadian territory were as much the objects of Sioux hatred as the Ojibwa or the Assinibome.⁵³⁰

Certainly the history of penetration shows quite clearly that Canadians had all too great an inclination to become involved in the conflicts dividing the Indians, either through unhesitating personal involvement or through the distribution of firearms which encouraged the aggressiveness of one tribe against another.⁵³¹ The continued delivery of muskets to the Indians by the trading posts could only heighten the dissensions that divided the prairie tribes, and it risked arousing against the employees of one post the animosity of a tribe that drew on the resources of a competing establishment.⁵³² But the personal relationships into which both employees and freemen entered also became one of the essential factors in creating animosity toward them on the part of the native people. The latter would develop a hostility to the man who by marrying an Indian woman identified himself in their eyes with a particular tribe, just as the white man who heard of the death of an Indian with whom he was connected would naturally think of helping to avenge him.

There is no doubt that many freemen perished thus in retalia-

tory expeditions in which they took part directly, as had happened in the past with the *coureurs de bois*,⁵³³ and it was logical that the class of freemen should have suffered most from the conflicts that raged in the country of the West. But it is even more significant to see Alexander Henry, regularly appointed to the direction of a trading post and inclined through his superior upbringing to avoid such quarrels, giving the ammunition they needed to the Indians who proposed to avenge the deaths of those among them to whom he was allied through his marriage to a native woman.⁵³⁴ The Canadian or freeman whose way of life and personal relationships virtually identified him with the native peoples and who took part in their disputes became more than anyone else the target of hostility on the part of the group to which his family connections put him in opposition.

Another and more lasting consequence of the tendency of the first Canadians to become completely absorbed into the primitive environment was that it attached many of their descendants to a way of life whose archaic character must inevitably resist economic revolution in the West and hinder their adaptation to white culture.

For the moment, the inconveniences which the Canadian suffered as a result of his excessive adaptation to the Indian way of life did not greatly diminish the strength he derived from it; if we collect the evidence left to us by the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, we must conclude that here the Canadians enjoyed a real superiority over their adversaries, whose relations with the primitive folk were more neutrally based and lacking in the advantages the Canadians were assured as well as the penalties such advantages implied. Of the ascendancy which the Canadians wielded over the Indians, and of the confidence which both engaged men and freemen inspired in the native peoples, the journals of the forts on the coast of Hudson Bay offer us the first evidence. Thus, in 1731-2, the journal of Moose Factory was ceaselessly describing the intimate associations between the two groups. Soon the Indians began to wait for the Canadian traders so that they could show them the location of their tents and reserve their furs for them; equally soon, attaching themselves completely to their new alliance, they began to decline requests to hunt game needed for the sustenance of the fort.⁵³⁵ To the invitation which the commandant of Moose Factory addressed in 1743 to an Indian "captain" to resume the operations he had hitherto undertaken on behalf of the

fort, the latter replied that, as a result of the alliances contracted by his son and daughter among the Canadian traders,⁵³⁶ he had given up working in the interest of their rivals. And, while they sometimes cursed the French who did not spare them from brutalities, and even asked the doctor attached to Fort Albany for a dose of poison that would enable them to get rid of the traders from Lower Canada,⁵³⁷ they still hastened, as soon as the news reached them that the French were near, and invited them to a meeting, to depart immediately, bag and baggage, so as to join these traders once again.⁵³⁸

This attraction which the pedlar from Quebec wielded over the native people was emphasized by Alexander Henry the Elder at the time of his journey to Michilimackinac,⁵³⁹ and by Anthony Henday when he reached the great plains of the West in 1754. "It is surprising," he wrote, "to observe what an influence the French have over the Natives."⁵⁴⁰ In 1755 he repeated the same perception: "I found them strongly attached to the French interest."⁵⁴¹ He also said: "The French speak the language of the natives with the same ease as they themselves do, and they command them at their will, even though the Indians pretend the opposite."⁵⁴² William Tomison corroborated Henday's judgment in every point.⁵⁴³ In 1769 he came upon the Indians near Lake Manitoba, devoting themselves to ritual dances and magical invocations meant to hasten the arrival of the Canadians.⁵⁴⁴ The correspondence and journals of York Factory contain similar observations,⁵⁴⁵ and it would be easy to multiply examples of them.⁵⁴⁶ It was natural that, in certain cases, the Indians should concentrate their devotion and their most intense sympathy on a particular Canadian, who was unusually adept at winning them over and making himself loved and respected by them. Such men were Michel Boyer, the trader on Rainy Lake, and the Canadian Réaume in the region of Brandon House.⁵⁴⁷ The Hudson's Bay Company's employees, with a remarkable impartiality, pay homage to the qualities of these humble traders, whose affinities, backgrounds, and tactful approach made them adept at handling primitive people.⁵⁴⁸

But it is not merely to the personal influence of a few men that one can attribute the partiality which the Indians showed for the Canadians. The reason must be sought in the spontaneous confidence born out of the close relationship between the two groups. In this respect the attitude of the Chipewyan is particularly significant. In spite of the inhuman violences which the Canadians,

according to Philip Turnor, committed among them, and in spite of the excesses of every kind to which the bitterness of the struggle against the Hudson's Bay Company gave rise during the years before the fusion of the rival organizations, the Chipewyan retained for them a preference which George Simpson personally witnessed in 1821 at the end of that period of merciless conflict. While blaming the North West Company for reducing these Indians to a state of "abject servility," and attributing their docile attitude to the reign of fear which its tyranny inspired, he admitted that the timidity this experience had engendered was accompanied by a real attachment to the great Canadian company: "Strange to tell, they have not only an innate fear, but attachment to that association."⁵⁴⁹ He thus pays homage to the Canadians' talent for adapting themselves to the habits and mentality of the native people: the excesses from which the latter suffered had not been able to overcome the confidence which the incorporation of men from Lower Canada into their tribes had spontaneously established between the two races. Simpson thus confirmed the observations that in 1776 Edward Jarvis had noted in the letter he addressed to the Committee in London.⁵⁵⁰

Of that incorporation the group of freemen represented the most significant manifestation and the most complete realization. It was at their level, rather than that of the engaged men in the posts, that the white race mingled with the primitive in a perfect identity of existence and reactions. This link was always missing so far as the Hudson's Bay Company was concerned. Its relations with the native peoples were ordered with a more regular framework, which had no room for the Canadians' excesses of violence, but also excluded the intimacy of relations they achieved.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE NORTHERN NUCLEUS

To the nucleus of racial mingling that centred around the southern routes of penetration must be compared its counterpart which emerged on the coast of Hudson Bay and gradually radiated into the hinterland. For more than a century it was limited to the verges of the inland sea where the first British posts were established. The white race at that time was represented essentially by Scots and Anglo-Saxons: at least, these formed the great majority, just as the French Canadians, though mingled with them were the Scots who were generally in charge of the posts, constituted the dominant element in the southern nucleus. The enterprises of Radisson and the Chevalier de Troyes, and the intermittent occupation of the English forts by French garrisons from 1686 to 1713 introduced only small groups of men, whose presence could not seriously change the character of the white population then established on Hudson Bay. Thus in 1682-3 Radisson disposed of a mere fourteen men, with whom he was able to capture thirty-three men from the Anglo-Saxon garrisons on the coast.¹ When he absented himself, in the summer of 1683, to rejoin the service of England shortly afterward, he left at the mouth of the Nelson River a group of only eight men who passed there the winter of 1683-4.² The fifty or so men disembarked in the same area by the two Canadian ships that in 1684 went to Hudson Bay to compete with the operations of the English company³ did not prolong their occupation beyond a single year.⁴ Even the expedition of the Chevalier de Troyes left in the coastal ports only small numbers of men, which, at Moose Factory, barely reached a strength of fifteen.⁵ The higher figure of sixty-seven for Fort Bourbon in 1684 can hardly be regarded as a decisive advantage for the French race since the position was lost soon afterward.⁶ During the years of

occupation the manpower of Fort Bourbon must have varied constantly; sometimes increased by the arrival of a boat whose crew wintered at the post and could swell its personnel to eighty men,⁷ sometimes diminished by the serious difficulties of provisioning which the Canadians seem to have experienced there,⁸ and which finally reduced the garrison to a mere dozen men by the time the post fell into the hands of the English.⁹

These men, unlike the English garrisons, were not immobilized at set points on the coastline. Since the epoch of Radisson's enterprises, the Canadians, whether to attract the natives to the coast, or in search of a subsistence they could not find along the shoreline, spread out among the Indians as they had done around the shores of Lake Superior.¹⁰ It is true that they did not penetrate very far into the interior, but they were able nevertheless to enter into relations with the Indians similar to those they had established in the more southerly sectors; only their small numbers and the intermittency of their occupation of Hudson Bay prevented such relations achieving the same amplitude. The extreme ease with which they always reached an accord with the Indians showed itself equally in that coastal zone, as is evident from the cordiality of relations that immediately developed between the Chevalier de Troyes' men and the Indians around Moose Factory.¹¹ It goes without saying that sexual relationships were not slow to emerge, sometimes contained within the framework of "reasonable licence," and sometimes, on the contrary, leading to disorders whose excess led to the massacre of nine men in the garrison of Fort Phelipeaux.¹² Without doubt, the presence of a few *coureurs de bois* who found their way here and there to the coast of Hudson Bay also helped to tighten the relations between the two races. But, if one leaves out the "Bottom of the Bay" (James Bay), which they reached more easily, these last elements represented no more than an accidental contribution, and, from the day when the restitution of the posts to the Hudson's Bay Company assured the stabilization of its personnel, the white race was represented, in this extreme sector of the Shield, only by the Scots and the Anglo-Saxons.

THE POLICY OF SEGREGATION

The excesses committed by the Canadians against the native peoples seem to have greatly impressed the Hudson's Bay Com-

pany's London Committee. From this time onward it continually used them as a reason to urge its agents to hinder the establishment of excessively close relations between the Company's personnel and the Indians. Even in the earliest years, before the dangers to which the Canadians exposed themselves could have justified a policy of segregating the races, the Committee had shown an obvious desire to impose on its representatives a life separate from that of the native people.¹³ Afterward, it tirelessly recommended the chiefs of posts to issue instructions which seemed likely to prevent the risk of disorders and guarantee pacific relations between white and primitive people. "No . . . person is allowed," wrote Andrew Graham in 1768, "to have any correspondence with the Natives without the Chiefs orders, not even to go into an Indian tent and the Natives are not permitted to come within the Forts but when their business requires."¹⁴ These instructions limited the contacts between the two groups to strictly commercial relationships. The Company imposed them not only on the coastal forts, where the concentration of personnel under the authority of a commandant made them easy to apply, but tried also to extend them to those of its men who undertook the exploration of the interior, where they were reduced to living in conditions of isolation from civilized life that rendered illusory all official instructions.

In acting thus, the Hudson's Bay Company was inspired primarily by an ideal of morality which the Scottish entrepreneurs of the North West Company did not share. The exemplary conduct which it attempted to impose on its personnel could not have resisted the pressures of a milieu under the close domination of native concepts. A deep concern for religious edification appeared in its first circulars to the governors of the forts: these insisted on the need to observe the "law of God,"¹⁵ and to make sure that all the employees were present at official prayer gatherings,¹⁶ which the journals of the posts inform us were observed regularly, thanks to the attentiveness of the officers in charge.¹⁷ Backsliding employees were punished by deductions from their wages. Reading such instructions, and the oath which Henry Kelsey, the governor of York Factory, required of his men in 1718, one gains the impression that the Company's enterprises were inspired by the idea of a Protestant crusade, in the service of the Church of England, as much as by commercial preoccupations. In the text of the oath which he imposed on his staff, Kelsey regarded respect for the religious laws of the kingdom as inseparably associated with hatred

for "all Popish pretenders & Superstitions with their cerimoniall Jurisdiction and Authority of the Roman Catholic Religion. . . ."¹⁸ And the officers never failed to take advantage of an opportunity to proclaim their loyalty to "the established Church of England" and to wish the confusion of its enemies. The celebrations which, in the month of November, marked the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot were inevitably accompanied by similar professions of faith, equally aggressive toward the enemies of Anglicanism and the Honourable Company.¹⁹ The Committee even tried to make the Canadian Louis Primeau, whose long association with the native peoples hardly inclined him to religious duties, conduct himself in an edifying manner among the tribes of the interior.²⁰ At the end of the eighteenth century it undertook to furnish pious books to its posts in the hope of encouraging among the men a sense of their moral obligations,²¹ and at the same time, as a logical extension of the religious principles it preached, endeavored to detach them from thoughts of licentiousness. From the earliest days, sobriety above all was urged upon them.²² The attention of the governors was drawn to the need to forbid all habits of idleness,²³ to prevent "immorality," to encourage "virtue" by the celebration—morning and evening—of "divine service,"²⁴ and to treat with uncompromising vigor any excess of which the employees might be guilty.²⁵ Finally, to eliminate the disorders that could not fail to follow the overabundance of alcoholic drinks, the governor of York Factory took precautions to dilute its strength and to regulate its distribution.²⁶

The same care to maintain an irreproachable morality in the posts led to instructions regarding the observation of continence. In 1682 the Committee threatened not to pay their salaries to chiefs of posts who might be easygoing enough to let native women into their establishments and to tolerate relations that could amount to infractions of the "law of God."²⁷

It is true that other preoccupations also inspired this policy of isolation. It proceeded partly from the indifference which the London Committee manifested in the early years toward the native peoples. The idea that constantly shines through the letters patent relating to the foundation of New France, of bringing colonists and natives together and merging them into a single community of race and civilization destined to further the uplifting of primitive man to the level of civilization, in no way guided the policy of the Hudson's Bay Company. The Committee was

equally removed from any program of mixed alliances and from any ideal of transforming the native people's way of life. It thought even less of applying in the territories that had been granted to it a policy of co-education, and in 1724 it actually recommended to Governor Macklish that he abstain from giving the Indians even the rudiments of an education, either reading or writing, since this would have no other effect than to give them free access to the posts.²⁸ Perhaps the Committee was not completely hostile to the idea of converting the heathen. Doubtless it was also moved by a sincere wish for justice toward the native peoples; it tirelessly urged on its agents a humane and reasonable attitude toward the tribes which gathered at the forts, and Governor Kelsey did not hesitate to punish men who went so far as to maltreat the Indians.²⁹ But this was far from the policy of a Champlain who envisaged the unification of the races and the mingling of their views of life. The Hudson's Bay Company in fact never completely overcame its feeling of mistrust toward the native peoples. In any too close contact between its employees and the Indians, it saw the possibilities of a clandestine trafficking that would have been prejudicial to its interests,³⁰ and it regarded as indispensable the redoubling of precautions to keep apart these groups whom the hazards of life had destined to come together. By forbidding employees of the forts to hold any personal conversation with the Indians during trading operations, and by attempting to immure them in the posts and prevent their access to the "plantations" where the Indians customarily gathered, the Committee in fact formulated rules whose rigorous application would have been harmful to the trade.³¹ To this excessive caution, which corresponded so well with the inflexibility of the Anglo-Saxon temperament and its habit of keeping a distance between superiors and subordinates, one must add a genuine fear of the native peoples, among whom any excessive show of confidence would, in the Company's eyes, encourage aggressive attitudes and even surprise attacks. In 1688, when the Committee authorized young Henry Kelsey to exploit the contacts he had made among the Indians and go in their company to the Churchill River, it cautioned him not to trust himself entirely to men he did not know and not to risk his life needlessly among them.³² The news of the difficulties that arose between the Indians and the French at Port Nelson confirmed the Committee in such attitudes, and the fear that it might have to regret similar incidents involving its personnel became a

veritable obsession in the years after the re-establishment of the English positions.³³ To such apprehensions the events at Henley House soon offered a partial justification.³⁴ They established that there was complicity between the French and the Indians, and the Company came to fear more and more the collusion of these two groups in league against their trading forts. Nothing less than a rigorous demarcation between the employees of the posts and the native peoples seemed to it capable of forestalling the effects of the kind of attachment which the Indians felt for the Canadians.³⁵

Guided by these various motives, the Company constantly reiterated the formal injunction to refuse the natives access to the forts, and above all to forbid them to take up residence there. The prohibitions were particularly rigorous in the case of Indian women.³⁶ Even in an epoch when theoretical rules had in actuality to give place to a considerable degree of tolerance, they were still proclaimed with a strictness that was directed equally toward the women whom the employees had made their regular companions.³⁷ Severe penalties—imprisonment and the reduction or withholding of pay—were threatened.³⁸ Men who had contracted venereal diseases were punished with the loss of a month's wages.³⁹

The viewpoint from which this policy of isolation and mistrust arose, elevated as it may have been in certain respects, fatally paralysed the mingling of these two peoples, of which one was openly reduced to a condition of inferiority. In fact, as we have seen, the Company did not try to keep its employees in complete ignorance of the native peoples. It admitted the usefulness of a knowledge of Indian languages.⁴⁰ But, unlike Champlain, it had no conception of the necessity for interpenetration between the two groups. The barriers it raised up between them led to limitations in the encouragement it gave to projects of discovery by its more enterprising agents,⁴¹ and even to refusals like that given in 1725 to young Butler when he proposed to go among the native peoples and carry out a task comparable to that of an Etienne Brulé;⁴² all these circumstances contributed to the continued immobility of the Company's operations on the coastal fringe of Hudson Bay. Unlike Champlain, who favored the initiatives of men who wished to mingle with the Indians and achieve among them a program of political and commercial expansion, the Hudson's Bay Company followed a reverse policy which consisted of cultivating the friendship of peoples on whom its commerce de-

pended less by allowing its men to stay among them than by brief and occasional periods of hospitality given to a few of the young Indians in its posts.⁴³ If occasionally it recommended a melding between employees of the posts and native people, this was solely in terms of temporary associations intended to give the Company's personnel the training that would enable them to provide for the feeding of the forts and lessen the somewhat embarrassing dependence on the Indians to which they were reduced. It envisaged neither reconciliation nor assimilation in the real sense.⁴⁴ By such a policy the Company hoped, more effectively than if it authorized free association between the two groups, to avoid any change in the moral standards it sought to impose in its forts—standards that would not have been able to survive any prolonged relationship between whites and natives. When it abandoned the indifference of its early years and decided to develop education among the Indians, it still remained aloof from that program of co-education which Champlain, Talon, and Colbert had successively projected in New France. Was it obeying, in all this, an impulse of ethnic rigidity, a racial prejudice? It is doubtful in fact if such a tendency, which later on was manifested so strongly in the English-speaking world, already inspired the attitude of the London Committee. It may have existed in the form of a confused reaction, linked to the less cordial nature of the Anglo-Saxon company with the French Canadian's easy adaptability.⁴⁵ But certainly, if the prejudice did exist, it was not evident in the Company's instructions. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the humane concerns which in the beginning played so great a part in the programs of the colonizers of New France, were not nearly so dominant in the commercial enterprises of the Hudson's Bay Company, at least until—at the beginning of the nineteenth century—it fell under the influence of philanthropists who drew the Committee's attention to the need to work for the uplift of the native peoples.⁴⁶

Of course, the isolation which the Company at first envisaged could not prevent the establishment of closer relations than it may have wished among its personnel and the Indians. But it is certain that the original program it tried to apply combined with the very temperament of its men to imprint on relations between the two groups a character that was never wholly erased, and which hindered the accomplishment of a union like that between the Canadians and the native peoples. There were other factors that tended in the same direction, and their influence, even if it did not assure

the complete application of orders that were too absolute to be entirely reliable, helped at least to prevent the instructions from becoming entirely a dead letter even in a country where so many circumstances hindered their execution.

THE APPLICATION OF THE OFFICIAL POLICY

Among such factors there was, first of all, the attitude of the heads of the posts. They were far from all conforming with complete docility to their superiors' instructions or scrupulously executing them. We shall have occasion to observe that some among them were not men of irreproachable morals, and that their very situation often enabled them to interpret freely the Committee's orders. Yet they could not remain entirely indifferent to the circulars that were addressed to them, and if they tolerated a great deal, their tolerance did not amount to unreserved acceptance of the misdemeanors of their personnel, and even less to encouragement. Various indications suggest that the Company's instructions were applied with a certain severity, even at the interior points whose distance might seem to dilute their effect. In 1788, for example, we witness a Canadian employee rebelling against the attempt by the chief of Brandon House to forbid him keeping an Indian woman like his compatriots who in the posts of the rival company were free to follow their own inclinations.⁴⁷ And several officers seem to have given proof of energy in the repression of abuses which, in spite of everything, emerged among men who were condemned to a life of isolation that might well unsettle the most robust of temperaments.

There were the instances of Richard Staunton of Moose Factory,⁴⁸ and Joseph Isbister of Prince of Wales Fort and later of Albany, who did not hesitate to chastise with corporal punishment both the vice of drunkenness and relations with Indian women.⁴⁹ There was also James Duffield whose severity imposed on Moose Factory a regime of military discipline; he compelled his men to go to bed at a set hour, forbade them to have lights in their rooms, and forced them to start work early in the morning, as soon as he himself had opened the gates of the fort.⁵⁰ Applying the Committee's orders to the letter, and exaggerating them if need be, he kept the native hunters outside the fort, refused to distribute to them the rations of oatmeal porridge to which the good nature of his predecessors had accustomed them, and systematically proscribed

any converse between his men and the Indians,⁵¹ at the risk of displeasing the latter through his excessive rigor. Others again ingratiated themselves with the Committee by displaying an equal severity to the employees and to the native people,⁵² by meticulously eliminating contacts between their men and the Indians, and by endeavoring to prevent any clandestine traffic in furs.⁵³ In 1761 a young Indian was provisionally allowed to live in York Factory, but the experiment turned out to be less than satisfactory, and the newcomer was quickly expelled so as to avoid the dissemination of his vices among the men of the garrison.⁵⁴ This attitude of the Company's officers, in making the orders of the central Committee respected, gave effect to the policy of segregation which that body had formulated from the beginning.

But the mode of recruitment of the employees for the forts, the short period of their residence⁵⁵ in a country that offered them no material satisfactions, provided its own obstacle to the reconciliation of the races and thus led toward an identical result. Not only were their engagements of short duration, but the Company did not seriously encourage their renewal. For a long period at least, it refused to guarantee them any increase of salary immediately after the expiry of their first contracts: such an increase was granted only after a supplementary stay of two years,⁵⁶ and the Company paralysed the renewal of engagements on the spot by refusing its officers authority to do so on their own initiative.⁵⁷ Many of the employees—especially among the Scots and the Orkneymen—looked forward to returning only in order to gather a nest-egg that would give them better opportunities of employment in their own country.⁵⁸ There were even some men who gladly cut short their term so as to rejoin the families they had left in their native land.⁵⁹ As a consequence, they had no time to develop an attachment to a country where they lived a few years at most. When they came back to it, they still appeared as foreigners in an environment for which their past lives, unlike those of the Canadians, had not prepared them. This is not the place to dwell on the sharp break which their years in Rupert's Land formed in such men's lives. It is enough to remark how the adaptation of their habits, their language, their disposition, to the corresponding elements in the country and its population could only result among them from assiduous effort and from a diligence most of them had neither the will nor even the desire to apply. The knowledge of Indian languages in particular was for them a matter of hard study,⁶⁰ or at

best of unconscious assimilation bred of lasting association with native people,⁶¹ which was precisely what the Company would not allow without restriction, even when it did not formally forbid such a relationship. Their way of life was more fitted to staying in the trading posts than to direct contact with a desolate environment, and the officers frequently had difficulty persuading these inexperienced men to adopt the practice of hunting which they had got into the habit of leaving to the Indians.⁶²

As to the natural tendencies of this unhomogenous personnel of Scots and Orkneymen, they did not find expression like those of the Canadians in a combination of characteristics that bore the stamp of a distinct milieu or of established human intercourse. It is true that we are lacking in real estimations of the situation, except in the case of the Orkneymen, of whom the little we know does nevertheless allow us to measure the distance separating them from the native populations and from the Canadians of the St. Lawrence. Without going so far as to deny all of them the possession of the qualities needed for existence in the North West,⁶³ qualities which some showed more than others, one must admit that the characteristics generally observed among them were the opposite of those of the Indians. Their slow and excessively methodical working habits and their lack of ability to submit to the privations which the Canadians endured or to the superhuman efforts of the voyageur's career, predisposed them neither to that instantaneous adaptation in the most various situations that was the special characteristic of the men from Lower Canada, nor to the difficulties of existence in the country of the West. Clinging obstinately to their traditions, they adapted badly to new practices. Their slowness in learning how to handle canoes, and in adopting hygienic measures with which they were unfamiliar, bear witness to their lack of flexibility.

"The Orkneymen," declared the commandant of York Factory, William H. Cook, in 1812, "are slaves to old habits and old customs,"⁶⁴ and Donald Mackay, who saw in their slowness an effect of indolence, judged them to be "stubborn and lazy," and attributed to them "a natural ill-feeling."⁶⁵ Perhaps his complaints were excessive. But they were justified by the difficulties he experienced in commanding them, and by the lack of eagerness which they devoted to competing with the Canadians who sought to get ahead of them with the Indians and seize their furs. Other witnesses accuse them of lacking the spirit of initiative, of making

demands greater than those of the Canadians, of not being content with the scanty rations of food which it was sometimes necessary to allot them,⁶⁶ of enduring with difficulty the sufferings and efforts involved in the life of the North West,⁶⁷ and finally of indulging in petty squabbles which divided them into mutually hostile groups and prejudiced them against anyone who seemed foreign to them—against the Canadians, as we have seen, and above all against the native peoples.⁶⁸ It seems certain, even if one makes allowance for the personal prejudices which may form part of such judgments, haphazardly noted down by the Scottish or Anglo-Saxon officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, that the employees who came from the Orkney Islands showed themselves, in their excessively cautious outlook and their lack of enthusiasm, inferior to the men recruited from the St. Lawrence. It was a matter of grave miscalculation to oppose them to the Canadians in particularly disputed areas.⁶⁹ George Simpson, whose judgment was rarely at fault, also agreed about their inferiority. He maintained they had less resistance, were less capable of steadfastness in difficult moments; that they had a stubbornness which could only be broken by a commander capable of making himself feared; that they had closed and unreceptive natures and made their decisions secretly.⁷⁰ In brief, he attributed to them a combination of characteristics that hindered them from accepting their new existence easily or forming spontaneous links with the Indians, and which, given the brevity of their terms in the North West, was unlikely to be noticeably modified while they were there.⁷¹

The short contracts which the Company was in the habit of concluding with them were in any case not the only reason for their short periods of residence. The greed which they seem to have brought to the search for gain and to economizing on their wages, as well as their attachment to traditional ways and to their native land,⁷² which they had left in the hope of returning provided with the means they could not acquire at home, also made them disinclined to prolong their terms in Rupert's Land.⁷³ William Auld, who perceived a great affinity between the nature of the Orkneymen and that of the Scots, wrote that both of them "identified themselves" with their purses.⁷⁴ Here was a token of outlooks too fundamentally different from those of the native people for confidence to be possible between the two groups in the same way as it was between the Canadian and the primitive man. Because of his wish to economize, the Orkneyman or the Scot was

repelled by the uncertainties of native existence, its habitual waste and the day-to-day life that implied, as well as the carelessness about the morrow and the absolute lack of foresight that were among the most striking manifestations of the Indian character.

Of course, the Orkneymen had their virtues, and the criticisms of them were generally modified by expressions like "efficient" and "beneficial,"⁷⁵ which bore witness to the services they rendered to the Hudson's Bay Company. They conscientiously carried out the tasks that were confided to them.⁷⁶ Their slowness was accompanied by a moderation—if not a natural goodwill—in their behavior toward the Indians that was far from the violence so often observed on the part of the Canadians.⁷⁷ But their natures made it impossible for them to attain a relationship with primitive people comparable to that which the Canadians owed to their affinities and their way of life.⁷⁸ The level of feeling on which the relations of Canadians and Indians seemed to develop was lowered among the Orkneymen to a more neutral level of relations that involved neither excesses nor a true coming together.

Though they aroused fewer comments on the part of officers in the posts, the same characteristics were to be found among the Scots and even among the more distinctive group of Highlanders. Here and there allusions to the strongly mercenary character of the Orkneymen and Scots emerge,⁷⁹ but a prouder nature and an even more pronounced clannishness were generally attributed to the latter.⁸⁰ As obstinate in their prejudices as the Orkneymen, free of the volatile disposition of the Canadians and consequently of their fecklessness, harder to satisfy⁸¹ and often rebellious where privations were likely, they nevertheless showed themselves better adapted than the Orkney employees to the demands of service in Rupert's Land.⁸² But they shared with them a closed, inflexible temperament, which made it more difficult to command them than the Canadians⁸³ and reduced the possibility of their adapting completely to a new setting. As to the recruits which the Company gathered in the towns of England, who for many years formed the personnel of its coastal posts, they were even less stable than the Orkneymen. Nothing had prepared them to mingle in a society with which association was in any case officially forbidden, and there were not bonds to attach them to a country into which they had been abruptly transplanted. It was this lack of roots in the geographic and human environment that contrasted them to the Canadians, not only in the first years of their terms in

Rupert's Land, but even at a later time when, if they had not been doomed by their character and their upbringing to resist it, they might have at least begun to achieve the assimilation that still eluded them. Colin Robertson made this observation at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when he contrasted the Orkney men's desire to economize, so as to return without delay to their own country, with the deep attachment which the Canadians felt toward a land they had adopted,⁸⁴ and when he noted at random the spiteful attitude of Company officers toward the native people, symptomatic of a state of mind far from that of the Canadians.⁸⁵

From these conditions there emerged a clearly established separation between white and natives. Neither of these groups intervened in the other's wars.⁸⁶ At the most, the Indians sometimes mounted around the posts on the coastline a theoretical guard intended to give warning of the possible arrival of the French.⁸⁷ But it is doubtful if they would have been glad to take part, had the occasion arisen, in any expedition directed against the latter. The kind of welcome they met in the British posts contrasted too clearly with the ease the Canadians had shown to them in the days before the diffusion of alcohol made them more prudent.

In the commercial transactions that took place in the posts on Hudson Bay, a regime of truly military discipline prevailed, which forbade the Indians the right to enter freely,⁸⁸ and forestalled the possibility of surprise attacks by placing guards at the fort's most vulnerable points.⁸⁹ Summing up the observations he had been able to make in the course of his journeys from York Factory to Winnipeg, Colin Robertson condemned the general neglect shown by the officers toward their primitive guests. Of the welcome reserved for them at the time of trading operations he left a picture which is perhaps somewhat exaggerated in tone. But there is reason to accept its portrayal of the lack of cordiality that separated the two parties, resulting from the temperaments of the officers as much as from the orders issued by the Committee. "The poor creatures that arrive here have not even a shelter from the inclemencies of the weather, you see them standing and laying under the porch of the trading room, shivering with cold."⁹⁰

Yet we cannot conclude from this that the officers were lacking in humanitarian sentiments. In the posts they were generous in their care of sick or wounded Indians, they did not hesitate to clothe friendless young children, and to distribute to abandoned

old or infirm people the scanty rations they needed.⁹¹ For their part, the Indians often came to the assistance of employees who might be wounded or exhausted at a distance from their forts.⁹² But one should not see in these actions, which do honor to the Company's representatives, the expression of an instinctive drawing together, analogous to that of which the Canadians give us an example. This fulfilment of the obligations which the civilized man felt toward a less evolved section of humanity could not replace the confidence that sprang from a community of life and character. The policy of segregation dominated the relations between the two races, and it was natural that the Indians should have expressed their bitterness at an attitude so remote from that of the Canadians, whose cordial generosity they had been able to appreciate during the latter's period on Hudson Bay.⁹³ The distribution of presents did not sufficiently compensate for the effects of this lack of spontaneity,⁹² nor did it win the English company an influence comparable to that which, as its own officers acknowledged, the Canadians wielded over the native peoples.⁹⁵ If the stubborn rigidity of the Committee's instructions could not hinder the practice of mixed unions in a milieu where they were a law of nature, it prevented the real assimilation of those who did come together, and it deprived the Anglo-Saxons of that strong base which their personal influence or their intuition of the primitive character gave the men from Lower Canada. Consequently, if a dispute arose, or if the officers sometimes allowed themselves to commit brutalities or blunders against the native people,⁹⁶ there was nothing that might soften the repercussions.⁹⁷ Moreover, thanks to this lack of confidence, the Canadians were able to lead the Indians into committing criminal acts against the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel.⁹⁸

Fortunately, the positive aspect of the Company's instructions, which continually urged the avoidance of all acts of violence against the native peoples, was scrupulously applied by its representatives.⁹⁹ Assaults or other acts of violence were rare in the British posts, and in this way the danger that resulted from the lack of intimacy between their personnel and the Indians was averted or notably diminished. It was the only real compensation for the excessive formality of the relations established between the two races. The only exceptional situations arose in the cases of a few heads of posts, who violated their instructions by giving their men a freedom of relations like that allowed by the Canadian

bourgeois. This was the reason for the great popularity of James Isham among the Indians. Of him Andrew Graham was able to write that the natives never ceased to lavish their affection on him.¹⁰⁰ But the indulgence of a few officers, which indeed introduced a relaxing influence into their posts that conformed little to the Company's ideals—was not enough to create the affinities of temperament necessary for the thorough fusion of these peoples who, after more than a century, remained alien to each other, in spite of a few instances of sincere attachment. The attitude of chief Matonabbee, who was doubtless won over by Samuel Hearne's personal initiative, and who remained faithful unto death to the British cause, is an example which shows the depth of feeling that might be hidden under the Indian's impassive exterior.¹⁰¹

THE COMING TOGETHER OF THE RACES

As we have seen, the Company's policy did not succeed entirely in raising between the races the barrier of segregation which seemed necessary to the objects, whether moral or mercenary, that it was pursuing. Though the general nature of relations between white men and primitive people was not radically changed, the mixed unions that had been so rigorously forbidden were soon being put into practice. On reading the instructions of the Hudson's Bay Company, one asks oneself if the Committee that framed them itself believed they could be carried out literally in a country so far away and offering such direct exposure to contact with native life. The official rigor of the regulations was bound to slacken in real-life situations. It might contribute to the relative isolation of the groups from each other, and it might maintain, by its own authority as well as by the officers' actions, a higher moral level than many of the Canadian posts sustained, but it could not prevent "miscegenation," and a nucleus of interbreeding was not slow to appear around the forts on Hudson Bay, even before it gained importance on the routes of penetration into the interior. But instead of being practised openly from the earliest years, as in the Canadian forts, the unions in the British establishments appear to have been usually the effect of unspoken tolerance, or of culpable indulgence, or the result of a clandestine commerce carried on without the knowledge of the officers.

During the period of immobility on the coastline, these officers themselves understood the impossibility of carrying out to the let-

ter a policy of absolute separation. In 1715 Captain James Knight expressed his intention of adopting a native policy whose pacificatory aims could not be carried out without direct relations with the Indians. At the same time as he wrote to the Company that the operation of his posts needed men well acquainted with the native population, a quality they could have acquired only by association with them, he was confiding young William Stewart to the care of the Indians, with the idea that his influence might convert them to peace.¹⁰² At the same time, the conditions of life in the posts on Hudson Bay quickly imposed unavoidable contacts, in spite of all the precautions that were observed at times when the Indians crowded into the "plantations." At first, in the preliminary years of occupation, it was necessary for the personnel, like the French whom Champlain had to send away from Quebec in 1629, to share at times the life of the native people. In 1686, when Moose Factory had fallen into the hands of the Canadians, twenty-two men were forced to live by fishing and hunting among the Indians, and some of them, who had no experience of such an existence, paid for it with their lives.¹⁰³

Later, when the forts had been taken back and stability re-established, occasions for contact arose out of the very rhythm of daily activity in the forts, whose monotony was relieved by a host of external tasks. These were not, indeed, comparable with the activity that went on outside the Canadian posts, for the country—desolate and broken—was ill adapted to that constant trafficking which in any case the Hudson's Bay personnel, unaccustomed to the natural environment of the North West, would not have been able to carry out.¹⁰⁴ Hence resulted a greater immobility than existed in the interior posts: a situation in which men spent long hours gathered around the fires during those interminable winter nights when the rigorous temperature paralysed every kind of activity.¹⁰⁵ At Prince of Wales Fort, during the cold season, work ended at two o'clock in the afternoon,¹⁰⁶ the morning having been devoted to carrying out the regular tasks, such as clearing snow in the fort's inner courtyard, keeping the palisades in repair, preparing meals—occupations which, during the summer, were spread out into the evening and carried on at the same time as gardening, fur-trading, and the preparation of consignments of furs destined for the homeland.¹⁰⁷

There was no lack of external activities. Stocks of wood for heating had to be collected, and, in a coastal region with no

forests, this meant in summer, and often also in winter, considerable trips on the part of the men.¹⁰⁸ Often, when a post ran short of provisions, the men were ordered to bring in the game that was needed—partridge in autumn and winter,¹⁰⁹ wild geese in autumn and spring,¹¹⁰ and of course the big game whose migrations near the coastline were eagerly awaited.¹¹¹ To these tasks must be added the setting of traps for marten¹¹² in winter, and, during the good season, the fishing that went on at the mouths of the waterways.¹¹³ All these occupations gave plenty of occasion for contact with native people. Woodcutting especially, when it was carried out several days' journey from the forts, forced the men into veritable isolation on the trails they cut through the woods,¹¹⁴ and left them free to associate with the Indians¹¹⁵ to such an extent that the Committee soon recommended restricting the practice.

Thus, by the simple play of the most normal activities, there emerged a series of encounters which official regulations had no means of hindering. Around the posts, when trading operations began,¹¹⁶ or when the Indians, impelled by poverty and privation, came to seek from the officers some relief in their sufferings,¹¹⁷ the influx of population would be such that the watchfulness of the posts' officers could never be sufficient to detect every infraction of the rules laid down against secret trafficking in furs or against relations with Indian women.¹¹⁸

In any case, the dependence of the Hudson's Bay Company's men on the natives was too close for it to be possible to apply the Committee's instructions literally. This dependence was constantly evident, proceeding from the men's lack of experience in both the difficulties of northern life and in the requirements of trading. Encouragements and favors had constantly to be given to the Indians in order to increase the posts' clientele and its contributions of furs;¹¹⁹ an excessively rigid attitude would have turned them away from their allegiance to the British, as happened in the case of officers who followed their instructions too slavishly. The ignorance of native languages which was the great failing among the Company's employees forced the officers to introduce among their men Indians of both sexes to act as interpreters, and in these circumstances the clause forbidding natives to live in the forts seemed difficult to apply.¹²⁰ The first governors of York Factory, James Knight and Henry Kelsey, not only welcomed native women who would enable them to communicate with their fellows, but actually commissioned Indians to visit Prince of Wales

Fort so that they [the Company's officers] could familiarize themselves with the languages of the northern peoples and thus facilitate the establishment of relations with new tribes.¹²¹

The same dependence appeared in the domain of hunting. Sometimes the Company's men and the Indians hunted together, with the Committee's approval;¹²² sometimes the officers engaged native hunters to furnish posts with the game needed for their sustenance. This was the origin of the class known as "Home Guard Indians," whose families collected around the forts they supplied with food. Experienced enough in hunting game of every kind, the Canadians did not need to have recourse in the same degree to Indians for services which their own engaged men and above all the freemen provided, and they never had the need to maintain a group like the "Home Guards" who, because of their changed conditions of life, quickly became a people without roots. But on the sterile shores of Hudson Bay, the means of survival were so limited, and the rigorous cold was so painful to the personnel of the forts that, in the first years at least, life would have been impossible without the help of the native people.¹²³ The practice thus came into existence of relying on their experience in killing the game that was needed,¹²⁴ and it continued even after the men themselves had become accustomed to the task. Whole families might be engaged in such activity.¹²⁵ In October, once the hunting of the geese had ended, the Home Guard were in the habit of leaving the immediate localities of the forts, supplied with trade goods, to hunt for marten in the hinterland. In May they would return to the posts, once again kill the wild geese needed by the garrisons, pay with the produce of their winter hunting for the articles that had been furnished to them, and trade the surplus for their personal profit.¹²⁶ But they also carried out other tasks, such as transporting merchandise and mail from post to post,¹²⁷ and so they found themselves dedicated, by the very nature of their occupations, to an almost permanent contact with the white race, which led quickly to the disintegration of their original cultures. The nearness of the forts assured them, in times of scarcity, a ready means of making up for the lack of food by the distributions of peas or porridge made by the Company's officers. Giving in to his natural indolence, the Indian gradually abandoned his normal activities, apart from the seasons when the birds were in migration, and soon showed himself incapable of procuring his own nourishment during the winter.¹²⁸ While alcohol ravaged their

constitutions, the "Home Guards" cleverly exploited the pedlars' offensive in order to increase their claims,¹²⁹ and to reduce even further their routines of work, while they rebelled against the demands of the officers who were annoyed by their attitude.¹³⁰ Finally, when the men expired, their families, unaccustomed to effort, fell to the charge of the post, from which more than ever, in a total reversal of roles, they expected the subsistence they had at first accepted the duty of providing for it.¹³¹

It is true that the commandant of the post could always make use of them to carry out the tasks which it was the custom to assign to native people. For if the Canadians, despite the diversity of their skills, were unable to do without the contribution of Indian women to the activities of their posts, this was even more the case with the Hudson's Bay Company's employees.

The earliest journals of York Factory, dating from 1715, show us the natives going with the men into the forest to prepare the frames for snowshoes.¹³² The journal of Prince of Wales Fort, immediately after the post's foundation, described "Indian women" occupied in preparing the fine cords with which snowshoes were laced,¹³³ a work often repaid by distribution of alcohol.¹³⁴ Later on, the tasks they were asked to perform became more and more numerous: making sails adapted for use on the York boats,¹³⁵ transporting willow shoots and young fir branches which served as forage for the animals,¹³⁶ haymaking in the clearings around the forts.¹³⁷ If the need arose, the women were even expected to hunt for game or to set traps for marten,¹³⁸ and they became so useful that the custom spread of maintaining in each post, as well as the widows and orphans (who no longer left the neighborhood of the fort and were employed haphazardly on minor services), a few families of Home Guards to whom were relegated the tasks in which natives were especially skilled.¹³⁹ The officers even intervened with the Company's directors, asking them to substitute a system of regular remuneration for the habit of paying with rations of food for the duties carried out by these families who had become an integral part of the personnel at their posts. Such a request was tantamount to asking for the recognition of a practice that was directly opposed to the earlier instructions of the Committee and against the spirit of its regulations.¹⁴⁰

This association of native women with the life of the posts rendered ineffective the rule which the Committee had formulated in the beginning against mixed unions. It was logical, on the other

hand, that the Company should rigorously forbid European women any access to its posts. If at first it had given signs of tolerating their presence,¹⁴¹ it quickly assumed a stricter attitude. Captains of ships had to inspect their craft before weighing anchor in the port of Gravesend, and to expel any women who prior to departure had been allowed on board.¹⁴² At the most, a few scattered employees gained authorization to bend the official rules.¹⁴³ A notable exception was a Scottish woman who succeeded in reaching James Bay in 1805, whence she proceeded in 1807, dressed as a man, to Red River; in 1808 she put into the world the first white child who saw the day in the plains of the West, but shortly afterward she was sent back to her country.¹⁴⁴

It would have been illusory at this period to hope to restrain men whose morality was not suited to a life of reclusion in the forts on Hudson Bay. In spite of defects that might have appeared offensive to Europeans, the Indian woman seemed seductive to them,¹⁴⁵ and the commandant of Prince of Wales Fort declared that he personally was incapable of suppressing a commerce that could only be stopped by a rigorous discipline, reinforced by high palisades designed to prevent nocturnal excursions.¹⁴⁶ Besides, in 1682, at the period when the Bay was first occupied, the Committee's instructions recognized the existence of a practice that breached the whole edifice of morality it hoped to erect in its forts.¹⁴⁷ It was soon evident that the men did not gladly put up with the excessive severity which the Company attempted to impose on them.¹⁴⁸ They also accepted grudgingly the rules relating to sobriety: the Committee had to reiterate continually the need to combat an evil which the solitude of the posts made inevitable,¹⁴⁹ and whose perils were revealed by the tragic fire at Moose Factory in 1735.¹⁵⁰

On Hudson Bay the native peoples showed as much looseness of morals as in Rupert's Land.¹⁵¹ They regarded it an honor to increase their families with children of mixed blood; in such circumstances the husband even felt an enhanced affection for his wife.¹⁵² This situation inevitably contributed to a certain slackness underlying the appearance of good behavior at the posts on the shoreline, so that the zeal of the officer in charge was liable to fall away. Thus, reading the reports of even the strictest officers, one cannot doubt that, for a certain numbers of years, the governors showed a good deal of indulgence toward their personnel. This was the case during the period of instability preceding the Treaty of

Utrecht, and the re-establishment of English domination did not bring about an immediate redressment of the situation. It was only with the arrival toward the middle of the eighteenth century of officers determined to apply the Committee's orders strictly that the official regulations appear in practice to have been followed to any effect. Until then, there is no doubt the Indian women were often admitted into the Hudson Bay factories and that often the example was set by the commandants themselves. A good deal of publicity was given, on the occasion of the capitulation of Fort Albany, to the hardly edifying conduct of Governor Sergeant in the presence of the Chevalier de Troyes' men.¹⁵³ In that epoch, to judge from the complaints of the officers who later strove to raise the garrisons' moral levels, and also from the Committee's admonishments, relations were carried on openly between the Company's men and Indian women, and the degree of licence was at least as great as in the Canadian posts.¹⁵⁴ At Moose Factory, at Prince of Wales Fort, at Fort Albany, the officers' correspondence denounced to the Company's directors the corruption of their personnel, the excessive familiarity that, in a generally disorderly atmosphere, had been established between their men and the native women.¹⁵⁵ When they attempted to put an end to such abandonment, they came up against the ill will of their own men as well as the hostility of the Indians, who had no desire to submit to the excessively strict regime that corresponded with the Committee's ideal. Against their rebellious personnel, the officers had to use corporal punishment, fines or, in the last resort, dismissal. Such was the case at Prince of Wales Fort, where Joseph Isbister ran into great difficulties in redressing a situation which the indulgence of James Isham had allowed to degenerate into one of excessive freedom.¹⁵⁶

It was at this time that discipline in the posts took on the military appearance which we have noted. Subject to the watchful supervision of their chiefs, forced to work long hours, the men now had only rare opportunities to break the rules that had too often been neglected.

Yet at the same time a new factor for disorder was at work to undo the effects of the reformation that was under way; this was the spread among the Indians of alcoholic drinks. In the posts themselves a great vigilance was imposed to check the progress of a vice to which the men were all too inclined,¹⁵⁷ and here again recourse to corporal punishment was sometimes needed. The

Company's directors were personally opposed to the excessive distribution of alcohol among the Indians; the profits it brought did not seem to them sufficient compensation for the disastrous effects. For a long time it remained largely a clandestine traffic between the employees—or the crews of the ships that periodically visited Hudson Bay¹⁵⁸—and the Indians.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, it was necessary for the officers to consider the needs of trade and the desirability of turning against the Canadians the very arms they used against the Company. Sometimes, of their own accord, they would ignore the underground trade in alcohol, knowing all too well its effectiveness among the Indians.¹⁶⁰ It was in fact the only weapon that could prevail over the superstitious terrors which the pedlars knew how to inspire in the Indians to deter them from trading with the posts on the Bay,¹⁶¹ and in spite of the Committee's efforts to prevent the spread of the practice, the officers were obliged to give in to the Indians' wishes and turn as widely as their enemies to the help of the "bewitching liquor."¹⁶² Unfortunately, the use of it spread everywhere among the Home Guard Indians, who quickly became accustomed to expecting alcohol in payment for any work they did: the women demanded this form of remuneration as eagerly as the men.¹⁶³ Thus the familiar scenes were re-enacted around the Hudson Bay factories, accompanied by a licence that encouraged prostitution. This took place especially at trading times and when the Hudson's Bay Company's ships paid their annual visits:¹⁶⁴ the crews often evaded the vigilance of their officers¹⁶⁵ and secretly provided alcohol to the Indians. The chiefs of the posts did in fact redouble their precautions and punished severely any infractions of the regulations that came to their notice, but they could not prevent all communication between their men and the native people, nor could they halt the abuses that resulted from the moral degradation of these primitive people.¹⁶⁷ Following the example of the peoples of the interior, the Indians of the shoreline did not hesitate to give their women to Europeans for a ration of alcohol.¹⁶⁸ The latter, in their turn, exploited the abandonment of Indian women in a state of intoxication.¹⁶⁹ Did these excesses lead to violences comparable to those committed by the Canadians during their occupation of Port Nelson? Examples of such violence are extremely rare, but not entirely lacking,¹⁷⁰ and those that took place show that even the most severe of officers was never able to check completely the disorders around the trad-

ing forts, and that the personnel of the garrisons were by no means innocent of relations with Indian women.

If the rigorous discipline that appears to have been firmly established in the forts, after a period of excessive tolerance, succeeded in reducing the abuses of earlier years, the officers' zeal was unable to eliminate the excesses that took place outside the posts; whatever they might do, promiscuity between the two races flourished there, as witnessed by the spread of venereal diseases, among the Europeans as well as among the native people, and especially among the Indian women who frequented the Company's establishments. Threats of punishment¹⁷¹ were not enough to repress the evil, since their effect was partly neutralized by the connivance of the doctors attached to the various posts. Numerous cases occurred not only in the early years, but even after discipline had been reinforced, and their extreme gravity alarmed the Company's directors.¹⁷² In 1763 they again urged their officers to keep watch so that contagion should not spread among the Home Guard Indians, whose numbers were already seriously eroded by epidemic sicknesses and the ravages of alcoholism.¹⁷³

But it is not necessary, any more than in the case of the Canadian posts, to regard such excesses as typical of the relations established on Hudson Bay between whites and natives. Trapped between the contradictory demands of the regulations they were instructed to apply and the conditions of life to which they must necessarily make concessions, the officers could not avoid adopting a system of compromise that sustained the directors' official orders and made an external show of the behavior they prescribed, but at the same time accepted a situation which it was better to tolerate in moderation than to resist systematically all the laws of good sense. Consequently, in the posts on the shoreline, regular relations were established between whites and Indian women, in the form of unions limited to the period of the man's term of service. Even the officers who made the greatest show of severity were no exceptions to this rule. They acted rigorously against the graver misdemeanors,¹⁷⁴ and, by requiring that their men keep up religious observances and submit to a regime of strict punctuality in their work, they sought to assure within their establishments the exemplary behavior which the Committee urged. But they had no thought of proscribing the very unions which they themselves practised. The most conscientious of them, so as not to der-

ogate the rules of which they were the custodians, and not to give an example that could have led to numerous infractions, would forbid their own native companions to live in the forts they commanded.

Such was the case, apparently, of Joseph Isbister, whose strictness within his establishment was tempered outside its palisades, for his personal convenience, by a considerable tolerance.¹⁷⁵ Others, less faithful to their instructions, openly allowed their women the benefits of living within the posts.¹⁷⁶ Andrew Graham recognized openly the universalization of this practice that ran counter to the Company's prohibitions.¹⁷⁷ Without officially granting any privileges, the governors also allowed great freedom of action to the lower officers.¹⁷⁸ To the ordinary employees they permitted only relations outside the forts.¹⁷⁹ But even this rule could not be fully maintained: the employees' women were too often employed on material tasks necessary to the life of the post for it to be possible to keep them entirely outside the establishments on the shoreline, and the chief factor of York declared personally to the Committee that in such circumstances he was unable to carry out his orders strictly.¹⁸⁰

Thus, in the British factories, mixed unions became a regular practice which, though not officially recognized, was in fact tolerated.¹⁸¹ An example had been given already in 1714 by the apprentice Richard Norton who, shortly after his arrival, married a Cree woman.¹⁸² In subsequent years the journals often show the native companions of officers of all ranks, or their parents-in-law, asking for the whites' assistance in their old age, which they received generously in the form of temporary employment or rations of food.¹⁸³ In 1802 the directors complained that the superior officers, almost all of whom had wives and children, did not charge against themselves the merchandise which they appropriated from the factories' stocks to clothe their families.¹⁸⁴ Several years later, when the settlement of Assiniboia was about to be established on the banks of the Red River, the commandant of York Factory, William H. Cook, who himself kept several Indian women,¹⁸⁵ remarked that mixed unions continued to be a general practice among the Company's representatives.¹⁸⁶

OBSTACLES TO THE ASSIMILATION OF THE RACES

But, even if the situation in the posts on the Bay appeared to re-

semble that of the Canadian forts, there remained, in the conception many of the officers held of their relations with the native peoples, a difference that prevents one from equating entirely the Canadians' position with that of the Anglo-Saxons. It is evident, for example, that for William H. Cook the unions of the chiefs of posts with Indians was no more than a makeshift arrangement which circumstances necessitated, and not, as among the Canadians, a practical consequence of their virtual assimilation with the tribes of the West and even, for many of them, a desirable way of living which they accepted without effort. Thus the commandant of York Factory welcomed with favor the idea of founding at Red River a colony that would enable the officers to contract marriages with women of their own race; in this way they would no longer need to have recourse to Indian women, and he expressed the view that mixed marriages should henceforward be forbidden, except with the halfbreed daughters of officers.¹⁸⁷ Superintendent William Auld shared the same prejudice against unions with Indian women. He refrained from recognizing as his wife the native woman he kept at Fort Churchill and whom he described merely as the "mother of my children."¹⁸⁸ Like many others, he also was pleased with the creation of the colony which would henceforward provide a home for the halfbreed families of the Company's personnel.¹⁸⁹ William H. Cook's attitude suggests a feeling of pride that was repelled by the thought of such misalliances; it was the resentment of the civilized man who is convinced of his own superiority and in spite of it is constrained to accept a way of living close to that of the native peoples. Such a mentality was obviously remote from that we have observed among the personnel who came from Lower Canada. It emphasizes the lack of any true incorporation between the two groups whom circumstances had obliged to come together, yet who remained, in spite of the forced intimacy of their links, completely unlike and lacking in mutual affinities.

The viewpoint which many officers shared with the chief of York Factory created a somewhat false situation between the two races. When the governors did not hesitate to live with one or more Indian women, while they kept the men rigorously outside the posts, they provoked among the latter a legitimate resentment, which was not mitigated by the officers' strict commercial honesty.¹⁹⁰ The Indians were not willing to accept the fact that, while making use of the women of the tribe, the chief of the post refused the menfolk free access to his establishment and did not allow

them to share the material advantages it might offer them. They therefore awaited the opportunity to take revenge for this remoteness of the officials, which ran counter to the intimacy of their relations with the Indian women. It contradicted the conceptions held in their own society and provoked their extreme sensitivity to such an extent that they adopted an attitude that was not only insolent but verged on the criminal. The circumstances surrounding the first destruction of Henley House make it clear that, even if Canadian provocations (which were particularly evident in the second attack on the post) had their share of responsibility, the resentment created among the Indians by the equivocal situation in which the private life of the chief within his post gave the lie to the rigidity of his public attitude, should not be ignored.¹⁹¹ The massacre of the little garrison at Henley House, though it did not proceed from quite the same causes, was nevertheless strikingly reminiscent of the massacre of the French at Fort Phelipeaux, whose memory haunted the Company's London Committee and was used to justify its regulations. The discontent among the Indians was all the greater because Joseph Isbister had set out to strengthen the wavering discipline of Fort Albany after many years of indulgence that had made the Indians accustomed to complete freedom of activity.¹⁹² This sharp break with the methods of his predecessors earned the governor of Albany a lively unpopularity, and when the officer he appointed to operate Henley House dared refuse to the Indians, whose wives or daughters were publicly admitted into the fort, freedom of access to it and free distribution of the presents and provisions they demanded, the inevitable tragedy occurred.¹⁹³ As we have seen, Isbister contributed through his own private life to the creation of an equivocal situation harmful to frank and open relations between whites and natives. All the same, the incident at Henley House must be regarded as an exceptional one. The Indians seem to have become reconciled to the kind of compromise that was developed by the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, and relations settled down to a peaceful and neutral level, accompanied neither by true intimacy nor by extreme hostility.

Thus, even though the severity of the Company's instructions suffered inevitable dilutions, they were not entirely devoid of practical effect, since they do in fact appear to have restricted freedom of behavior. The large turnover of personnel at the posts, as well as the attitude many of the officers and even some of the men

developed in their relations with the native peoples, helped to frustrate the free play of influences in a milieu where they might otherwise have led more than one employee toward the primitive life. Seldom in fact do the posts' journals mention cases of their men giving in to an acceptance of the native way of existence.¹⁹⁴ At Moose Factory, indeed, we find mention of an employee who had formed an alliance with an Indian family and surrendered to his desire to share their freely wandering life. But the measures immediately taken by J. Duffield made it impossible for him to complete a process that was so much opposed to the Company's policies.¹⁹⁵ In spite of the disorders whose existence is sometimes revealed to us by the documents of the trading posts, it was not in vain that the Committee decreed the measures intended to raise a barrier between the civilized and the primitive man that would prevent all true assimilation.

THE SITUATION IN THE INTERIOR OF RUPERT'S LAND

The relations that were created in the posts on the shores of Hudson Bay inevitably underwent a certain change in the interior of Rupert's Land, for it was impossible there to consider in the same way the effect of contact with native peoples and with their ways of life. As the nucleus of interbreeding that had first become established on the shoreline spread into the interior, the gap between Indians and white men was narrowed, owing to the effects of a situation that imposed on the employees a greater activity outside the forts and involved them more closely in the life of the native peoples; owing to the dilution of the strictness of official regulations in proportion to distance from the shoreline; and finally owing to the greater familiarity that in the isolation of these primitive regions drew the chiefs and their men more closely together and prevented the excessively severe application of discipline. This is not to say that the assimilation which failed to materialize on the coastline was here achieved to any great extent between the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel and the Indians. The factors needed for a real coalescence were equally lacking in these circumstances. The men were no more inclined to prolong their terms in the interior posts than they had been in those on Hudson Bay. In 1810 Colin Robertson described the mercenary attitude of a personnel which, desirous only of making the funds they had

hoped for, would abandon the Company's service to return to their native lands as soon as they thought themselves sufficiently enriched,¹⁹⁶ and he urged the Committee to compensate for this inferiority by turning more widely to recruits from Lower Canada. At the same time, Superintendent William Auld made a similar estimate of the situation.¹⁹⁷ The men did not let themselves be troubled by the requirement to pay for their return voyage that was imposed [on those who left before their term of engagement was over]¹⁹⁸ They abandoned Rupert's Land all the more readily since they had put down no roots there. If, like the men of Lower Canada, they had been animated by a true attachment toward the natural wilderness, or if they had been propelled by the same spirit of adventure, they would have more gladly renounced the traditions that called them back to their country; they would have created for themselves a new mentality and have shed their preoccupation with economy. Being what they were, they could not establish solid links with a milieu in which their failure to adapt, already visible on the coast, became even more strongly evident.

The distance which, during the years of immobility, had clearly separated them from the Canadians persisted in the interior of Rupert's Land, and for all practical purposes destroyed any possibility of a true identification of the newcomers with the native society. It was especially in their relations with the latter that the spontaneity of the Canadians showed up their failings. Not only did their psychology prevent them from having that instinctive knowledge which the recruits from Lower Canada possessed of native ways, but they never mastered the techniques of primitive living so far as to do without the services of such recruits and behave in their new environment with the same ease as the Canadians.¹⁹⁹ Hence arose an awkwardness and a timidity, and sometimes an excessive stiffness of manner,²⁰⁰ which they sought to mitigate by their liberalities, so that trade would not be jeopardized and they could avoid alienating the people they had to humor even at the risk of looking small in their eyes. If the Canadian provoked the native's resentment by his violent actions, the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel, on the contrary, even hesitated to avenge the insults of an Indian, for they felt too closely dependent on him and too uncertain of his reactions. The chiefs of the posts were obliged to be constantly on the watch because of the Indian's propensity for thieving, while the Canadians had an intuitive awareness that forewarned them and enabled them a-

droitly to safeguard their interests.²⁰¹ An attempt by a drunken Indian to murder a Hudson's Bay Company employee would provoke neither reprisals nor reprimands, for the Company's officers feared to lose a hunter who was essential to the survival of the post.²⁰² Sometimes, without flinching, the Company's men had to accept offensive practices on the part of the Indians which they could not avoid sharing.²⁰³

It is true that the chiefs of the posts did not have the same freedom of action as their Canadian counterparts. The Committee laid down for them a policy of peace at any price. If, on occasion, an officer gave in to an impulse of violence that involved the life of an Indian, he would anticipate the penalties that could not fail to be inflicted on him by deserting the Company's service.²⁰⁴ Such excesses, in fact, rarely occurred, and in the interior, as well as on the coast, the relations between Anglo-Saxons and Indians, rarely disturbed by murders or surprise attacks,²⁰⁵ sustained that neutral character which eliminated either deep attachments or violent resentments.²⁰⁶

But it goes without saying that the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel, once involved in the exigencies of material life in the North West, were bound to feel the effects of more immediate contact with primitive peoples and with the conditions of living inherent in their environment. For a long time the Company's men acted as mere novices in Rupert's Land. None of them ever enjoyed, as the Canadians did, the benefit of habits contracted in childhood. Nevertheless, the very force of circumstances obliged them to accommodate to the habits and associations of a milieu from which they did not find it possible to withdraw as they could on the coast. It was no longer a question of merely awaiting the arrival of the Indians and exchanging European goods for their furs; instead it became important that the personnel, if it did not wish to abandon the field to the Canadians, should learn from their methods and spread out among the native people.

The Hudson's Bay Company's men had gradually to resign themselves to the wanderings imposed on the petty trafficker in furs;²⁰⁷ this situation was not lacking in difficulties, and in 1805 there were whole posts that did not dispose of a single individual capable of undertaking such expeditions.²⁰⁸ Gradually also, they accustomed themselves to transporting the meat for which they went in search among the Indians.²⁰⁹ Then it became necessary for them to learn the practices of the buffalo hunt, so that if necessary

they could make up for the failures of the Indians who were expected to provision the forts.²¹⁰ A few of them even went of their own accord to stay among the Indians and become familiar with their languages and customs.²¹¹ Finally, when a post was threatened by famine, the garrison would be forced to seek its sustenance in the prairie and to conform completely, as the Canadians did, to the native nomad life.²¹² Of course, such occupations were only temporary among the Company's employees, limited to the few years of their contracts of engagement, and too brief to lead to their absorption into the environment in which they moved. For all that, the experience could not fail to strengthen their contact with the land and its people; this was all the more so since the factors that on the coast reminded them of their homeland no longer acted so strongly once they had reached the interior.

Here the instructions from the directors in London were no more than distant orders whose theoretical rigor could not survive the demands of a new environment. They were supposed to apply to the establishments in the interior as much as to those on the coast, and they showed, with regard to Rupert's Land as well, just as great a preoccupation with hindering promiscuous intercourse between the Company's men and Indian women and with imposing on everyone the strict observance of religious duties.²¹³ Of course, the chiefs of the posts could not entirely neglect their implementation, and here and there we see them becoming concerned over excessive licentiousness.²¹⁴ But we also see them laying down a line of conduct for men newly arrived in the territories of the interior in more moderate terms than the directors would have done.²¹⁵ They clearly understood the need for evasion. They did not even think of opposing the unions which, even in the coastal factories, had ended by becoming a general practice, to whose law the exceptional men who pioneered the exploration of the interior were the first to submit. Such had been the case with Henry Kelsey, to whom, when he returned, the governor of York Factory refused the right to bring his native wife into the fort, where he was attempting to apply his superiors' instructions.²¹⁶ Such, later on, was also the case with Anthony Henday,²¹⁷ and Joseph Smith,²¹⁸ who like the Canadians would go nowhere without their squaws; the now incumbent governor of York did not reprove them for their conduct.²¹⁹

When they chose a native companion in the interior of Rupert's

Land, such men were not only obeying a human reaction to loneliness, which still today can lead a civilized man to seek the company of primitive people.²²⁰ The native wife was even more necessary to the Hudson's Bay Company man than she was useful to the French Canadian, for she alone could initiate him into the subtleties of native thinking, on which the success of his trading operations was closely dependent. Anthony Henday could only congratulate himself on the services which his squaw, who was always ready to foil the duplicity or the calculating tricks of her congeners, rendered him in this domain,²²¹ and James Isham openly criticized him for having refused to marry the daughter of a Blackfoot chief and thus having neglected an opportunity to ensure the Company's posts a profitable alliance.²²² Even more useful to the interest of trade was the custom among the Indian chiefs of admitting to their tents the men who ventured into the interior. The presence of white men in their families flattered the chiefs' pride. Besides, it brought them numerous material benefits, for which they expressed their gratitude by doing their best to lead their followers to the English posts, whose profits they increased in this way.²²³ To refuse such hospitality, even though it went against the directors' orders, could—like abstaining from any intercourse with Indian women—have endangered the prosperity of the British forts²²⁴ and widened the gap which so many circumstances conspired to maintain between the two races.

Furthermore, both officers and employees had before their eyes the Canadians' example: the gains which the latter knew how to draw out of their unions with native women could not fail to inspire the conduct of their rivals. Contrasting with the many advantages enjoyed by their adversaries the more difficult position in which the Orkneymen found themselves and the great errors they made in their dealings with the native people,²²⁵ the officers did not hesitate to provide themselves with the indispensable Indian companions and tolerated an equal freedom among their men.²²⁶

If Indian women had already demonstrated in the posts on the shoreline the value of the material services they could offer, they appeared even more useful in Rupert's Land, where the personnel spent their time on activities which called for the advice or the actual assistance of native women. It was not unusual for such a woman to guide personally the expeditions made into areas where the Company proposed to erect new posts.²²⁷ She would protect the men in regions infested by war parties,²²⁸ and keep them in-

formed of their competitors' plans.²²⁹ Often she was called on to act as interpreter²³⁰ or to carry out the tasks necessary for the maintenance of the men or the operation of the posts: at Ile à la Crosse, in 1810, it was Peter Fidler's squaw who made up for the absence of personnel with any experience of fishing and who fed the garrison.²³¹ At Edmonton, Manchester House, Brandon House, and in the posts on the Red River, the squaws carried on the same multitude of occupations as they did in the Canadian posts, cleaning and dressing beaver skins,²³² cutting the roots needed for caulking canoes and the grass needed to stuff the cracks in roofs, making and repairing moccasins and snowshoes, which the interior posts used more widely than those of the shoreline.²³³ Thus it seems to have been even more necessary in the interior posts for the factors to classify Indian women as part of the personnel regularly attached to the trading posts and to remunerate them on this basis for their services.²³⁴

The differences that had distinguished the English posts on the coast from those of the Canadians tended to vanish in the interior of Rupert's Land. It is possible that in the British establishments the men were somewhat more reserved; the witness of Daniel Harmon, who contrasted the greater dignity they displayed on holidays with the intemperance of the Canadians, is confirmed by the impatience of those Canadians who entered the service of the English company toward the regulations—often no more than nominal—which it made a show of imposing on them.²³⁵ Doubtless a stricter protocol, imported from the coast where the spirit of the homeland survived with greater rigor, also regulated the relations between chiefs of posts and subordinate employees. Only notable Indians were freely received into the forts, and officially admitted to the commandant's table among his principal officers.²³⁶ A more complete solidarity was bred of the difficulties of existence, and the Indian woman, present everywhere, doubtless communicated to the personnel a little of her own egalitarian outlook. For the presence of the native wives and mixed-blood families of commandants and employees was the most striking characteristic of the English as of the Canadian posts.²³⁷ There would also be numerous native families whose fathers had left them in the post's charge and with whom it was more difficult to avoid contact than it had been in the factories on Hudson Bay.²³⁸

Above all, the state of mind was not the same as on the coast. Inevitably it was impregnated with the mentality that existed in

the Canadian posts. These were too near and—as we have seen—too often associated with the life of the English establishments by the rendering of reciprocal services, by the visits competing traders made to each other, and by the mutual assistance they would lend each other in preventing the pillages of the prairie Indians,²³⁹ for their influence not to affect the British posts. The presence of a certain number of Canadian recruits in the English establishments favored the spread of that mentality. In finally moving away from the coastline, the Scots and the Anglo-Saxons themselves acquired new inclinations.

In spite of the admonitions they had received, soon after entering the interior they were liable to surrender to the sway of their passions.²⁴⁰ When the recruitment of personnel became increasingly difficult because of the war with France, the Company's men, knowing they were indispensable, abandoned their docility.²⁴¹ They accepted less willingly the constraint of long-lasting engagements, and endured less easily the rules which the governors had attempted to sustain on the coast. The officers even complained that some of them had been converted too completely to French ways.²⁴² When attempts were made to stop them arriving at York Factory accompanied by their squaws, many abandoned the service rather than allowing their personal freedom to be limited.²⁴³ Faced with such a state of mind, the severity of orders tended to slacken; there was no longer the same strictness in keeping up appearances, and relations with the native people showed a more evident loosening than in the initial [coastal] sector of the Company's enterprises.²⁴⁴ Naturally, with the spread of alcoholic drinks, the loosening of relations increased,²⁴⁵ and prostitution was more widely practised.²⁴⁶ Sometimes—but fortunately only rarely—the employees in the posts would abandon themselves, under the influence of drink, to the same criminal excesses as the natives.²⁴⁷

Because of the spread of mixed marriages, and because the officers and men more often found it necessary to adopt native styles of living, it is certain that in the interior of Rupert's Land the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel were subjected more directly to the influence of the environment that surrounded them. The alliances they contracted gradually had their effects, tying the men more closely to this land where at first they had been merely strangers. Soon such influences would help to keep a number of them in the North West, particularly when, as in the Red River

colony, they found the means of providing more adequately for their children and of bettering their futures. But a true assimilation, similar to that established between the Canadians and the native societies, still did not take place among the employees of the British company. Not only did their upbringing and their past lives make it difficult for them to undergo a spontaneous adaptation, but the attitude we have noted in men like William Auld and William H. Cook must also, to a degree, have existed among the officers in the interior posts and have set them against the kind of coalescence which the Canadians had achieved.

One significant factor is the absence, between the Company's personnel and the native populations, of a class like the freemen who established between the Canadians and their primitive neighbors an especially strong link of intimacy. The instances of drifting into the native life, common enough among the Canadians to have given birth to a highly individualized category of men, were rare among the Hudson's Bay Company's employees, at least so far as one can judge from the documents at our disposal. The examples one notices here and there seem to have been exceptional, like the instances we have observed on the coast, such as the two employees we have already cited in the early years of penetration, Isbister and Peterson; such as John Richards, whom the journal of Brandon House represented as giving himself up to odious excesses in the company of the Indians and abandoning the fort to share their life.²⁴⁸ Since, at the same time, most of the employees returned to their homeland once their contracts were ended, the Company long remained lacking in a group like the freemen who showed themselves so useful in the pursuit of commercial operations. Here was a failing the extent of whose harmfulness to their enterprises the Hudson's Bay officers quickly understood. They contrived to fill it only incompletely, at first by appealing to the freemen belonging to the rival group. Later they tried to deal with the situation by adopting in their turn the practice of releasing on the spot those of their men who were willing to take up residence in the country of the West. But this practice only appeared rather late,²⁴⁹ at a time when the Métis group was already solidly established, and it affected only a small number of men, of whom most were released either for lack of zeal or because of disobedience.²⁵⁰ Meanwhile a few Canadians who had been incorporated into the Company's personnel obtained their freedom from it in the same conditions as the engaged men received it from the North West

Company.²⁵¹ Like the few Scots or Orkneymen who were freed of their obligations, they adopted in the prairie the way of life of the freemen, hunting fur-bearing animals whose skins they reserved for their former masters,²⁵² providing transport with the horses and the rough vehicles that formed their only capital,²⁵³ or undertaking ever more distant expeditions in search of bison.²⁵⁴ But they remained few in numbers, and until the fusion of companies in 1821 allowed the Anglo-Saxons to make use of their rivals' freemen, the Hudson's Bay Company appears to have been deprived of this intermediary element which formed the best stepping stone between the two races.

Thus, the increasing reconciliation established between the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel and the native peoples from the threshold of Rupert's Land to the immensities of its internal territories did not give place to a true assimilation of races and cultures. A demarcation remained, varying in sharpness from place to place, such as the Canadians had never conceived. It extended beyond the shoreline the spirit of the regulations which the London Committee had formulated at the end of the seventeenth century and thus from the beginning it contributed to the distinction between the two nuclei of interbreeding which formed around the respective penetration routes of the Canadians and the Anglo-Saxons.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE APPEARANCE OF THE METIS PEOPLE

THE FIRST METIS

It is only toward the middle of the eighteenth century that one becomes aware of the presence around the posts on Hudson Bay of the earliest representatives of the Métis people. In 1743 James Isham, the Governor of Prince of Wales Fort, described in his "Observations on Hudson's Bay" the new type of people who were emerging out of that contact between the races which the Company had striven in vain to prevent. Though his post had been in existence for a mere twenty years, such a short period had been enough to bring into being an offspring of "mixed blood," sufficiently distinct from the ethnic groups that had produced it to assume its own individuality and to introduce among the native people manifest evidence of the dilution of their indigenous nature. Despite the silence of the records in this respect, it is logical to assume that the posts of York Factory, Fort Albany, and Moose Factory, longer established and better manned, would present an even more numerous population of mixed bloods at the same period than the fort on Churchill River. In fact, as early as 1682 the Committee in London had thought it desirable to intervene by reprimanding the heads of its posts for their excessively widespread practice of allowing and maintaining large numbers of Indian women in their establishments. In view of such official disapproval aroused by their indulgence, we may justly assume that the commandants of the forts would be disinclined to record in their journals of correspondence the presence of a progeny that would serve as evidence of their breach of official orders.

We are in fact no better informed about the first origins of the Canadian Métis. None of the French explorers—Dulhut, Jacques

de Noyon, or even La Vérendrye himself—whose narratives are more ample and precise than those of their predecessors, pays any attention to the emergence of that population which in the early years of the eighteenth century must clearly have already been represented on the threshold of the West. Yet the obscurity of the individuals concerned, and their virtual absorption into the ranks of the native societies, may help to explain the apparent imperceptiveness of the explorers so far as they were concerned.

Indeed it is only the documents of the Hudson's Bay Company that help us envisage their first appearance. Yet even here the allusions are often too vague for us to decide exactly whether they imply the existence of individuals of mixed blood or pure blood. In what way, for example, must we interpret such expressions as "French Indians" or "woodrunners," which are endlessly repeated in the texts that have come down to us? Sometimes there is no possibility of doubt; in one instance it is quite evidently a matter of Indians affiliated to the French cause, and in another of "coureurs de bois" from Lower Canada.¹ But there are times, on the other hand, when the texts actually differentiate "French Indians" from both Canadians and natives; in placing them apart from the others, the writers are perhaps describing individuals near enough to the Indians to be confused with them, yet offering affinities with the French which justify the name by which they are described.² In the same way, when they talk of *coureurs de bois* as "half-French," one is tempted to see in them individuals so closely associated with the primitive way of life that they no longer look like Frenchmen,³ and one may suppose that already in their ranks there were Métis whose presence gave them an appearance closer to that of the Indian. This is all the more likely since the dates when the "French-Indians" or "woodrunners" are mentioned logically coincide with the epoch—the first quarter of the eighteenth century—during which one must accept the Métis as being already numerous enough to attract the attention of the Hudson's Bay Company's officers.

It is, moreover, along the trails at the bottom of the Bay (James Bay), the routes of penetration most directly communicating with the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, where the French had been established long enough to have given birth to a Métis population, that the texts indicate the presence of those individuals whom we may regard as the descendants of the earliest mixed unions. The

journey undertaken at the same period from Lake Superior to York Factory by the Métis Joseph La France, "native of Michilimackinac,"⁴ helps to confirm us in the opinion that the allusions to "French Indians" in the English texts refer to the most outlying groups of Métis whose existence one can recognize.

In the West properly speaking, that is to say in the region extending beyond Lake Superior, the origin of the Métis entirely eludes us. Yet if one remembers that, from the first quarter of the eighteenth century onward, French penetration undoubtedly began along the routes between Lake Superior and Lake Winnipeg, and henceforward continued intermittently, involving appreciable numbers of men, in the region of Rainy Lake up to the time when La Vérendrye extended and stabilized his positions, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that, from the early days of the eighteenth century, a scattering of Métis must have figured among the native peoples around Rainy Lake. The groups of French who established themselves on the shores of Hudson Bay at the period of the enterprises of Radisson and the Chevalier de Troyes and later at the time of Iberville's exploits, and stayed on until the Treaty of Utrecht, must also have brought about an early mingling of races. The texts say nothing of this, but its development can be deduced from the kind of relations that came into being between the French and the native people. Thus, at the time when the Métis—French or Canadian—make a confused appearance in the trails that pierce the Shield in the direction of the Bottom of the Bay, one can as easily envisage them emerging beyond Lake Superior, and mingling, on the shoreline of Hudson Bay, with the first mixed-bloods of Scottish or Anglo-Saxon extraction, whose origins Isham's text justifies us in attributing to the beginning of the eighteenth century. Unfortunately we cannot actually trace the evolution of the Canadian Métis before the end of the eighteenth century. At this point, however, the texts represent them as a group already solidly established and ready to play a part in the events that mark the establishment of a sedentary economy in the western plains. Before that date we have at our disposal only the Hudson's Bay Company's documents which, if they contain a growing number of allusions to the halfbreed population that was growing up around the Anglo-Saxon trading posts, virtually ignore—despite its undeniable numerical superiority—the group that sprang from the French-Canadian race.

THE PEOPLE OF MIXED BLOOD ON HUDSON BAY AND THEIR EARLY ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STATUS

Of the first mixed-bloods of Scottish or Anglo-Saxon origin the Company's documents present a somewhat flattering picture. To James Isham's description, which applied to Prince of Wales Fort, Andrew Graham in his collection of observations soon added a more general description of the children born of mixed unions. According to him, in 1768 they formed an important human element around the various posts along the shoreline. "Although relations between native 'ladies' and the Company's employees are forbidden, a numerous halfbreed progeny exists in every fort "' Both Isham and Graham saw in these people the signs of superiority to the native race. They were more active, more adept at the use of bow and gun, more inclined to adapt themselves to European ways. Cleaner and more civilized in appearance than the Indians, they displayed a straightforward and vigorous bearing. Their hair, fair and often curly, differed from that of the natives, which was black as ebony, straight and coarse, and hanging uncared-for to their knees. Their skin color, faintly coppery, was also quite different from the densely yellow tint of the Indians, while their blue eyes and clearly delineated fair eyebrows added to their distinctiveness and often conferred great beauty on the faces of their women.⁶

At this period, if one accepts the remarks recorded by Isham and Graham, a youth of mixed blood with the sense of superiority which he did not hesitate to express⁷ toward the native races seems to have attained a certain social equilibrium. Fondly regarded by the native woman who had borne him and to whom he was attached enough to help her in old age, he was also accepted by the whites who, detached in their frontier posts from the prejudices of the homeland, did not think of applying to him the kind of ostracism that is nowadays so prevalent in the society of the West.⁸ He had not broken any of his original attachments. If he gloried in the superiority of his ancestry to that of the Indians, he did not forget the mother who had lavished affection on him, out of natural sentiment but also doubtless from pride in the links which a child of mixed blood established with a people who from the beginning appeared as a "privileged race." Unlike the primitive peoples of Tasmania and Australia, who would often kill at birth children of mixed blood,⁹ the Indians accepted them without discrimination

and even allowed them a more favored status than their own descendants,¹⁰ and did not hesitate, after the father's departure, to adopt into the mother's tribe such children of mixed blood as had not grown up in native families.¹¹ At first sight, if one can judge from the observations made by Isham and Graham, the mixed bloods on the shores of Hudson Bay round about the middle of the eighteenth century seem to have benefited from a combination of factors eminently favorable to their existence, to their activities, and to the rise of the new race which they represented.

At the same time, if one compares these rather generalized remarks with the scanty records we possess from the same period, it seems as though from the beginning the small groups of mixed-bloods on Hudson Bay were subjected to a variety of factors, some of which tended toward their elevation and others toward their debasement to the level of the native people.¹² Absorption into the primitive society did not resolve for all of them the problems aroused by the departure of their fathers. Many of them, and especially the children of employees of lower rank—and even more those who owed their birth to transitory unions and whose fathers were actually unknown—grew up among the Indians, mingled with their families, and quickly lost the memory of their origins. No doubt the special attention which the Indians paid to them, and the affection which their adoptive fathers lavished on them,¹³ encouraged a feeling of superiority on their part. But their upbringing differed in no way from that of the native children. It consisted of the usual training in meeting the exigencies of the environment, and in the adoption of the simple moral doctrines of Indian society.¹⁴ As soon as they wedded a woman of pure race, they disappeared into the native background, and became absorbed into the ranks of the Home Guard Indians, of whom Andrew Graham declared that such mixed bloods formed the majority.¹⁵ In the eyes of the Company's officers they were, like the rest of the "home guards," merely fishermen and hunters, and this was the role that, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was reserved for many of them.¹⁶

But, as well as this category whose members so quickly sank back into primitive life, another group emerged that remained more directly associated with the life of the forts, and whose closer relations with the whites seemed destined to offer them a higher status. These included the offspring of officers of higher rank, the sons of the heads of posts, or those children of more modest

employees who had passed their early years in the immediate neighborhood of the forts and in the company of fathers who became separated from them only on the day of their departure. Even in those early days we can detect the play of causes that could neutralize the potentialities which such individuals might owe to their birth and their early education, and which already deprived some of them of any clear way of entry into either of the two societies to which they could lay claim. It is certain that, in the desolate regions of Hudson Bay where, in their isolation, the men felt the need for a family life strongly enough to demand on occasion the breaking of their contracts of employment so as to return to their native land, many must have become deeply attached to the children of mixed blood whose presence filled the gaps in their existence.¹⁷ Even those who were already married at home could not avoid nourishing a lively affection for their new families. To be convinced of this, it is enough to glance through the letters which some of the officers exchanged with the Committee in London in the hope of obtaining permission from their directors to take their children home. Thus in 1783 the commandant of Fort Albany begged the Company to mitigate in his favor the strictness of the instructions it had laid down on this subject: "An infant that has the tenderest claims upon me, and looks up to me for protection and support demands that I should not (whatever fault originally there may be in his very existence) increase it by leaving him in this country, a helpless orphan—unprotected."¹⁸ Before leaving York Factory in 1772, Andrew Graham had expressed himself in terms just as urgent, when he appealed to the directors, in the name of their "duties as men and Christians," to let him take his daughter back with him to his native land.¹⁹ Sometimes the father would be unable to endure the separation, and, after going home, would ask to be allowed to return so that he might settle on Hudson Bay and share the life of his mixed-blood family.²⁰

There were times when the chiefs of the posts hesitated to terminate the service of ordinary employees, despite their lack of zeal, because they anticipated the sorrow such men would feel on abandoning their children, and the children's unfortunate situation once their fathers had departed.²¹ Samuel Hearne, for one, described the excessive affection that Europeans customarily showed toward their children of mixed marriages; they loaded them with the tokens of affection, shielded them from the privations inherent in the life of these desolate lands, and supplied them with an excess

of food and clothing.²² Moses Norton, the halfbreed son of Richard Norton, who in 1762—several years after his father—succeeded to the command of Prince of Wales Fort,²³ showed this kind of excessive affection toward his daughter Mary. There were times when even ordinary employees, despite their more modest means, adopted a similar attitude,²⁴ which doubtless showed not only the depth of their feelings, but also the desire to remove their children from the influence of the primitive environment and give them a level of existence more in conformity with civilized ways of living.

Unfortunately, once the father's contract expired, he was obliged to take the homeward road and abandon his children and their mother. He could not even think of settling in the country. Before Lord Selkirk's enterprise in 1812, the absence of a settlement colony gave him no alternative but to adopt the nomad life of the Indians or to become dependent on the trading posts. But the Company could not allow its depots to become the haunt of men it no longer employed, whose age or infirmities might render them useless appendages.²⁵ And, since many of the officers already had wives and children in Europe,²⁶ they were unable—without incurring the directors' disapprobation and bringing down on themselves appropriate sanctions—to renounce the bonds that united them with civilized society in favor of those that attached them to the primitive environment.

The Committee was in part influenced by this last consideration when it forbade its men to take their mixed-blood children back to Europe. A few individuals, like Edward Jarvis or Humphrey Marten, might manage to soften the strictness of the directors,²⁷ but in general the Company remained opposed to a practice which, quite apart from the family complications that in many instances it created, had led in the early years, when permission was more freely given, to instances of great distress, and had involved the Company in heavy expenses which it soon refused to accept. If the fathers died, their children were often completely isolated in a world where they had neither friends nor resources, so that they had no alternative but to call upon the Company's generosity.²⁸ With a view to preventing the repetition of such situations the Company had rigorously forbidden the captains of its ships to accept any family on board the craft that supplied Hudson Bay.²⁹ It was in these circumstances that Andrew Graham's request in favor of his daughter was rejected.³⁰ In 1791, intensifying the severity of

its instructions, the Company decided no longer to accept the increasingly numerous demands of the officers who asked for similar privileges for their children.³¹ If, occasionally, it allowed breaches of this rule, it was only in exceptional circumstances when an assurance has been received that the individuals involved disposed of sufficient capital to save their children from all risk of poverty after the parents' death.³²

Otherwise, the officer who had truly at heart the fate of the child he was forced to leave behind on the shores of Hudson Bay could mitigate the uncertainties of its future only by guaranteeing a payment each year for its benefit, or by making a deed of gift which he would deposit in the Company's hands so that its interest, paid regularly, might assure it the benefit of an income. The greater affluence of the superior officers allowed them to follow this procedure more often than the simple employees, and as most if not all of them had families of mixed-blood,³³ such deeds of gift became a general practice in the posts on the Bay.

They were sufficient to provide the young mixed bloods with clothing and provisions of food, whose distribution was a continuation of the indulgences their fathers had hitherto lavished on them.³⁴ Ferdinand Jacobs, for example, regularly sent to his daughter and grandchildren while he lived the annual sum of 5 guineas, which was dispensed to them in the form of blankets and cloth;³⁵ after his death, the executors of his will increased the amount of this periodic payment to £10.³⁶ Moses Norton left an annual legacy of £10 to his mixed-blood sister and her daughter, who also received its value in clothes and blankets.³⁷ In the same way, Matthew Cocking provided for the needs of his three daughters by an annual provision of £6, which he confided to the Company to be dispensed in kind.³⁸ One could multiply the examples.³⁹ Officers at all levels in this way credited to the accounts of their children sums of varying importance, whose payment the Company or sometimes their legitimate spouses were commissioned to ensure.⁴⁰ Such commissions were punctually fulfilled by the Company, but it refused the least generosity in the absence of any provision, and it took the precaution of asking the heads of posts for certificates attesting that the beneficiaries were still alive.⁴¹

This attentiveness of the Hudson's Bay Company's officers did not, however, compensate for the effect of their absence. By providing for their children the modest revenues intended to protect them from the uncertainties of their material existence, they could

postpone their absorption into native society, but not entirely prevent it. Left to themselves, or to the influence of an Indian mother, the children quickly ceased to find in the pension granted to them enough to live on without having recourse to the nomad occupations of hunting and fishing. Often the gift to them, represented merely by the interest on shares deposited with the Company's directors, rapidly declined in value, and, after the father's death, it might prove insufficient to provide for their material needs,⁴² for it was seldom that the officers, excepting the commandants of the most important posts, could guarantee them an annual income in the order of £15–20. While they were alive, they would sometimes increase the amount of their gifts. But afterward these were reduced, in most cases, to an annual interest of a few pounds which, shared among several children, represented merely the value of a small quantity of trade goods.⁴³ Gradually, the sons of officers fell to the level of the children whose less prosperous fathers were in no position to provide any income whatever,⁴⁴ and whom the heads of the posts, touched by compassion for their need, would assume the responsibility of clothing at the expense of their establishments.⁴⁵

In fact, after the departure of their fathers, nomadism quickly became the customary way of life for officers' sons, with no distinction of grade. Their presence is noted here and there, sometimes at Fort Severn, sometimes at Fort Albany, sometimes at York Factory. It is evident that such mixed bloods had no fixed residences. Sometimes they appeared at the forts merely to pick up the money or goods that were due to them.⁴⁶ Their nomadic wanderings were governed by those of the Indians with whom they mingled their existence. For those among them whose fathers had been careful not to detach them entirely from the primitive environment, there was no abrupt breach of continuity in their lives at this point. Samuel Hearne described the chief factor Ferdinand Jacobs as conscious of the need to take the precautions on which depended the happiness if not the lives of his children. He took care to bring up his own daughter to experience the exigencies of a pitiless milieu, and the latter was afterward able to marry one of the better Home Guard Indians and to become as useful a companion to him as any Indian woman, without experiencing the shock that awaited those young women of mixed blood who had been deprived of any preparation for the primitive existence.⁴⁷ In the same way, the half-Indian family of Andrew Graham shared

the life of the native people at Fort Churchill where he assumed control;⁴⁸ Humphrey Marten, the commandant of York Factory, confided his two children to the care of his squaw's relatives;⁴⁹ finally, James Swain, an officer of the same grade, employed his Indian wife and his own daughter, in the company of the Indian women attached to the post, in carrying out the material tasks that were the latter's speciality.⁵⁰ In the same way the families of the ordinary employees often mingled with those of the native people; they imitated their occupations and followed, though to a lesser degree, their nomadic ways.⁵¹ It was natural that such individuals, accustomed to Indian conceptions of life, should suffer relatively slightly from the departure of their fathers. Some mixed bloods even preferred the freedom and hazards of the hunter's life to the monotonous regularity of the tasks to be undertaken in the trading posts.⁵² For them, absorption into native society came automatically. Lacking any solidly established religious principles, because they had been brought up too close to the Indians, they quickly surrendered—with few exceptions—to the extreme freedom of morals that prevailed among the native people, and adopted the latter's already profoundly changed culture.⁵³

For others, who were victims of the excessive affection of their fathers, the latter's departure created a rupture in their lives, whose first symptoms appeared immediately; this hindered any normal return of the young people of mixed blood into native society. Brought up to follow the conceptions and habits of white society, they suffered from the beginning a moral disequilibrium, which removed any possibility of their complete absorption into primitive existence. An assumption of superiority was evident from the beginning in their attitude toward the native people, manifested timidly—as Andrew Graham noted⁵⁴ by most of the mixed bloods, but more noticeable among others, whom it encouraged to consider themselves the equals of the whites and to aspire to the same employments as they followed.⁵⁵ Whatever material advantages they received from their absent fathers tended to sustain them in this feeling, which one encounters in all the groups of mixed blood who lived in the neighborhood of the two unequally evolved races from which they were born. The native race would seem to them an alien race, among whom they failed to make friendships, and in dealing with whom they did not encounter that generosity in helping each other which was so broadly practised within primitive society. It was this situation that Edward Jarvis

evoked before the Committee to justify his desire to bring home with him his son of mixed blood, who in his absence would be "a helpless orphan, unprotected to the mercy of unfeeling Indians."⁵⁶ Humphrey Marten put forward a similar argument.⁵⁷ And in like vein, the journal of York Factory noted in 1813 the case of three young Métis who were reduced to a life of friendless isolation, since the subordinate employees responsible for their existence had left them behind.⁵⁸

The situation was especially grievous when the mother of such children had herself, as a result of her new existence, broken her ties with her own tribe. This could easily happen if she herself were of mixed blood by origin, the daughter of a superior officer. Her marriage with the head of a post would then complete her assimilation with the whites, and her children, experiencing more directly the ascendancy of European culture, would feel themselves too far removed from the native people to hope to adapt to their way of life or to gain free admittance into their tribes. Such was the situation that faced Edward Jarvis's son; in yielding to this request, the Committee enabled him to avoid the loss of social position which his father feared.

But the moral disturbance suffered by these children of mixed blood at a time, moreover, when the foundations of Anglo-Saxon society on the Bay were weak and its numbers limited, was also accompanied by a dislocation of their material existence. Samuel Hearne cites to us the example of Moses Norton's daughter who, having been too delicately brought up, perished of hunger and cold at the age of twenty-two in her mother's family, and he blamed the improvidence of the officers, who too often neglected to give their Métis children the training that would enable them to face a primitive existence as soon as they no longer enjoyed their father's material support.⁵⁹ Often the heads of posts pleaded the precarious health of their children, and the perils of abandoning them to the rigors of native existence, when, contrary to the Committee's instructions,⁶⁰ they asked to be allowed to bring them to Europe.⁶¹ It is true that the pensions paid to such children mitigated the uncertainties of their lives, but such support did not exempt them from the need to seek their subsistence in a difficult environment. If, after a few years, the father neglected to keep up payments, or if he did not dispose of a capital sufficient to provide for the child's material needs, the latter's situation could then be even more painful than that of the Indians. For the Company re-

fused to grant the benefit of its generosity to the sons of officers whose parents were well enough off to guarantee the endowment of their children; they even refused to include them in the distributions of food which the heads of posts customarily made to the Indians who gathered around their forts.⁶²

In such circumstances, deprived of material help from the posts, and at the same time less equipped than the natives to exploit the resources of fishing and hunting, the young man of mixed blood indeed became a man without standing. His position was already that of the modern Métis, deprived by white society of all the kinds of material assistance which it distributed generously to the Indians settled on the reservations. As yet the situation existed only in embryo: according to the texts at our disposal, only a few families⁶³ suffered from this total abandonment. Yet it is none the less interesting to be able to glimpse, from the beginning, one of the causes of the difficulties which the Métis suffer today in the provinces of the West. These consequences were already painful enough, in 1796, for the commandant of York Factory to take upon himself to expose to the Committee the destitution of these families in terms whose severity amounted to a frank reproach to the directors for their own severity.⁶⁴

THE REMEDIES FOR THE MIXED BLOODS' LOSS OF STANDING

The simplest solution consisted of preventing the disorientation of the young mixed bloods by preparing them for reabsorption into native society, whose circumstances would inevitably be imposed on those children who were abandoned. We have seen that some of the chief factors and officers of lower grade did not hesitate to make the sacrifices that such an eventuality demanded of their affection. But the judgment of Samuel Hearne seems clearly to indicate that there were many who did not follow the examples of Ferdinand Jacobs or James Swain. The petition which 110 officers and employees of all grades addressed to the Earl of Bathurst in 1816, requesting him to constitute a colony that would give shelter to their families, is an even more significant indication of the upbringing which the majority of the Company's personnel gave their children. The signatories declared that, having educated their children in the ways of the white men, they would not leave them to the mercy of savages, whose numbers they would augment

without "possessing those Arts and Habits which render a Savage Life supportable."⁶⁵ At that relatively late date, the signatories had the hope of soon finding in the colony of Assiniboia a refuge for their numerous families. In the years before the appearance of a settled way of life on the shores of the Red River, no solution of this kind could even be envisaged. It was therefore natural that the officers who had neglected to prepare for the break with their children by providing an appropriate training, or who were too ambitious to accept the idea of their children returning to the primitive life, should dream of orienting them toward their own society as a preparation for their assimilation into the white race.

Marriage to a white, whether an officer or an ordinary employee, constituted for their daughters the first step in that process of assimilation. Such unions were frequent in the Company's posts, where the whites were more ready to ally themselves to women who had been brought up in their own conventions.⁶⁶ According to Andrew Graham, officers' daughters quickly found matches with their fathers' successors,⁶⁷ and in this way a number of women of mixed blood could escape submergence in native society. But this was only a temporary solution, for the departure of their husbands soon posed for them and their children an equally agonizing dilemma. Detached by birth and upbringing from native society, lacking ties and sympathies in an environment with which they had lost contact, they were unable to orient their own daughters toward the tribes which they themselves had rejected, and the future of such children seemed, when their fathers departed, even more threatened than that of the first generation of halfbreeds. Thus the Factor John McNab in 1807 called the attention of the Committee to the fate of girls of mixed blood and to the difficulty in protecting them from the vexations that awaited them in native society.⁶⁸

Male children escaped such vexations more easily. At least, for them the problem was at first sight less complex. They only needed to gain employment in one of the posts, and then they could be incorporated into its regular personnel and find, in the company of white men, the means of re-establishing themselves. The girls did not have the same opportunities, since their entry into the fort's labor force merely meant their immersion in the ranks of Indian women employed in material tasks around the establishment, and promoted rather than prevented their contact with primitive life. For the boys whom their fathers had been

careful to train in white men's ways, there was no obstacle to their gaining employment. Their absence of technical training was hardly a drawback: work for laborers without special skills was not lacking in the posts. Neither the Anglo-Saxons nor the Scots could express any unwillingness to accept them in their midst, since they themselves, almost without exception, had mixed-blood families. Moreover, in a frontier setting and in the absence of European women likely to arouse in their men a racial prejudice against native women, they had as yet no serious feelings on the question of color. At most the youths of mixed blood might be exposed to a certain amount of ridicule among the whites because of the dark—though by no means black—coloring that sometimes emerged, following the Mendelian law of heredity, among mixed-blood children of the second generation. But for the moment this was only an occasional manifestation, without immediate consequences, of the sense of inferiority which the color of their skin would later impose on Métis and mulattoes in Anglo-Saxon society.⁷⁰

During this preliminary period, the Company itself does not seem to have developed any prejudice of this kind. Nevertheless, it was only in a later epoch that the first employees of mixed blood figured on the lists of regular personnel in the trading forts. Though James Isham represented the mixed-blood group as already numerous toward the middle of the eighteenth century, he had to wait until 1774 before his own son, Charles Price Isham, after several years of apprenticeship at Fort Severn, officially assumed the rank of laborer in the Lists of Servants at York Factory;⁷¹ for this his antecedents had prepared him, since he had grown up around the fort in which he now became an employee and he had been able to familiarize himself there with the ways of the white men.⁷²

In later years, recourse to mixed bloods in this field continued to be very slow. It was only in 1783–4 that two of them appeared in the registers of employment alongside young Isham, and, like him, in the rank of laborers, one at Eastmain and the other at Henley House.⁷³ Indeed, it seems evident that for a long time the Company remained uninterested in the fate of children of mixed blood. It is true that in 1775 the Committee urged Humphrey Marten to prepare for useful employment the two young children of an officer whose death had left them no other resources than a capital of £9/3/0.⁷⁴ But this seems to have been a whimsical act

that was not followed up, and it was only in 1794 that the Company, doubtless responding to the reiterated complaints of its agents on the dearth of personnel in its establishments, formally authorized the chief factor of Fort Albany to engage the adult sons of its "old employees."⁷⁵ After this time, while giving preference to the sons of superior officers and of the most esteemed employees,⁷⁶ and also reserving posts for the sons of the doctors attached to the various establishments⁷⁷ (in other words for the individuals best prepared for the disciplines of the trading forts), the Company also engaged the sons of more obscure employees, of simple laborers whose aptitudes are not even recorded in the lists. In this way orphans without any resources were eventually spared the hardship of being engulfed in Indian society or the humiliation of a loss of standing that was even more painful than the mere fact of being absorbed into the primitive world.⁷⁸

From this point onward the custom was established of each year engaging a certain number of employees of mixed blood in the posts on the shoreline and also in the interior.⁷⁹ The growing difficulty of recruiting manpower in Europe as a result of the continuing war with France, and the rigorous economies that the Company was forced at this time to accept,⁸⁰ quickly accelerated this tendency, and the Committee openly manifested the desire to give an increasingly important place in its establishment to young men of mixed blood. In 1806 it even asked the governor of York Factory to supervise their instruction so as to enable them to occupy a greater variety of posts,⁸¹ and from 1800 onward their numbers never ceased to grow.⁸²

Among the rather colorless group of Europeans who represented the Hudson's Bay Company in the interior, the mixed blood Charles Price Isham, whose name was linked with the very first attempts at penetration, stands out in sharp relief. In 1775 he went to the interior post newly erected by Samuel Hearne [Cumberland House] to carry on trade there with the Indians.⁸³ Perhaps the commandant of York Factory hoped to use Isham's relationships to make up for the poor training of his men in the milieu where they would find themselves. It is certain that in his trading enterprises, which he soon extended to the rich sector of Swan River,⁸⁴ Isham showed a remarkable knowledge of the country and its difficulties, as well as of its peoples. His training had made him a successful hunter,⁸⁵ while his origins and his knowledge of their languages⁸⁶ made him welcome among the native peoples.

Thus he was able to compensate for that failure of the Anglo-Saxons to become absorbed into the native milieu which had always been the Hudson's Bay Company's weakest point.⁸⁷ More in tune with the psychology of primitive people, he was successful in winning them over as allies against the Canadians and in inspiring them with his own resentment against the Company's enemies. He was ready to oppose violence against violence, and the pedlars accused him of inciting the murder of several of their men.⁸⁸ His great adaptability enabled him to mediate with ease between whites and Indians, whom he excelled in cunning. Finally, on the physical level, he showed a greater resistance than the native people to the contagious sicknesses imported by Europeans: in general, these appear to have been less deadly to those of mixed blood, who were perhaps protected by inherited immunities.⁸⁹ It is not surprising that in such circumstances the Canadians should have counted him one of their more formidable enemies,⁹⁰ or that he should have quickly climbed the ladder of the Company's services, especially distinguishing himself by the qualities that enabled him to adapt to a primitive land and by the aptitudes that were derived from his upbringing and his ancestry. These varied assets manifested themselves equally in his organization of canoe transport, which was allotted to him at Cumberland House and Hudson House in 1785, in the function of interpreter and linguist which he fulfilled from 1786 to 1787 at York Factory, and in the role of associate trader which he assumed at the same post and later in the interior, from which, in 1790, he was promoted to the rank of postmaster in the Company's establishment at Swan River.⁹¹ His example showed how far the Company, lacking a personnel that could compete with the Canadians, was able to benefit from accepting the services of intelligent people of mixed blood brought up in the company of white people, but remaining close to the Indians so that they never appeared among them as strangers.

At the same time, the young mixed bloods tended to specialize in occupations that depended on good training in the conditions of life in the West and in the habits of its peoples: in the navigation and construction of canoes, in which, whatever may have been their fathers' positions, whether they were officers like John Thomas,⁹² or doctors like John and Thomas Knight,⁹³ or more modest employees like Thomas and William Richards,⁹⁴ they were particularly successful, thus making up for one of the principal weaknesses in the Company's service; in the operation of moving

from post to post, in trafficking directly among the Indians, or in reconnaissance expeditions in connection with which the officers frequently called upon their experience;⁹⁵ finally, and by no means least important, in the role of interpreter. If they continued to show zeal and endurance, they might hope, as they grew older, to assume more important posts, involving greater responsibilities. As in Charles Price Isham's case, they then became associated, as traders or assistant traders, in the commercial operations of the trading posts, at salaries of £30 or £40 per annum.⁹⁶ Sometimes they even rose so far as to become the heads of posts of secondary importance,⁹⁷ or, like J. P. Pruden in Edmonton, to occupy under the title of master trader a position superior to that of the ordinary traders, which could put them—should the need arise—in charge of the fort's commercial operations.⁹⁸

On the other hand, they were more rarely employed as artisans, or tradesmen, which was understandable in view of the difficulties of giving the young mixed bloods a specialized technical training in the trading posts. Here and there a few are mentioned—as masons,⁹⁹ carpenters,¹⁰⁰ coopers,¹⁰¹ and shipbuilders.¹⁰² But these were exceptional cases which did not threaten the virtual monopoly that Europeans held on employments requiring long years of apprenticeship. At the same time, given the importance of providing for the material needs of life in an environment lacking in industries, the young mixed bloods tended to develop a manual aptitude which recalled that of the people of Lower Canada and which some of the factors recognized when they described them as "universal good hands."¹⁰³

Their superior qualities became especially evident in the provisioning of the interior posts and in the struggle against the Canadians. Here their association with the Indians provided a basis for their activity of which the mixed bloods took advantage with an ease facilitated by their affinities of race and nature. J. Thomas, the commandant of Moose Factory, displayed a special interest in the mixed bloods among whom his son held an honorable place, and in 1803 he wrote to the Committee that the interior posts relied on them to assure their provisioning and to hold their rivals in check.¹⁰⁴ One has only to glance through the journals of the various posts, Edmonton, Moose Factory, Ile à la Crosse, to see noted from day to day the usefulness of the tasks they carried out in these two domains, which reproduced point for point the activity of the Canadians. They hunted game in company with the Indians, they

mingled with them to get their furs, they got round them cleverly so as to prevent their defection, and they were not deterred by the prospect of long marches during the most rigorous season of the year.¹⁰⁵ Around the Anglo-Saxon forts they played a role almost identical with that of the freemen around the Canadian establishments.¹⁰⁶ When the Company decided to establish itself permanently in Athabasca, it appealed at the same time to the French Canadians and to the young men of mixed blood whose value as fishermen and hunters it proposed to exploit.¹⁰⁷ In the same way, when the commandant of York Factory in 1809 planned to reconnoitre the Canadian positions in the environs of Lake Winnipeg with a view to embarking on an energetic counteroffensive, it was to the mixed blood Thomas McNab that he confided the accomplishment of this task, whose realization depended on a mastery of very difficult waterways.¹⁰⁸

Again, it is interesting to observe that despite the privilege of their birth, the sons of superior officers were obliged, like the rest, to climb the preliminary steps of "apprentice" and "laborer," and in this way worked beside the mixed bloods of more humble origin. The nuances of class and lineage were thus dissolved in a common activity, in which the young men of mixed blood were equally oriented toward achievements that put to the test the qualities all of them had developed through their immersion in the primitive environment and their contacts with native people.¹⁰⁹ The distance that separated the personnel of the rival companies was thus dramatically curtailed by the entry on the scene of a new factor. The Canadians were sharply enough aware of the changed situation to concentrate their hostility on this new generation of mixed ancestry. They developed against them a campaign of violence and also of attempts at debauchery.¹¹⁰

On their side, the Hudson's Bay Company's officers congratulated themselves on the zeal and efficiency of their new employees. In 1816, contrasting the mediocrity of the Orkney men with the quality of recruits from Lower Canada, D. McPherson declared that the Canadians were superior to the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel—*always excepting* the mixed bloods whom the organization was now bringing into its service;¹¹¹ the report of 1822 from Rainy Lake declared that a mixed blood, by definition, was a "good trader."¹¹² The appreciations of individuals of mixed blood in this early phase of their employment are no less laudatory. Terms such as "useful and active," "successfully acting as mas-

ters," "very useful, like the rest of the native youths," recur constantly in the writings of officers called upon to express their opinions.¹¹³

Complaints are rare. Occasionally one encounters an accusation of laziness or of an inclination toward drinking.¹¹⁴ Sometimes a mixed blood may be reproached with lacking frankness and acting underhandedly in the interests of the Canadians.¹¹⁵ Such an accusation reminds one of similar charges of duplicity against the Indians, but in the absence of broader evidence it does not justify generalizations made on the basis of a tendency that seems to have been only sporadically manifested. Some mixed bloods surrendered to the attractions of primitive existence: under the influence of a passing grievance or because of a natural preference, they gladly abandoned service in the posts for the freer life of the Indians.¹¹⁶ A degree of negligence in the performance of their duties was sometimes imputed to the mixed bloods, and as they were less susceptible than the Scots to the attraction of monetary gains, the usual penalty of the partial withholding of their wages was no more successful with them than with the Canadians.¹¹⁷ But on these few clues it is impossible to form any definite judgment. And it is hardly possible, given the almost unanimous evidence of the officers, to avoid the conclusion that the mixed bloods employed in the posts resembled the whites as much as—and perhaps more than—they did the native peoples.

The custom of engaging mixed bloods during their extreme youth or at the beginning of adolescence—at anything from ten to fifteen years of age¹¹⁸—inevitably eased their adaptation to the methods of the dominant race and the disciplines of the service, while the very nature of the occupations they were asked to perform safeguarded the links which their affinities and their nearness to the primitive world had in varying degrees established between children of mixed blood and native people. The formulas worked out by the Company, at the request of its officers and under the pressure of present needs, thus circumvented the life crisis that threatened children brought up too close to the posts; without detaching them from the milieu into which they were born, it facilitated the process by which they were gradually drawn back into the race of their fathers.

At the same time, it offered the Hudson's Bay Company incontestable material advantages. In recruiting its mixed-blood employees on the spot, not only did it avoid the travelling costs

involved in the engagement of hands from Europe, but it could pay wages lower than would have been acceptable to Scots or Orkneymen. If the need arose, it could even pay them in kind.¹¹⁹ In the first three years or so of their engagements, before they had gained the training needed for more important roles, the young men of mixed blood did not earn salaries of more than £6 per annum, while the Europeans started with appointments of between £6 and £10, with increments, provided they were diligent, of £2 per annum.¹²⁰ At the expiry of their first three-year contract, the wages of the mixed bloods increased to £10, or to £15 if they were clearly exceptional,¹²¹ a sum which J. Thomas in 1804 recommended should be brought into line with the needs of existence in the neighborhood of £25 at the beginning of the third contract of engagement.¹²² As they advanced in grade, the employees of mixed blood began to gain remuneration equal to that of Europeans in the same role, but they were never able to reach the more elevated ranks which the latter occupied on the ladder of employment. The superior posts were not accessible to them above the rank of trader, or, at best, of postmaster,¹²³ and only Charles Price Isham was appointed to that dignity. The most notable of the others did not rise beyond the rank of trader, of whom, in the early years, no more than ten were indicated as having climbed so far in the "list of servants."¹²⁴ It was equally seldom that they were entrusted with the functions of accountancy, implied by the designation of "writer" or "clerk," which were the first steps for those who might become chiefs of posts. The few mixed bloods who did exercise such roles—John McNab, Charles Thomas, Charles Bird, James Hodgson, Thomas Fidler¹²⁵—were themselves the sons of superior officers or accountants. They owed to the upbringing their fathers had been careful to assure them the level of education necessary for such a profession, an education whose absence constituted the weak point of the mixed bloods as a group. It was in fact inevitable that the earliest officers, preoccupied with their occupations, and little concerned about the instruction of their sons whom they left too often to the care of their native mothers, should by and large have neglected their education. The need for it became evident only some years later, when the spectacle of so many children immobilized around the fort, on the edge of a society which did not absorb them, awakened among the officers a sense of their responsibilities.

EDUCATION IN THE POSTS ON HUDSON BAY

A long period in the homeland would have been the sole means by which a child of mixed blood could escape from such a manifest inferiority. Among the reasons which the officers would invoke for taking their sons with them to Europe, a number emphasized the desire to assure them the education without which there would be no opening for them in civilized society.¹²⁶ Young Moses Norton owed to his father's solicitude¹²⁷ the possibility of acquiring, probably in England, this element that was indispensable for the exercise of the higher functions in the Company's service. While his sister, who remained in the setting of her birth, quickly mingled with the natives (in the same way, apparently, as his own daughter),¹²⁸ he himself was able to contract a regular marriage in Europe. Soon he was in a position to assume the charge of accounts at Prince of Wales Fort, and then, in 1762, to attain the grade of chief of post there.¹²⁹ He then returned to Europe, leaving his sister and his daughter Sarah (?) among the natives of Hudson Bay. His connections, his instinctive knowledge of the native people, combined with the education he had acquired to facilitate his career, whose success was affirmed by the good relations that, under his administration, were immediately established between whites and natives. Toward the Indians he never ceased to show a concern and a familiarity that contrasted with the stiff manner of the Anglo-Saxons and which give the lie to the fictionalized portrait Agnes Laut has left us of his administration.¹³⁰ Faithful to the pacific instructions of the Company, he pursued a policy of conciliation between Chipewyans and Eskimos to whose wisdom Chief Factor Ferdinand Jacobs himself paid homage.¹³¹ Resuming the tradition of his father Richard, who had always shown a lively interest in the country and its inhabitants, he followed attentively the progress made by the pedlars in their discovery of the Athabasca region. Using data provided by the Indians, he prepared a map in order to solve the problem of the routes of penetration toward Great Slave Lake,¹³² and he personally directed explorations on the coast of Hudson Bay, where in 1761 he penetrated into Chesterfield Inlet.¹³³

Richard Norton was certainly not the only officer to make sure of a solid education for his son. Before the Company became opposed to a practice that sometimes involved it in heavy expenses, several officers succeeded in taking their children to the Orkney

Islands, where, in a school specially organized for them in South Ronaldshay, they received the education which was so long lacking in the posts on Hudson Bay.¹³⁴ The instructions issued by the Company in 1791 notably reduced this exodus, though it was not entirely suppressed, since the Committee authorized a number of exceptions. Nevertheless, the school in the Orkneys continued to function for several more years,¹³⁵ and a certain number of officers were able to have their children educated there, but without great profit for the Company itself, since the majority of the young people brought up in this way established themselves later on in their fathers' country. Lower Canada also offered the possibilities of education, and a number of families benefited from it, but only toward the end of the period we are considering,¹³⁶ and without the service of the posts reaping any benefits from it.

It was the Committee itself that, doing final justice to its agents' suggestions, provided their children of mixed blood in the posts themselves with the elements necessary for their education. The initiative was an interesting one. Decided on in the final years of the eighteenth century, at a period when nothing of the kind had been thought of in the Canadian posts, it seems to have contributed to giving a fair number of mixed bloods of Scottish origin an intellectual status superior to that of their French-speaking congeners.

In 1794, in response to a request from the heads of posts, the Committee sent to Moose Factory, York Factory, Fort Churchill, and Eastmain a series of alphabets intended to familiarize the children with the first rudiments of reading and writing.¹³⁷ The following year it congratulated J. Thomas, whose attention never flagged in a cause which was that of his own family, on the early progress made by the children at Moose Factory.¹³⁸ With that acute sense of opportunity which permeated the policies of the Committee and led it to soften the theoretical rigidity of its instructions in response to circumstances, it now saw in the class of mixed bloods, whose very birth it had attempted to prevent, the uniting factor that might win for it, through closer contacts, the confidence of the native people. Not that it contemplated a policy of assimilation between white men and primitives. But, recognizing a situation that had come into being, it prepared to profit by it in the interests of its operations and in the recruitment of its personnel. The instructions it addressed in 1805 and 1806 to the commandants of York Factory and Moose Factory show no evi-

dence of a special concern for the native people, but rather the desire to communicate to children expected to join the posts' regular personnel the same basic training and education as the Committee claimed to expect of its usual employees. "Wishing to cultivate as much as possible an intimate connection with the Natives all over the country & to facilitate your Intercourse with them, which must of course prove to the Company, we have thought it would be advisable to instruct the children belonging to our servants in the principles of Religion & teach them from their youth Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, & Accounts, which we hope would attach them to our Service, and in a few years become a small colony of very useful Hands."¹³⁹

At the same time, and without harboring the thought of any concession on the part of the whites to a primitive culture, the Committee relaxed its earlier policy of isolation and agreed to extend to young Indians the benefit of the education it planned for the sons of officers and employees. It was to serve these double ends that in 1808 it instructed one of its agents to recruit, at Stromness in the Orkneys, schoolteachers intended for the trading posts of Rupert's Land.¹⁴⁰ The gains the Indians might reap in this way would ease their relations with the whites, and the mediation of the mixed bloods, whose upbringing would now guarantee their fidelity to the cause of their masters, could sustain the natives' loyalties. The religious functions that had hitherto been entrusted to the chiefs of posts, who were expected to perform services and administer baptisms,¹⁴¹ should henceforward be entrusted to Anglican clergy. But until that became possible,¹⁴² and until the teachers could be appointed, instruction should immediately be organized with such personnel and means as the trading forts could call upon. The doctors attached to the various establishments could usefully be employed in this way.¹⁴³

In 1808 it was possible to engage a minister willing to act as schoolmaster, G. Geddes, and a teacher, W. Harper, the first for York Factory and the second for Fort Albany, and the Company's program went into operation,¹⁴⁴ to the great satisfaction of the officers who had already expressed to the Committee the gratitude its projects inspired in them.¹⁴⁵ The more ambitious among them at last saw the realization of their desire to preserve their children from the environment that seemed to lie in wait for them, both by the teaching of the religious principles of their own country and by the compulsory practice of their language, which the young mixed

bloods were all inclined to neglect when they were associated permanently with their native mothers.¹⁴⁶

In 1807 the chiefs of the posts asked the Company to make room in its educational program for their daughters, whom they were unwillingly obliged to put in the care of native servants. They proposed the establishment, a short distance from York Factory, of an institution where their children could be gathered together, away from the Indians, under the direction of a European woman charged with their moral and intellectual upbringing.¹⁴⁷ The project proved overambitious, and the Company, which had already experienced great difficulty in finding the schoolmasters it needed,¹⁴⁸ was unable to contemplate its execution. But at least the arrival of Harper and Geddes, and the simultaneous opening in 1808 of a modest school at Moose Factory, under the direction of D. Robertson,¹⁴⁹ assured a partial satisfaction of the personnel's demands. At York Factory, while the teaching of G. Geddes was bearing its first fruits, the commandant even undertook the construction of quarters intended to be used as both a school and a hostel for the children of employees.¹⁵⁰

It is true that these were modest beginnings. Not all establishments were as well served as York Factory. At Moose Factory, owing to the lack of space, the governor had to turn his bed-chamber into a classroom¹⁵¹ until a school could be built.¹⁵² Everywhere the process of instruction had to be adapted to the necessities of the frontier and to be carried on at the same time as the material tasks that were inseparable from life in a trading post. At Moose Factory we see the schoolmaster sometimes devoting himself to his teaching, sometimes serving as steward, sometimes hunting hares in the company of the eight children entrusted to his care,¹⁵³ supervising the packing of trade goods destined for the interior posts,¹⁵⁴ filleting fish,¹⁵⁵ felling trees, or preparing logs.¹⁵⁶ During the winter, the children spent the mornings with the native women gathering firewood, and devoted their afternoons to learning.¹⁵⁷ In the spring, trading for furs and the various activities connected with it became the universal occupation and took precedence over school work.¹⁵⁸ At Fort Albany, where the pupils were naturally more numerous, they often had to accompany their fathers on hunting expeditions. And there were some who became disgusted with the monotony of learning, and played truant to indulge in material activities.¹⁵⁹

At the same time, by no means all the children of employees

benefited from the chance of an education. Attendance in school was in no way obligatory,¹⁶⁰ and a glance at the lists of pupils regularly inscribed in the schools at Moose Factory and Fort Albany shows that it was mainly the sons of officers who attended these early establishments.¹⁶¹ A few sons of ordinary laborers figure there, but they form a tiny proportion.

In the conditions and in the setting where it was carried out, the work inaugurated by the Hudson's Bay Company was bound to remain incomplete and to encourage most of all those who, like William H. Cook, wished to ban unions with native women and preserve the "racial purity" of their group. We should not exaggerate the benefits which, in the long run, the young mixed bloods could gain from such training. As we shall soon have occasion to observe, in most cases their knowledge remained too elementary to give them access to the ranks which their fathers would have liked to see them attaining. Yet this educational process spread among a certain number of young people new conceptions that were more in conformity with civilized society and superior to those of the young Canadian Métis who were deprived of such facilities.

The process even benefited the Indians themselves. Admittedly only a tiny proportion of exceptional Indians replied to the officers' invitation to send their children to the schools in the posts, and in the beginning, like the natives of Lower Canada in the schools which the first missionaries opened on their behalf, these tended to desert the establishments where they were constrained to a life that was too sedentary for them.¹⁶² Yet many of these Home Guard Indians were in fact of mixed blood, the sons of the first employees in the forts; for the most part, primitive life had entirely reabsorbed them and stifled all thought of returning to the society of their fathers. Nevertheless, there are a few examples which show us that the benefit of education was not lost to all of them, and that the women who consented to submit to this elementary discipline were especially favored as spouses for white men.¹⁶³

Those officers whose careers developed in the interior of Rupert's Land were less favored than their colleagues on the shoreline of the Bay. The Company could not contemplate opening schools in all the forts it had scattered over its vast domain, and even if it did not forget in its educational program the children in posts that were still hardly more than dependencies of the coastal forts, it never thought of doing more than bringing them to the

latter locations when they were old enough to benefit from the instruction being organized there.

The records do not tell how far such plans were in fact carried out, but, to judge from the only list of pupils we have, that of Fort Albany, only the children of personnel from the coastal establishments seem to have been registered in their schools.¹⁶⁴ Many of the young people, denied the advantage of education and brought up among the native people, had no alternative but to efface themselves in the primitive milieu, like the son of Joseph Smith, who through the accidental death of his father, found himself entrusted to the care of his Indian mother and went to live among her tribe.¹⁶⁵ Yet Sir John Franklin, whose evidence is admittedly somewhat tardy,¹⁶⁶ does affirm that the sons of Orkney men who grew up in the interior posts received from their fathers, even though they lacked formal teaching, a kind of moral upbringing which the records do not suggest existed among the young Canadian Métis.¹⁶⁷

Even if one treats Franklin's view with certain reservations, it seems likely that the lesser degree of integration that took place between the Indians and the personnel of the British garrisons helped the young mixed bloods of Anglo-Saxon or Scottish origin to sustain more faithfully the principles of the white man's culture. The desire shown by a great number of the officers to keep their children away from the background of their Indian mothers; the temperament of the Orkney men and the Scots, which prevented them from making any great concessions to primitive culture; the means of acquiring the principles indispensable to their inclusion in civilized society which, in tune with its original policy of segregation, the London Committee offered to a certain number of young people; all these influences combined to save many of them from slipping entirely into the native way of life.

THE EARLY SITUATION OF THE CANADIAN MÉTIS

At the same period, in the absence of factors likely to sustain it at a civilized level, the opposing group (the Canadian Métis) became more clearly oriented toward the primitive tribes. Doubtless we must see in this development one of the circumstances that, in later years, would hinder the progress of the Canadian Métis and keep large numbers of them in an inferior social position. In the posts organized by the companies from Lower Canada, there was no ef-

fort to give the children the elements of any culture higher than what they acquired in associating with their native mothers, and the bourgeois who nurtured any ambition for their sons similar to that of the Hudson's Bay Company's officers had to rely on their own efforts. But those who were convinced of the utility of an education and the need for a moral upbringing made use in the interests of their children of all the resources at their disposal in the isolation in which they lived. Daniel Harmon dispensed to his own children and to the son of the bourgeois Archibald N. McLeod the elements of his own education,¹⁶⁸ while Roderick Mackenzie—proud of the library he had assembled in his distant residence of Fort Chipewyan¹⁶⁹ and later in the school at Terrebonne¹⁷⁰—could easily bear comparison with the most educated of the English company's chief factors. Many others—such as J. Macdonell,¹⁷¹ David Thompson,¹⁷² and John McLoughlin,¹⁷³ sent their children into American territory or to the St. Lawrence,¹⁷⁴ where the Terrebonne school played for the young Métis of the North West Company the same role as the South Ronaldshay school for the sons of Orkneymen.¹⁷⁵ Daniel Harmon sent his son into American territory at the age of three to assure him the education he considered necessary.¹⁷⁶ Here there was no official attempt to hinder the exodus of families into Canada. The more fortunate heads of posts could in this way remedy the neglect into which the children fell in the forts of the West, and prepare them for the exercise of functions needing a certain intellectual level.¹⁷⁷ The joy which many of them manifested at the creation of the colony of Assiniboia, where they saw an outlet for their families, showed how similar their wishes were to those expressed at the same period by the Hudson's Bay Company's officers.¹⁷⁸ Some of them established, for the benefit of the native or Métis spouses whom they abandoned in the country of the West, funds that enabled them to surmount the difficulties of existence and to live in "comfortable security."¹⁷⁹ But with few exceptions the bourgeois in charge of the Canadian posts were themselves Scottish¹⁸⁰ in origin, and the resemblance we observe between their views and those of the officers of the British company should not lead us to confuse the situations of the groups derived from the two nuclei of interbreeding we have distinguished.

The great majority of the [Canadian companies'] personnel was recruited among the French Canadians, and the numerical superiority of this group, together with the absence of any ten-

dency such as existed in the Hudson Bay posts to prevent or moderate the influence of the native milieu, explains the more complete submergence of the southern group of Métis in primitive society. The subordinate positions which they occupied gave the men from Lower Canada no scope for ambition. Their style of life, their state of mind, the ease with which they adopted the existence, and the very attitudes of the native people were bound to re-emerge in their Métis descendants. Guided in the same way by the upbringing they received from their Canadian fathers as well as by the influence of their native mothers, these children found themselves thrust in the direction of Indian society, and thus they paid the price for the assimilation that had drawn the Canadians so close to the primitive peoples.

Against the inclination of the Canadians to merge with the native people, the trading companies had no thought of reacting. Conscious of the profit it brought to their operations, they avoided issuing rules that would have conflicted with the ingrained inclinations of their personnel. They allowed the two races to mingle without hindrance, and remained indifferent to the fate of the young Métis who grew up, left to their mothers' care, far removed from the principles and ideals of civilized society. This almost universal way of bringing up Métis children had at least the advantage of preventing the onset of that sense of rootlessness which we have observed among those Scottish halfbreeds who, being the victims of an education according to white methods, were incapable of becoming absorbed into the native tribes among whom their fathers abandoned them. For the Canadian Métis this problem did not arise. If, at the expiration of his contract, the father refused to break the bonds of affection he had formed in the country of the West, he could either take his Métis family back with him to Lower Canada, or settle down near them in that Indian country whose way of life required of him no effort of adaptation since its modalities merely reproduced on a broader scale the voyageurs' existence. The children of the Canadians, whether they were engaged or freemen, were consequently raised in conditions that strikingly resembled the upbringing of young Indians. Their education was gained through a permanent contact with their natural environment and with the peoples who inhabited it. The freemen's dwellings, like the trading posts, were generally crowded with children for which their modest space could sometimes hardly provide room. There were even instances where

families were too numerous for the employees to be able to carry out their duties.¹⁸¹ But such children, raised in the care of their mothers,¹⁸² rarely grew up merely in the environs of the trading posts. The sons of the engaged men spent long months with their fathers in the prairie, entirely preoccupied, like nomad Indians, with hunting and freedom, removed from the regular discipline of the posts,¹⁸³ and sometimes abandoned to their own resources or to the supervision of their mothers, while the fathers undertook distant expeditions that involved protracted absences.¹⁸⁴ In marrying a Canadian Métis girl hardly fourteen years old, Daniel Harmon had to accept the extent to which she had already regressed toward the native milieu, her ignorance of white customs, her habitual use of her mother's tongue;¹⁸⁵ those of his children whom he could not shape by a white schooling inevitably adopted the use of that same language.

The concessions to primitive ways emerged spontaneously, as unavoidable consequences of the life-style of the Canadian employees and the company it led them to keep. Most of the sons of engaged men were brought up too near to the Indians not to surrender to an attraction they had felt since childhood. If on reaching adulthood they in turn embarked on a term of service to the trading companies, they would find their education was insufficient for them to aspire to the higher positions, so they were restricted to the subordinate roles their fathers had filled, which involved association with the native peoples. If we except the rare Métis like J. B. Cadotte, who was born in the region of the Great Lakes where he benefited from the educational possibilities offered by the relative proximity of Lower Canada¹⁸⁶ and was thus able to assume the direction of commercial establishments, the vast majority of the children of engaged men were destined for the tasks of voyageur¹⁸⁷ or guide,¹⁸⁸ for the occupations of interpreter¹⁸⁹ or hunter.¹⁹⁰ Their perfect knowledge of the land where they had been born would sometimes lead to their being entrusted with the transport of mail from one post to another.¹⁹¹ At other times they acted as cooks in the forts.¹⁹² In brief, they tended to be trapped in employments where education was unnecessary, and where responsibility did not count. These employments resembled those confided to the mixed blood personnel of the Hudson's Bay Company, with the difference that, being less privileged in their upbringing, the Canadian Métis attained less often the relatively high rank that the others could occasionally reach, and their usefulness

was less evident because of the great number of Canadians capable of filling the same roles. The modest situations of their fathers, the upbringing they had received, the more familiar nature of the relationships that were established between employees and natives in the Canadian posts, all hindered the young Métis from finding in the engagements he accepted any way of access to white society comparable to that which incorporation into the personnel of the trading posts offered his English-speaking congeners. When relations with the native peoples were especially difficult, the Métis became an indispensable element, whether he set out as an interpreter to win them over and prevent the possible effects of their ferocity,¹⁹³ or, in his capacity as hunter, provided the bourgeois with a security which his post would have lacked if it had been forced to rely on the services of the Indians.¹⁹⁴ Less hard to please than its rivals, the North West Company would occasionally put a Métis in charge of a secondary post without caring greatly about his scanty education or his intemperance, as it did with Jacco Finlay who, despite his [Scottish] ancestry, mingled with the Canadian Métis and became well known for the activity he showed in the exploration of routes to the Pacific.¹⁹⁵ In such positions, the young Métis was no more out of contact with the country and its people than if he had continued to live away from the fort; he did not let the new discipline change his way of life, and remained under the influence of his earliest education.

To an even greater extent, the children born of the fleeting relations between Canadians and squaws were destined to pure and simple absorption into the tribes among whom they were born.¹⁹⁶ The Indians appear to have admired the special hunting abilities and warlike qualities of these children of mixed origin,¹⁹⁷ which explains why some of them attained, like Le Bâtard Flamand among the Iroquois, or the Métis Richarville among the Miami,¹⁹⁸ the dignity of chiefs in native hierarchies.¹⁹⁹

Sometimes, however, the traders' descendants, however illustrious their ancestry, seem to have vanished among the ranks of the Indian world, like the granddaughter of Pierre de Rocheblave, one of the most celebrated partners of the North West Company, whom the missionaries discovered many years later, entirely submerged in a milieu whose way of living she had adopted without retaining any stronger link with the civilized world than the vague memory of her distant origins.²⁰⁰ When the trader Jacques Porlier in 1793 encountered in Wisconsin the French Métis woman he

eventually married, she had—after being abandoned by her father—renounced all her attachments to the white people and, in the company of her Indian mother, adopted the nomadic life of the Menominee.²⁰¹

In the families of the freemen regression was even more rapid, for the young Métis knew no other existence than that of hunting big game or fur-bearing animals. If he acquired a few notions about sedentary living in the nascent colonies that clustered around the trading posts, around watering places, or in the favorite haunts of the bison herds, he practised by choice a perpetually nomadic existence. The distance from the trading posts at which many of these children lived, sometimes for several years,²⁰² imprinted on them the characteristics of the native and his ways of living. Though he shared the activities of his father, the young Métis received no other education than that which he owed to experience and to the lessons of his mother. When the freeman assumed responsibility for provisioning a trading post, his children would accompany him in the hunt like a tribe of nomads.²⁰³ If he settled by a lake or in an area of rapids where fish were abundant, the children would fish beside him and thus contribute to the community's subsistence. Nearly always, it is the same tableau we are offered: the freeman had no other assistants than his children.²⁰⁴ Whether he sailed the rivers of the Shield on his frail craft,²⁰⁵ or traversed the prairie with his carts or travois, the family followed him, nourishing itself on whatever resources—wild berries, game, or fish—it found on its way. Those who went to winter in areas of the Rocky Mountains where food was scarce and difficult to obtain would often travel with their children, who did not shrink from the length of the journey or the precarious nature of existence on the way.²⁰⁶

In this manner the characters of these various categories of Métis were molded in a life of nomadic freedom, and in contact with the Indian women who had given them birth and with the society such women represented. To what extent were their characters actually distinguishable from those of the Indians, or identifiable with those of the Canadians? The rare and scanty allusions one sometimes encounters are insufficient to establish any definite conclusion. It appears as though these young Métis, whose only school was nature, drew from it the powers of endurance shown by their fathers, the acceptance of privation that was inherent in the troubled existence of the nomad hunter, the qualities of obser-

vation that engraved on their memories not only the least details of the land they traversed but also the mentality and the habits of its wild animals—all the qualities that enabled them to excel in the role of hunter or guide; Daniel Harmon said of them that they were "blessed with a retentive memory."²⁰⁷ There was nothing in all this that differentiated them from either their Canadian fathers or from the Indians, or identified them more with one than the other. It seems merely that they owed to the example of their fathers, whose degree of activity the trading companies regarded as greater than that of the native people, the qualities lacking in the Indians. It is impossible to say whether these qualities were diluted in them as a result of the indolence latent in the native temperament which may have been communicated to the Métis children through the upbringing they received from their mothers. Here and there one encounters unfavorable evidence in this respect.²⁰⁸ Yet, if one can judge from their participation in hunting expeditions to the more desolate sections of the Rockies, where it was impossible to count on the assistance of the Indians, they cannot yet have lost the qualities of energy their fathers displayed.²⁰⁹ The natives whose views of the young Métis are recorded by Alexander Henry seem to have reached a very similar conclusion, and several other judgments, unfortunately too scattered to authorize an emphatic generalization, offer additional corroboration.²¹⁰

Doubtless it would also seem logical to assume that the contacts and training they owed to their mothers, by transmitting to them habits of thought and language identical to those of primitive people, put them in a better position to influence the natives. But in this also the texts are almost silent, and one's deductions can only be uncertain. This would continue to be the case until the Métis as a group had reached the period of maturity and had been forced to manifest, by responsible actions, the effects of their heredity or, at least, of an upbringing that took the place of heredity. It is enough, on the strength of subsequent evidence, that as a result of their origin and upbringing, many of the Métis possessed a genuine ascendancy over the native people, and a familiarity with primitive man that inspired the latter's confidence,²¹¹ and would make the Métis, in missions requiring close links with the natives, equally useful and dangerous to the trading companies. No less plausible would be the conclusion that they were better adapted even than their fathers to the life of the West, and more responsive to the appeal of the primitive land in which they were

born and whose ways of living were the only ones they knew. The young Métis who went to Quebec under the guidance of François Florimcaux, refused to enter civilized life there, and hastened on his own initiative to return to the vastness of the West, offers convincing evidence²¹² whose limited nature does not lessen its value, since the same law was also made manifest among certain descendants of Orkneymen,²¹³ whose fathers had never felt the same attachment as the Canadians to the primitive regions. The need for freedom and a nomadic existence, it appears, took hold of them from their earliest childhood and entered into them like a true heredity, to abandon which would have meant doing violence to the nature they had in this way acquired.

Can one accuse them of especially intemperate habits, as Daniel Harmon²¹⁴ insinuates as if he referred to a situation by no means isolated,²¹⁵ and as much later evidence demonstrates? It could hardly have been otherwise, given the conditions in which they grew up, as much under the tutelage of the Indians as of the Canadians, among whom intemperance constituted an undeniable shortcoming. Finally, did they present a nature more savage than the whites, which might be interpreted as the mark of Indian affinities they owed to their birth or derived from their upbringing? Manifestations of this tendency are hinted here and there in the documents of this early period. The example of a young child shooting arrows at his Canadian father before leaving him to follow the mother who was taking him back to the tribe would certainly appear to be the expression of a nature dominated by primitive reflexes.²¹⁶ Sometimes the Métis were chosen as the individuals best qualified to cope with tribes whose aggressive mentality made them fearful to Europeans,²¹⁷ and occasional acts of violence and murder were attributed to them.²¹⁸ But the example offered by the Canadians and Highlanders in the exasperation of the struggles that set them against each other offers an excuse for such acts of violence and makes it difficult to consider them as peculiar to the Métis.²¹⁹ It would seem, on the contrary, in this early period, that the Métis did not in the absence of provocation to violence display an instinctive reaction comparable in ferocity to that of the nomad peoples of the prairie. It would even seem that on the whole the whites were more given to excesses.

In personality the Métis showed strong resemblances to the Indians only when they became entirely submerged in the ranks of the primitive tribes which, as we have seen, was the case of some

of the freeman families whose lives were carried on among the peoples with whom they became identified. In noting such promiscuous situations, Alexander Henry found little difference between the two groups. He noted merely the more arrogant attitude of Métis and freemen toward the whites, whose ascendancy they denied and whose superiority they refused to accept with the appearance of humility shown by many of the Indians.²²⁰ In the Indian war parties the Métis participated more fully than the freemen, and suffered the hostility of opposing tribes to the same extent as the Indians with whom they allied themselves.²²¹

Apart from the instances of total fusion, in which his personality was entirely subordinated to the native milieu, the real distinctiveness of the Métis—difficult by its very nature to perceive—seems to have lurked in that very absence of a moral training which he owed to his dual origins. This uncertainty, many examples of which appeared in later periods, had certainly emerged in the early stages: when we perceive its obvious manifestations, these clearly represent the culmination of a process whose beginnings must be sought in the very nature of the education offered to the young Canadian Métis. This left him devoid of any solidly rooted culture that might have offered even the slightest resistance to external influences.

Among the mixed bloods of Scottish origin, this irresolution was less marked, if one ignores those individuals whom the primitive life absorbed without their being sufficiently prepared to offer any resistance. Here it was a matter of the fathers not merging with the native peoples and thus maintaining more immediate contacts with their own culture, a tendency reinforced by the Company's official policy and its attempts, however incomplete they may have been, to hinder the excessively powerful influence of the primitive environment on life in the forts.

The Canadian Métis, on the other hand, whether he was the son of an engaged man or a freeman, himself employed in the service of a post, suffered from the excessive concessions his father had made to the native milieu. In his eager acceptance of the primitive way of life, the Canadian had abandoned the foundations of civilized culture, had denied the principles of his moral upbringing, and even if he accepted the superstitions of the native peoples along with their ways of life and thinking, he at the same time failed to understand and imbibe the moral aspects of their culture and the discipline it called for. In consequence the education he

could give the young Métis was only a weakened and profoundly altered image of his own native culture. It was reduced to little more than vague notions of Christianity tinged with superstition, while the Indian woman in her turn transmitted to her Métis children only the husk of a culture that was gravely disturbed by association with the whites, and whose disciplines—which had once given the tribe its cohesion—were in her own case dissolved by the union she had contracted with a Canadian.²²² The reconciliation which both sides attempted to establish between their respective civilizations ended merely in a series of concessions and reciprocal sacrifices, which communicated to the child only the fragile rudiments of an education and, while orienting him to a way of life nearer that of the native than that of the white man, assured him nothing better than a combination of two incomplete cultures without any firm foundation. It was logical that his moral development should feel the effects of this situation, that his will should thus become weakened, that his sense of honor should be diminished,²²³ and that in the absence of any clearly defined directing principle, he should have been destined to suffer the ascendancy of conflicting influences.

In the period we are discussing, the weaknesses of the Métis as a group were not yet defined as sharply as they would become later on. In many individuals among them, as we have observed, the urge to work, for example, does not appear to have fallen away, and the diligence which they displayed in the execution of the tasks entrusted to them by the heads of the posts make it clear that their fathers' qualities survived among them. Yet we may with some justification admit that many of them had already fallen victim to that moral laxity which Sir John Franklin mentions at a period relatively near to that we are considering, even if we put aside as distorted by evident hostility William Auld's unfavorable judgment of the Canadian Métis,²²⁴ accept with caution Alexander Henry's descriptions of nomadic groups that were hardly distinguishable from the Indians,²²⁵ and stress, once again, that some of the Canadians, even when they married Indian women, raised their children along lines singularly reminiscent of the practice in Lower Canada. In many cases, indeed, there was nothing to prevent the children from declining into abandonment; in the spectacle of the freedom of behavior among the Indians, in the easy ways of many of the Canadians, whether freemen or engaged men, in the weak and distorted vestiges of cultures that were taught to

them, there was nothing to awaken in them the quality of resistance. Indeed, their weakness of will, even if it did not find open means of expression in the simple and eventless life they led in the North West, was certainly a clearly marked element in their personalities, and the difficulties which emerged in later years, at the time of the adventure in Assiniboia, were enough to demonstrate the extreme docility of the Métis in giving obedience to individuals who recognized their essential weakness.

Their ill-defined status, which became more evident as time went on, could in the last resort be evaded, at least by the young Métis women, through entering into marriage with the whites. When the North West Company in 1806 informed its employees that henceforward it forbade the maintenance of native wives within the trading forts, it formally exempted the Métis daughters of its personnel,²²⁶ and these were thus able to benefit in the same way as the mixed-blood girls of Scottish origin, from the possibilities of social elevation to be found in such unions. Among the Canadians, nevertheless, the possibilities were more limited than among the other group, for the marriages most likely to free them from their situation were those they might conclude with the bourgeois or higher ranking officers, who were naturally inclined to choose their wives among women of Scottish descent.²²⁷ If a few women of Métis descent, like Daniel Harmon's wife, succeeded in contracting alliances of this kind, most of them had merely the opportunity to marry a simple employee or a freeman;²²⁸ such marriages were no more than temporary solutions, since the children that came of them were mostly destined to marry into their own group, if not among the natives, or, at best, in the case of young women, to enter into a union with some employee or Canadian freeman whose way of life hardly differed from that of the Indians.

At the same time, as we have observed in the British posts, the recurrent problem for the young men lay in the fact that their choice in marriage was limited to Indian women or to women of their own group. Logically, their preferences might be expected to lean toward the latter but it would be difficult to determine how far the Métis group actually turned in on itself in a kind of endogamy whose result would prevent the injection of outside blood.²²⁹ Certainly many marriages continued to take place between Métis and Indian women, and it was the Métis girls, limiting themselves more narrowly to the circle of families of mixed

ancestry, who contributed more than the young men to the stabilization of the group. Already, we begin to see the appearance of families whose very names evoke even today in the West the race of "mixed blood": the Desjarlais, the Vandals, the Cardinals, the Beaugards, the Dumonts, the Beaulieus, the Deschamps, whose founders, whether employees or freemen, sometimes wandered according to the needs of the service, but in other cases began to settle around the posts or in areas which later, like Deer Lake or Lake Winnipeg, became favored concentration points for Métis families.²⁵⁰

Between such men a solidarity had already established itself, a community of both life and origin, which probably extended to the two branches of the people of mixed blood. This was not only because the descendants of the personnel of the two companies were often neighbors or because the freemen often hired out their services to the Hudson's Bay Company, but even more because, in each of the two camps, the presence of a few representatives of the other group prevented a rigid division between individuals of Canadian and Scottish descent. The latter often adopted the French language, which was dominant because of the numerical superiority of the Canadians, and despite their names—which even today betray their origins—many of them had no difficulty in identifying themselves with the Canadian Métis.

The ethnic diversity of the Métis race, which also included, apart from the two dominant elements, the prisoners captured by Indians on the frontiers of the American colonies and transplanted by the chance migrations of their captors into Canadian territory,²⁵¹ did not in the beginning diminish the good relations and sense of fellowship that resulted from similar ways of living and similar affinities. But this emergent fellowship was far from leading to a real cohesion, and even less did it result in the formation of a sentiment of nationality common to the group as a whole. Their dispersion was too widespread, their ambitions too limited to immediate realities, their material life as yet too peaceful and too little threatened for them to become conscious of the strength they could represent or to experience the feeling that, between the whites and the Indians, they formed a distinct "nation," called on to defend its own interests and to play in the history of the West a special role, in conformity with the destinies its dual ancestry might assign to it.

It was with the appearance of sedentary colonization in the western plains that the Métis group, which had no history during the eighteenth century, stepped on to the stage and rapidly acquired the national consciousness which it had hitherto lacked. But no sooner had events called the group to a clearly defined role than the weaknesses were revealed of a personality whose elements were in many ways alien to each other.

PART FOUR

THE AWAKENING
OF A NATIONAL
CONSCIOUSNESS

CHAPTER NINE

THE ENTERPRISE OF ASSINIBOIA

On 23 September 1811, the *Edward and Ann* under the command of Captain Gull, followed by the *Eddystone* which arrived two days later, dropped anchor in sight of York Factory, and disembarked the first group of seventy to eighty men who had been sent to prepare on the banks of the Red River for the arrival of the families of settlers who were to be sent there in the following year.¹ The Scot Miles Macdonell, who commanded the expedition as governor of the future colony of Assiniboia, was provided by the promoter of the enterprise, the Earl of Selkirk, with instructions laying down the boundaries of the territory to be assigned to the settlers, detailing the first tasks of clearing and cultivation, and specifying the policy that should be followed in relation to the native peoples.²

LORD SELKIRK'S PROJECTS

The plan whose fulfilment these men were to prepare had been developed by Thomas Douglas, Earl of Selkirk, as a result of seeing the misery that in the eighteenth century was devastating the Scottish Highlands. The cause of this misery Selkirk found in the substitution for the older form of rural economy, in which holdings of small extent would include a mountain slope devoted to cattle rearing and an area of cultivated valley land, of large estates devoted entirely to grazing. Gradually adopting the mercenary attitudes of the English magnates, the Scottish landlords abandoned their traditional custom of sustaining on their lands, as a sign of their power, large retinues of small tenants (or crofters). They deliberately reduced the number of these crofters to increase the profits they could make from rearing sheep³ on the lands that had

ceased to be the collective property of the clan and were now regarded as belonging to the head of the clan himself.⁴

Unable to meet the landlords' demands and pay the rents he now so harshly demanded, the tenants were subjected to ruthless eviction procedures and whole families were expelled from the lands they had cultivated for long periods. Certain communities—such as Clyne and Kildonan—were especially affected: the development of grazing there had resulted, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, in the eviction of more than a hundred families whose pride as Highlanders and whose habit of considering these lands their property prevented them from submitting without resistance to practices that were so remote from the conditions of life they had once known.⁵ Revolts broke out against the sheep farmers,⁶ but the resistance was quickly broken and between 1809 and 1819 some 450,000 acres of land were taken away from the hereditary tenants.⁷ Exasperated and impoverished by the falling prices of the products of his soil and by the growth of his rents,⁸ the tenant whose personal loyalties had formerly united him with the head of the clan, now saw him as nothing better than an egotistical landlord, concerned only with the profits he could wring from the soil, and too often absent to inspire any feelings of affection or fellowship.⁹ As the trader D. Cameron put it, "the unprincipled of France destroyed the rich in order to plunder them and the unprincipled rich in the Highlands squeeze and starve the poor in order to get more money."¹⁰

For those men who had been humiliated by this degrading situation into which circumstances had plunged them after the glorious age of warlike feudalism,¹¹ Lord Selkirk could see no other solution than an exodus to distant lands. The process of emigration had in fact begun by the middle of the eighteenth century: between 1763 and 1775 more than 30,000 Highlanders deserted their native land, some for the industrial towns of the Lowlands and others for the American continent.¹² Soon, the wave of misery had reached the Western Isles, and there again the exodus of a population that had become too numerous for its resources seemed the only remedy for a growing poverty.¹³ Convinced that the very security of Britain called for the removal of these elements who could not be reconciled with the new economy and the social changes accompanying it, the Earl of Selkirk undertook to divert the flow of emigration toward the British possessions. In this way he hoped to prevent the loss of a population that otherwise would go to enrich

the American republic, where Highlanders were tending to pick as their places of settlement New York State and North Carolina.¹⁴ The increase of Highlanders on Canadian soil would help to limit the growth of the American population, whose progress Lord Selkirk had been observing uneasily.¹⁵ Seeing that these rural people were otherwise condemned to be submerged in the proletariat of the great manufacturing centres of the Lowlands or to lose in the United States the most distinctive of their characteristics,¹⁶ he planned to resettle them in such a way that they would retain their framework of traditional occupations and be able to make full use of their special abilities while taking up the harsh life of pioneers on the Red River. For the Highlanders were so accustomed to carrying out a meagre kind of farming on desolate land, to the hard existence of mountain peoples, and to the severity of the Highland climate,¹⁷ that they would experience no difficulty in accommodating themselves to the problems that would inevitably mark the first efforts at colonization in Manitoba. Their frugal habits would prepare them for the shortages of the first years, and their traditions of pride and independence, liberated from the obligations that burdened them in their fatherland, would blossom freely in the pristine plains of the Canadian West. For them, as for the colonists of Lower Canada, the life of the frontier could offer neither surprise nor disappointment.

It was in this way that Lord Selkirk, going beyond the speculative concerns that had first directed his attention to the plight of the Highlands, ended by formulating a plan of colonization, which gave concrete expression to his patriotic ideal and in which he saw an effective remedy for the troubles of his native land.¹⁸ But, if it is impossible to cast suspicion on the sincerity of Selkirk's patriotic intentions, if there is no doubt that he engaged in this enterprise with the intention of saving his fellow countrymen from imminent ruin, it is hardly likely that the Hudson's Bay Company, when it allowed him to realize his project through granting the vast territory of the Red River, was interested only in the altruistic aspects of his plan for colonization and had not been attracted by the multiple benefits the project might offer to its commercial operations.

In fact, Lord Selkirk's colonizing plans opened up to the Hudson's Bay Company the prospect of quickly terminating to its advantage the conflict in which it had become engaged with the North West Company on the day when, going over to the offen-

sive on the trails of the interior, it had presented the latter organization with a competitor whom its interests called upon it to eliminate. In establishing a settlement colony on the banks of the Red River, Selkirk created a refuge that could gather in the Canadians engaged by the rival Company and their Métis families. In this way a kind of manpower pool would be organized from which the Hudson's Bay Company could draw the hands it needed for its service, so that it might eventually be able to give up the practice of drawing entirely on the population of the Orkneys or of Scottish territory.¹⁹ But it would also open up a market that could provide the supplies of food which the Company needed for its posts and its brigades. Situated near the areas in which the Company operated, the colony could free its provisioning from close and costly dependence either on the British homeland or on the St. Lawrence valley, itself too far away and too difficult to reach by a route that was, in any case, pre-empted by the North West Company. For the Anglo-Saxons, the fertile Red River valley would become the equivalent of Lower Canada. It would neutralize the advantages which the Montreal merchants had so capably exploited. Even better, it would quickly disrupt the whole method of trading which they had so rationally organized. Not only would the new colony of Assiniboia provide the establishments of the interior, and even the coastal posts, with grain, meat, and flour which at present were brought there by the sea route through Hudson Bay,²⁰ but, through the attraction it could not fail to exercise on the North West Company's personnel, it would have a chance of provoking defections in its ranks that would weaken its position and correspondingly strengthen that of the rival company.²¹ Above all, it would narrow the Montreal traders' field of operation in the Red River area, since the Indians, because of the closeness of the outlet the colony offered them and the more advantageous conditions Selkirk suggested should be presented to them,²² would inevitably become the clients of the Hudson's Bay Company. By the threat which this enterprise suggested of a rapid extension of settlement beyond the limits at present assigned to it, the very existence of the North West Company seemed doomed to annihilation in the near future.²³ Finally, such a concentration of people in the heart of a district where the bison herds abounded would consume the provisions of fat and pemmican which the Canadians customarily extracted from them, and, in the

last resort, would jeopardize their ingenious mechanism for keeping the fur brigades supplied.²⁴

Simon M'Gillivray summed up the uneasiness which this cluster of unfavorable circumstances aroused in him when he wrote in April 1812, to the partners of the North West Company in London, that he would oppose with all his power these projects whose achievement would be "fatal to the very existence of their trade."²⁵ At the same time, it was the prospect of the benefits which Selkirk's program offered the Hudson's Bay Company that persuaded its Committee to cede to the Scottish nobleman, for the derisory sum of ten shillings, the full ownership "in fee simple" of the 116,000 acres of land that henceforward would form "the colony of Assiniboia."²⁶

Seen in this way, Lord Selkirk's plan fitted in closely with the work of reorganizing the Hudson's Bay Company which in broad outline his brother-in-law, Andrew Colville, had traced out in 1810 and which had been accepted as a means of breathing into the somewhat sluggish organism of the English company a new spirit and a greater vigor of action.²⁷ Already, the North West Company had been able to assess the first effects of the improvement its adversaries had achieved in both methods and personnel. The program conceived by Selkirk now gave the Anglo-Saxon enterprises an added strength and a new success factor: when it had achieved maturity, the Red River Colony, by allowing them to find both their personnel and their provisions on the spot, would make the struggle between the two companies too unequal for the Canadian organization, which was forced to import its men and merchandise at great cost from Lower Canada, to hold on to that supremacy in the West which it had so long maintained.

Moreover, Lord Selkirk's enterprise threatened to destroy the structure of legality which the Canadian Jurisdiction Act of 1803 had provided for the country of the West, and of which the North West Company had habitually made use to further the aim of eliminating its rival.²⁸ The foundation of the colony of Assiniboia would in effect introduce into the West the civil and criminal jurisdiction which the Hudson's Bay Company retained over Rupert's Land according to the terms of the Royal Charter of 1670. By its act of cession to Lord Selkirk, the Company transferred that jurisdiction to the colony which would be established on the banks of the Red River, where the Governor and his Council would be au-

thorized to exercise it according to the principles of British law.²⁹ The North West Company would henceforward lose the benefit of the legal accommodations that had allowed it to give free rein to its policy of violence. Furthermore, under a new system of law, the Montreal traders would not be allowed to continue the distributions of alcohol that were decimating the native populations; Selkirk was already committed to fighting this practice, in anticipation of being able to proscribe it entirely through the elimination of the competition that brought trading companies into conflict.³⁰ Finally the voluntary transfer by the Hudson's Bay Company of a vast portion of the domain granted by its charter of foundation would in effect confirm the right of proprietorship which it claimed over Rupert's Land. Undoubtedly this event would be the prelude to a stricter application of the prerogatives included in the charter and a more effective occupation of the territory which it covered.

The North West Company could not accept without reacting against it a development whose success, at a moment when it was showing manifest signs of weakness and when its adversaries were preparing to storm its stronghold in Athabasca, would have meant its ruin: it was not without reason that Simon M'Gillivray resolved to prevent the realization of Lord Selkirk's projects. Thus it was against the enterprise of Assiniboia, the tangible expression of the new policy of their enemies, that the North Westers concentrated their rage. After having tried in vain to paralyse the recruitment of Scottish settlers and to discourage by means of defamatory articles in the press the possibility of families emigrating from Lower Canada toward the rich lands of the Red River,³¹ they launched against the newborn colony an offensive whose violence was in keeping with their traditional policy and whose bitterness seemed justified by the importance of the stake for which they were playing. They were helped by a number of circumstances which they cleverly exploited but which in the end fell short of bringing about total ruin of the Red River Colony.

THE EARLY DIFFICULTIES

Material difficulties emerged right at the beginning, as soon as the settlers arrived on the shores of Hudson Bay. The slow voyage, whose duration of sixty-one days was one of the longest on record,³² with the consequence that they disembarked late in the sea-

son, prevented the vanguard that year from reaching in the autumn of 1811 the banks of the Red River, where they were supposed to prepare quarters for the families expected in the following year. In a way, according to Superintendent William Auld, this may have been "fortunate," since a too early arrival would have uselessly overcrowded York Factory with men who were incapable, in the absence of the garrison that was away trading in the interior, of navigating the waterways of the Shield.³³ Yet it immobilized, at the beginning of a winter that would be especially rigorous, these "unexpected" and inexperienced "visitors"³⁴ who lived for long months in the temporary shelters they had to put up outside the post, where space was too restricted to admit them.³⁵

Then began the customary ordeals of the cold country, as hard for these newcomers as they had been for the personnel of the earliest garrisons. Many of them were ignorant of the precautions required by the rigor of the climate, and this exposed them to serious injuries;³⁶ the construction of the dwellings they had to improvise, the preparation of logs for them, the work of protecting the roofs against the cold, created difficulties compounded by the use of tools whose badly tempered steel could not resist the action of frost;³⁷ most important, these men lacked the training that would have enabled them to feed themselves through hunting,³⁸ while the scanty migrations of caribou that year in any case reduced the chances of getting fresh meat. Already, in 1810-11, big game had been scarce on the shoreline.³⁹ The lack of it grew worse in 1811-12.⁴⁰ The same thing happened in the two subsequent years,⁴¹ and then, because of the presence of women and children, the situation became extremely grave.⁴² Scurvy, which William Auld had feared in the winter of 1810-11, was not slow to make its appearance,⁴³ causing discouragement and irritation among the men. Many of them, trusting in the excessively generous promises that had been lavished on them to counter the intrigues of the North West Company, had expected to find in Rupert's Land the most easy and comfortable living conditions.⁴⁴ Others seem to have been disappointed by the total absence of any social hierarchy in this world of primitive nature where men of all ranks mingled.⁴⁵ Finally, most of the colonists, divided by religion and places of origin, developed irreconcilable hostilities, which pitted the "honest" Highlanders against the Orkneymen or against those "infidels" of Irishmen,⁴⁶ being — wrote William Auld — "averse to any

connection with these people which no doubt their difference in Religious view contributes to confirm."⁴⁷

In a situation of such deep divisions, the disappointments caused by the material difficulties of existence led to a state of perpetual agitation which at times degenerated into ventable riots: the worst broke out among the Irish, and Captain Macdonell was on this occasion unable to impose his authority as governor.⁴⁸

The same trials marked the arrival in 1813 of the families of settlers intended to reinforce the contingents that had preceded them: decimated by sickness during their voyage, and incapable on landing of continuing to the Red River, they had to winter near Fort Churchill, in makeshift shelters where they underwent the sufferings of the arctic winter in an atmosphere of constant acrimony and rancor sustained by the disagreements between the Scots and the Irish.⁴⁹

In actual fact, these disappointment and dissatisfactions—in so far as they were confined to the shoreline of Hudson Bay—had only a slight effect on the colony's destinies. It was more serious when the first contingent had reached the territory of Assiniboia, where the North Westers were awaiting them, ready to take advantage of any sign of faltering they might betray. The same material difficulties that they had experienced on the coast at once assailed the colony and impeded its progress; the dissensions that had weakened them, the mutinous spirit that had arisen in their ranks, appeared once again, giving Lord Selkirk's enemies the impression that his initiative was too fragile to resist their assault. It was August 1812 when Governor Miles Macdonell reached the confluence of the Red River and the Assiniboine with the most vigorous of his men.⁵⁰ Two months later, on 27 October, the colony took shape with the arrival of the first families, seventy men, women, and children, whom the Company's ships had newly brought from Europe.⁵¹ With his rational and perhaps excessively meticulous outlook, Lord Selkirk set out to spare his colony from a disorganized beginning, and for this purpose he had planned the construction of trails to link Red River with Hudson Bay,⁵² organized the despatch of artisans capable of meeting basic needs, undertaken the formation of an initial herd of sheep and provided for the arrival of the first heads of cattle.⁵³ But such precautions were not sufficient to resolve all the problems that the country would soon present to the settlers, and could make up for the experience which most of them lacked.⁵⁴ Apart from the difficulties

which the men encountered in clearing and seeding the ground with the few implements at their disposal,⁵⁵ and the fact that they had to delay sowing their winter wheat until October when—for lack of better tools—they prepared the ground with ordinary hoes,⁵⁶ the settlers suffered particularly from lack of food. Although Macdonell hastened to send men into the region of Pembina, in the hope of finding in that area of abundant bison herds the supplies needed for the families that continued to arrive,⁵⁷ the ravages of the autumn fires and the extreme mildness of the winter sent the animals wandering toward the parts of the prairie that were clear of snow, and in this way his hopes were frustrated.⁵⁸ The local Saulteaux Indians, whose economy was nearer that of the forest peoples than that of the prairie tribes, did not know how to use buffalo pounds. Consequently they were unable to follow the animals and feed the settlers gathered at Pembina.⁵⁹ And when in spring the herds came near again, the men were no better able to assure their families' sustenance, since they were unable to transport their cargoes of meat over the frozen ground.⁶⁰ The absence of personnel accustomed to the way of life of the western country and trained in the use of the axe and in woodworking notably delayed the building of the houses meant to receive the settlers' families. These had to be content, in the cold Red River atmosphere, with tepees which they modelled on native habitations, and it was only in the last days of November that they were able to move into the cluster of log huts that became known as Fort Daer.⁶¹

Now further difficulties appeared: the insufficiency of clothes, the absence of proper shoes and the impossibility of providing them owing to the lack of leather,⁶² the perils to which the little herd of sheep they had brought to the Red River was constantly exposed from the presence of half-wild dogs, "more dangerous than wolves,"⁶³ and finally the insidious hostility of the North West Company, whose men did their best, under a pretence of affability and compassion, to sow discouragement among the colonists and exaggerate in their eyes the dangers of their situation.⁶⁴ The result, among settlers who were already worked up by their own dissensions, was a serious discontent which showed itself in refusal to obey and in manifest ill will against Miles Macdonell, and encouraged the North Westers to foresee the coming dislocation of the whole enterprise.⁶⁵

The situation hardly improved with the appearance of good

weather. On the lots, limited by the course of the river to narrow frontages (four acres), that were hastily apportioned to them the settlers undertook the agricultural labor from which they hoped to gather provisions for the winter.⁶⁶ This led to new disappointments; the seed was of poor quality; the tillage, almost entirely done by hoe, was insufficient, and the wheat, whether of the winter or the spring variety, gave poor results on that virgin soil infested by insects and rodents, while the crops of barley and maize were too meagre to offer any compensation.⁶⁷ Fortunately, fishing and hunting made up to an extent for these shortages.⁶⁸ If a few of the settlers worked with energy and conviction, many showed only indifference; they "cared not in general how little they wrought or in what manner it may turn out."⁶⁹ With the return of winter, almost the whole little colony had to set off once again for Pembina.⁷⁰ There its members lived more easily than the previous year, well provided with meat by the freemen who agreed to provide their services and succeeded in bringing in provisions in spite of the remoteness of the herds.⁷¹ The settlers even organized, as if they were beginning to take root in their new environment, entertainments that alleviated the monotony of the winter days.⁷² Eventually spring returned. It was then only, with the arrival in June 1814 of the group of Kildonan settlers, that the colony entered into a more promising phase of consolidation.

Not having been able to reach Red River in the autumn of 1813, this new contingent of thirty-one men and twenty women, animated by an energy that had too often been lacking in their predecessors, had left York Factory as soon as the rivers were open to navigation. They began work immediately. The soil was thoroughly turned, and on the brown and compact land beside the Red River a rich harvest of potatoes appeared. The surveyor Peter Fidler traced out for the newcomers their fields of a hundred acres each, stretching out like ribbons whose narrow base, now reduced to three acres to avoid the excessive spread of the colony, allowed the houses to be built close together along the river and the settlers to help each other in difficulties⁷³ and to exploit fully the resources which the river provided. The conditions that dictated the concentrations of lots along the St. Lawrence imposed here a similar distribution of holdings.

In August and September, newcomers arrived to reinforce the first contingent of Kildonan settlers. Their appearance brought to about 200 the number of colonists gathered on the shores of the

Red River.⁷⁴ A few of the more enterprising among them began to build spacious dwellings, thus expressing their attachment to the homeland they were making for themselves in the territory of Assiniboia. J. McLean, whose zeal was evident from the earliest days, refused to join the exodus of the other families to Pembina, and over the winter of 1813-14 established his home near the Forks, where he lived with his family on the produce of his land and his hunting.⁷⁵ Peter Fidler was especially qualified by his endurance and ingenuity for the life of a pioneer, and in the summer of 1844, assuming the temporary direction of the colony, he erected buildings, enclosed within a wooden palisade,⁷⁶ large enough to include a granary, a sheepfold, a stable, and pigsties, as well as living quarters. At the same time, work continued on the building of Fort Douglas, a new stronghold of the Hudson's Bay Company, placed near the junction of the Red River and the Assiniboine, facing the site of Fort Gibraltar, which was occupied by the North West Company; it protected the colony that developed upstream from the Forks.⁷⁷ Finally, agriculture in its turn recovered from the uncertainties which at first had paralysed it. Wheat, barley, oats, maize, buckwheat, and potatoes had been sown in sufficient quantity and had benefited from weather conditions favorable enough to promise yields that for the first time would meet the colony's need for subsistence.⁷⁸ In addition, having recovered from their initial confusion, the settlers were familiarizing themselves with the ways of hunting bison, and by experience daily gathered they were bringing new solutions to the problem of supplies.

Meanwhile, underneath the apparent optimism of the population, which was reflected in Miles Macdonell's letters to Lord Selkirk, the symptoms of discontent lingered and the dissensions of the early days reappeared. The Irish remained turbulent and undisciplined. The Highlanders showed themselves to be difficult and suspicious. Their clan prejudices prevented any solidarity among them,⁷⁹ and the situation was worsened by the absence of a Gaelic-speaking pastor, by the lack of a school for their children, and by the feeling of relative isolation which some of them retained in a country their first experience of which had disappointed them.⁸⁰ The opening of a school at the end of 1814 was not enough to overcome the resentment of those who, because there was not enough room in the boats, had been unable to transport their effects to Red River.⁸¹ At the same time, there were several deser-

tions among the men who had been engaged as indentured servants, and, according to the terms of their contracts, were expected to put in several years of wage labor for the community before they could gain title to their lands.⁸² If the settlers who arrived in June 1814 compelled Macdonell's admiration by their excellent conduct, those who joined them in September were indocile and turbulent, opposed to any idea of serious settlement, and even, according to Macdonell, ready to ally themselves with the colony's enemies.⁸³ They may well have harbored resentment against Lord Selkirk for giving too favorable a description of the advantages the country offered them and thus leading them into illusions that reality belied.⁸⁴ Some of them, who had to leave their country alone, without friends or families, were bound to experience in these distant regions the depressing effects of isolation and to forget the poverty which had caused their exile as they concentrated on the disappointments of their present situation.⁸⁵ To the cleverly camouflaged propaganda of the North Westers such individuals offered a soil it was easy to exploit in the hope of detaching from the colony a portion of its strength.⁸⁶ To reconcile these malcontents by dissolving their grudges and thus preventing defections would have needed a leader with the qualities of subtlety and firmness combined which, unfortunately, Miles Macdonell seems to have lacked.

At the same time the governor picked by Selkirk showed a devotion whose benefits the settlers experienced during the difficult period when they were living at Pembina.⁸⁷ He did his best to diminish their sufferings by a methodical distribution of the resources of his disposal and a judicious sharing out of their activities. But he lacked the conciliatory disposition which the situation demanded; if he found deplorable the preconceived hostility of certain officers, he himself did not know how to display toward his enemies the dignity that would have put them in their places, or how to gain by moderation the respect of men who were alienated from him by their aversion to Catholicism, of which he was a convinced adherent.⁸⁸ The violence he exhibited toward his opponents, the harshness with which he demanded the carrying out of the most arduous tasks,⁸⁹ the severity with which he repressed acts of indiscipline provoked by discontent among the men during the winter of 1812-13 (of which the representatives of the North West Company were quick to take advantage in weakening the newborn colony),⁹⁰ all helped to neutralize the benefits that stem-

med from the qualities of integrity and devotion he possessed in the higher degree, and exposed him to deep resentment. It seems as though, in certain cases, he even failed in the practise of equity, whose exercise alone could have maintained a real balance between the true settlers and the paid workers: by the policy of discrimination he applied, he increased the jealousies and stimulated the resentments that divided the two groups. Finally, it is evident that the biting comments which, right from the beginning, he introduced into his letters about the Hudson's Bay Company and its selfish methods gave evidence of a lack of cordiality which did not help in lessening the misunderstandings and conflicts between the governor of Assiniboia and the Company's officers.⁹¹

THE ATTITUDE OF THE COMPANY'S OFFICERS

It would be unjust to see the officers as systematically hostile to an enterprise which embraced a plan of reform directed against the slow and routine-ridden methods by which—without exception—the Company's agents were bound. Many shared the ambition of Superintendent Auld, and saw in the colony Macdonell had come to organize on the banks of Red River a means of rescuing their mixed-blood families from the hazards of primitive existence and of absorbing them quickly into a society permeated by the conceptions of civilized peoples. In such circumstances, could they have done other than welcome Lord Selkirk's initiatives and the man appointed to carry them out? Macdonell, who never failed to recount the slightest indiscretions of William Auld, admitted that he was received in a courteous and friendly way by both the superintendent and the governor of York Factory, William H. Cook, though he attributed this to their wish to bring their families soon to the colony of Assiniboia.⁹² Doing justice to Auld's sincerity, he recorded that even before the arrival of the settlers, the latter had taken care to inform the posts on the Red River that they should collect provisions that would be needed by Lord Selkirk's immigrants.⁹³ Auld, on his side, had already communicated to the Company's directors the hopes which the colony's foundation aroused in him and the instructions he had given his subordinates to resolve the problem of subsistence.⁹⁴ "Many parents in this Service . . . say . . . it is a most fortunate thing for them that an asylum is on foot which may afford shelter to their offspring. I myself too am like them a Parent."⁹⁵ Thus there is no

reason to doubt that the relations between Macdonell and the superior officers who welcomed him on his arrival were marked with reciprocal cordiality.⁹⁶

But it is natural that the disturbances introduced by this influx of immigrants into the activities of York Factory, the hindrances it offered to the carrying out of normal tasks in the posts, and the restlessness it stirred among the garrison personnel should quickly jeopardize the good relations that were established in the beginning between the leader of the expedition and the Company's representatives. The presence of these somewhat undisciplined visitors, whose winter quarters had to be organized, precipitated William Auld into a nervous exhaustion.⁹⁷ Their arrival in fact coincided with a difficult period: in 1811 the trade in furs had fallen off, and William H. Cook had written of the "decline of business" in the posts along the coast.⁹⁸ York Factory had only with difficulty been able to provide for its own subsistence.⁹⁹ Auld feared that if such shortages continued, it would be impossible to solve the double problem of feeding both the settlers and the garrisons.¹⁰¹ Against their will, the personnel had to accept a reduction in the food rations normally given them; from this resulted manifestations of ill will and recriminations that irritated the officers all the more because Macdonell demanded for his men distributions of supplies that were often irreconcilable with the needs or expectations of the garrisons.¹⁰¹

Caught between such opposing claims, alarmed by Indian reports of the shortage of game, the governor of York Factory still showed neither hostility nor indifference to the settlers who were located some distance from his establishment.¹⁰² But if he were to husband the post's scanty stocks of provisions he could give in neither to the reproaches of his own men nor to the repeated pleas of the settlers, and in this situation he was faced with resentment from both sides. It would have been difficult for him not to give in to outbursts of temper against these immigrants whose presence troubled the lives of his personnel and to a great extent paralysed the normal activity of his establishment. The officers, in fact, were unable to reconcile their normal preoccupations with those now added by the concentration of these men near the post. Forced to carry on a double activity, on the one hand they sacrificed the projected development of their commercial activities to the interests of the settlers,¹⁰³ yet on the other hand, at the risk of provoking Macdonell's dissatisfaction,¹⁰⁴ they refused to make excessive con-

cessions on behalf of the colony, and especially to employ their personnel in provisioning the immigrant camps and thus compromise the accomplishment of the normal winter tasks.¹⁰⁵ Can one blame them for regretting the peacefulness of earlier years, or for often losing sight of the advantages they had first perceived in the Assiniboian enterprise and seeing only the problems it created for them? It was not only that the settlers were difficult to handle and that their ignorance of the country and its ways of life, apart from making them incapable of serving the trading posts,¹⁰⁶ imposed on the Company's officers an extra load of responsibility, since they had often to intervene to prevent accidents or disappointments linked to the strangers' lack of experience.¹⁰⁷ The mutinies that broke out in the immigrant camp,¹⁰⁸ and the dissensions that divided the settlers into mutually hostile groups, had unfortunate effects on the discipline of the employees, creating among them, and also among their officers, a mood of irritation that was hardly conducive to the good functioning of the service. The settlers who arrived in 1813 gave an even worse example to the garrison personnel: enrolled as "free settlers" because they were able to pay the cost of their passage, they became excessively proud of the fact and refused to perform any physical tasks.¹⁰⁹

To these many causes of exasperation we must add the personal disagreements that were not slow to break out between the Company's officers and the Governor of Assiniboia. Sometimes they were simple conflicts over precedence between men who believed in the superiority of their respective functions: sometimes they were squabbles provoked by the claim of an officer to an infallibility of judgment he believed he had acquired through his long experience in a primitive country, and which the sceptical Macdonell, sometimes to his cost,¹¹⁰ but at other times with reason, refused to recognize. Such a situation was sharply posed when the Governor of Assiniboia decided to undertake the construction of craft to transport the settlers to their new place of residence. A dispute ensued about the design and size of the boats. The superintendent and the governor of York Factory sought to follow the traditional conceptions of the heads of posts, but these were far from Macdonell's ideas.¹¹¹ This divergence ended by straining the relationship between these men who, at the beginning, had congratulated each other on the good harmony that united them. The obligation under which Auld found himself of immobilizing for this enterprise a good portion of his personnel,¹¹² combined with

the mortification he felt at having to bow to Macdonell's views, added new causes of antipathy to those that already divided the two men. If the Governor of York Factory succeeded in overcoming his displeasure¹¹³ in spite of the disturbances which the arrival of the settlers caused even in his family life,¹¹⁴ the more impulsive Auld gave way to invective against the immigrants who teemed in the environs of the Factory. In his letters and in open speech as well,¹¹⁵ he adopted a passionate and grating tone that deceived newcomers regarding his real feelings and made them regard him as a resolute adversary of the Red River settlement. It was in this guise that he appeared to Colin Robertson, who described him as a "man of strong passions" and believed he had deliberately hindered Lord Selkirk's projects from the arrival of the first settlers.¹¹⁶ It is certain that, if one become excessively hypnotized by the unkind judgments he applied in his correspondence to the Red River settlers,¹¹⁷ one can do no other than see him as the declared enemy of the Assiniboia enterprise.

To have avoided the disagreement that emerged from such conditions would have required a spirit of extreme reconciliation, but these men had neither the breadth of vision needed to rise above their immediate preoccupations—reduced for one to the good progress of his commercial operations and for the other to getting his colonizing enterprise under way—nor the flexibility that would help them forget the issues that divided them or at least lessen their impact.¹¹⁸ From these unfortunate beginnings there lingered between Auld and the Governor of Assiniboia a bitterness that did not end with Miles Macdonell's departure,¹¹⁹ for it was further inspired, as we shall soon have the occasion to observe, by reasons both deeper and more delicate than the causes already indicated.¹²⁰

Before bringing in this last point, let us for the time being say merely that the hostility toward Macdonell harbored by Hugh Heney, the Company's representative in the Red River sector, proceeded from the same motives as that of Auld, his immediate superior. His men, while they showed little affability toward the newcomers,¹²¹ do not seem to have shared the acrimony of their chief, whose impulsive temperament found expression in an even more exaggerated way than that of the superintendent.¹²²

In spite of the formal orders which Auld transmitted to him, Heney had neglected to prepare the provisions needed for the immigrants, and as soon as Macdonell reached the banks of the Red

River, he complained sharply to the superintendent about this grave negligence which seriously affected his men's lives.¹²³ With a malevolence at which Macdonell hinted, without daring to accuse him openly, Hugh Heney had even bought up their crops of potatoes from the freemen who grew gardens around the junction of the Red River and the Assiniboine,¹²⁴ leaving the settlers no other alternative than to live their first winter at Pembina. The same intent to injure the colony is evident in the instructions which in 1813 he gave to the officer MacLeod, whom he enjoined to refuse all assistance to the people involved in the Assiniboian enterprise.¹²⁵ It is possible that such prejudiced hostility was a projection of Auld's resentment.¹²⁶ But Heney could act with such conviction only because he shared his superior's dissatisfaction, and because the arrival of the governor, which deprived him of the power he had hitherto wielded in the territory of Assiniboia, seemed to him a humiliation hard to bear.¹²⁷

But his interests as well as his pride were at stake in this enterprise. Even if the Company reserved to itself the right of exclusive commerce within the limits of the colony and had not surrendered its privilege of building trading posts there, it had still accepted, in authorizing the creation of Assiniboia, a notable reduction in its field of activity.¹²⁸ In the absence of adequate proofs, one can ignore Heney's accusation against Macdonell that he was personally interested in trading operations, in formal contravention of certain clauses of the act of cession of Assiniboia to Lord Selkirk.¹²⁹ But one can still admit that the opening of an agrarian settlement in the parkland of the Red River would mean a reduction of trade in this rich locality and an infringement of the interests of the chief factor, who had been accustomed to exploiting the trade without interference. With even more doggedness than Auld, Heney pursued against the settlement and its governor a spiteful policy whose systematic hostility led on several occasions to the moderating intervention of the superintendent himself.¹³⁰ But Auld intervened in vain, and the conflict continued without interruption. At Pembina the Company's employees and the settlers, both of them dependent for their subsistence on the stocks of meat which hitherto had been entirely reserved for the Company's use, became exasperated with each other and indulged in mutual recriminations about their excessive numbers.¹³¹ The conciliatory and excessively courteous manner which Miles Macdonell adopted at the time of his arrival toward the North Westers, whom he thought he could win over

to the support of the Assinibolan enterprise at a time when they were planning, under the guise of goodwill, to bring about its annihilation, added to the grievances of the Company's agents.¹³² Even if, as he later claimed, Macdonell's policy proceeded from a rational assessment of realities rather than—as it appeared at the time—from self-delusion,¹³³ it was not for this reason any less offensive in the eyes of those officers who, like Hugh Hency, displayed an open hostility to the North Westers.¹³⁴

Relations were thus every bit as strained between Hency and Macdonell as they had been between the latter and William Auld. Ceaselessly opposing each other, and accusing each other of deliberately hindering the feeding of the colony and blindly furthering the interests of the North West Company, these two men displayed to their adversaries a spectacle of the glaring weaknesses of the enterprise of Assiniboia.¹³⁵

In fact, there were few among the Company's officers or ordinary employees who shared Hugh Hency's intemperate hostility. Many greeted favorably the program of settlement from which their children might benefit,¹³⁶ and to Hency's ill will one can oppose the entirely different attitude of Peter Fidler, to whose kindness Macdonell paid full tribute. From the post at Brandon, whose command he had just assumed, Fidler was unsparing in his devoted assistance and in his effective co-operation.¹³⁷ In agreeing to carry out the surveys necessary to lay out the lots for the various settlers, he displayed his sympathetic interest in Lord Selkirk's enterprise. Soon, like many others, he would take his place among the inhabitants of the colony. Yet it is likely that Hency's policy wielded a demoralizing influence on both his subordinates and on the colonists. To the first he gave the example of a hostility which, coming from above, would paralyse any sympathy they might engender for the Red River enterprise. So far as the others were concerned, the constant disputes between Governor Macdonell and the Company's representative aggravated in every direction the difficulties that impeded the progress of the settlement.

Convinced from this point onward of the fissure appearing in the organization so laboriously constructed by Lord Selkirk, the North Westers were confirmed in the resolution they had formed from the beginning of stifling at birth an enterprise whose success would have meant the early demise of their own operations. Encouraged by the fragility betrayed by the events they had witnessed, they set about overturning the edifice constructed by the

Scottish nobleman, and to carry out their work of destruction, they appealed to the Métis group which during the eighteenth century had slowly come into being in the country of the West. It was then that, thrust despite themselves into a conflict between the two economies that confronted each other in Rupert's Land, the Métis of the West were led to play a more active role, to draw out of the composite humanity that already existed in the provinces of the West¹³⁶ a personality that was not yet clearly defined, and in the events which they then experienced to uncover the first roots of a national feeling. Thus the few years that witnessed the conflict between the settlers of Assiniboia and the North West Company, a simple episode in the fierce struggle which the trading groups waged against each other, had a prime importance in the history of the Métis group: from now onward the Bois-Brûlé became a characteristic element in the society of the West, inseparable from its history, as he remains to the present day.

CHAPTER TEN

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE METIS

FREEMEN AND METIS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CONFLICT

To carry out the work of elimination which its representatives considered necessary for the future of the North West Company, the latter had to dispose of shock troops who were at the same time resolute and obedient. It could not put its entire confidence in its own employees, mostly Canadians from the St. Lawrence valley, engaged as voyageurs, who would have been difficult to organize and arm to mount a regular attack on the Red River settlement. The hostility which they showed to the bourgeois Archibald Norman McLeod in 1816 when he tried to turn the staff of canoemen who accompanied him into a miniature army at Bas de la Rivière¹ was an expression of the scruples they felt about being involved in any flagrant breach of legality, or in lending themselves to manoeuvres that denied the elementary principles of their upbringing. They were indeed little aware of the rights and privileges implied in the Charter of 1670 and little concerned about the legal basis of Lord Selkirk's enterprise. But though they often abandoned themselves to isolated acts of violence and aggression, they would have refused to become involved in an enterprise whose obvious aim was the destruction of the families who had recently established themselves on the Red River. Far from accepting all their masters' orders, they showed an independence toward them in which the North Westers saw the effect of the policy of competitive bidding which the Hudson's Bay Company was following in the parishes of Lower Canada to increase its recruitment of Canadian personnel.²

Responding to the material advantages that were offered, the French Canadians were open to the idea of serving the British company, and the sympathy they developed for the latter prevented them from associating themselves with the projects of their Scottish chiefs. They also felt that if they were led into excessive violence, they might be exposed to judicial procedures from which the privileged status that the complaisance of Canadian courts had guaranteed the North West Company would no longer be able to preserve them.³ The Montreal magnates were unable to eliminate either the scruples or the timidity of their men, nor could they overcome the independence the latter displayed toward their superiors.

But there existed in the country of the West an element whose ignorance, isolation, and uncertain moral development made them more accessible to the manoeuvres and the propaganda of the partners. First, there were the freemen; the very conditions under which they enjoyed their "liberation" tended to limit their real possibilities of independence. And then there were their Métis descendants, whose weakness of will made them easy to exploit so that they would become the instruments needed to carry out the North West Company's plans. It was among them that the latter set out to recruit the troops that would enable it to bring an end to the enterprise in Assiniboia. Yet neither the freemen nor the Métis felt at the beginning any hostility toward the Red River colony, and there was nothing to suggest, when Miles Macdonell arrived at the forks of the Assiniboine with the contingent of Scottish families, that they would one day seek to destroy the settlers' farms and crops.

It is true that the North West Company had at its disposal various means of making the freemen dependent on its representatives. Theoretically at least they owed to the tolerance of the bourgeois the right to prolong their residence in the country of the West. In the "Tableau" which he left us of the fur trade in North America, Selkirk represents them as being narrowly enslaved, despite a pretence of liberation, to the North West Company; the latter forced them to offer it, at terms fixed by itself, the produce of their hunts, and to limit their activity entirely to the pursuit of its selfish interests.⁴

In fact, if the formalities of release reduced many of the freemen to an appearance of semi-servitude, that condition remained more theoretical than real. In general, the Company arrogated to itself a

right of pre-emption on their furs, but it bought them on terms that guaranteed a reasonable profit.⁵ If it reserved the right to call on their services when it seemed fitting,⁶ it allowed them to discuss the conditions of employment in the same way as the ordinary personnel; in such circumstances, it remunerated their services at a rate identical to that accorded any other employee.⁷ The inferiority of their position was most manifest in the right which the bourgeois claimed of expelling from the territories where they had taken up residence⁸ those who offended him by their lack of discipline, refused to respond to his requisitions, or harmed his trade by competing with him. Faced with the prospect of returning to Lower Canada, where poverty awaited them, and where in many cases they did not dare take their half-Indian families, the freemen would give way and submit. But there was nothing in this that distinguished them from the engaged men regularly attached to the service of the posts; failure of discipline or breaches of contract in both categories were punished with the same penalties. Attempts at desertion could lead to pursuits which, in the absence of any police force, were confided to the Indians who were authorized, so that the lesson would be more efficacious, to rob them of their equipment, seize their horses, and, in extremity, threaten their lives.⁹ The most one can say is that the actual situation of the freemen sometimes rendered illusory the appearance of liberty given by the expiry of their contracts, since they remained, by the very limits set on their independence, in a situation similar to that of the engaged men.

Most of all, the North Westers found in this practice the certainty of having available in any situation an experienced manpower pool,¹⁰ which, by the activity it displayed in seeking out fur-bearing animals, guaranteed the Company a certain superiority over its competitors. But it was a long way from this kind of limited freedom to the state of servitude which Lord Selkirk described—all the more so since, before the attack on the colony made it seem necessary, the Company does not appear to have had serious recourse to the sanctions which it claimed to have the right of applying. The conditions the freeman engaged himself to respect on the day of his liberation very soon gave way to an independence which lapsed only on the rare occasions when the Company requisitioned his services. A certain number of freemen, either by their mingling with native tribes or by their extreme dispersion and the range of their distant wanderings, moved beyond

the reach or influence of the heads of posts. But those who were faithful to the terms of their release and kept for their bourgeois the furs they collected were obeying their personal interests rather than any compulsion to carry out their engagements or any idea of immutable loyalty. The North West Company in fact gave them terms considerably better than those offered by the rival Company, and this, even if one had no other proof, should be enough to counter the reproach its detractors addressed to it of releasing its men only to bind them more securely. Indeed, it had so little thought of reducing them to servitude that it closed its eyes to the undertakings they might enter into with the rival company. If the freemen were slow to avail themselves of this latitude, it was because the British posts were in no position to offer the kind of advantages that would attract them to its service. During James Bird's period in Edmonton, where the freemen were especially numerous, he tried to establish commercial relations with them, and as a result he came to an open recognition of this inferiority. The North West Company, he wrote in 1807, received from its freemen more furs than all the native tribes brought in, with the exception of the Iroquois. It gave them the goods they asked for on terms more or less equal to those the Hudson's Bay Company offered. But it paid for the beavers that it bought from them in cash at the rate of 11 Canadian pounds per pound in weight, and it was this that prevented the British Company from competing; "they would often prefer Your Honors Goods could they receive Money, or Bills for the small part of their Hunts they may so wish to dispose of. It is almost unnecessary to add, that the NW Co. will not pay a man in money for any part of his Furs unless he takes his necessities from them."¹¹

Yet a certain number of freemen had already hired themselves out to the English forts without the North West Company appearing to be concerned. In 1789 groups of freemen encountered no difficulty in trading furs and buffalo meat at Manchester House; some of them, as we have seen, even took the furs they had collected to York Factory in the hope of trading them at a better rate, and do not seem to have been concerned about the possibility of eventual coercion by their former bourgeois.¹² Others had no scruples about acting as guides for the adversaries of the Canadian organizations even at a time when the commercial rivalry had turned into a merciless struggle.¹³ They knowingly accepted the task of leading them to areas well supplied with fur-bearing ani-

mals¹⁴ or showing them stands of birches they needed for making canoes.¹⁵ Thus in 1799 Hudson's Bay Company men from Buckingham House reached the rich area of Deer Lake under the guidance of the Canadian freemen, who were paid in trade goods;¹⁶ once Greenwich House was established, several freemen went there to trade beaver skins.¹⁷ Similarly, the journal of Fort Edmonton mentioned the establishment of commercial relations in 1798 with Canadians who had been released from their obligations by the North Westers. Some of these, already absorbed into native society, looked like actual Indians and had abandoned themselves to the indolence of primitive man;¹⁸ the more active ones were distinguished by the quantity of their returns.¹⁹ But there were still not many of either kind. Most of them went to the Canadian posts, which responded better to their desire for monetary gain, the area in which their links with white society were not completely dissolved in the primitive milieu with which they associated intimately.

As the conflict between the trading companies became exacerbated, it seemed more necessary to have recourse to the services of these freemen and to treat them as liberally as the North Westers, so as to close the gap between the rival posts. Thus in 1807 James Bird reached an agreement with a Canadian who proposed to hunt fur-bearing animals in the Rocky Mountains for almost two consecutive years, and on his return to hand over to the English post part of the wealth in pelts he had accumulated.²⁰ The following year, on his own initiative but hoping that the Committee would soon agree to the financial remuneration he urged it to authorize, Bird negotiated with a group of freemen, including J.-B. Lagimodière, who, after having successfully traded their furs among the bourgeois of the Red River and the Company's employees at Fort Albany, now proposed to carry on their operations in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. As they insisted on receiving the reward for their hunting in cash, Bird promised to advance the sums they demanded from his own capital, and by committing himself in this way he was able to conclude a verbal contract with them identical to those which they were in the habit of making with the North West Company.²¹ The Canadians who round about the same period entered into a commercial agreement with Fort Albany insisted on similar conditions.²² As a consequence the Committee adopted the suggestions of its agents and in 1809 authorized its officers to negotiate for furs with the freemen

on the same terms as the North Westers,²⁵ either at the rate of 11 Canadian pounds per pound in weight for winter beaver, or 5½ pounds for summer beaver.²⁴

At this period, it was not only as trappers that the freemen frequented the English posts. Their activity became as full and diversified as it had been around the Canadian forts. They hunted bison as well as fur-bearing animals, they gladly sold to the Company's officers the produce they grew on their plots of land, they were active in providing its personnel with information on little exploited regions, on the routes leading to them, and on the dangers that might result from the presence of hostile tribes.²⁵ From reading the journals of the posts one gains the impression that these freemen were regularly incorporated into the life of the British establishments, without mention being made of any kind of opposition from the bourgeois of the North West Company. In 1812 Bird even noted that two of them brought him an exceptionally rich consignment of 600 beavers; although the North Westers had offered them 12 Canadian pounds per pound in weight, they preferred to let him have them on the same terms because of the better deal he offered them in trade goods. He hastened to negotiate with other freemen a wider agreement that resulted in a gain to the Company of more than £200.²⁶ When the conflict finally broke out between the North West Company and the colony of Assiniboia, the texts reveal no interruption in this commercial alliance which had been formed between many of the Canadian freemen and the English posts: at most the Edmonton journal suggests that for fear of reprisals, the freemen would trade clandestinely with the Anglo-Saxons and at the same time offer some furs "officially" to the bourgeois of the opposing establishment.²⁷ But such instances were exceptional; few of the freemen appear to have harbored such fears.²⁸

In such a situation, it was inevitable that at the moment when the decisive struggle was on the point of being played out between the two rival companies around the colony of Red River, the freemen as a group should not show any hostility toward the organization to which so many had become customers and suppliers. Doubtless these Canadians could not forget that their origins and antecedents attached them more closely to the company which, in contrast to the British enterprises, represented the interests of the St. Lawrence valley. Conscious of these feelings, and adroit at reawakening them, the North Westers must have tried to exploit

them on opportune occasions to regain the wavering fidelity of the freemen and line them up against their enemies. But the liberty to which these freemen had become gradually accustomed, and the profit they now found in serving the English posts, had obliterated these inclinations to a notable degree, and the favorable welcome they gave the settlers who had newly arrived on the plains of Manitoba testified to their goodwill and their conciliatory spirit.

While he continued to denounce the state of subjection to which he believed the freemen had been reduced by the bourgeois of the North West Company, Selkirk advised Miles Macdonell to exploit their long-standing knowledge of the country to facilitate the provisioning of the colony and to familiarize its inhabitants with the access routes to the territory of Assiniboia.²⁹ He even saw them as future settlers, and he envisaged distributing land to them so that they would support his plans and constitute the best possible safeguard for the colony.³⁰ There is no doubt, of course, that many of the freemen, still ruled by a naive vanity, were not coolheaded enough to refuse lending themselves to the acts of aggression which the North West Company asked them to perform. Some of them were more inclined than others to ignore the responsibilities they had assumed or too far removed from their initial upbringing to understand the real implication of their superiors' actions. Others responded to the threat of coercion which the bourgeois claimed to be able to apply,³¹ or to the arguments the latter invoked to revive their former attachment to the North Westers' cause. These submitted docilely to what was expected of them. But others, who were less removed from civilized life, who kept their contacts with Lower Canada and maintained in the isolation of the prairie the principles which in the colony along the St. Lawrence had dominated their existence, reacted with rejection or indifference to the persuasions of the partners³² and to their intimidatory tactics. The example of J.-B. Lagimodière is significant. His way of life led him to return often to Lower Canada, while his religious principles were too well rooted and his commercial relations with the Hudson's Bay Company too close for him to perform any criminal acts against the settlement. On the contrary, he was to be a useful ally both to Lord Selkirk and to his enterprise.

Thus the North West Company was far from finding unreserved support among the freemen. It disposed of more pliable elements among them than it found among the Canadian voy-

ageurs; it could invoke, so as to mobilize them against the colony, the terms of their "contract" of release; but it never succeeded in stifling the benevolent sympathy they demonstrated spontaneously toward Lord Selkirk's colony or in subduing in all of them the voyageur's pride or the habits of independence which most of them had developed thanks to their style of life.

It goes without saying that the Métis children of this class of freemen would at first share the sympathy their fathers showed toward the families on the Red River and toward the Hudson's Bay Company. The Métis had no understanding of the repercussions which the enterprise that inaugurated the colony might have on the Canadian company and on the destinies of the nomad economy which they maintained in Rupert's Land. Thus, in the initial stage of the settlement, we encounter neither prejudice nor ill will among these simple and generous men. In most of them the event provoked nothing more than indifference. To those who lived in the remote areas, the conflict that emerged on the banks of the Red River passed unnoticed, and did nothing to change the good relations they had established with the English posts.³³

Yet their group offered to the North Westers a field of influence considerably more favorable than that of the freemen or voyageurs. In drawing out for the Métis the lessons of the events that were unrolling, in exploiting their susceptibility, their impressionable character, their lack of will, the partners had little difficulty triumphing over the sympathy they showed toward the settlers. The atmosphere of cordiality and mutual aid which presided over the birth of the settlement and which offered the immigrants to Assiniboia the encouraging spectacle of Métis and freemen rivaling each other in generosity and goodwill toward them, soon gave way to an atmosphere of mistrust and then of antagonism that set the Métis against the enterprise they had at first regarded with favor.

The young Métis, in fact, were lacking in the elements of resistance that became evident among the freemen. Their education had taken place in a primitive environment, apart from the civilizing influences incorporated in the society of New France, and also apart from the moral code which, in a native society, did not operate beyond the framework of the tribe. Of Christianity they were scarcely aware; those among them whom Commissioner Coltman interrogated on their religious notions answered that they had been neither baptized nor instructed in the Christian religion, that

they merely knew the importance of an oath and believed in the existence of a God who could punish and reward them;³⁴ to such rudiments had been reduced the moral upbringing their fathers transmitted to them. The mothers, for their part, taught them a simple collection of superstitious notions without any moral implications. Thus they had too fragile a basis to enable them to resist the influence of a Company that in their eyes still appeared as a dominating power, which knew how to make use of threats and intimidation, an effective weapon against these timid natures who were too ignorant to express doubts of the legality of the organization's actions, and among whom the bourgeois, since they had their own families of mixed blood, could invoke the solidarity of race which united them with the most humble of the Métis. Above all, the North West Company had the advantage of being represented by a number of men of Métis descent who owed to their origins and their knowledge of the psychology of their congeners a considerable prestige among the Bois-Brûlés. The events of the years that saw the awakening of a national consciousness in fact demonstrated that the Métis, though impervious to the remote and abstract influence of men they did not know and principles they did not understand, were at the same time completely accessible to the influence of anyone who approached them directly, knew their preferences, and could gain their confidence.

Must we see in this a manifestation of the emotional make-up of the Indian and to a certain extent of the French Canadian, a tendency to accept arguments addressed to the feelings rather than to the intelligence? Or a projection of that special view of obedience which the Indian also to a degree shared with the Canadian, and which made him accept the orders of whoever ruled by persuasion and personal prestige rather than by authority and discipline? This characteristic became clearly evident in the Canadian Métis during the events that for the first time drew attention to his character by drawing him into the foreground of the history of the West. He put his trust in the men of his own race who knew how to command him, and surrendered to their orders with a docility that proceeded from his natural passivity and from the ascendancy a strong will could always establish over him; he could obey blindly, and let himself be led without realizing it into the worst of excesses. But if he allowed himself to be won over in this way, it was not merely the effect of his emotional make-up and of the trust that was born of common origins. It stemmed also from the

attitude of the whites, who, arriving in greater numbers and repudiating the idea of allegiances with the native peoples, began to treat the Métis with humiliating scorn.

From this time onward the Métis began to withdraw into the group to which he belonged; the discrimination which the whites applied openly to him tied him all the more closely to those of his congeners who knew how to dominate him and offer him a clearly defined line of conduct. By chance, the North West Company at this period had among its personnel a number of enterprising Métis who were capable of assuming the role of leaders and of transmitting their ideas to people of their own race. Furthermore, even if the freemen might feel scruples about declaring themselves in opposition to a Company which now possessed a numerous Canadian personnel, the Métis, who were less close to the latter, would not feel similar hesitations. In brief, they displayed a whole cluster of inclinations that seemed to destine them to become docile tools in the hands of the partners who were resolved to annihilate the Red River colony. The North Westers hoped that, under the control of leaders of their own race, the Métis would carry out that work of destruction with the ferocity that—they believed—Indian ancestry or at least close association with the native groups would have transmitted to them.

Thus it was natural that the North West Company should place its reliance on this group which as yet was little known, but which its initiatives would soon bring to attention. Yet though it had calculated the evident advantages of such an intervention, the Company had not recognized its inherent perils. The docility of the Métis was no reliable guarantee of performance, for it resulted from a weakness of will that placed them equally at the mercy of opposing influences. Should the influence of the leaders who directed them weaken in the slightest degree, or should they encounter an unexpected change of circumstances, they might withdraw their support as easily as they had committed it. If they could be violent to excess, changes of mood or impulses of compassion could follow without warning; toward the settlers of Assiniboia they alternated between passionate hostility and a conciliatory mood marked by cordiality and goodwill. Faced by such disconcerting contrasts in the attitudes of the Métis, the North West Company was obliged constantly to reawaken their loyalties, either by threats or promises of gifts or appeals to the sentiments of national independence which it inculcated among them

and which, without the Company's actions, they would probably never have felt in the same degree. If the North Westers gradually overcame the hesitations among the Métis, it was because they could exploit the personal influence of a number of Métis devoted to their cause; because they could develop a propaganda calculated to stir the touchy susceptibilities of the Métis and to arouse in them dreams of national grandeur; and finally because they knew how to make the most of the errors of their adversaries, not only to inspire among the Métis a lively resentment of the immigrants of Assiniboia but also to dissipate the scruples that turned many of the Canadians freed from their tutelage against a program of destruction.

THE TRANSFORMATION

Good Relations in the Early Days

The beginnings of the colony were distinguished by mutual courtesies. When Miles Macdonell on 4 September 1812 took possession with great pomp of the territory of Assiniboia, to the sound of six guns which the settlers had acquired for the defence of their land, the bourgeois of the North West Company, John Wills and Alexander Macdonell, were present at the ceremony, in the company of eighteen Indians, freemen, Métis, and employees. They did not appear to take exception to the reading of the Act of Cession of the territory,³⁵ which was formulated for the benefit of Lord Selkirk and which affirmed the sovereign property rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, and henceforward of the "noble Lord," in the newly constituted colony. When the ceremony was over, the bourgeois gathered with the officers of the British company in Governor Macdonell's tent, where toasts were drunk to the future prosperity of the Red River Colony.³⁶ Despite the blow which the Act of Cession inflicted on the claims of the North Westers over the country they exploited, their attitude remained courteous and conciliatory. Macdonell could only congratulate himself on the welcome they had accorded him on the way to Red River,³⁷ and on reaching Fort Gibraltar and later the site of Pembina he encountered a friendly reception among their partners.³⁸ He openly expressed his satisfaction about this in a letter to William Auld on 5 December 1812 in which he contrasted the indifference of the Hudson's Bay Company's officers with the prompt

generosity of the North Westers. "I am indebted to the North-West Company's gentlemen for much personal civility."³⁰ And one cannot wholly deny the sincerity of an attitude which gave the settlers on Red River the hope of an easy and peaceful future: even if later events seem to justify the hypothesis of deception from the beginning on the part of certain North Westers and even if family links between Governor Miles and the bourgeois Alexander Macdonell did not divert the latter's rancor against the colony, it is still beyond doubt that many of the partners, like the Hudson's Bay Company's officers, welcomed the Red River enterprise as a means of achieving the refuge for their children which they had so long awaited.⁴⁰ It seems logical to conclude that, if no orders had come down from their superiors, who were resolved from the start to prevent the success of the enterprise, and if the governor had not taken the steps he shortly did, many of the partners would have continued to watch favorably the realization of a project that served their personal interests.

In the same way, the freemen and their Métis families, who customarily gathered at Pembina to carry out their winter hunts⁴¹ and whose favorable inclinations Macdonell well knew,⁴² placed their experience at the service of the immigrants: their knowledge of the country, their skills in hunting, and the fact that many of them owned Red River carts in which they could transport the carcasses to the settlers' camps were of inestimable value to the latter. Some of the Canadians were exceptional in their attentions, such as the old freeman Peltier, who immediately Macdonell arrived showed him a site where the land, already cleared by freemen and ready for cultivation, seemed suitable for the establishment of the settlement.⁴³ It was with his horses that the settlers were able to cart the wood necessary for building Fort Daer,⁴⁴ and he agreed to lend his cart and his canoe for the summer to a family that, without this help, would not have been able to bring in its crop or move around.⁴⁵ Another Canadian, Baptiste Roy, received and took care of the seed grains intended for the first agriculture,⁴⁶ while François Delorme, assisted by his Métis son, was employed in supervising the construction of the first dwellings and in smoothing relations with the Indians.⁴⁷ Lagimodière acted as hunter for a payment of £30 a year.⁴⁸ Most of the freemen and Métis were employed in the same way.⁴⁹ With their families they co-operated in feeding the colony: fifteen people helped Lagimodière in his task, eight men joined the Canadian Tranchemontagne, and such

groups could bring in as many as seven bison at a time.⁵⁰ If the herds had not been led away by the moderation of the winter of 1812-13, this personnel of freemen would have provided settlers amply with the subsistence they needed before the coming of spring. But the scarcity had already begun in December, and it lasted until March, only occasionally relieved by the arrival of provisions brought by some unusually fortunate hunter, such as Lagimodière or Beaulieu.⁵¹ Other freemen were willing to be engaged as fishermen.⁵²

A number of the Métis assisted the freemen in these various activities; some, of Canadian origin, helped in the transport of goods and in the reception of the newly arrived settlers;⁵³ others, of Scottish descent, and regularly incorporated in the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel, were sparing in neither time nor willingness. An example was the halfbreed, Isham, who helped the settlers as soon as they arrived, supervised the preliminary work of breaking the soil, and soon became the interpreter for the new colony, while his son was employed as hunter at wages of £15 a year.⁵⁴ All of them, Canadians and Métis, acted as interpreters as well as hunters,⁵⁵ and they helped to keep the Indians in the good mood with which from the beginning they had regarded the settlers.

Selkirk had been careful to send Miles Macdonell particularly sensible instructions on the policy he should follow in regard to the native people; he recommended him to respect the traditions of these primitive folk, not to awaken their apprehension by introducing too abruptly the scientific methods from which they would eventually benefit, and above all to avoid any appearance of stealing their lands, by proposing compensation through the payment of annuities and through representing the enterprise in Assiniboia as leading toward the creation of a commercial establishment rather than a sedentary colony.⁵⁶ In the beginning it was in this way that many of the Indians in fact envisaged it. Reassured by Macdonell regarding the fate of their lands,⁵⁷ persuaded that in the settlement stores they would find an abundance of merchandise and generous distributions of alcohol,⁵⁸ they refrained from opposing the enterprise. The purchase of horses from them was accompanied by ritual gifts of alcohol and tobacco,⁵⁹ and the furs they offered were acquired without hesitation by Macdonell, who later justified such actions by his wish to promote friendship with the Indians.⁶⁰ Thus, by making itself an organization competing with the North West Company, the settlement gave the native

people a means of trading more sharply with the bourgeois, and the hope of perhaps liberating themselves from their tutelage; the North Westers were perfectly aware of this new danger that threatened them.⁶¹ Finally, the Indians saw in the Red River settlers eventual allies against the Sioux, their inveterate enemies, whose incursions took place regularly, each year in the month of July, along the shores of the Pembina River. They came forward, even before Governor Macdonell had reached the territory of the Assiniboine, with a request that he intervene actively on their side, which in the eyes of the Indians was the only way of proving the sincerity of the alliance Macdonell wished to make with them.⁶²

While Macdonell confided a boy of twelve to one of the Ojibwa chiefs so that he could gain practice in the language,⁶³ the Indians attended the celebrations which the settlers organized; they took part in the Scottish dances that accompanied a wedding among the Highlanders in December 1813,⁶⁴ and asked for the services of the settlement's piper on the occasion of a wedding between a Canadian and an Indian woman.⁶⁵ The chief of the Red River Saulteaux seems even to have accepted Macdonell's suggestion that he renounce the nomad life to dedicate himself to the sedentary occupations of farming, and he busied himself trying to win over his fellow tribesmen at Rainy Lake to his new projects.⁶⁶ In brief, in the early days an evident sympathy united the settlers in Assiniboia with the native element in the broadest sense, whether Indians, Métis, or freemen. For the Indians, the understanding was not limited to the relations of those happy early days; the cordiality persisted through the worst periods of conflict. For the Métis and the freemen it was of short duration, since in the winter of 1812-13, when the settlers were struggling painfully against the harsh conditions of the West in their refuge of Pembina, the Canadian company began, insidiously at first and then more and more openly, to destroy the work which many of its representatives had either welcomed because of the future prospects it offered to them, or openly befriended.

The Intrigue of the North Westers

This program of dissolution was in fact the work of a few men, among whom figured the same Alexander Macdonell whose conduct had at first so well impressed the settlers and whose later attitude suggests that his courtesy was in fact dissimulated. Now

that his intimacy with the settlers was so solidly established that he felt himself the object of their confidence, and his links of relationship with his cousin Miles Macdonell guaranteed him the latter's friendship, he was in a position to begin the task of demoralization to which he had dedicated himself. His aim was to spread discouragement among the still poorly acclimatized Scots by slyly exploiting the difficulties of every kind that assailed them and in this way preparing them to abandon an enterprise which he declared had new disappointments in store for them. The task was made easier for him by the relations he had been able to establish with the settlers and the extreme cordiality he continued to show them.

Settlers would often pay visits to Macdonell, and he would immediately enquire about the conditions of life at Fort Daer, would blame the governor for not having foreseen what stocks of food might be needed for the subsistence of the immigrants, and would insinuate that such scarcities were good cause for desertion. Then he would offer to help them find their way to Canada. If any rumor of these intrigues reached Miles Macdonell, it was easy for Alexander to calm his cousin's suspicions by making a timely offer of a few provisions which appeared to demonstrate his generosity.⁶⁷

Thus the winter of 1812-13 passed in alternations of covert hostility and feigned goodwill. A number of the discontented settlers began to lend an ear to the suggestions of escape they received from the representative of the rival company. Some of them declared later that they had gone to Alexander Macdonell to learn details of the means of departure which he could offer them, and had received his assurance that if they went in the spring to the mouth of the Winnipeg River, they would find there all the assistance they needed.⁶⁸ Though he was not so ferociously hostile to the Assiniboia enterprise, J. Dougald Cameron nevertheless duplicated at Pembina the clever propaganda of Alexander Macdonell.⁶⁹

At the same time the influence of the North Westers was exerted on the native elements, toward whom they adopted tactics appropriate to the different groups. They began by criticizing the Indians: but, conscious of the reasons which the latter had to support the settlement and wish it to prosper, they were careful not to confront them openly and condemn their attitude. Instead they spread among them completely fabricated tales which were designed to arouse the hostility of the native people against the settlers.⁷⁰ They

made use especially of the obvious accusation that the newcomers were taking over the land and tried to destroy the effect of Miles Macdonell's assurances by arguing that it would all end in the enslavement of the Indians, and that, encircled by the Sioux who in-pinged on their territory to the south and the settlement that threatened to close them off from the east, they would inevitably be reduced to poverty if they did not obtain from the settlers the price of their lands and adequate distributions of firearms and merchandise.⁷¹ These arguments do not seem to have seriously shaken the friendly attitude of the Indians on the verges of the Red River, who were dominated by chiefs favorable to the colony and attracted by the idea of trade, but in rather more distant areas, among the Indians of Turtle River for example, who were not in direct contact with the settlers, they did exercise from 1813 onward a negative influence.⁷²

With the freemen and the Métis, the North Westers made use of similar arguments, but adroitly detached them from excessively material motives by raising them to the level of a national idea. They had means of influencing the Métis which were more effective and immediate than anything they could use with the Indians. In the winter of 1813, Alexander Macdonell had hinted to his cousin, during a discussion provoked by the latter's claim to be able to eject the Canadian traders from the territory of Assiniboia, that he knew how to force the settlers to capitulate by reducing them to famine.⁷³ In this way he exposed the strategy which he proposed to use against Lord Selkirk's plans, and which could be achieved only with the co-operation of the Métis. He had no trouble in winning over at the beginning a certain number of freemen and their descendants. Then, while he himself pursued his double-faced policy of good neighborliness and insidious hostility, he proceeded to act aggressively against one of the Canadians, whom he punished for having supplied stocks of meat to the settlement by seizing his horses and refusing to give them back.⁷⁴ Though this incident was an isolated one, it indicated clearly that the North Westers would not hesitate to use the right of coercion which they still claimed over their released personnel. At the same time, Macdonell spread widely among the freemen and the Métis the advice to hunt the bison on horseback, which, in view of the speed of the coursers with which they alone were provided, would end in driving the bison so far away that they would be inaccessible to the settlers of Assiniboia. This manoeuvre was all the more

cleverly devised since the fact that the herds were already far away seemed to justify it and to give the Métis the illusion that it was inspired less by a desire to harm the colony than by the conditions created by the prairie fires and the moderation of the temperature. The procedure was well calculated to overcome the scruples of those whom their sympathy for the immigrants would normally discourage from any kind of malevolent acts toward them. Apart from such considerations, the very way of life of these freemen and their children, the passionate joy they gained from riding over the prairies, and the excitement of hunting the bison predisposed them to welcome the suggestions of their bourgeois. There were indeed a few of them, like the freeman Bottineau, whose immediate response to Alexander Macdonell's invitation stemmed from a deliberate intention to deprive the little settlement at Pembina of its possibilities of sustenance,⁷⁵ but most of those who at this time agreed to pursue the herds of bison did so in response to natural inclination or to the needs of the moment rather than from a desire to harm an enterprise they had not ceased to befriend. Many of them, in any case, did not abandon their previous attitude and continued to give the colony the benefit of their activity, some by offering experienced help to the settlers in building log houses with bark roofs, and others in bringing them supplies of meat gathered on the prairies perhaps eight or ten days' journey from the Pembina region. More accustomed now to travelling on the prairie, better equipped, and favored by the mildness of the winter, the settlers managed their move back to the Red River without untoward accident.⁷⁶ Besides, as we have already seen, the winter of 1813-14 was less precarious for the immigrants, and their provisions were better secured. Some of the freemen, well informed of the situation because of their role as interpreters, did not hesitate to inform Governor Macdonell of the intrigues which the bourgeois of the North West Company were carrying on at this time among the Indians,⁷⁷ and it must have been through freemen whose loyalty to him was not undermined that Macdonell, in 1814, became informed of his adversaries' plans and of the violent intentions they denoted.⁷⁸

Miles Macdonell's Answer

Thus, though the colony did not yet experience the effects of the North Westers' strategy, the governor soon began to feel an uneas-

ness that was increased by the imprudent words his cousin let fall in the winter of 1812-13. Aware of the danger to his followers of the overhunting planned by his adversaries, and disturbed by the enormous quantities of meat which the North West Company was drawing from the "buffalo preserve" of the Red River and Pembina Mountain, thereby creating a threat of famine among the immigrants, Miles Macdonell decided in the spring of 1813 to prevent by appropriate measures the consequences he feared. On 17 June he informed Lord Selkirk of his resolution to establish quickly an embargo on the products of the Red River, so as to put an end to this squandering of victuals, and to hinder the realization of the plans that were suggested by the conduct of the bourgeois, by whom he pretended, despite all appearances, never to have been deceived.⁷⁹ Perhaps at this point Miles Macdonell remembered the ironic disapprobation which his self-congratulation at his good neighborly relations with the North West Company had aroused in Hugh Heney,⁸⁰ who was so much better informed on the feelings of his adversaries. Resolved to frustrate the schemes of the partners, he committed himself to the decisive measure that was intended to deny to the North West Company a right of possession consecrated by time and that would condemn their enterprises to imminent failure. However judicious and founded in law may have been the prohibitions he set out to formulate, his initiatives could not fail to be the beginning of a deep rift between the settlers and the groups that in the beginning had given them assistance. Above all, his proposals provided the enemies of the colony with a solid basis for their propaganda. They would not fail to exploit it among the Métis and the Canadians in order to regain the fidelity of those who were too devotedly serving the settlers of the Red River and to destroy their scruples about declaring their opposition to an enterprise which they could not openly denounce as wronging the first occupants of the country. These people were accustomed to a freedom without restriction. But the governor was proposing to attack the most essential of all their liberties. Soon, in fact, he was going to impose on their right to hunt the animals of the prairie, which nobody had ever contested, a strict limitation that would gravely threaten the very basis of their livelihood. It was then that the Métis and the Canadians began to think in terms of the contrast between the situation with which the introduction of a sedentary economy threatened them and the respect which the North Westers had already shown for their

nomadic existence and the latitude they had given them to regulate it as they wished. Automatically, in their eyes, the Company from Lower Canada took on once again the ascendancy it had held in the past.

It only needed an apparently logical initiative, motivated by the elementary needs of the settlers in Assiniboia, for the latent conflict between the two divergent economies that was concealed within Lord Selkirk's enterprise to awaken abruptly; the sedentary colonists would clash with the nomad Métis in the same way as agricultural interests in the colony on the St. Lawrence had shown themselves to be incompatible with those of the fur trade. In the spring of 1813 the conflict emerged in isolated incidents which were nevertheless symptomatic of the discontent that was already developing among the Métis. Testifying before Commissioner Coltman, the Canadian François Delorme, whose attitude toward the colonists had been especially accommodating, declared that at this time an attempt was made to impose three vexatious limitations on the freemen: the first threatened them with fines if they persisted in driving the bison on horseback, and this they considered a hostile act toward them; the second, which forbade them to peel the barks of trees to cover their houses, threatened their material life as seriously as the ban on hunting in the way they favored; the third, designed to restrain the waste of the better kinds of trees, called on them to reserve these for house construction and to use as firewood only the inferior species or dead branches.⁸¹ Restrictions of this kind resulted from the attitudes of a sedentary society, guided by principles of judicious economy, and the two latter were justified by the already evident shortage of woodland on the verges of the prairie; nevertheless, those who were natives by birth or adoption were unable to understand the reasons that legitimized them, and the bourgeois of the North West Company had no difficulty in persuading them to ignore such regulations.

These incidents had no immediate consequences. Although they were the prelude to more rigorous and aggravating rules, they were soon forgotten and did not appreciably affect relations between settlers and nomads. They merely implanted among the latter a vague uneasiness, which was counterbalanced by the declared intention of a number of the freemen to go over to the agricultural life and establish themselves on lots in Macdonell's colony.⁸² But the lull was of short duration. On 8 January 1814, following up his first initiatives, the governor officially forbade the exporting out-

side the limits of his territory of the pemmican which it was the practice to make of bison meat and which provided food for the North West Company's brigades that circulated regularly to Fort William; the ban applied also to other products of the colony, such as fish, game, and vegetables.⁸³ Perhaps Macdonell, whose action was contrary to the instructions Selkirk had just addressed to him,⁸⁴ was acting not only from a desire to ensure the feeding of the families for whom he was responsible, but also in obedience to the less disinterested thought of eliminating from the environs of Red River, by depriving them of their customary provisions,⁸⁵ of both the rival companies whose representatives had singularly complicated his task either by their hostility or by the narrowly selfish aims they had pursued. At all events, his action dealt a disastrous blow to the North West Company, for it came at a moment when the season was too advanced to make possible, by substituting provisions from more distant areas for the resources of which it would be deprived in the Red River region, the rearrangement that the development of its trade demanded. The war that was going on at the same time between England and the United States increased the difficulties of the situation by interrupting the deliveries of food from Detroit. Finally, the season's hunt had been a poor one, and the Canadian company's personnel would in any case suffer from the effects of the scarcity.⁸⁶ The bourgeois John Wills spoke out to Miles Macdonell about the distress he would be causing; not without reason, he condemned the governor's decisions as inhuman.⁸⁷ Soon his refusals to make Macdonell's edicts public at Fort la Souris would demonstrate the intention of the North Westers not to accept without resistance a measure that so directly harmed them.⁸⁸

The Métis and the freemen themselves would have been more directly affected if Governor Macdonell had prohibited—as he first proposed to do—the hunting of bison by horse. By following the latter procedure, the Métis made the herds inaccessible to the immigrants. In this way they assured themselves the monopoly of providing food for the colony, for even if a small proportion of the inhabitants of Assiniboia had begun to adapt themselves to the buffalo hunt, they were in no position to follow the herds so far from their own base. But as soon as the settler's subsistence was assured by the ban on exports of pemmican, this method of hunting became less harmful to them.⁸⁹ It was in view of this that the proclamation was restricted to prohibiting the export of meat pro-

ducts without mentioning the issue that was so close to the hearts of the Métis. All the same, Macdonell complained about the presence of groups of vagabond Canadians, who lived as nomads on the prairie and who, caring little for the well-being of the settlers, reserved for themselves the whole product of the animals which they hunted to excess. Laboring under delusions which the future would quickly dispel, he proposed to detach them from their wandering life by establishing them in the colony, convinced that the protection they would find there against the Sioux would be enough to turn them away from their traditional existence.⁹⁰

Nevertheless, the edict he had just promulgated assumed a menacing significance for the Métis: its repercussions threatened, as clearly as the limitations imposed for a short time in 1813, to restrain the virtual anarchy of their way of life. It was clear that it heralded the coming of a new kind of authority, represented by men lacking the bonds of intimacy that the North West Company had established, and on whom they could not rely, should the need arise, for either sympathy or understanding. Macdonell affirmed that authority peremptorily in the correspondence he carried on with John Wills, the bourgeois of Fort la Souris, following on the proclamation of 8 January. To the latter's refusal to admit that his company's men should be regarded as subject to the Governor of Assiniboia, Macdonell replied that since they were established on the lands of the Hudson's Bay Company, they must submit to its rules and to those of the settlement's authorities.⁹¹ The Métis were unaware of this dispute. But they had nevertheless the feeling that serious and unfavorable changes were taking place that would have the effect of subordinating them to the will of the newcomers and destroy for ever the liberty which the North West Company had so fully allowed them. For them it was a revolution which recalled the substitution of English domination for that of New France. The newcomers could not identify themselves with their group as profoundly as the North West Company had done. And the acts of authority which these strangers had just initiated might well be the prelude to others that would seriously imperil the economy of their way of life.

In fact, the threat which they so confusedly glimpsed was not slow to materialize. Without waiting to observe the consequences of his edict, Miles Macdonell was resolved to put into action, by force if need be, the orders he had proclaimed, and the policing operations which he devised left no doubt about the establishment

in the western plains of an authority prepared to assert itself and to challenge the existing state of affairs. In May 1814, having informed John Wills of his intention to confiscate a cargo of pemmican which the North Westers were taking by the classic route of the Assiniboine toward their depot at Bas de la Rivière, Macdonell ordered into action the sheriff of the settlement, sending an escort of armed men prepared to give him support. The precious stores had been carefully hidden in a cache on the clearing which at White Horse Prairie breaks the woodland lining the shores of the Assiniboine, but, assisted by Lagimodière and following indications given by the free Canadian André Poitras, who lived in the neighborhood, the sheriff succeeded in finding and appropriating the ninety-six sacks of which they consisted.⁹² A month later a similar operation was directed in more difficult circumstances against Fort la Souris, at the confluence of the river of the same name with the Assiniboine River, two of the arteries most actively used in transporting buffalo meat. When the head of the post, John Pritchard, refused to hand over the provisions he had just received from the hunting grounds of the Qu'Appelle River, the sheriff ordered the breaching of the wooden palisade that defended the buildings, and, in spite of the resistance offered to him, he seized the rich cargo of 479 sacks of dried meat that had been stored there.⁹³

Macdonell was indeed careful not to attempt to reduce the adverse company's personnel to a state of famine. By personally offering to return to John Wills the provisions he considered necessary for feeding the men at Fort Gibraltar, he escaped the charge of a lack of humanity that had first been levelled against him.⁹⁴ But the seizure which he had ordered deprived the staging point of Bas de la Rivière of the provisions that were destined for it, and this in turn amounted to paralysing, as Lord Selkirk later recognized, the normal passage to Fort William of the Athabasca brigades, which henceforward would be deprived of the means of safely completing the last stage of their journey.⁹⁵ Thus Macdonell's rash action, apart from indicating to the freemen and the Métis the danger of police action against anyone who did not obey the governor's injunctions, provided the North Westers with a precise grievance. They made it an excuse to oppose violence to violence. The two parties took prisoners.⁹⁶ On both sides, groups of armed men were recruited to ward off possible aggressions. Twenty-eight men were sent to the shores of the Assiniboine to protect the

sheriff, who was arriving from Fort la Souris, and the booty he was transporting. On their side, the North Westers had mobilized a force of 120 voyageurs, and had given the command of them to twelve bourgeois who were exasperated by the plundering to which they had been subjected, and were resolved to do battle to recover their property. A number of Indians had arrived to swell their ranks: two or three hundred men were expected any day as reinforcement.⁹⁷ For the first time, voyageurs, freemen, and Métis were taking up arms at the call of the North West Company to defend a cause which more and more became that of the population of Rupert's Land. In the conflict that threatened to break out, the disproportion of forces was too evident to offer any other prospect, in the event of a defeat of the settlers, but the immediate collapse of the Assiniboine undertaking. Macdonell did not dare risk such a perilous gamble. When the bourgeois McDonald (John McDonald of Garth) went to him and proposed a compromise according to which the colony would receive, out of the consignment it had captured, two hundred sacks of pemmican, and would be assured, during the coming winter (1814-15), new provisions of fresh meat from the North West Company, he hastened to accept an agreement in such reasonable terms,⁹⁸ which allowed him, without further harming the interests of his antagonists, to meet the needs of the new settlers who would soon be arriving.⁹⁹

The Intervention of Duncan Cameron and the New Offensive of the North Westers

An accord between the two parties seemed to have been re-established, and some of the partners, assuming that in these circumstances their company and Lord Selkirk's enterprise would cease to clash with each other, began to think seriously of settling down in the colony with their Métis children. J. Dougald Cameron expressed openly his intention of doing so, and it seems likely that he would have carried out his plan if it had in fact been possible.¹⁰⁰ But, on a higher level, the agents in Montreal could not accept such an easy reconciliation, which also aroused the animosity of William Auld, doubtless inspired by his inveterate hostility toward the North West Company.¹⁰¹ This was the very time when the Red River colony was entering on its first phase of consolidation, thanks to the arrival of those model colonists, the Kildonan settlers, to the appearance of crops that seemed to justify every

hope, to the completion of the first surveys by Peter Fidler, and to the acquisition of a flock of sheep which was shortly expected from the plains of the Mississippi.

Apart from that, the colony of Assiniboia promised to serve in the near future as the reservoir of men and provisions,¹⁰² which the directors of the Hudson's Bay Company had expected it to be, and this explains the hostility which, from the beginning, Lord Selkirk's plans had awakened in William M'Gillivray. The very intention that certain partners expressed of establishing themselves on the banks of the Red River aroused fears that the personnel of the North West Company would let itself be gradually drawn toward the opposing cause. Fortunately, not all the bourgeois shared these inclinations toward defection. Some of them maintained an irreducible resentment against the colony: in the first rank of these was Alexander Macdonell, who, at the same time as J. D. Cameron was preparing to adopt the sedentary life, openly repudiated all idea of conciliation.¹⁰³ By making use of such elements, and by arranging the intervention of the Highlander Duncan Cameron, whose entry into the scene notably reinforced their position, the North Westers could make the effort to recover their position and, by a mixture of cunning and violence, deprive Miles Macdonell of the gains he appeared to have made. Under the impetus given by Duncan Cameron, whose active will was reinforced by a Machiavellian mind, the strategy of encirclement which Alexander Macdonell had applied during the winter of 1812-13 was taken up on a larger scale, and, once again, the demoralizing tactics, intended to spread discouragement among the inhabitants of Assiniboia, produced their effects.

As soon as he arrived in the territory of Red River (June 1814), Duncan Cameron, whom his long experience in the Lake Nipigon sector had familiarized with the native populations and accustomed to all the violent means adopted by the North Westers, took advantage of the ease of access he obtained to the settlers by virtue of common language and origins. Addressing them in Gaelic, he turned immediately to the most recent arrivals, the immigrants from Sutherland, whose good qualities and the attachment they immediately manifested for their new home constituted an important guarantee of stability for the colony.¹⁰⁴ Inviting them to visit him, and winning their sympathy by generous distributions of the goods, such as sugar, tea, and liquor, which the governor measured out to them sparingly,¹⁰⁵ he took every opportu-

ity, in the intimacy of conversation, to suggest to them that they had unwittingly been taken from their homes, "kidnapped" as it were, and transplanted without any guarantee for the future into a land where the natives would soon set about massacring them.¹⁰⁶ He then offered to take them to Canada, there they would find an assured refuge,¹⁰⁷ and be spared the privations they were still suffering on the Red River.¹⁰⁸ As for the earlier immigrants, he reminded them of the excessive severity Miles Macdonell had shown toward them, imposing immoderate punishments for minor breaches of discipline.¹⁰⁹ Before whose who were still attached to the settlement in the humble condition of wage-earners, he dangled—in the hope of bringing about their desertion—the bait of higher pay. After having persuaded seventeen of them to repudiate their contracts, he made regular use of them to get round the others and increase the number of defections.¹¹⁰

At the same time Cameron acted in obedience to instructions which the wintering partners had evidently just agreed on at Fort William during their last reunion,¹¹¹ and, like Alexander Macdonell in the past, he plotted to intercept the colony's food supplies.¹¹² He used a well-planned duplicity to finally win over the Métis, some of whom were still faithfully serving Macdonell.¹¹³ As the measures the latter had adopted had not resolved the question of how the buffalo hunt should be conducted, and as the procedure employed by the free Canadians and the Métis put the settlement at the mercy of these men, who alone were supplied with fast horses, Macdonell on 21 July 1814 published a new proclamation which ordered the hunters henceforward to abandon their practice of chasing the animals on horseback. Afterward he claimed that the North Westers had themselves urged him to this decision, whose result would infallibly be to alienate the Métis from him.¹¹⁴ J. White, the colony's doctor, categorically put the blame for the initiative on the partners of the North West Company,¹¹⁵ in whose hands he showed Macdonell becoming a mere tool, and the Canadian Séraphin Lamarre himself admitted to Colin Robertson that he had deliberately led the governor into the trap which the cunning Duncan Cameron had laid for him.¹¹⁶ Thus it was thanks to the duplicity of his adversaries that the governor finally surrendered to the desire he had long manifested of opposing the methods of hunting favored by the Métis. Taken in by the clever rationalizations of the North Westers, who had no difficulty in convincing him of the importance, for their own establishments

as well as for the settlers, of limiting this practice, he took on himself, in the eyes of the Canadians and their descendants, the unpopularity of a decision to which he had come only through his enemies' suggestions.

The North Westers hastened to give wide publicity to this proclamation whose terms they had established in full agreement with Macdonell.¹¹⁷ They posted it on the gates of Fort Gibraltar,¹¹⁸ and did not oppose its publication at Brandon House.¹¹⁹ But at the same time Duncan Cameron advised the Métis not to take any notice of a decision that arbitrarily restrained their right to govern their own lives as they wished.¹²⁰ As they could not follow the text of the proclamation, he distorted its meaning, and claimed that it forbade them under pain of death to assure the subsistence of their families.¹²¹ In the French translation which he had Séraphin Lamarre read to them, Cameron introduced clever modifications that were calculated to provoke indignation among those who heard it.¹²² At Fort Gibraltar he publicly tore up Macdonell's decree, and told the Métis that they had every latitude to hunt as they had done in the past,¹²³ adding that he was the boss, and that Macdonell's orders could not oblige them to anything.¹²⁴

In this way, not only did Cameron regain the confidence of the Métis by the respect he showed for the traditional freedom of their way of life, not only did he communicate through his relations with these simple natures the spirit of solidarity that animated the organization of the North West Company, but he tried, by proclaiming his authority as leader, to challenge the position Macdonell arrogated to himself.

The governor acted in the name of the Charter of 1670 and of the jurisdiction with which he had been invested under the Act of Cession of the territory of Assiniboia to Lord Selkirk by the Hudson's Bay Company. Assisted by a council of three members which he had constituted a little after the proclamation of January 1814 in conformity with the text of the Charter,¹²⁵ he had obtained from his adversaries, by the conclusion of the agreement relating to pemmican, an implicit recognition of the authority which he held under the terms of the Charter.¹²⁶ The Canada Jurisdiction Act, of which the North Westers had constantly availed themselves, had thus suffered its first setback. In order to regain the ground that had already been lost in this way, Duncan Cameron offered in opposition to the titles of his adversaries the legal sanction of a royal commission in accordance with which he pro-

claimed himself "Captain of the Corps of Voltigeurs, Officer Commanding on the Red River."¹²⁷ And by virtue of that lapsed commission, which applied to a regiment that had been disbanded in March 1813,¹²⁸ he claimed a supreme authority over all the inhabitants of the Red River, proclaimed himself superior even to Macdonell,¹²⁹ and openly repudiated the legality of Lord Selkirk's enterprise.¹³⁰

To impose even more on the freemen and Métis, he began to parade in his full-dress captain's uniform,¹³¹ and, in accordance with the commission with which he claimed to have been invested, he distributed ranks of lieutenant and ensign to the bourgeois Alexander Macdonell, to the clerk Séraphin Lamarre, who were directly under his orders, and to the Métis William Shaw and Peter Pangman (Bostonois Pangman) who were placed under the command of the clerk Cuthbert Grant, himself promoted to the rank of Captain of the Métis.¹³² Finally, while in this way he created the framework of an army which he intended to deploy against the colony, he set out to obtain from the partner, A. N. McLeod, who filled the role of justice of the peace under the Canada Jurisdiction Act, a warrant of arrest against Miles Macdonell, accusing him of theft and breaking in through the agency of the sheriff who had conducted the seizure of pemmican at Fort la Souris.¹³³

For the time being, equilibrium was re-established on the basis of legality: the two antagonists laid equal claim to royal authority, one by virtue of the Company's Charter, the other by virtue of a military commission. The validity of the titles they invoked could not be contested by the freemen and even less by the Métis. But while Macdonell sheltered behind a distant act whose illegality the North Westers had not ceased to proclaim, Cameron acted in the name of a commission that seemed less abstract to the Métis, for he invoked once again that Canada Jurisdiction Act with which the partners had given cover to their aggressions in earlier years and which the natives of the country of the West were accustomed to regard as governing the legal status of their fatherland. The jurisdiction of the Canadian tribunals, nearer and more tangible, had in their eyes a solidity that could not be supplanted by the authority of a little-known charter. Personified by Duncan Cameron, and favorably interpreted by him, it respected the freedom of the Métis by avoiding any interference with their way of life, while the authority incarnated by Miles Macdonell imposed on them

immediate limitations which would doubtless be followed by other impositions. Finally, the military entourage with which Cameron surrounded himself, and the ranks which he conferred, augmented the prestige of the commission of which he took advantage to preach openly the destruction of the colony, first of all by starving it out,¹⁵⁴ and then by force if necessary;¹⁵⁵ arguments infallible in the eyes of these uneducated men who were ready, as Robert Semple would soon observe, to let themselves be awed by any display of arms and uniforms or by the influence of men acting "in the name of the king."¹⁵⁶ The doubts that might be aroused among the Canadian voyageurs by the North Westers' frequently repeated affirmations of legality were non-existent among the more ignorant Métis and, to a great extent, among the freemen. And so to the power he acquired from his intimate relations with the descendants of the freemen and from the support he found among some of the leading Métis, Cameron added the prestige conferred on him by his adept invocation of a commission from the king and the unanswerable arguments that derived from it.

The Birth of Métis Nationalism

But while this work of disruption was going on, Miles Macdonell was provoked, by two events which happened at this point, to take yet other measures which, however justified they may have been, were bound once again to play the game of his enemies and tighten more closely their links with the Métis group. His initiatives might possibly have been successful if Cameron's activities had been less far advanced, and if the governor had accompanied his actions with a counter-propaganda among the Métis and had assumed a more bold and capable attitude that would have demonstrated a self-confidence equal to Cameron's. As things stood, his actions could only ruin his cause and that of the colony in the eyes of the Métis and give all the support his adversaries could have wished to their campaign.

In September 1814, on his return from York Factory, where he had gone to welcome a new contingent of settlers, Miles Macdonell learnt that the North Westers had gone so far as to arrest the sheriff, J. Spencer, whom they formally accused of theft at Fort la Souris, in preparation for formulating the same charge against the governor of the colony.¹⁵⁷ He also learnt, shortly after, that his adversaries had repudiated the agreement that had been reached on

the question of the distribution of pemmican, and had resolved to hand over to the colony none of the provisions which they regularly assembled at Fort la Souris.¹³⁸ They hoped in this way to reduce the inhabitants of Red River to starvation in the winter of 1814–15, to paralyse as a consequence all their energies, and so, by the following summer, to have completely destroyed Lord Selkirk's creation.¹³⁹ The decision had been taken at Fort William, under the influence of William M'Gillivray and A. N. McLeod.¹⁴⁰ Sustaining an implacable hatred toward the colony, the latter devoted themselves to creating new difficulties for it, and to changing the minds of those among their officers who had freely welcomed the idea of taking up land in the Red River valley.¹⁴¹ The prejudices of these leaders quickly communicated themselves to all the officers of the North West Company, from the highest to the lowest, and this organization, whose workings had always been based on reciprocal confidence, once again found a source of strength in the solidarity that united the simple clerks to the bourgeois and the agents.¹⁴²

It was now that the project which Alexander Macdonell had revealed to his cousin in the winter of 1813—of taking the colony by starvation—began to take shape. The agreement of June 1814 was broken, and the North Westers set out to monopolize the production of pemmican from the rich "buffalo parks" of the Qu'Appelle River, so as to cut off even more completely the supplies of food to Assiniboia.¹⁴³

To this new offensive the governor replied with the decision to prohibit all exportation of dried meat in any form.¹⁴⁴ Then he set out to remove his enemies from Lord Selkirk's territory by ordering Duncan Cameron to abandon Fort Gibraltar, which, because it was situated within the limits of the colony, was no longer the property of the North Westers. The order, to be executed within six months, was given to him on 21 October, and the same order was soon addressed to the chiefs of the establishments at Turtle River and Souris River, of Fort Dauphin, Bas de la Rivière, and Carlton.¹⁴⁵

Immediately Duncan Cameron redoubled his arguments aimed at the Métis and cleverly stirred up in their minds thoughts of the danger that these ultimatums implied for their own future. Not neglecting any of the aspects likely to arouse their feelings, reminding them that the North West Company had raised them from childhood, that they had grown up around its posts, he

suggested to them that the expulsion of a personnel whose members were their natural protectors would leave them exposed to the tyranny of a group of newcomers who did not understand them.¹⁴⁶ He added that the orders issued by Macdonell were the prelude to the coming expulsion of the Métis from the territory of Assiniboia, and that if the governor had thought himself powerful enough to act he would not have hesitated to order their eviction at the same time as that of the North West Company. As for the lands of which the strangers were taking possession, the Métis were by right of birth the incontestable owners of them; it behoved them to oppose the policy of illegal seizure which began with the confiscation of the soil and would end with the unconditional extradition of the Métis as a group.¹⁴⁷

Thus, broadening his appeal, Cameron laid the first foundations of Métis nationalism: he brought to the people of mixed blood the consciousness that by virtue of their birth they had rights of their own, which they owed it to themselves to assert and to defend against the threats posed by an alien race. The national idea was sketched out in this argument whose simplicity captivated the Métis and reawakened their prickly sensibilities. Henceforward, convinced of their sovereign rights over the immense plains of the West where by virtue of their origins they represented the indigenous element, they were not slow to think of themselves as a group coherent enough to demand the standing of an independent nation and to claim the restitution of a territory which it was proposed against all legality to take away from them.

It was on this slender foundation that the national idea of the Métis arose. Yet in a way the concept remained alien to the people who adopted it and used it to justify their own later actions. It emanated essentially from the bourgeois of the North West Company, who skilfully brought it into being and exploited it for their own ends. They were equally adroit in spreading the idea with the co-operation of the Métis Cuthbert Grant, on whom Cameron had conferred the rank of captain and to whom he had given command of the Métis group, which Grant set about organizing militarily and which he planned to lead against the colony as soon as his appeals to national sentiment had taken effect.¹⁴⁸ There is no doubt that Duncan Cameron stirred up genuinely deep feelings among the Métis. Based on a simple idea, and ignoring the more soundly based rights of the Indians, these feelings would show

themselves, when they were put to the test, tenacious enough to prove their sincerity.

Yet from the beginning the national idea was marred by weaknesses of two kinds. First, the Métis had not conceived it spontaneously and hence it was liable to suffer frequent fluctuations under the influence of various kinds of propaganda that were contrary to that of the North Westers but at the same time appealing to the Métis temperament. Even more important, because of the variation in the standards of living among the freemen, which were inevitably reflected in the condition of the Métis families, the group was not homogenous enough for all its members to harbor the same aspirations. In any case, it was a group of people too changeable and impressionable by nature for the means of expressing their national feelings not to vary according to the circumstances or personalities which influenced them. Hence arose the endless changes which the national idea underwent in the course of Métis history, despite the underlying loyalty it always continued to inspire. Hence also arose the circumstance that the national idea was affirmed with any vigor only when a strong personality was able to awaken and embody it. At least, by arousing among the Métis aspirations hitherto unknown to them, the North Westers provided the group with an element of cohesion which partly made up for that lack of a clearly defined culture which the group owed to the duality of its origins.

Miles Macdonell's Blunders

Duncan Cameron would not have been able—as he did—to exploit fully the rash actions of his antagonist if the latter had not, by his own blunders, provoked the resentment of the Métis and given them the impression that they could expect neither sympathy nor understanding from the new society in Assiniboia. In 1811 and again in 1813, Selkirk had suggested to Macdonell that he should admit as settlers in the Red River territory the released employees of either company who, after entering into marriages with native women, had acquired Métis families.¹⁴⁹ The lands they might occupy would not be given freely; to prevent agricultural work from appearing contemptible in their eyes, it would be handed over to them at a price which Macdonell had the authority to fix as he saw fit.¹⁵⁰ The governor was not unaware that a

number of officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, as well as of the North West Company, proposed to take up their abode with their children in the colony of Assiniboia. He had been assured of this as soon as he reached York Factory, and he had discussed it openly with Lord Selkirk,¹⁵¹ informing him that William Auld and William H. Cook were both inclined to settle in the colony.¹⁵² Soon afterward, in 1814, James Bird told him of his intention and that of several of his friends to acquire parcels of land on the banks of the Red River.¹⁵³ The disappointment that these men eventually displayed at the destruction of the colony¹⁵⁴ fully justified Macdonell's remark in 1814 that the Hudson's Bay Company's officers were far from displaying a unanimous hostility toward the colony of Assiniboia.¹⁵⁵ But if Lord Selkirk encouraged the establishment of such mixed-blood families on the lands of the Red River, he had no plan to assimilate them with the white settlers he had brought there. On the contrary he advised Macdonell to maintain a demarcation that would prevent clashes and conflicts between unequally evolved races: he even suggested that it be written into the distribution of lands by concentrating the Europeans around the confluence of the Assiniboine and keeping the Métis families on the periphery.¹⁵⁶ This discriminatory system fitted too well with Macdonell's own prejudices for the governor to neglect its application. A sincere Catholic,¹⁵⁷ he had spoken from the beginning in unsympathetic terms of the free unions that were contracted between whites and natives,¹⁵⁸ and he was careful not to encourage the mingling of the two groups of families he admitted into the colony. At the same time he refused to provide for the officers who wished to establish themselves on the Red River the privileged treatment they asked in transporting their families to the colony and settling them in. Faced by the rejection of his approaches to Macdonell, William H. Cook had to address himself directly to Lord Selkirk, and to attempt to gain through his generosity the concessions that had been refused to him.¹⁵⁹

Perhaps we can see in this rigidity one of the reasons that led to the hostility which a number of the officers showed toward the colony that had disappointed their hopes.¹⁶⁰ This is what Colin Robertson leads us to understand when, after declaring that the majority of them were in the beginning deeply attached to the Assiniboian enterprise because of the prospects it offered their children, he accuses Macdonell of having established between them and Lord Selkirk's immigrants a humiliating distinction, of having

openly directed all his attentions toward the settlers while treating the officers' families as no better than a subordinate personnel, whom he spared neither insult nor criticism, using their faults, and mainly the manners they had acquired in the isolation of the trading posts, as an excuse to keep them on the verges of the society that was being organized on the Red River.¹⁶¹ By such means, which went beyond Lord Selkirk's instructions,¹⁶² Macdonell fatally discouraged the officers who at first had welcomed joyfully the idea of settling in the colony. For their mixed blood families might have been of great help to the settlers at the height of the conflict. Through the affinities of race that united them with the Canadian Métis, they might have mitigated the latter's resentment, and in this way they could largely have neutralized Duncan Cameron's propaganda. According to Colin Robertson, fifty families decided because of the governor's attitude not to participate in the land concessions that were offered to them, and in this way Miles Macdonell deprived himself of an alliance whose value to the cause of the colony cannot be exaggerated.¹⁶³

The result was that from the beginning the Métis as a group found it difficult to carve a place for themselves in a society which, even though it had experienced the equalizing influence of the frontier, still remained subject by a kind of reflex action to the social prejudices and readymade ideas which it had imported from Europe and which Governor Macdonell affirmed without reservation. In fact, when J. Pritchard, one of the North West Company's clerks, was inclined in 1815 to establish himself on the Red River, he could not persuade his native wife to follow him among these "foreigners" whose contempt and derision she feared.¹⁶⁴ In the case of the halfbreed Isham, whose value as an interpreter was highly attested by William Auld,¹⁶⁵ an incident immediately took place which gave rise to criticisms on Macdonell's part that were as sharp as they were unjustified, and which testified to the lack of goodwill on the part of the governor where the factor of color appeared.¹⁶⁶

In these cases it was solely a question of mixed bloods of Anglo-Saxon or Scottish origin, in whose cases the higher position of their fathers and the rudiments of education they had received sustained them at a level nearer to that of the whites. Would it be excessive to assume that with regard to the Canadian Métis, more humble in origin and nomadic in their way of life, the governor had developed an open antipathy? His lack of tact and the

malicious way he addressed Canadian freemen and Métis, the hastiness with which he declared to them that the herds wandering in the territory of Assinibora, like the other resources it offered, belonged to him and that they must give up hunting them, and above all the haughty indifference he showed toward them when they appeared at his home showed an uncontrolled aversion, the expression of a nature ill adapted for relations with people whose fears or resentments might have been dissipated by a few easy gestures.¹⁶⁷ The Métis themselves told Colin Robertson that, even more than by his words, Macdonell had offended them by his indifference, so unlike the informal cordiality of the bourgeois of the North West Company: "No one would ask us in to take a Glass of Rum or even to warm ourselves."¹⁶⁸ And this at a time when it would have been so easy, by a few marks of consideration, to have avoided the inexpiable divisions which the North Westers would exploit to the utmost degree! Neglecting those spectacular uniforms that so greatly impressed freemen, Métis, and Indians alike, and maintaining toward them all an imprudent distance at which they often took offence, Macdonell forgot that in the conflict which was about to break out, Cameron had the advantage of being able to use methods whose infallible effect on the native elements he knew well,¹⁶⁹ an advantage which his antagonist's blindness, proceeding from his lack of experience, prevented him from challenging. A trader more familiar with the inclinations of the Indians, like Hugh Heney, who had been forced to resign his position through having incurred the displeasure of his superiors, would have been able to prevent the errors or blunders that in this way were committed.¹⁷⁰ Left to himself, Macdonell failed to take any of the precautions that elementary prudence seemed to demand. As if on purpose, he magnified the inferiority complex that had already been aroused among the Métis by their contact with a white population and which, because of his contempt for them, the governor made no attempt to mitigate. By his intemperate language and the rashness of his policies, he fanned the resentment they felt toward these usurpers, who in their eyes seemed resolved to reduce them to slavery by depriving them of their means of subsistence, by eliminating—in the persons of the North Westers—their natural protectors, and finally by making light of the sovereign rights of their "nation" over the territory that belonged to them.

Thus, by the beginning of the year 1815, the Métis had under-

gone a radical transformation which had effaced the friendly inclinations they had shown in the early days. The good feelings with which they had first regarded Lord Selkirk's enterprise had been shed and replaced by either concealed or open hostility, which extended to the people whose presence upset their economy and whose laws threatened to dry up the very source from which their needs were supplied. All that had been needed to change their attitudes was the clever propaganda of Duncan Cameron, which the words and actions of Governor Macdonell did nothing but reinforce.

The Attitude of the Freemen and the Indian

At the same time, while he directed his main effort toward the Métis, Cameron was active among the freemen. This task was more difficult, since the Canadians were better equipped to resist the propaganda of the North Westers and to maintain a greater freedom of judgment in regard to current events. Neither the proclamation of July 1814 nor Cameron's effort to assume sovereign power over the Red River and to enrol the "native" population against the settlement succeeded in provoking among the Canadians the same kind of unanimous resentment as the Métis displayed.¹⁷¹ Many of them continued to serve the settlement.¹⁷² To maintain a greater support among them, Cameron had to elaborate his arguments and even, where necessary, to resort to violence. The nationalist propaganda so adroitly disseminated among the Métis could not have the same effect on the Canadian freemen, while the latter, less exclusively dependent on the buffalo hunt, were not so impressed by the argument that the North West Company recognized their complete freedom in this respect. For this reason Cameron sought to attach all the Canadians who had established themselves in the locality of the Red River directly to the Company by means of regular engagements, and to monopolize the activity of the hunters so that the settlers of Assiniboia would be deprived of their services.¹⁷³

As for the lukewarm and the reluctant, he devised other means of influencing them, either by dances and celebrations which he excelled in organizing at Fort Gibraltar and in which great numbers of Métis and Canadians took part, or by the prospect which he offered them, if they passed into his service, of repudiating the debts they may have incurred toward the rival company or the

colony.¹⁷⁴ Already certain freemen had refused to pay off the debts from which he promised to free them, and this had led to attacks on them which did no good to their perpetrators and made the victims all the more solid in their allegiance to the North West Company.¹⁷⁵

The fear of an approaching annihilation of the great Canadian company did not leave the freemen indifferent.¹⁷⁶ And Cameron did not hesitate to forbid the Canadians to serve the colony, whether in hunting or in carrying out more diverse material tasks.¹⁷⁷ Where necessary, he used violence. If there were some who persisted in their fidelity,¹⁷⁸ most of those who had at first offered their services freely to the colony, and even some who had expressed their great satisfaction with the actions of the immigrants, moved unreservedly into the opposing camp.¹⁷⁹

Duncan Cameron had reason to be disturbed by the intention to take up lands on the banks of the Red River which some of the Canadians manifested. In many cases, of course, the firmness of their intentions was doubtful; the nomadism that up to this point had ruled their lives seemed likely to undermine any serious inclination toward a sedentary existence, and Macdonell, as we have seen, quickly lost any illusions he may have harbored in this direction.¹⁸⁰ For many of them, poverty was a serious handicap since it made them unable to pay the price asked for their lands.¹⁸¹ Miles Macdonell deemed it prudent, in the hope of overcoming this obstacle, to offer free concessions to those who would agree to improve the soil and work it for three consecutive years.¹⁸² But he thought it would be a long time before his proposal would succeed among men accustomed to an existence too removed from farming for them to accept the agrarian way of life from one day to the next. At the same time, there already existed small clusters of cultivators who, while they still linked their sedentary occupations to nomadic activities, appreciated the relative security provided by work on the land enough to look with favor on the kind of existence offered them in the colony.

More intimately involved in the nomadic life of the prairie, the Métis did not experience such aspirations, and the North West Company, in developing its arguments, could easily awaken in them the natural reflexes of men who practised a purely nomadic existence. With the freemen, on the other hand, it soon found its propaganda coming up against the sedentary tendencies which a number of them showed. It observed with suspicion the first

half-agricultural, half-nomad colonies that began to take shape. In the spring of 1814 a small group of Canadians prepared to establish themselves close to Fort Daer, under the protection it would offer against the attacks of the Sioux.¹⁸³ At the same time, another group came together on White Horse Prairie, along the Assiniboine River halfway between its confluence with the Red River and Portage la Prairie; this was the first nucleus of the future settlement of St. François Xavier.¹⁸⁴ Here and there Macdonell's correspondence mentions concessions of land granted to Canadians in the territory of Assiniboia.¹⁸⁵ The small number receiving concessions seems to have removed any danger of contagion. But their example was still enough to arouse anxiety among the North Westers, who feared it would lead to a weakening of their own position. Thus, in the conflict that broke out, the two economies symbolized by the Métis people and Lord Selkirk's enterprise came into open opposition. Resolved to make an end to the colony of Assiniboia, the North West Company set out to detach the Canadian population, over which it claimed to exercise command and even guardianship, from the way of life which the immigrants of the Scottish colonies had brought to Manitoba, and Duncan Cameron applied himself energetically to fighting against the tendency that appeared to be spreading among the freemen. He removed by force some of the Canadians who had taken up concessions on the Red River.¹⁸⁶ He applied pressure to the Canadian A. Poitras, who had established himself on a lot at White Horse Prairie,¹⁸⁷ with the intention of discouraging him from having any dealings with the colony, and succeeded in winning him over to his cause.¹⁸⁸ In all this he sustained the policy of William M'Gillivray, who at the Fort William reunion had forbidden employees of the North West Company to settle in the colony and had offered in compensation to help them settle in the region of York in Upper Canada.¹⁸⁹

So, at the beginning of 1815, Miles Macdonell's colony had largely lost the favor of the peoples who at first had received it so welcomingly. The Canadian freemen detached themselves from it in large numbers. Willingly or under duress, many adopted the viewpoint of the North Westers, and even set about persuading their congeners not to help an enterprise that deliberately aimed at the ruin of the North West Company.¹⁹⁰ With more unity, the Métis supported the partners who were preaching the destruction of the colony of Assiniboia, which was guilty of attacking their

primordial rights and of disregarding their national aspirations.

Only the Indians do not seem to have varied in their attitudes. The favorable inclination they had shown toward the settlers from the day of their arrival did not decline later on. In 1814 there were various indications to show that, despite the intrigues of the North Westers, they still felt nothing but sympathy and goodwill toward Selkirk's colony.¹⁹¹ Perhaps they appreciated the conciliatory attitude which Macdonell had shown toward them at the beginning and the care he had taken to dissipate any fears they might have of the seizure of their lands. Perhaps they were more aware of the advantages which the enterprise of Assiniboia might offer them: the possibility of trading with the settlers,¹⁹² the profits they could make from providing meat for them, and the support they might eventually find among the settlers against their enemies in American territory.¹⁹³

Macdonell retained their goodwill by emphasizing to them that the colony would provide them with the various articles they were accustomed to procuring from the whites,¹⁹⁴ and they themselves came to the conclusion that the settling of the banks of the Red River would henceforward guarantee them against the uncertainties inherent in their manner of life.¹⁹⁵

Finally, the harm done to them by the Métis and the freemen by chasing away the herds of bison led to a resentment among the tribes, from which the settlers could not fail to profit, against these men who posed as the adversaries of the colony. Lacking horses, and consequently unable to pursue the game for great distances, the Indians found themselves deprived of their necessary subsistence by the tactics of the Métis, and they could not take offence at the edict Macdonell issued against the practice of hunting on horseback: on the contrary the measure was bound to make them entertain a greater degree of goodwill toward the governor. What could they do against a Bottineau who personally owned eleven or twelve rapid coursers capable of overtaking the prairie bison?¹⁹⁶ For the Métis, the possession of a fast and vigorous horse was already a manifest sign of wealth, the most valued capital of the buffalo hunter. Reduced to dire need, the natives—of whom a number died of hunger in the winter of 1813–14¹⁹⁷—conceived a strong resentment against the Métis who were responsible for their privations. The effect of this was inevitably to neutralize the manoeuvres by which the North West Company tried to shake their fidelity toward the colony, either by inciting them openly to

violence,¹⁹⁸ or by interfering between the colonists and the Indians in the hope of provoking difficulties and quarrels,¹⁹⁹ or by spreading, through the intervention of the Métis Cuthbert Grant, false accusations about the alleged confiscation of native lands by the newcomers.²⁰⁰ The opposition of interests that divided the Métis and the Indians, as well as the numerous advantages which the latter foresaw in the development of the colony, prevented the natives from identifying their cause with that of the North West Company and the Métis group, and from sharing in the hostility which the North Westers had been able to inspire in the descendants of the free Canadians.

At the moment when the colony faced increasing defections, and was beginning to become isolated from those who before had been of service to it, the Indians persisted in their loyal attitude,²⁰¹ which earned them bitter reproaches from Duncan Cameron: "the cowardly Indians hereabouts can't be depended upon for any assistance."²⁰²

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE ATTACK ON THE SETTLEMENT OF ASSINIBOIA

THE FIRST DESTRUCTION OF THE COLONY (MAY-JUNE 1815)

If it had succeeded in awakening among the Métis a manifest hostility against Lord Selkirk's enterprise, the North West Company had not yet inspired in them by the beginning of 1815 a hatred deep enough to inspire an attack on the settlement. It was vain, in any case, to expect in a people so susceptible to external influences any enduring resentment against the immigrants of Assiniboia. Good-natured, not obstinate enough to sustain their hatreds, and impressionable to excess, they would veer more than once during the conflict which the North Westers were preparing to unleash, passing from open hostility to conciliation, from exasperation to discouragement, and it would be difficult not to see in the assault they finally made on the colony the result of accidental circumstances rather than a premeditated action.

Attached by instinct to the North West Company, which guaranteed them the only way of life that seemed to conform with their inclinations and antecedents, and persuaded that the stabilization of the colony would be achieved only by the loss of their personal freedom, by the disappearance of their economy, and by the challenging of their national rights, they felt a definite hostility toward the enterprise of Assiniboia which testified to the effectiveness of their superiors' manoeuvres. But their attitude remained dependent on the personal influence of a few men who had been able — by speaking the right language and by exploiting the confidence they inspired — to awaken the desired reactions. A show of goodwill toward the Métis, even a few well-chosen words, would have been enough to make them abandon their prejudices and turn aside from the aggression toward which the

North Westers were constantly urging them.

Hence arose the rather desultory character of the events that marked the years 1815 and 1816, the often uncertain attitude adopted by the Métis, and the constant efforts of the North Westers to make sure that the resentment felt by the Bois-Brûlés against the colony would overcome their natural hesitations.

Defections among the Settlers

In general terms the policy of the North West Company showed no variation. Resolved to destroy the colony of Assiniboia, it utilized simultaneously the methods to which it had always resorted; on the one hand it attempted to reduce the settlement to nothing by inducing more and more of the settlers to desert; on the other hand, it set about undermining the will of the more resolute among them by intercepting the arrival of foodstuffs from the prairie. To increase the number of desertions, the usual promises of monetary rewards and grants of land were made to those who would agree to abandon the soil of the Red River.¹ Under pretexts that had no foundation, arrests were made among the settlers who remained too loyal, and their extradition was ordered by the North Westers.² More often, it was by means of the dances and other gatherings he organized that Duncan Cameron beguiled the settlers, stirred up once again the discontents whose causes had gradually diminished with the stabilization of the settlement,³ and won them over to the idea of a new emigration.⁴ In this way, according to Peter Fidler, the colony lost almost a hundred persons, a figure nearly equal to the whole number of arrivals in the two preceding years.⁵ Most of them travelled toward the Winnipeg River, by which they intended to reach Canada;⁶ some went into American territory;⁷ others simply adopted the way of life of the Canadian prairie.⁸ Duncan Cameron's provocations and intrigues kept the colony in a state of excitement and nervousness which affected the wage-earners most of all: Miles Macdonell had to handle them with special care, for fear the slightest offence would lead to their desertion.⁹ The terms of the contracts they had signed no longer bound them; desertions took place in defiance of all engagements.¹⁰

The Growing Hostility of the Freeman

At the same time Duncan Cameron resumed his scheming among

the freemen. To detach them more completely from the colony of Assiniboia, he set out to arouse between them and the population of Red River an animosity similar to that which separated the settlers and the Métis. He had no difficulty in convincing those Canadians who, despite their releases, continued to serve the North West Company: from the month of January 1815, Macdonell observed the sudden change in their attitude, which hitherto had been friendly toward the settlers. The freemen deliberately created annoyances, acted boorishly, even committed acts of violence, and in this way provoked many quarrels that succeeded in exasperating the immigrants.¹¹ Urged on by Cameron, other Canadians, who had entered early on into trading relations with Macdonell, refused to hand over to him the furs which they had agreed to provide in return for the merchandise he had advanced to them.¹² A manifest ill will replaced the good feeling of the first days.¹³ Everywhere the North Westers increased their pressure on the Canadians, in the hope of depriving the Hudson's Bay Company of their services. In the more remote areas, they exploited their credulity to discourage them from accepting the notes payable in Montreal which the Anglo-Saxons gave them in exchange for their furs.¹⁴ Above all, they pressed them to give chase to the animals that were indispensable for the feeding of the settlement, and many of the Canadians, in obedience to their chiefs' command, resumed during the winter of 1815 that blind pursuit of the bison herds in which they exhausted their best horses and which reawakened the fear of famine in the settlement and in the Hudson's Bay Company's posts.¹⁵

Yet agreement was less unanimous among the freemen than among the Métis. If many openly broke Macdonell's rules, and by their conduct seemed to threaten new excesses, there were others who, in the conflict that was already engaged, adopted a position of neutrality that amounted to a resistance to the provocations of the bourgeois.¹⁶ It seems certain that, without the moderating influence of some of these freemen, the Métis would have seized Governor Macdonell and handed him over to Duncan Cameron.¹⁷

The Chiefs of the Métis Nation

To reinforce its influence over the Métis, who were more pliable than the Canadians, and to spread and strengthen among them the patriotic and national idea, the Company called in at this point a number of its employees of mixed blood.

Most of them worked as clerks and belonged to the families of the bourgeois or of high-ranking officers. Their fathers' positions had enabled them to carry on in Montreal studies advanced enough for them to appreciate the significance of the events that were now taking place, to realize the importance of the stakes involved so far as the North West Company was concerned, and to sense the danger which its ruin or defeat might bring to the Métis as much as to the Canadians. The feeling many Canadians then harbored that the disappearance of the great company would result in an increase of poverty in Lower Canada—so many of whose "honest folk" had "only their voyaging to sustain them and their families"¹⁸—was shared with equal conviction by the Métis sons of the partners. Without concerning themselves with the claims to legality of a charter which in their opinion was negated by anterior Canadian occupation,¹⁹ they set out to communicate to their people the ideas of their bourgeois and in this way to avert the danger that threatened them.

They embarked on their task with an energy and a will exempt from the changeability which paralysed the resolutions of their congeners. They derived from the example and position of their fathers a tradition of attachment to the North West Company that was deeply rooted enough to resist opposing influences and to lead them into bold ventures.²⁰ During their Lower Canadian upbringing, they had also acquired a more precise sense of direction that drew its inspiration from the culture of the whites and lacked all the uncertainties that ensued from the lack of restraint in which the Métis child grew up in the plains of the West.²¹ That the convictions they expressed and endeavored to inculcate among their congeners were lacking in spontaneity, that they sprang in fact from the teaching of their fathers or the propaganda of the bourgeois, one can hardly doubt. But in their education they had imbibed the qualities of action and will needed to realize those convictions, and they would bring to the defence of the North West Company an energy and a sincerity comparable to that of the partners, often reinforced by a blind obedience to their chiefs' orders.²² They were too accustomed to the spectacle of the violences committed by the North Westers to refuse to associate themselves with such actions when circumstances seemed to necessitate them or when they received orders to take part.

The long absence that some of them had undergone, the years

they had passed in Lower Canada gaining their education, had not diminished the effect of their racial affinities with the Métis. When they returned to the country of the West, they immediately re-established sympathy and confidence among their compatriots, for their education had not deprived them of the homely and picturesque language, tinged with the modulations of Indian tongues, that already distinguished the Bois-Brûlés. Cuthbert Grant, son of a bourgeois of the same name and of a Métis woman from the Qu'Appelle River region, was taken in early childhood to Montreal and did not return to the prairie until he was eighteen years old.²³ But the habits he had acquired through his constant association with white people, the new qualities he had absorbed through his superior education, the ease with which he established himself,²⁴ had not entirely detached him from his primary instincts. Absorbed immediately into the life of the West, he had willingly adapted himself to its ways, familiarizing himself with the inclinations and the ways of expression of the Bois-Brûlés, and he was better equipped than any other men to find the right word, the phrase that would capture the adherence of the Métis, the argument that would win their allegiance.²⁵ In all sincerity he had adopted the ideas that his congeners took to heart, and he affirmed the patriotism of their nation with a proud intransigence that aspired to subordinate the settlers to the will of these natives of the West.²⁶

As well as Grant, other Métis, though less conspicuous, constituted nevertheless valuable recruits for the North West Company. There was Alexander Fraser, also endowed with a good education thanks to a long residence in Lower Canada, after which he was appointed to the rank of clerk by Alexander Macdonell;²⁷ William Shaw, who had been assured the benefit of a similar education and identical promotion by the position of his father, the partner Angus Shaw;²⁸ Roderick Mackenzie and Alexander Mackay, both trained in Montreal and also figuring among the Company's clerks.²⁹ Though they had to be content with the humbler role of interpreter, Peter Pangman, nicknamed Bostonois Pangman, and Bonhomme Montour, both sons of bourgeois, would play an extremely active role in the struggle and demonstrate the ascendancy they maintained over the group whose command they shared with Cuthbert Grant and William Shaw.³⁰

The degree of education these young Métis had received and the

more elevated functions that could be delegated to them testified to the ambition which the bourgeois of the North West Company, like the officers of the rival company, nourished for their children. It was to the position of their fathers and the benefits this assured them that these young Scottish Métis owed the fact that they had reached a higher level than the French Métis, generally confined by their more humble birth to a subordinate status. This predominance of educated Scots explains why the North West Company had confided to them, despite their origins and without neglecting to call on the Métis Montour and the Canadian Séraphin Lamarre,⁵¹ the leadership of the Canadian Métis whom it was endeavoring to organize into a disciplined army, united around the national ideal. The ascendancy of the native element was as evident among the leaders whose upbringing had brought them near to the civilized groups as it was among the elements that had remained nearer to the primitive life, and it constituted the most solid link between the two groups, even effacing the differences of religious confession that sometimes separated them.⁵² Language, it is true, united them as much as their affinities of race, for, if most of the Scots had become accustomed through their associations to the indiscriminate use of English and French, the tongue of Lower Canada, along with the native dialects, had quickly assumed ascendancy in the West and had become the customary usage among the leaders and their men.

Guided by their affinities of origin, which were reinforced by their use of the same tongue, the leaders chosen by the North West Company were able to surmount the difficulties involved in commanding the Métis as a group. Cuthbert Grant was distinguished by the firmness of his attitude; he succeeded in imposing on his little troop—so ready to fall away if left to themselves or under the command of a leader without sufficient authority⁵³—a relative degree of discipline. He owed his success to his prestige and skill in manipulating the susceptibilities of the Métis, to the forcefulness he displayed toward the whites,⁵⁴ as much as to his strictness and the respect he commanded. Though he could be violent toward recalcitrants,⁵⁵ he also knew how to win the hearts of his men; if they sometimes obeyed because of the fear he knew how to inspire in them, they were loath to disappoint him by neglecting to carry out his orders.⁵⁶ Helped by this instinctual mutual understanding, he was able until his death to stand out as the verit-

able chief of the "Métis nation." The qualities of courtesy and strong will gave him a personality that in some ways resembled that of the whites, yet a certain hardness of character brought him near to the Indians. More than any of the leaders who were associated with him, he spread and established among the Métis the conviction that they had a right of sovereign proprietorship over the lands of the West which was the basis of their claims to nationality.

The Organization of the "Métis Nation"

But that conviction alone would not have been enough to create and sustain the national idea if it had not been bodied out in the organization given to the Métis at this stage by the North West Company. For the first time they were enabled to find—in their community of origins and in the presence of "national" leaders—a source of cohesion and solidarity. Their leaders were men of the same race, thinking and acting like them, proclaiming their essential rights, and turning to their advantage the laws which the governor of the colony was constantly evoking. Their actions were further sustained by the men who used the authority of their original commissions to prescribe and justify such actions or who claimed to be invested with royal authority³⁷—claims which the Métis had neither the opportunity to verify nor the boldness to question—and all this strengthened with an appearance of legality their pretensions to nationality. The thought never occurred to the Métis that this right which they invoked on behalf of their nation had already been claimed by the Indians, and that if the whites seemed usurpers to them, it was in the same light that they themselves appeared to the native peoples. If and when they had some confused perception of this contradiction, they found the solution in the incorporation of their group into the race from which it derived.

To attach the Métis more closely to the ambitions they had implanted in them, and to awaken in them an aggressive ambition which they hoped would overcome their recurrent hesitations, the North Westers eventually decided to inflate the national idea by introducing the title of "Lords of the Soil," which would flatter their vanity and, in reaction to the timidity they were liable to feel in the presence of white people, to provoke them to expressions of immoderate arrogance.³⁸ With a great adroitness, the partners

showed an ostensible respect for the independence of these men whom they described as "free halfbreeds of the Red River," the only "*masters of the soil*."³⁹ William M'Gillivray stressed their desire to be "considered an independent tribe,"⁴⁰ and the partners avoided giving any appearance of constraint, which might have caused offence; making a pretence of leaving them free to follow their own initiatives, they multiplied the arguments aimed at inducing the Métis to destroy the colony, but never sought to force them into any such action.⁴¹ Gradually, the idea spread among the Métis that they were indeed the "only masters of the soil" and of their own destinies, and that their status as an independent nation justified them in imposing their own conditions on the immigrants to the Red River, in the hope of avoiding the servitude that seemed to threaten them as a result of the disturbance of their traditional economy. "You will be given shovels and pickaxes," Duncan Cameron told them, "and you will be forced to cultivate the soil for the settlers if you let them freely increase their numbers."⁴²

In the spring of 1815, the Métis laid claim to be treated as equals by the North West Company and the settlers in Assiniboia. Proudly describing themselves as the "New Nation," or the nation of the Bois-Brûlés (and in this way elevating into the title of a nation the nickname that was derived from the color of their skin), they transmitted their wishes, which in fact merely reproduced the injunctions of the North Westers, to the population of the Red River, demanding that they be carried out under the threat of reprisals, as if they themselves formed a freely constituted state, provided with regular institutions.⁴³ For, prompted once again by the representatives of the North West Company, they had reached the stage of thinking of themselves as organized in an autonomous republic, whose four leaders were merely the representatives of the collectivity. The leaders sustained these illusions by referring in the treaties they proposed to the opposing party to the "mutual consent of their companions," in the same way as Indian chiefs would make a show of carefully respecting the susceptibilities of the men who had come together voluntarily under their leadership.⁴⁴ Such rather simplistic concepts suited the inclinations of these families of nomad hunters, who were unfamiliar with any more developed kind of organization. And in this way their ideas of nationality acquired a tenacity that would enable them to survive the oblivion into which later events seemed to consign them.

and would ensure that they were transmitted almost intact to the Métis of the present time.

While they dictated their wishes to the settlers who had occupied their territory, the Métis regarded themselves as free of all obligation toward the whites or toward their systems of legislation. They even rejected, as inapplicable to their nation, the injunctions of Christianity and the moral laws inspired by them.⁴⁵ The decrees that emanated from their own nation were the only ones toward which they admitted any obligation. Moreover, the refuge they could find in the boundless prairie, and the possibilities of subsistence which it offered them, allowed them to defy with impunity the morality of the white men.⁴⁶

The contagion of these readymade notions, fabricated by the leaders of the North West Company, spread without hindrance among men who were incapable of discussing them and recognizing their fragility, and who were already too detached from the civilizations of their origins to remain committed to their values or to oppose by firmly based principles the propaganda to which they were subjected. Their national leaders spread the ideas of their masters with a zeal encouraged by the titles and dignities with which they were now invested and which they regarded as conferring a superior status to that which they maintained within the working hierarchy of the Company.⁴⁷

The scheme envisaged by the North Westers was not only well calculated to provide a source of pride and energy that would strengthen the vacillating resolution of the Métis. It also allowed its promoters to conceal their true responsibility for events under the so-called spontaneous activities of the men whose independence they proclaimed and appeared to respect. It was on behalf of the "New Nation" that they made their boldest demands, and it was through the Métis that they transmitted to the settlers the order to abandon the soil of Red River.⁴⁸ When, at their instigation, acts of violence against the colony increased, they declared that they were powerless to moderate the will to destruction of the Bois-Brûlés, over whose initiatives they had no control.⁴⁹ Angus Shaw and William M'Gillivray never ceased to attest the complete independence of the group that responded so well to their manoeuvres,⁵⁰ and Duncan Cameron did not hesitate to throw on the Métis the responsibility for the aggression that would sweep away the colony of Assiniboia. Yet when Cameron's remarks were re-

ported to Cuthbert Grant, the latter remained unconvinced of the duplicity of this man whose sincerity he had never doubted.⁵¹

The Appeal to Atavism

The activities of the North Westers were not bounded by the considerations already outlined. In order to keep up the energy that the Métis gained from the patriotic ideal, they endeavored to reawaken in them the Indian affinities within their natures and to stir up the savage instincts which in many cases their origins must have transmitted to them as a recessive factor in their personalities. Any manifestation of that latent atavism might weaken the courage of the settlers by making them fear the outbreak of primitive violence, and this in turn might increase the number of desertions and hasten the colony's capitulation. On one side, in fact, we see the North Westers striving to destroy the links that still attached the Métis to Christianity, whose teachings they told them could not be applied to the traditions and the culture of their group. On the other hand we see them, once this work had been accomplished, seeking to lead them back to the level of Indian customs, either by inciting them to pillage the settlers' property, which they promised to share out among those who carried out attacks on the Red River farms,⁵² or by suggesting that they adopt the war garb of the Indians, putting feathers in their hair and painting their faces, practices that were alien to the Métis, but which could have the effect of increasing disorganization among the settlers.⁵³ This was all the more likely to happen, since the settlers were aware of the presence of a number of Métis whose nicknames,⁵⁴ cruder manners,⁵⁵ and even the languages in which they chose to express themselves,⁵⁶ seemed to identify them with the Indians, and whom they therefore believed capable of the worst of violences.

The suggestions transmitted by the partners did not go without effect. In the months that preceded the decisive events, one might fairly agree that the Métis gave in to the atavism attributed to them. They would form armed gatherings on the verges of the colony, resembling groups of Indians ready for combat; they sang war songs to which they kept time with the beating of drums, and even performed Indian war dances and plastered their faces with vermilion.⁵⁷ When the assault was finally unleashed, the warfare was conducted according to the rules of Indian tactics, in minor

actions such as ambushes, surprise attacks, limited raids, somewhat more openly carried out than Indian expeditions, but generally announced by war cries or Indian war whoops.⁵⁸ When the action was over, the joy of the victors was manifested in songs or dances to the rhythm of the drums, as in a camp of nomad families celebrating the return of its triumphant warriors.⁵⁹ How could the settlers, whom North Westers did not tire of warning that one day they would be massacred by the native peoples, keep calm in the presence of such obvious manifestations of a heredity whose consequences they feared?

On their side, by reverting to practices that assimilated them closely to the warrior tribes of the prairie, the Métis became gradually accustomed to the thought of the murderous actions which the partners expected of them. The North Westers had well considered the tactics that would enable them to rally the Métis to their projects. To complete the course of action they had set in motion, they had recourse to incessant distributions of presents, and especially of alcohol, and they were careful not to ask of the Métis any service that was not accompanied by the promise of payment. In this way they dissipated any impression of constraint, and cleverly played on the susceptibilities of their men.⁶⁰

The Intervention of the Métis of the West

Despite the precautions that appeared to guarantee them the loyalty of the Métis, the partners did not have confidence in all the elements that made up the group known as the Bois-Brûlés. Undoubtedly they knew that the Métis of the Red River, repulsed by the blunders and the lack of cordiality on the part of Governor Macdonell, and seduced by the patriotic idea which they had communicated to them, felt from this time onward a deep national pride as well as a lively resentment against the colony, so that they were unlikely to escape from the North West Company's influence. Yet they still feared the effects of the sympathy that in the beginning had united these people with the settlers of Assiniboia. Some unexpected change of mood might still, from one day to the next, re-establish the links between groups whose relations had once been so cordial. Events were to prove such apprehensions at least partly justified. Below the surface of their national aspirations, and below the appearance of an atavistic return to their native origins, the outgoing nature of the Métis was always

ready to re-emerge,⁶¹ and for this reason the cohesion of their group was always subject to disintegration.⁶²

But, between the Métis who inhabited the rich area of the Red River, with its wooded and genial landscapes, and those who wandered the more remote and wilder regions of the prairie, there existed an elemental difference which the years of maturity would accentuate and broaden. In the more primitive setting, the Métis lived in closer contact with the nomad tribes of the plains. Perhaps they derived from this contact a more violent nature, stamped with a kind of ferocity. Certainly the isolation that separated them from the colony lessened among them the possibilities of a change of mood that might emerge from too close a proximity to the settlers. To the personal influence of the Métis leaders, which it utilized to lessen the risk of defection, the North West Company was thus able to add that of the Bois-Brûlés who gravitated around the forts of the Qu'Appelle River and the Saskatchewan. In 1816 especially, it increasingly appealed to the latter for their support. Already, in 1815, it recruited a number of Métis in the Edmonton region and, under the pretext of confiding to them the defence of its establishments on the Red River, made use of them in realizing its designs against Governor Macdonell.⁶³ Thanks to their intervention, the Métis as a whole gained in both resolution and energy.

The Attack

The Company could now prepare the attack on the colony which it had contemplated. Its first steps were directed against Miles Macdonell, whose errors of judgment singled him out for the resentment of the Métis. In the course of the winter their hostility toward him grew continually. The settlers watched anxiously the bitterness of their indignation.⁶⁴ Relations had become too strained not to degenerate into an open conflict, which only awaited the incident that would provoke it. Then, in February 1815, the governor sent two of his emissaries to the camp which the Métis and the free men of the North West Company had set up near the source of the Turtle River, where they hunted the bison herds and used their moments of leisure to "sing of war." Did Macdonell's representatives go as delegates in the hope of bringing about an accord with these men who had developed, from the provocations of their leaders and the bellicose appearance of their

camp, a veritable war psychosis?⁶⁵ Or were they hoping to oblige some of them to deliver to the colony the supplies of meat which they had agreed to furnish, at the risk of arousing in the ranks of the Métis, through this intervention, the feeling that their national independence was being violated?⁶⁶ Whatever may have been the case, Macdonell's emissaries were immediately arrested, and, under the guard of the Métis Bostonois Pangman and the Canadian Charles Hesse, they were taken to the hunters' camp, where they were detained for several days. For the moment, the incident had no other consequence than to increase the tension of relations and to give credit to the rumors of attack which spread insistently within the colony.⁶⁷

Once again, the situation called for skilful and prudent management. But Macdonell clumsily committed the same error as in 1814, when he had thought to ward off the dangers that threatened the colony by proceeding with police operations which, however justified, were inopportune. On hearing of the attack on his messengers, he ordered, as a reprisal, the arrest of Bostonois Pangman, one of the most respected men among the Métis, whose promotion to the rank of commander in their army had enhanced his reputation even more in their eyes.⁶⁸ It was even possible that the incident might influence the attitude of the Indians and range them on the side of the Métis; the governor wrote in his journal: "All the Indians about the place would join them in case of hostility."⁶⁹ The compromise which followed shortly after this manifestation, and the appearance of a reconciliation between the Métis and the settlers, did not really change the position of the former group: hatred against Macdonell continued, and the North Westers, with a tenacity that did not dwindle, since they were resolved to lay hands on the governor himself, kept stirring it into life.⁷⁰

The settlers were so conscious of the danger hanging over them that, in growing numbers, they gave in to the movement of defection. Macdonell could not succeed in holding them; his popularity was slight and his authority was openly contested. The ban he issued on attending the balls which the North Westers continued to organize in their fort went unheeded, and the settlers who attended them immediately fell under the influence of Duncan Cameron's intrigues.⁷¹ Some of them deserted not merely with the thought of finding in other climes the advantages they had vainly sought in the colony of Assiniboia, but also with the intent of doing harm both to the governor and to Lord Selkirk's enterprise.

They devised the most malevolent activities against the loyal settlers, damaging their fields and fences⁷² and even joining in the pillage which the North Westers were constantly suggesting to them. Thus, on 6 April 1815, a group of deserters, led by one of their number and by the principal Métis leaders, carried off by surprise the colony's artillery while the settlers were occupied with their work.⁷³

Judging that the rage of the Métis was sufficiently inflamed, and the colony weakened enough by such desertions, Cameron decided he was in a position to engage in decisive hostilities. He rejected the idea of a regular assault, conducted by an organized and well-disciplined army, doubtless judging that such a procedure would have been too alien to the habits of the Métis to ensure their support and to be certain of avoiding a sudden abandonment by them of the masters' cause, induced either by an unexpected resistance on the part of the enemy or by one of those inexplicable shifts of mood that might result from the peculiar nature of the Métis. For this reason the first assault was no more than a succession of skirmishes and plunderings, which seemed to have no relevance to any general master plan. Sometimes the Métis would ride by in military formation, in little groups of thirty or forty, like a well-ordered and commanded troop prepared for an assault. But this would only be a show intended, by the warlike apparel and belligerent cries of the men, to break down the courage of those settlers whose loyalty had resisted all the manoeuvres of the North Westers.⁷⁴ In fact, the Métis contented themselves, at the beginning of June, with a gathering of their forces in one of those clearings which, on the verges of the parkland waterways, interrupted the strips of woodland along their banks: this was Frog Plain, or La Grenouillère, whose empty space opened out along the Red River above its confluence with the Assiniboine.⁷⁵ From there, they undertook robberies and raids, often carried out in darkness, sometimes openly and sometimes unknown to the settlers. Often the colony's horses were shot at with arrows;⁷⁶ sometimes the cattle were rustled or killed;⁷⁷ the fences around the fields were pushed over or torn out;⁷⁸ the cultivated areas were systematically ravaged by the feet of the horses whom the Métis released among them.⁷⁹ Finally, some of the houses were either occupied or vandalized.⁸⁰

From the camp of La Grenouillère, the Métis also organized more direct aggressions; from ambush, cleverly hidden in the

coulees or among the thickets and safe from the reprisals of their adversaries, they would direct on Fort Douglas a fire whose great precision showed the sure marksmanship of the hunters who were accustomed to shooting wild animals.⁸¹ Thus, from 9 to 11 June 1815, the palisades of the fort were subjected to a sustained and deadly fusillade which claimed several victims; since it was impossible for the defenders to place them exactly, the attackers could act with impunity, unconcerned about the fire of their adversaries, who were reduced to shooting at random against an invisible attacker⁸² in an atmosphere obscured by the smoke that on all sides floated out of the thickets where the assailants were hiding.⁸³ This was how the Indians carried on their actions against the trading posts, and it was also how the Métis would act during the insurrection which, in 1885, would pit them against the regular forces of the police and the Dominion army. The action continued in the following days, spreading among the settlers a growing exhaustion and a discouragement that aggravated their feeling of powerlessness. When the Métis began to threaten those who dared to continue working in their fields,⁸⁴ the conviction began to emerge that it would be better to abandon Governor Macdonell rather than to expose the colony to new outrages and even greater losses;⁸⁵ all the more so since a certain number of deserters had joined the Métis and were participating personally in the attacks on the colony.⁸⁶

The North Westers had never ceased to proclaim their intention to eliminate Miles Macdonell: it was against him that they had initiated the conflict, since this provided an excellent cause on which to rally and strengthen the sympathies of the Métis—a cause that seemed to be inspired by the very will of their nation. Let the governor give himself up to his enemies, and peace would immediately be made with the settlers of Assiniboia.⁸⁷ On 17 June, Miles Macdonell gave in to the demands of his adversaries. He delivered himself up voluntarily to the partners, in the hope that by sacrificing his liberty, he would prevent further shedding of blood.⁸⁸ But, behind the person of the governor whose unpopularity marked him out for the hostility of the Métis, the North Westers had their eye on the colony itself, whose destruction was the real underlying cause of the attack.⁸⁹ Thus Macdonell's capture could promise only a fleeting delay.

Here again, the North Westers were able to shelter under the pretended wishes of the Métis, whose independence they pre-

tended to respect, and who, they claimed, were not content with this first success. If, to begin, they allowed their prisoner the benefit of a provisional liberty guaranteed by the payment of a pecuniary bond, they quickly retracted this, ostensibly on the insistence of the Métis, who declared that before their hostage was set free they would have to receive the rewards that had been promised to them.⁹⁰ After this, and always under the cover of the pretended demands of the Métis "nation" (even though the latter had sincerely believed that Macdonell's arrest would bring an end to hostilities and were prepared to respond favorably to the pacific mediation of the Indians between the two parties),⁹¹ the partners hastened to transmit to the colonists their final conditions. They did this through the intervention of William Shaw, who appeared to act in the name of the Métis group rather than of the Company's bourgeois. As well as the abandonment of the Red River by Lord Selkirk's colonists, the ultimatum required the evacuation by the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel of the post at Brandon,⁹² a clear manifestation of the North Westers' intention to eliminate at one and the same time all the troublesome enterprises of their adversaries, colony and trading posts alike.⁹³ The terms had been drawn up by Alexander Macdonell, even though they were officially attributed to the Métis "nation."⁹⁴ The four Métis leaders, rallying to the viewpoint of the partners, defended the ultimatum with conviction.⁹⁵ But their men, more modest in origin and lacking in education, could not understand so easily the Company's interest in the exodus of the colonists, and at this point a number of the settlers showed great presence of mind by addressing themselves to the more humble of the Bois-Brûlés in an attempt to dissolve an intransigence which they well knew was sustained only by pressure from the North Westers.

It was now that the fragility of the nationalism which the partners had aroused among these weak-willed beings became evident. Sincerely convinced of their national rights, persuaded of the negative intention of the colonists toward them, they had nevertheless no thought of pushing their convictions to extreme ends. The capitulation of Macdonell on whom their hostility had centred, and the certainty that they would now receive the rewards they had been promised seemed to them sufficient advantages, and after the action they went to Duncan Cameron to give back their arms and receive payment for their efforts.⁹⁶

In such circumstances it was easy to play on their sentiments in

an attempt to induce one of those sudden changes of mind to which they were always liable and so to dislocate the forces of the North Westers.⁹⁷ On 19 June, the very day on which William Shaw had indicated to the colony's representatives the intention of the Métis to tolerate no longer the presence of settlers on the banks of the Red River, the latter were trying to establish a more conciliatory atmosphere through the mediation of the mixed blood, in the employment of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Unfortunately, several Scottish halfbreeds, discouraged by Miles Macdonell's contemptuous attitude, had already defected,⁹⁸ and on the 11 June, when the Bois-Brûlés had fired on the settlers' farms, the halfbreeds employed by the Hudson's Bay Company, though they were in a position to command respect, had avoided interfering.⁹⁹ When the Métis leaders had threatened to treat them as enemies if they defended Fort Douglas, many of them abandoned the colony and concluded a pacific accord with the Bois-Brûlés.¹⁰⁰

But at the request of Peter Fidler, who was more tactful than Macdonell and, besides, had a family of mixed blood, those who had not joined the general desertion agreed to make a peace-seeking approach to their congeners employed by the North West Company. On 14 June, talks were initiated by the halfbreed Jack Ram.¹⁰² They were resumed on 19 June.¹⁰³ On the next day, when two emissaries of the North West Company had just informed the settlers of its intention to destroy their farms, to efface every trace of their presence, and to tolerate the commercial activity of the Hudson's Bay Company only if it agreed to pay the Métis and the freemen an annual tribute in merchandise, the Canadian Métis were responding favorably to the peace overtures that had been made to them, and had proposed to the colonists, unknown to their masters, the conclusion of an accord. They offered to leave the settlers and the personnel of the Hudson's Bay Company in peaceful possession of their lands and trading forts, on the sole condition that they would not be called to book for the damage they had committed and the harm they had caused.¹⁰⁴ Thirty-five men were involved in this approach, which demonstrated the factitious character of the activities provoked and led by the North Westers and by the leaders who obeyed their orders. Toward these impulsive individuals, directed up to now by men who knew how to persuade them, a courteous gesture and a proof of confidence were enough to prevail over attitudes which had seemed to be sol-

idly established among them. At this point it became evident that, if the Métis made war according to Indian methods, the only ones with which they were familiar, the actions to which they had committed themselves in order to intimidate the settlers did not in fact constitute responses to a savage instinct.

It is true that their change of mood did not last long, for their leaders quickly regained control over them. On 21 June, when Peter Fidler went to the meeting with the Métis in order to negotiate the agreement they had proposed, he found himself confronted by the intransigent William Shaw, who had substituted himself for the delegates of the preceding day, and once again demanded the complete evacuation of the colony.¹⁰⁵ On the 24th the settlers asked the Indians and their chief Peguis to intervene as mediators with the Métis and transmit a message of peace,¹⁰⁶ which would have been accepted but for the opposition of the bourgeois Allan McDonald, commandant of Fort Carlton, who prevented the Métis from taking the calumet that the Indians offered them.¹⁰⁷ Peguis told the settlers that he was powerless to do anything more: "We are too few to contend with them at present."¹⁰⁸ He brought back, in the name of the Bois-Brûlés, and under the signature of their leaders, Grant, Shaw, Bostonois, and Montour, an order of evacuation, for which Peter Fidler threw the blame on the partners: the ultimatum made the re-establishment of peace conditional on the departure of the settlers and the destruction of their farms.¹⁰⁹

Meanwhile, a new attempt at conciliation took place on the next day. It came to nothing. The representatives of the colony promised not to disturb the Métis in their ways of life, no longer to forbid the hunting of the herds on horseback, to dispense the Métis from observing laws that might be promulgated in the colony, and finally to admit them to the annual distributions of presents that were made to the Indians. These proposals would have been enough to win the sympathies of the Métis, if Grant, Shaw, and Bostonois had not hastened to revive their failing resolution and had not renewed the demands of the North Westers.¹¹⁰

On 27 June, the settlers had to resign themselves to accepting the wishes of their enemies. The population of Red River, with its modest possessions and the small flock of sheep it had acquired, embarked in six boats and set out toward Lake Winnipeg,¹¹¹ while Cuthbert Grant ordered his men to burn down the dwellings that marked the site of the colony.¹¹² A smith's workshop was the only

building to escape destruction,¹¹³ and the plains of Red River appeared to have returned to the nomad economy of earlier years. Undoubtedly, the men who had manifested their fury against Lord Selkirk's creation seem to have been obeying the instructions of their leaders rather than any clear consciousness of the conduct their own interests might dictate. Yet one may ask oneself whether the elimination of the colony was not the only solution that corresponded to their ideal of life, and whether, in giving the order to burn the farms of Assiniboia, their leaders were not better serving the cause of the "New Nation" than those who tried to convince its members of the benefits that the stabilization of the colony would bring them. The poverty and the state of servitude into which the Métis group fell when a sedentary economy was finally established on the plains of the West gives in hindsight a melancholy significance to the warnings which the North West Company had earlier lavished on the Bois-Brûlés. But the very attempt to check the progress of the new economy was in vain. The North Westers' success did not carry forward into the future, and the destruction of the settlement of Assiniboia was merely a passing episode. The struggle against the agricultural colonization that was gradually flowing over the plains of the American Middle West, and which found in the parkland of the Red River exceptionally favorable conditions, was to stand in opposition to the irresistible progress of the activity that was destined to supplant the primitive exploitation of furs.

Once the colony was destroyed, the Métis and the freemen left the Red River in considerable numbers. Some of them helped the settlers in their exodus. Then they found their way to Fort William, where the partners had promised to recompense them liberally for their "bravery."¹¹⁴ Simon M'Gillivray did not conceal the joy he felt at the destruction of the colony; while denying his own responsibility and that of the partners for what had happened, he confided to Lord Bathurst the satisfaction which the event had given him.¹¹⁵

Yet in the success which the North Westers had just achieved, there were two small factors that might have justified them in feeling apprehensive of the future. On the one side were the hesitations which the Métis had displayed; on the other was the favor with which from the beginning the Indians had regarded the colony. In order to make up for the weakness of their situation so far as the Indians were concerned, the North Westers had cultivated

the support of the western tribes, as they had also sought the intervention of the Métis from the more distant areas. But it was difficult for them to soften the independence of those peoples who resisted all thought of discipline and who found it no more in their interest than did the Saulteaux of the Red River to work for the complete success of either of the rival companies. Thus in the beginning the partners were unable to recruit in the region of the Qu'Appelle River more than a dozen Indians, Cree and Assiniboine, whose action in May 1815 was of little consequence.¹¹⁶ If the "proprietor" of Carlton, Allan McDonald, succeeded in recruiting a more important contingent, it was only at the price of distributions of alcohol so lavish that they destroyed among his recruits all inclination toward activity.¹¹⁷ The Saulteaux of the Red River persisted in their benevolent attitude,¹¹⁸ and the North West Company had to admit that it was unable to count on these "cowardly Indians."¹¹⁹ The Saulteaux even showed an inclination to intervene against the men who were mobilized by the partners and to hinder the depredations they might commit.¹²⁰ But they withdrew because of their fear of reprisals¹²¹ and because they felt that the conflict did not directly concern their tribes. At the same time, they increased their manifestations of goodwill, accepted the role of mediators between the settlers and the Métis, helped the settlers at the time of their exodus, and cheered them with speeches bearing the stamp of cordiality,¹²² but they did not otherwise become involved in a struggle in which they judged that the disproportion of forces was too much to the advantage of the North Westers,¹²³ and in which the abuse of alcohol, a temptation that could not be avoided in the neighborhood of white men,¹²⁴ would have prevented any serious action on the part of the native people.

The North Westers pretended not to be concerned with these factors which weakened their situation. Soon, however, they would feel their effects when, after the colonists had courageously repossessed their land, the question was once again posed of the destruction of the colony of Assiniboia.

THE SECOND DESTRUCTION OF THE COLONY (JUNE 1816)

The Return of the Settlers and the Hesitant Attitude of the Métis

Never in fact were the uncertainty of resolution among the Métis

and the fragility of their nationalism so clearly manifested as during the days following the return of the settlers.

On 19 August, after an exile of seven weeks which they had spent on the northern shore of Lake Winnipeg, the colonists returned to their abandoned lands under the leadership of the energetic Colin Robertson.¹²⁵ Robertson had left Montreal in the spring, accompanied by a score of men, who were merely the advance guard preceding the main body of the expedition destined to resume the activity of the Hudson's Bay Company in the fur-gathering area of Athabasca.¹²⁶ Having reached Red River, he did not stay there for long. Finding his way quickly to the settlers' place of exile, he led them back to their new fatherland on the banks of the river whose rich soil they had been the first to clear.¹²⁷ Shortly afterwards, at the beginning of November, a new contingent of eighty-four settlers, recently arrived from Europe, and augmented by forty or so employees,¹²⁸ reached the colony of Assiniboia, under the command of Robert Semple, who had come as governor to assume its direction.¹²⁹ Flags flying, cheered by the old inhabitants returned from exile, the group entered into Lord Selkirk's fief.¹³⁰ Since the provisions at their disposal could not assure their subsistence, the newcomers followed the example of their predecessors and chose to live over the winter in the locality of Fort Daer, where the abundance of bison, as well as those crops which had escaped destruction during the month of June, assured them against privation.¹³¹ For the settlers, despite the obstacles that had been put in their way, had not neglected their agricultural tasks: 40 bushels of barley and wheat, and 100 bushels of potatoes had been sown,¹³² and when Robert Semple reached the site of the colony, he discovered to his surprise a crop of 600 bushels of cereals and 500 of potatoes.¹³³ Having put aside the seed needed for sowing the following year,¹³⁴ gathered the supplies of hay for the small herd of sheep and cattle of which the colony disposed,¹³⁵ and accumulated a stock of dried and salt fish,¹³⁶ they faced the winter without apprehension. It was only dwellings that were lacking. Most of the thirty homes that formed the original colony had been destroyed; only two remained habitable. Yet not all the colonists responded to the invitation to spend the most rigorous months at Pembina. Twenty-four refused to accept the governor's urgings, and shared the two houses at their disposal until the return of spring.¹³⁷ At that time Robert Semple intended to re-establish the immigrants on the lands which they had formerly occupied and to

give shape to Lord Selkirk's colony. To encourage the resumption of work, he planned to establish himself among the settlers and to undertake the clearing of a patch of land.¹³⁸ While waiting for the arrival of a pastor to care for the spiritual needs of the settlers, he authorized one of the latter, J. Sutherland, to serve in his place.¹³⁹ Thus, on the banks of the Red River, the community which the North Westers thought they had expelled forever reconstituted itself.

The event was more than a challenge to the North West Company. Its coincidence with the arrival of Colin Robertson,¹⁴⁰ and with the organization in Athabasca of a new enterprise supported by a personnel of those Canadian voyageurs who had brought about the success of the North Westers,¹⁴¹ broadened its significance. In fact, the two enterprises were closely linked: the colony, serving as a supply base for the brigades destined for the regions in the extreme north,¹⁴² was necessary for the success of the offensive in Athabasca.

To that double threat, the Company was obliged to retort with equal force, once again mobilizing, in the extreme North as well as in the territory of Assiniboia, the Métis levies of which it had already made use.

The game, as we have already seen, was won easily in Athabasca.¹⁴³ Here the North Westers were able to exploit not only the obstacles which the land offered to penetration by their adversaries. They found in the attitude of the Indians and the Métis an element of strength on which they could rely. The first, who were carefully watched, had too great a fear of reprisals on the part of the North West Company to let themselves become involved in lasting relations with its adversaries.¹⁴⁴ The others were too close to the Canadian company and its personnel, and too accustomed to seeing it as the sovereign power in these distant regions,¹⁴⁵ to do other than obey its orders and carry out the measures it proposed to them.¹⁴⁶ Through their more direct association with the Indians they sustained the latter's fidelity to the North West Company,¹⁴⁷ and if the native people's loyalty seemed to weaken, they did not hesitate to have recourse to the kind of violent acts against them which showed the greater toughness of their own characters.¹⁴⁸ The Hudson's Bay Company was still too weakly established in Athabasca and in the neighboring regions to dispose of a Métis personnel capable of earning the respect of the forces opposed to it.¹⁴⁹ And the expedition of 1815-16 owed its

failure partly to the isolation in which it found itself, in the midst of peoples whom the North Westers had warned to hand over nothing to their enemies, and whom the Métis and the Canadians made sure did not transgress their orders.¹⁵⁰

Victorious in Athabasca, the partners found things less easy in the territory of Assiniboia, for, if they were able to mobilize large numbers of Métis here, they could not with any certainty rely on their fidelity. The question arose as soon as the settlers returned to their domain. The Métis leaders were absent, as were the more implacable of the partners. Most of the Métis had taken themselves to Fort William, either to carry out the customary annual transport of furs and merchandise for the North West Company,¹⁵¹ or to collect their rewards. The Métis of the prairie, their mission terminated, had returned to the banks of the Qu'Appelle River where, under the direction of Alexander Macdonell, they were employed in consolidating the Company's positions.

Left to their own devices, the few Métis who were present when the settlers returned immediately gave in to their natural benevolence. Through a mingling of conciliation and forcefulness, Colin Robertson obtained a formal statement that they had acted only in response to the express demands of the North Westers and under the promise of payment.¹⁵² Certainly the propaganda to which they had been subjected had not been without its effect; Robertson admitted that the Métis and the freemen had gained an exaggerated idea of their own strength which would take a long time to dissipate,¹⁵³ and which called for a rigorous response.¹⁵⁴ But this feeling was soon neutralized by their natural goodwill, by the remorse they perhaps experienced for having treated unjustly men who had been guilty merely of awkward or irritating behavior toward them, by the forethought with which Robertson himself distributed presents of rum and tobacco on his arrival, and finally by the cordiality with which the freemen greeted the Canadians of his escort, among whom several of them found relatives.¹⁵⁵ The Métis immediately shared in the satisfaction the freemen experienced in seeing members of their families, and the settlers in turn benefited from the good humor of both groups. Mutual confidence was re-established to the point where one of the Métis came forward to apologize for the events of the preceding June,¹⁵⁶ and Robertson noted with astonishment in his journal: "Are these the men that drove away the colonists last spring?"¹⁵⁷ Afterwards the Métis revealed to him how the North Westers had misrepresented

to them Miles Macdonell's intentions, how they had persuaded them that the governor intended to reduce them to servitude, and how the latter had awakened their distrust and provoked their anger by his lack of respect for them, by the restrictions on the hunting of bison which he had formulated, and by his statement that the herds which wandered in the territory of Assiniboia belonged, not to the Métis, but to the governor of the colony.¹⁵⁹

By a few well-chosen words, Robertson reassured them about his own intentions.¹⁶⁰ Both Métis and freemen hastened, as in previous years, to put their skill as hunters at the disposition of the settlers at the Red River.¹⁶¹ Thanks to their activity around Fort Daer, where the "winterers" had gathered once again, there was no lack of meat during the cold season.¹⁶² J. B. Lagimodière, whose fidelity had resisted the intrigues of the North West Company, continued to distinguish himself by his devotion. In September he helped with the harvest,¹⁶³ and, following the Canadian custom, he put his carts at the disposal of the settlers. In October he was commissioned by Robertson to go to Montreal with an important letter giving Lord Selkirk the news of the colony's re-establishment. He left the house he had built a few miles from Fort Douglas,¹⁶⁴ where he had gathered his family, and undertook the long journey by way of Red Lake, the head of Lake Superior, and Sault Sainte-Marie, that would lead him to his destination in the month of January.¹⁶⁵ On his return he was attacked in the locality of the Lakehead by the North West Company's men, who robbed him of the letters which Selkirk had confided to him for the governor of the colony.¹⁶⁶

The grievances which the Métis had harbored during the preceding months dissolved in the general harmony of the reconciliation which the return of the colonists had brought about. The Indians, for their part, increased their attentions and competed in generosity toward the settlers of the Red River.¹⁶⁷ This time it looked as though the return of sympathy would be more lasting. It is true that there was a moment of hesitation among the Métis when their leader Cuthbert Grant reappeared among them in September 1815. Without voicing any reproach, he made them understand, by the way he greeted them, the displeasure which their attitude caused him.¹⁶⁸ Perhaps this silent disapproval on the part of a man to whom they were deeply attached would have been enough to win them back if they had not at this time found reasons for complaint against the North West Company. Many of them

regarded the rewards they had received as insufficient.¹⁶⁹ They did not hide their feelings from Duncan Cameron, who on 13 September had made an imposing re-entry at the head of a force of seventy Métis.¹⁷⁰ At the same time, convinced that the departure of the settlers would assure it the full possession of the Red River, the North West Company had neglected to accumulate there any reserves of merchandise. Having sent the whole of its stocks to Athabasca, it had left its posts entirely stripped, which annoyed the Métis and reconciled them with the rival company.¹⁷¹

The partners were clearly aware that the Métis group had escaped from their control. For the first time, Alexander Macdonell was doubtful of being able to win them back. Observing the defections in their ranks, he expressed his discouragement to Duncan Cameron: "the Spirit of our People is entirely lost, freemen and all look upon them as entire Conquerors, and our destruction is daily looked for."¹⁷²

Finally, the greater skill of the individuals now directing the colony, the clearer vision of the real situation and the needs it involved that appeared to animate the policies of Robert Semple and Colin Robertson, also had their influence on the Métis in addition to the grievances which the latter felt. Robert Semple tempered his firmness with a discretion and a courtesy his predecessor had not attempted.¹⁷³ For his part, Robertson endeavored, by a policy of overbidding,¹⁷⁴ and by adroitly exploiting the mistakes and meannesses of the North Westers,¹⁷⁵ to attract the Métis into alliance with him. Helped by a number of Canadians who had declared themselves in his favor, he dissipated the misunderstandings awakened by Duncan Cameron's propaganda, which was once again based on warnings of imminent enslavement.¹⁷⁶ He emphasized that his hostility was directed solely against the North West Company and did not involve the Métis group,¹⁷⁷ on whom he lavished gestures of courtesy intended to efface the unfortunate impression created by Miles Macdonell's excessively distant attitude.¹⁷⁸ When necessary, he would intervene against his men if they became involved in quarrels with the Métis which threatened to throw the latter back into the arms of the North West Company at the very moment when he was endeavoring to keep them apart.¹⁷⁹

To the Indians he addressed equally encouraging words on the intentions of the whites.¹⁸⁰ Inspired by his example, John Pritch-

ard at Fort Daer succeeded in winning back several of the Métis and Canadians whose conduct had shown the depth of their resentment against the colony and whom the North Westers had placed near the hunting territories in the hope that they would hinder the settlers' activities there.¹⁸¹

To achieve this end it was enough to arouse the gratitude of the Métis by a few personal attentions, to help them in moments of distress, and to provide them with articles of primary necessity, such as the thread used in making fish nets.¹⁸² The reconciliation was so complete that a number of Métis appealed to Pritchard to forward to the Bishop of Quebec a petition asking for a priest to be sent to the Red River to instruct them.¹⁸³ By the beginning of winter it looked as though the break which Colin Robertson had anticipated between the Métis and the North West Company was on the point of realization.¹⁸⁴ Everywhere engagements of freemen and Métis were on the increase. Some of them offered to help the settlers in the task of clearing land.¹⁸⁵ Others occupied themselves in cartage or in carrying the mail.¹⁸⁶ Yet others collected the supplies of oakwood needed for manufacturing the Red River carts.¹⁸⁷ All these were profitable occupations for which the settlers paid well. The hunters earned especially good profits, for the Highlanders, forsaking their frugal customs, paid handsomely for the quarters of meat that reached them in abundance, and which they quickly substituted for the national diet of herrings and porridge.¹⁸⁸

Thus Robert Semple was able to congratulate himself on the return of peace to the colony of Assiniboia and on the good relationship that now existed between the settlers and the Métis.¹⁸⁹ It seemed a good augury for the straightforwardness with which Robertson had immediately combated the intrigues and intimidations of the partners.

Returning on 13 September to Fort Gibraltar, Duncan Cameron and Alexander Macdonell had created a strong impression on the Indians, the Métis, and even the settlers by their gaudy uniforms and their considerable escort.¹⁹⁰ After that, the never-changing propaganda was resumed. The same arguments as before were repeated.¹⁹¹ Once again, the settlers were represented as being resolved to take vengeance for the insults to which they had been subjected. Once again, the newly arrived families were slyly approached by Cameron and urged to leave the Red River, where they would otherwise succumb to the attacks of the Indians,

for less desolate regions.¹⁹³ These intrigues were all the more to be feared since at this very moment the North Westers were attempting to expel their rivals from their positions on the Qu'Appelle River.¹⁹⁴ They would have done so by main force if they had not encountered the opposition of the Indians.¹⁹⁵

At this point, a manifestation of authority was needed, and Robertson took the initiative. On 15 October he seized Fort Gibraltar by surprise, arrested Cameron, and freed him only on the promise of renouncing the insidious propaganda he was making among the settlers and the violent policies he had just been inaugurating on the Qu'Appelle River.¹⁹⁶ Two of the settlers showed their resentment by whipping him, which singularly diminished his prestige in the eyes of the Métis.¹⁹⁷ Thus Robert Semple seemed justified in regarding as vain the threats which Cameron was making for the next spring.¹⁹⁸

The North Westers Win Back the Métis

Nevertheless, Semple was not yet master of the situation. The partial defection of the Métis did not completely disarm the North Westers, any more than it finally consolidated the position of the colony. If the moderation which Bostonois Pangman displayed represented a setback for the North West Company, the latter made up for this loss by the immovable fidelity of the more enterprising Métis leaders. Neither Alexander Fraser, nor Cuthbert Grant, nor Montour showed any change in their feelings. The first had ordered the personnel on the Qu'Appelle River to disperse, but he had added that "no Colony should exist in their Country so long as there was a heart in his Breast,"¹⁹⁹ and that the attitude of his compatriots would not "diminish his courage."²⁰⁰ Cuthbert Grant was more sober in expressing himself, but he had not hidden his displeasure from the Métis.²⁰¹ Montour had also tried to bring them back to their allegiance.²⁰² Besides, even if the partners felt that they were losing ground in Red River, there were still great possibilities of action in the region of the Qu'Appelle River.

Their clerical personnel, as Robertson admitted, remained remarkably devoted.²⁰³ Outside the colony, their propaganda was freely at work, not only among the Métis belonging to that region, who had shown the extent of their exasperation by burning down during the summer the Hudson's Bay Company's fort on the Qu'Appelle River,²⁰⁴ but also among those whom Alexander

Macdonell, with the promise of greater rewards, had attracted toward the same region, where he had removed them from the influence of the leaders of the colony²⁰⁵ and brought them into contact with their more reliable congeners on the prairie.²⁰⁶

Governor Semple failed to recognize these possibilities of the North Westers' recovery. Instead of redoubling his efforts with the Métis, whose changeability was no secret,²⁰⁷ and supporting Robertson's policies to the full, he embarked in a conflict with him that quickly ended in an open breach between the two men and as a result weakened the position of the settlers.

The rivalry between the two men was in fact inevitable. It existed potentially in the duality of powers which they personified, Robert Semple holding over the colony, through his title of Governor-in-Chief of Rupert's Land, an authority superior to that of Colin Robertson, whose powers as "chief of the colony" did not go beyond the boundaries of the settlement.²⁰⁸ The situation lent itself all the more readily to misunderstanding since it was complicated by a complete opposition in temperament, program, and ideas. Semple, who was direct and perhaps a little self-willed in character, did not share Robertson's feelings toward the Métis. Lacking the latter's experience, he did not understand, any more than his sheriff A. Macdonell, the need to take into account the exuberance of the Bois-Brûlés, to apply to them that policy of "coaxing" which, according to the statement of a veteran of the North West like John Pritchard, always had the best effects with the groups of mixed blood.²⁰⁹ His suppleness in the early days had quickly been subordinated to the rigidity of his temperament, and he neglected the sensible warning of Robertson that, from the day the Métis returned to the cause of the North West Company, the colony would once again be at the mercy of his adversaries.²¹⁰ Apart from anything else, he felt personally nothing but contempt for these descendants of the Indian peoples and for the ageing Canadians who formed the group of freemen.²¹¹

Very soon, the two policies were in open opposition. Quarrels came to the surface and increased the tension of relationships. They ended with Robertson's resignation, following an altercation provoked by the advice he offered to the settlers to group themselves close to Fort Douglas instead of setting up homes in their lots which were too far away from the protection of the fort.²¹² In blindly opposing Robertson's policy, Governor Semple was misguided more by his lack of knowledge of the native peoples of the

North West than by the feeling of superiority he owed to the nature of his functions; he was led away by his imperious temperament, yet he suffered from incessant fits of indecision,²¹³ which inclined him to modify his program of action according to the influences to which he was subjected, but sometimes, on the contrary, made him give in to an excessive confidence in himself, for which he would eventually pay with his life.

The disagreement that set Semple against Robertson would not have had such truly disastrous consequences if it had been limited to the colony's leaders. Unfortunately, the state of mind that guided Semple's actions also animated many of his subordinates. Among those who had been present at the first destruction of the colony and who should have drawn from it some useful lessons for the future, the resentments that they felt overcame all prudence. Some of them did not hesitate openly to defy Robertson's policies by blaming the Métis whose sympathy he tried to regain. The violence they committed at this time against Bostonois Pangman made it clear to Robertson that he had more to fear from these men dominated by their rancorous feelings than from the hostility of the North Westers themselves.²¹⁴ They added to their exasperation with past events an insurmountable racial prejudice against anyone who was not Anglo-Saxon, and they showed toward those who were colored a provocative contempt²¹⁵ which they extended to the Canadians themselves.²¹⁶ The Irish, who were more irreconcilable than anyone else, associated themselves with these manifestations of Britannic pride.²¹⁷ For them the Indians were the special objects of repulsion;²¹⁸ there were some troublesome encounters at Fort Douglas where certain officers of the Hudson's Bay Company displayed a disdainful arrogance toward these primitive peoples.²¹⁹ Semple shared the same prejudices, and those who were responsible for the ever-increasing outrages and vexations against the Indians or the Métis availed themselves of his protection, and in this way they were able to avoid the effects of Colin Robertson's resentment.²²⁰ At the very moment when the latter undertook to convince the Métis and the freemen that it was in their interests to trade with the colony or the Hudson's Bay Company, Semple adopted in his dealings with them a strict attitude that seemed calculated to throw them back into the arms of the North Westers.²²¹ The governor was obviously letting himself be dominated by the men he had invited to sit on his governing council, the Irishman Bourke and the Scot Arch-

ibald McDonald, to the exclusion of Robertson, whose moderating influence was rapidly eroded. Robertson was soon unable to continue with the Bois-Brûlés the cordial relations he had first established.²²² He tried vainly to remonstrate with the men of whom he had reason to complain, their answer was that "British values" should have precedence over all else.²²³

Certainly the facts related by Colin Robertson, whose evident dissatisfaction does not seem to exaggerate the offensive attitude of Semple and his supporters, do not imply that all the settlers were equally responsible for it. Nevertheless, it could not fail to create, among the groups who faced each other, a genuine uneasiness out of which there emerged once again the inferiority complex which the Métis developed when they were in contact with the whites. Duncan Cameron naturally hastened to exaggerate the humiliations which the whites did not spare the Métis; it all proved, he told them, that the servitude which he had prophesied would be their irremediable fate.²²⁴ The feeling of uneasiness spread even to the Indians. It is significant that Peguis, the Ojibwa chief who had consistently manifested his friendship toward the settlers, should have complained about the poor welcome he had received at Fort Douglas.²²⁵ Finally, there is no doubt that the Métis whom the Hudson's Bay Company employed in the trading forts or on the Red River were unfavorably impressed by the attitude which the more highly placed officers adopted toward their congeners in the opposite camp. Their loyalty, whose fragility had been demonstrated by the events of June 1815, once again began to show signs of weakening. In both cases the North West Company found in the errors of its adversaries a basis for propaganda that was effective and easy to exploit.

The main centre of that propaganda was once again the region of the Qu'Appelle River and Brandon House, where, far from the conciliating and all too effective influence of Colin Robertson, the partners were in a position to mobilize the numbers and the energies of the Métis. It was there they organized the army which was intended for use in recapturing the colony of Assiniboia. Their efforts were especially effective in the area of the Qu'Appelle River; there they operated more freely than in the locality of Brandon House, whose officer, Peter Fidler, could use against them the counterbalancing influence of his Indian affinities.

In the colony, meanwhile, the North West Company was not slow to take advantage of the possibilities of success which were

offered it by the errors of its enemies, and Duncan Cameron, revoking all the undertakings he had accepted at the time of the capture of Fort Gibraltar, soon emerged from the abstention from activity to which he had temporarily committed himself. He was soon able to overcome the humiliations he had suffered since his return. Once again, he paraded in military full dress along the banks of the Red River,²²⁶ accompanied by a retinue of officers in richly decorated uniforms. Beside him was the Métis Alexander Fraser, notorious for his violence, who had also come back on the stage,²²⁷ and was trying to regroup the hesitant Métis.²²⁸ The argument of the certainty of reprisals on the part of the colonists which these men ceaselessly evoked found its proofs in what was happening every day in Assiniboia.²²⁹ The settlers seemed unable to admit the idea of a reconciliation, and for this reason Cameron was able to represent Robertson as attempting to dupe the Métis, with the aim of inflicting a more spectacular revenge upon them.²³⁰

By the end of February 1816, this argument had already done its work, and the Métis showed signs of wavering, especially in the region of Brandon and Qu'Appelle, where Robertson had to abandon the field to his enemies.²³¹ The partners were now able to involve them more directly in the action which, in the month of December 1815, Alexander Macdonell had announced the intention of organizing against the colony.²³² The danger in which the Athabasca expedition had involved the North West Company imposed on it a measure which, if it put an end to the operations of its adversaries, would allow it to redress a singularly imperilled financial situation.²³³ The assault on the colony was the desperate blow on which the North Westers relied for the re-establishment of their interests.

Robertson assessed their intentions by the provocative attitude of Duncan Cameron,²³⁴ by the fact that the North Westers made no secret of their intention to annihilate their enemies,²³⁵ and by the results which the systematic hunting of the bison herds in the region of Fort Daer by the Canadian personnel of the North West Company seemed already to presage.²³⁶ Aware at the same time of the increasingly dubious attitude of the Métis, gradually being won over to the cause of their bourgeois, who kept them in awe by the fear they inspired,²³⁷ he decided to precipitate the outbreak of a conflict that was now inevitable: the action he projected would establish proof of the aggressive designs of the North Westers but,

in exonerating the Métis, it would bear witness to the sincerity of the intentions he had affirmed on many occasions toward them. Repeating his action of the previous October, he seized Fort Gibraltar by surprise on 17 March 1816. There he quickly laid hands on important documents which revealed the intentions of the partners and laid down the nature of the propaganda they were carrying on among the Métis and the Canadians.²³⁸ The correspondence of Duncan Cameron and Cuthbert Grant revealed the organization of a new force of Bois-Brûlés whose members, recruited in the region of Fort Dauphin, Fort des Prairies, the Churchill River, and the Qu'Appelle River, would sweep away in the coming spring the last vestiges of the colony that presumed to defy the wishes of their nation.²³⁹ In these letters Grant took issue with Colin Robertson, and affirmed his intention of not tolerating the slightest offence against the pride of the Bois-Brûlés.²⁴⁰

The national idea had re-emerged with a vengeance. Around it the Métis would rediscover the cohesion which they appeared to have lost, and in its name they prepared to drive back the despoilers of their land.²⁴¹

The tactics of Colin Robertson might have had a decisive effect on the events that were in preparation if he had been able to act on the Métis of the prairie, and if the imprudent initiatives of others had not compromised his efforts. In the region of the Qu'Appelle River, the seizure of Fort Gibraltar was immediately represented as a provocation aimed at the Métis. The grievances which the latter had harbored against the North West Company were immediately effaced. Once again, they felt at one with the organization that had never ceased to protect them. They feared that this defeat of the North Westers boded nothing but harsh reprisals against themselves.²⁴² And, at this very moment, arrests were made which struck at the Métis national pride and stirred their deepest feelings: first, of Duncan Cameron and the Canadian Séraphin Lamarre, which followed shortly after the capture of Fort Gibraltar;²⁴³ then of Bostonois Pangman, Alexander Fraser, Charles Hesse, and Cotonahay, whom Sheriff Macdonell, believing that Colin Robertson's manifestation of authority called for other equally energetic measures, seized in the region of Pembina.²⁴⁴

These arrests, occurring at a time when Robertson had personally assured Bostonois Pangman that he was not affected and ran no risk,²⁴⁵ entirely upset the plan he had devised for breaking the

accord between the North Westers and the Métis. They put him in a position of having either to disavow the sheriff's unfortunate initiatives, or to be discredited in the eyes of the Métis. It was to the humiliation of the latter alternative that he resigned himself, not daring to declare himself against the sheriff and thus condemn his policy.²⁴⁶ The setback he suffered gave justification to Cameron's statements about the sincerity of the settlers and drove the Métis back toward their natural allies of the North West Company. As for the colony of Assiniboia, it faced once again the prospect of isolation among the native peoples of the Red River, the prelude to its coming destruction.

The Indians, among whom Bostonois had many relatives, were annoyed by what had taken place. The imprisonment of a man who could have passed for one of them was repugnant to their feelings.²⁴⁷ At the beginning of May, several of them went to ask in the most pressing terms for his release.²⁴⁸ Semple was obliged to give in,²⁴⁹ and Bostonois rejoined his wife and children near Brandon House. Perhaps he retained an instinctive recognition of Robertson's quality that prevented him from immediately giving way to an unthinking hostility. Peter Fidler paid homage to his goodwill, and was able to congratulate himself on the happy effect of Pangman's release on the Métis of Brandon House.²⁵⁰ But shortly afterward Bostonois went on to the Qu'Appelle River, and there, dominated again by his masters, he launched out into invective against the colony and against Robertson, attributing to him the responsibility for the events that were soon to follow.²⁵¹

It was natural that, during these months of April and May that witnessed the foundering of a program so well started, Robertson should have given in to discouragement and exasperation. His disagreements with Robert Semple had continued for too long. The arrests that were carried out without his knowledge had angered him.²⁵² A veritable faction seemed to have developed in opposition to his policies.²⁵³ Having resolved to leave the colony, Robertson ceased to involve himself in events that were moving out of his control until the day when, on 11 June 1816, he abruptly made up his mind to depart,²⁵⁴ after having obtained from the governor an undertaking that he would demolish Fort Gibraltar and would concentrate around Fort Douglas the forces of the colony, which would be weakened if they were excessively dispersed.²⁵⁵

The farm plots that extended for three miles downstream from Fort Douglas²⁵⁶ had by now taken on again the appearance of the

preceding year. Returning from Pembina on 29 April, the settlers had sowed their fields with renewed energy. Barley, wheat, and potatoes all promised to bring good returns. Only the scarcity of houses, which were being slowly rebuilt, still demonstrated the work of destruction that had taken place here.²⁵⁷ Dominated by his optimism, Robert Semple failed to give heed to the warnings that, during May, the Canadians in their simplicity lavished on the settlers. "Watch out! For the love of God, watch out!"²⁵⁸ Undisturbed, and convinced that the mere good sense of his enemies would protect him from an aggression for which they would pay doubly,²⁵⁹ the governor offered only his inertia in opposition to the activity which the partners were generating in the region of Qu'Appelle. At Brandon House, at least, their actions came up against the influence of Peter Fidler. But at Qu'Appelle the man who represented the Hudson's Bay Company, John Sutherland, was not as capable of carrying on the struggle. He himself admitted his weakness in dealing with the Indians,²⁶⁰ and his inability to win over completely to his cause the freemen who were constantly fearful of reprisals from the North Westers.²⁶¹

Meanwhile, this was where the decisive action was being prepared. The methods were no different from those of the preceding year. Against those who held back, whether they were freemen or Métis, and especially against those who too openly manifested sympathy for the settlers of Assiniboia, or who persisted in an attitude of neutrality, the Métis leaders had recourse to threats, to assaults, and even to expulsion from the territory in which they had been born.²⁶² It was easy to dupe the more naive, and to impose on them, so that they came to share a point of view they did not understand.²⁶³ At the same time, the North Westers extended the recruitment of their forces by appealing to the Métis of more distant posts. William Shaw raised men at Ile à la Crosse, Simon M'Gillivray was active at Fort des Prairies, in the area of English River, and as far as Athabasca, while Alexander Fraser and Cuthbert Grant mobilized the Métis of the Qu'Appelle River.²⁶⁴ In the month of April, the Bois-Brûlés, some on horseback and others in their birchbark canoes, made their way in small groups toward Qu'Appelle River, where they were concentrated²⁶⁵ under the command of Cuthbert Grant and Alexander Macdonell.²⁶⁶ Cumberland House and Carlton also furnished groups of varying importance.²⁶⁷ Among those who assumed command of these various groups figure men who, like the Métis Michel Bourassa, had

in the past been distinguished by the generosity with which they had welcomed the personnel of the Hudson's Bay Company.²⁶⁸ All of them, when they arrived, were imbued with hostile intentions toward the Red River settlers, and were resolved to sweep them from the territory they had usurped from the Métis nation. As buffalo hunters, most of them came armed with their muskets. The rest had provided themselves with pistols, daggers, bows, or swords. On the Qu'Appelle River, near the North West Company's post, a smith had set up a stall where he repaired their arms and forged lances on request.²⁶⁹

To the Métis of the different areas, the national idea provided the necessary factor of cohesion. Supported by Grant and Fraser, the North Westers had taken care to maintain and intensify a conviction whose power over the Bois-Brûlés had been proved by events. They had unceasingly proclaimed the sovereign property rights of the Métis over the lands bordering the Red River.²⁷⁰ On the eve of unleashing the decisive assault on the colony, they gave a new amplitude to their policy by designating Cuthbert Grant, under the title of "Captain General," to sole command of all the Métis groups of the North West,²⁷¹ which were led by "captains" subordinate to Grant: Antoine Houle, Michel Bourassa, La Certe, Alexander Fraser, William Shaw.²⁷² Then they rallied the energies of the "New Nation" around a flag decorated with a horizontal figure eight on a red²⁷³ or blue²⁷⁴ ground. The emblem had been unfurled for the first time, opposite the Hudson's Bay post at Qu'Appelle, when Alexander Macdonell arrived from the Red River in September 1815 at the head of a column of freemen and Métis whom he had led away from the colony to remove them from the influence of Colin Robertson.²⁷⁵

Henceforward, all the national manifestations of the Bois-Brûlés would develop around this insignia which the North Westers had devised in order to instil patriotic feelings more deeply in them.²⁷⁶

Once again, the partners pretended to respect the free initiatives of the racial group that had risen to national rank, and in their correspondence they proclaimed the will of the "New Nation" to chase the "intruders and assassins" from the lands of the Red River.²⁷⁷ Faithful once again to the tactics that had been successful for them in 1815, the North Westers, in order to deceive the settlers regarding the true feelings of the Métis, induced their men to reproduce the war dress of the primitive tribes.²⁷⁸ As in the year before, the Métis painted their faces before going into action and

rode to combat to the beat of drums and to Indian war songs.²⁷⁹

Meanwhile, confident of British valor,²⁸⁰ the leaders of the colony neglected to oppose to this mounting activity a single measure that might detach the Métis from the leaders who had won them over again. And so those individuals who had betrayed the cause of the North Westers for that of the colony or the Hudson's Bay Company returned to their old loyalties. Some of them, stirred by the spectacle of the forces that were gathering beside the Qu'Appelle River, yielded to the general drift.²⁸¹ Others, even if they did not openly abandon the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, refused to take part in a struggle "against his Country Men" and by taking up this position they revealed the sincerity of their patriotism.²⁸² Even some of the Métis in the English posts whose fathers had remained faithful to the Hudson's Bay Company adopted a similar attitude. At Brandon House, despite the confidence which Peter Fidler inspired in them, they manifested an evident disinclination to range themselves on the side of their masters.²⁸³ Perhaps they harbored a resentment against the settlers for the standoffishness which many of the latter had shown toward them. Perhaps they feared the violence of the North Westers, who sometimes deprived them of their arms or obstructed them in carrying out their duties,²⁸⁴ and at other times even dragged them by force to the Canadian post where they demanded a written agreement of neutrality from them.²⁸⁵ Besides, the North Westers varied their tactics by clever indulgences toward the hesitant; when Brandon House was pillaged on 1 June 1816, Cuthbert Grant refrained from touching the property of the Métis J. Lyons and T. Favell, and the latter, remembering the threats that had been made to them at Red River, refrained from offering the least resistance.²⁸⁶ Finally, there seem to have been some who renounced the education they had received in the Hudson's Bay schools and let themselves be reabsorbed into the primitive environment. Giving in to the influence of their indolent mentality, lacking in any ambition for personal gain, caring nothing for the loss of wages or even the dismissal that might be the price of their negligence or indifference,²⁸⁷ they envied the lot of the North West Company Métis to whom their masters promised good rewards without demanding any other activity than military parades or looting operations.²⁸⁸ At Brandon House refusals to work increased,²⁸⁹ and instances of indiscipline became more numerous,²⁹⁰ and if men were sacked it merely benefited the opposing camp.

More even than in 1815, the colony found itself isolated on the eve of the attack from the peoples who surrounded it that would sweep it away, as much through the errors of its own leaders as because of the disruptive manoeuvres in which its enemies excelled and of the activity they carried out in the regions where their prestige was still intact. All this strikingly justified the reproach which Robertson had made to Miles Macdonell, that he neglected the strength of the halfbreed element descended from the personnel of the British company, instead of making use of it in the same way as the Canadian company utilized its own Métis. Robert Semple had acted no differently, even when he might have influenced the mixed bloods who were accessible to him by arguments identical to those which his adversaries used. He could have shown them, for example, that the destruction of the Hudson's Bay Company, at which Duncan Cameron's program aimed, would abandon them without defence to the latter's enemies. He could have aroused in them a national sentiment that would have deflected the propaganda of the North Westers.

Signs, indeed, were not lacking to suggest that where the demoralizing influence of the partners did not extend, a frank sympathy toward the colony could exist among the Métis. It had already been declared at Red River where, under the influence of Robertson's policy, the Métis group, according to Cuthbert Grant, did not rally unanimously and without reserve to the cause it had for the time being abandoned.²⁹¹ It would soon find expression in the region of Brandon House and the Souris River in the very heart of the North West Company's fief, where a number of Canadian Métis refused, in spite of promises and threats, to intervene against the colony, and even warned its governor of the approach of the attackers.²⁹²

In the neighborhood of Cumberland House, one of the Canadian Métis in the same way told James Bird of the preparations for attack, and tried to deter his congeners from taking part in any criminal activity.²⁹³ In the area of Jack River, the mixed bloods of Anglo-Saxon descent, when they heard of the destruction of the colony, organized themselves into a little army for the defence of their families and their possessions against the reprisals of the North Westers; if it had received the least encouragement from Robert Semple or the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, this group would have stood up to the Métis of the opposing camp.²⁹⁴ To Bird, who as factor at Edmonton was passing through Jack

River, the mixed bloods of the region offered to choose leaders of their own race and under their command to keep in check the Canadian Métis whose power had been greatly enhanced by the victory of La Grenouillère [shortly to be described]. Though all this happened after the destruction of the colony, this approach revealed a state of mind that might easily have been exploited for the benefit of a party which the blind optimism of its leaders had left defenceless against an enemy that was superior in numbers. But it also revealed, through the hesitation imposed on Bird who before committing himself had to seek instruction from the directors in London, the obstacles which the complex and slow-moving machinery of the Hudson's Bay Company put in the way of immediate initiatives on the part of its representatives.²⁹⁶ Fear of reprobation, and the refusal which the officers finally applied to an action that might have degenerated into a racial war,²⁹⁷ paralysed the possibility of intervention on the part of the English mixed bloods in the same way as the lack of a decisive attitude and an ignorance of the real situation had paralysed in Robert Semple all impulses toward action.

In selecting the support he might have found among the Métis of the English posts and a certain number of their congeners with the North West Company, the governor deprived himself of an effective means of influencing the freemen. The latter might well have followed the example of the Métis who were favorable to the Hudson's Bay Company. More fully masters of their own decisions, they maintained an independence which,²⁹⁸ combined with the opposition of the Anglo-Saxon or Scottish Métis, could have created great difficulties for the partners. But some demonstration of vigor was needed to triumph over the timidity they felt in the presence of the partners who were always ready to resort to violence.²⁹⁹ Semple did nothing to dissipate their apprehensions. He even declined to accept the personal intervention which some of them proposed to him on the eve of the conflict in the hope of preventing bloodshed between brothers by race.³⁰⁰ In these circumstances, the freemen resigned themselves to non-interference. Many of them departed into the distant spaces of the prairie.³⁰¹ Others remained in the theatre of events, and though they played no role in a contest that was totally unequal so far as the settlers were concerned, they expressed now and again, by a few benevolent gestures, the attachment which some at least of them had retained toward the Assiniboia immigrants.³⁰²

The Indians also confined themselves to an attitude of neutrality. Except for a tiny proportion, they were no more willing than in 1815 to take part in a conflict that did not involve them directly or to contribute, by declaring themselves against either of the adversaries, to the ruin of a competition from which they benefited. The North West Company, indeed, had not neglected to seek their allegiance. It had appealed to their pillaging instincts, and had given them tempting glimpses of gathering a rich booty.³⁰³ It had tried to involve the Iroquois, of whose devotion it was well aware.³⁰⁴ It had promised to identify the cause of the Indians with that of the Métis and had endeavored to show them that the stake in the struggle was, for those two closely related groups, the retention of the same property rights in the land which they enjoyed in common.³⁰⁵ It had even tried to reawaken in them the memory of the wrongs the whites had brought about among their tribes through the spread of alcoholism and contagious diseases;³⁰⁶ to spread its arguments more effectively, it had often delegated to the Métis the task of expounding and developing them.³⁰⁷ But it had encountered little success. The responses to its appeals, which were disseminated as far as the Indians of Rainy Lake, of Fort William, of the Lakehead area, remained scanty.³⁰⁸ Alexander Macdonell encountered several categorical refusals to obey,³⁰⁹ and to the few Indians who took part in the skirmishes the records attribute neither excessive nor violent acts.³¹⁰

Nevertheless, there was nothing in this situation that counteracted the projects of the North West Company and the actions of its partners. Of the weapons he might have turned against his adversaries, the governor failed to understand the effectiveness of some, rejected the very idea of others, and merely neglected to use the rest. A quick turnabout of the Métis, in whose ranks—despite Cuthbert Grant's authority—the symptoms of indiscipline were again appearing,³¹¹ would alone have been able to prevent, at the last moment, the realization of the project so long prepared. But the presence of a greater number of Métis from the West in the army which was coming together on the banks of the Qu'Appelle River, the greater cohesion assured by unity of command, the animosity aroused by the blunders of some of the settlers, and the grave danger which the capture of Fort Gibraltar posed for the North West Company and consequently for the group dependent on it, so tightened the union of the Métis and the partners that there was no reason to expect a breakdown.

This time too there was no cause to expect the intervention of the Métis of the English company as mediators, since there existed among their opponents a stronger intention to cause harm,³¹² though the latter were neither prepared nor resolved to massacre the people of Red River. It does not in fact appear that the North Westers had revealed to the Bois-Brûlés all their intentions or that they had openly assigned to them the task of destroying the settlers. Only the Métis chiefs knew the partners' plans, and they would not carry them out.³¹³ Among their men there were actually some who, at the moment of action, were alarmed by the idea of an eventual massacre of the people of Assiniboria: they were reassured by being told that they should keep on the defensive and that their weapons were merely to allow them to ward off any attack.³¹⁴ Cuthbert Grant let himself be guided by his attachment and loyalty to the North West Company of which he was a devoted employee.³¹⁵ He obeyed the urge to avenge the humiliation which the return of the settlers had inflicted on the nation he commanded; as its "captain general" the setback it suffered involved him personally.³¹⁶ He also let himself be carried away by the resentment he bore toward Colin Robertson. The success the latter had achieved among the Métis, and the energy he had put into the seizure of Fort Gibraltar and the capture of Duncan Cameron appear to explain the animosity which the Métis chief harbored toward him.³¹⁷ Grant was determined to chase the colonists from Red River, to prevent their ever returning, to wipe out all trace of the colony's existence.³¹⁸ But neither he nor the Métis had any premeditated intention to carry things as far as a massacre of the colonists. His hatred was concentrated on the leaders of the colony. It was only toward them that he did not draw back from the idea of murder, and his men shared his feelings.³¹⁹

The Massacre of La Grenouillère

As in 1815, the activity of the Métis disintegrated into a succession of ambushes and surprise attacks, carried out by small groups of men—fifty, sixty, or seventy at the most—armed with an assortment of weapons. At the beginning of May they attacked a flotilla of canoes, loaded with furs and provisions of meat, which was descending the Qu'Appelle River under the command of John Sutherland. The windings of the river, the tightness of its curves, which hardly allowed the passage of the Company's boats and

forced them to keep a fair distance from each other, and the thickness of the underbrush that crowded the banks provided easy conditions for ambush. Led by Cuthbert Grant, Bostonois Pangman, and Roderick Mackenzie, the Métis had arranged their troop near a particularly sharp curve, where the shallowness of the water slowed down the speed of the boats. Concealed in the Indian manner in pits dug in the soil among the thickets, they unexpectedly attacked the two leading bateaux, seized the provisions they were carrying, captured the crews, and then laid hands on the craft that followed a short way behind.³²⁰ The affair had no sequel: the men were set free under the promise that they would not take up arms against the North West Company.³²¹ Semple made no protest.³²² But a few days afterwards the Métis took over the Hudson's Bay Company's fort on the Qu'Appelle River: the North Westers arrested John Sutherland, holding him prisoner, and demanded of the personnel an engagement not to commit any hostile act against their representatives on the Red River.³²³

Then, on 1 June, Grant's little army attacked the post at Brandon and the officer in charge refused to obey the summons to hand over the keys of his storehouses to the Métis. In reprisal for the seizure of Fort Gibraltar by Colin Robertson,³²⁴ the fort was sacked under the eyes of the bourgeois Alexander Macdonell, who watched from the Canadian post everything that went on. The stocks of provisions and trade goods were seized and transported to the North West Company's fort³²⁵ and the horses were stolen. Since the attackers threatened to burn down the buildings, Peter Fidler and his men had taken refuge on the prairie with whatever possessions they were able to save from destruction. They lived there for a whole week among the Cree and the Assiniboine who showed their goodwill by building a temporary shelter for them. Never before had the instinct toward savagery manifested itself so vigorously among the Bois-Brûlés. When their horsemen appeared in sight of Brandon House, they had the look of a well-disciplined troop, enclosing the national flag within their rectangular ranks, and riding to the sound of an Indian drum whose rhythm sustained their war songs.³²⁶ Yet for three whole days pillage and disorder enjoyed free rein. Overcome by drink, the Métis carried on their destruction without ceasing, breaking open the hay stores whose contents they appropriated, tearing up the palisades of the fort, devastating the cultivated plots, and celebrating their success with dances and war songs that echoed day and night in the tents

which they had set up near the fort. Alexander Macdonell sought by his distribution of alcohol and tobacco to provoke them to new excesses. The employees watched powerlessly while the task of destruction went on; it was still continuing on 5 June.³²⁷

Finally, on 7 June, armed and painted like a group of native warriors, the troop, commanded by Cuthbert Grant, set off toward the colony.³²⁸ The North Westers hoped that, having acquired a taste for loot through the events at Brandon House, they would abandon themselves to cruel actions, and Cuthbert Grant held orders to that effect.³²⁹ But it seems certain that the Bois-Brûlés intended merely to besiege the colony, expecting that a rigorous blockade would reduce it to famine and surrender. This is what Cuthbert Grant personally stated.³³⁰ The clash that cost the lives of so many of the settlers occurred by accident.

On 19 June, Grant's army, moving down the valley of the Assiniboine and following the left bank, came in sight of Fort Douglas. A short distance from the meeting of the rivers they left the Assiniboine and proceeded toward the clearing of Frog Plain—known to the Canadians as La Grenouillère—which opened out to the Red River,³³¹ downstream from the Hudson's Bay Company's post and approximately four miles from the colony.³³²

At this point the Métis who formed the advance guard surprised a number of settlers engaged on farmwork, and carried them off in the direction of La Grenouillère. One of them was handed over to a freeman and detained in his house.³³³ Robert Semple immediately gathered together a handful of settlers armed with useless muskets and, disregarding the prudent advice offered him by the older men, set off toward the Métis troop, which had just reached the plain of La Grenouillère.³³⁴ As the Métis were unsaddling their horses, the rumor spread that the settlers were preparing to attack. Immediately, taking up the challenge that the governor seemed to be offering, they abandoned the position where they intended to make their camp, and rode on to meet the opposing group. They encountered it roughly halfway between La Grenouillère and Fort Douglas.³³⁵ Deploying in a semi-circle, they hemmed in the settlers, who retreated toward the Red River,³³⁶ and took up a position behind one of the coulees that cut across the flat surface of the prairie.³³⁷ Semple went forward to parley, and the Canadian Boucher left the Métis ranks and rode to meet him. They exchanged angry words. The governor seized the bridle of the other man's horse, and at this moment shots were fired. Since

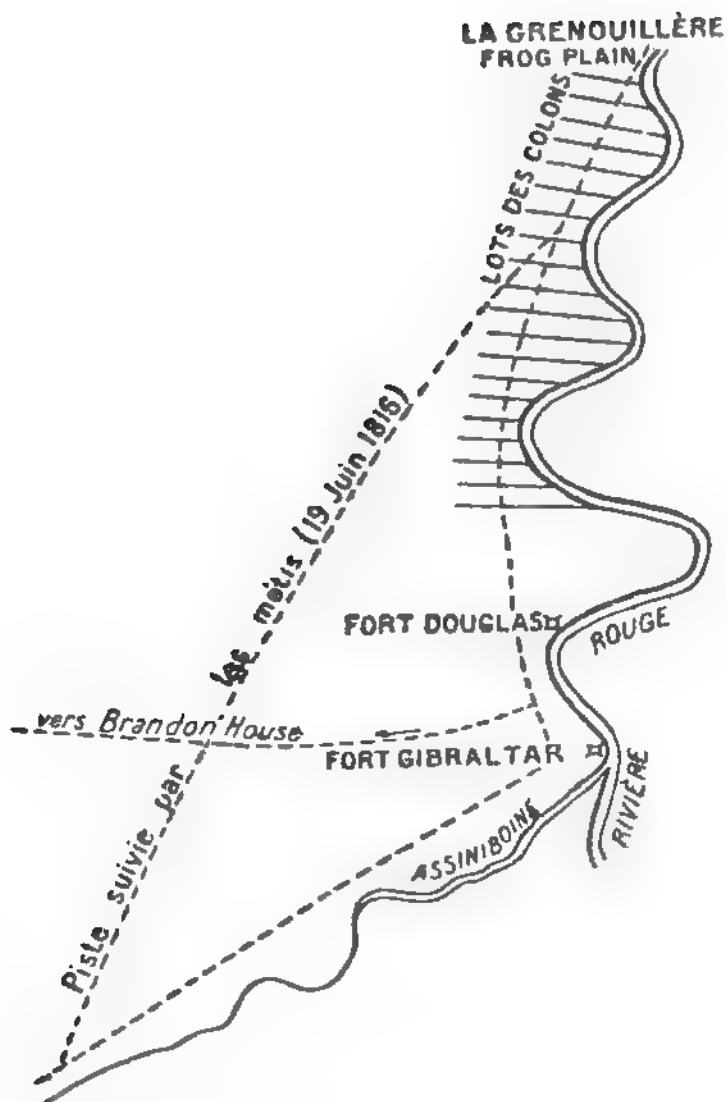


Fig.2 La Grenouillère engagement

the testimony of eyewitnesses was mutually contradictory, it is impossible to be sure where they first came from.³³⁸ But within a few minutes, firing with practice and precision, the Métis had massacred twenty-two settlers, almost all the group of thirty-two men which Semple had imprudently mobilized and engaged in an action which neither side had premeditated.³³⁹

By appearing armed and with their faces painted, and by making prisoners of the first colonists they encountered, the Métis had given the impression that an attack was imminent; by reacting prematurely, Robert Semple on his side had given the Bois-Brûlés a similar impression.³⁴⁰

In fact, the governor was once again a victim of that ignorance of the native peoples which he had already manifested on several occasions. The idea of a battle in the open field was in fact too alien to the Métis for their parade in military order in the neighborhood of the colony to be interpretable as a prelude to such action. The ambush was the only tactic that fitted their mentality and their customs, and if it had not been for Robert Semple's unfortunate initiative, this is the procedure they would have followed in 1816, as they had done in 1815. Based on Frog Plain, they would have besieged the colony,³⁴¹ and have awaited patiently the arrival of the partners of the North West Company who at this very moment were travelling toward the Red River by the classic route of the Winnipeg River and Lake Winnipeg.³⁴² The Métis leaders had in fact told a number of their men that the arms distributed to them were to enable them to defend themselves until the canoes arrived from Montreal.³⁴³ Then only, the settlers could expect a murderous attack: the unmitigated determination of the North Westers and the tenacious resentment borne by these men whose future was at risk³⁴⁴ were dangers that seemed to threaten the colony much more than the animosity of the Métis.

It seems certain that the partners would not have hesitated at the thought of a general massacre of the settlers.³⁴⁵ But it is doubtful if the Métis leaders would have been able to carry it out in cold blood. The attitude of Cuthbert Grant is significant enough. Disregarding the instructions of Alexander Macdonell, he had spared the lives of the prisoners taken before the affray of La Grenouillère,³⁴⁶ and during the skirmish he had refrained from finishing off the wounded Semple, who succumbed to the blows of the only Indian to join the attackers.³⁴⁷ The threats which he sometimes made against the settlers do not alter the general moderation of his

attitude. As much as by any sensitivity of reaction, his conduct can be explained by a feeling, imbibed through his better upbringing and his more advanced education, of the gravity of the actions expected of him. He hesitated before the responsibilities that were involved in the destruction of the inhabitants of Assiniboia.

Too ignorant to obey the same motivations, the men he commanded would undoubtedly have given in, if the conflict had not been unleashed by accident, to their spontaneous goodness of nature. But once the battle was engaged, these simple beings, deprived of religious conviction, seemed to give free rein to the savage instinct which the North Westers had awakened in them. Their barbarism found expression in the mutilation of the bodies. Some were scalped, others had their skulls broken, yet others were horribly slashed.³⁴⁸ In many cases the wounded were finished off.³⁴⁹ Such atrocities, it is true, were mainly the acts of the Métis from the West, who were more completely dominated by the ways of the Indians, and who lacked any real sympathy for the settlers whom they had never known.³⁵⁰ The cruelties perhaps also resulted partly from the resentment which some of the settlers had aroused by their offensive attitude.³⁵¹ The few Canadians and freemen who were present among the Métis were better able to hold themselves in control.³⁵²

The surrender of the settlers, who gave up their arms and their possessions, was all that prevented further massacres and the destruction of the Company's fort.³⁵³ Yet it is probable that this concession would not have been enough to hold back the Métis if their own losses had not been insignificant. Only one Bois-Brûlé had been killed during the skirmish, and the anger felt as a result of this by Bostonois Pangman, a relative of the victim, allows one to suspect the bitterness of the reprisals that would have resulted from greater losses.³⁵⁴

Obedying the orders of their conquerors, on 22 June 1816 the settlers abandoned the shores of the Red River for the second time, sacrificing their crops and the few homes they had rebuilt.³⁵⁵ Under the direction of their most resolute enemy, Alexander Macdonell, they reached the north shore of Lake Winnipeg, where they would find in the fisheries of Jack River a means of subsistence.³⁵⁶ Some of them were assured that they would be transported to Scotland.³⁵⁷ Many were in a state of total destitution,³⁵⁸ and could not envisage a return to their native country, where poverty awaited them. But the sense of terror which they derived

from recent events also discouraged them from returning to Red River, which from now on the Bois-Brûlés held as their sovereign property.³⁶⁹

The very day of the exodus of the settlers, the partners and clerks representing the North West Company—Alexander Mackenzie "the Emperor," A. N. McLeod, Robert Henry, John McLoughlin, and Thomas Murray,³⁷⁰ arrived at Red River and observed with satisfaction the success of the plan of campaign that had been carried out by the Métis. A few penalties were imposed on those whose sympathy toward the colonists had been too openly expressed; one freeman, Bottineau, was provisionally arrested for having become engaged as a hunter in their service.³⁷¹ The Indians of the Red River were severely reprimanded for the attitude of benevolent neutrality they had not ceased to observe toward the colony, and from which they had deviated only after Governor Semple's death to defend the cause of the settlers.³⁷² On several occasions Indian women had even protected colonists and saved them from massacre.³⁷³ Emperor Mackenzie accordingly condemned in insulting terms the native people and those of their chiefs who had maintained their loyalties.³⁷⁴ On the other hand, A. N. McLeod lavished congratulations and incitements on the Métis, taking care to exalt their national pride and to give legitimacy to their action because of the need to defend their soil, which was threatened with seizure.³⁷⁵ In reward for their conduct, the most notable of the Bois-Brûlés were admitted to the partner's table at Fort Douglas.³⁷⁶ Presents were distributed in the form of cloaks and capotes.³⁷⁷ The Métis were exhorted not to allow any weakening of the energy with which they had so valiantly defended the lands of their "nation."³⁷⁸ As if intending to sustain in them the ferocity that had been so skilfully awakened, the North Westers praised the Bois-Brûlés on the battlefield, where the bodies still lay, for the mutilations they had inflicted on their enemies.³⁷⁹

The celebrations followed—horse races, buffalo hunts,³⁸⁰ and especially the dances which, stripped of clothes and painted of face, the Métis performed for the amused eyes of the North Westers,³⁸¹ to whom they presented the illusion that they had surrendered to the instincts of primitive man. The partners sought to encourage such inclinations at the same time as they fostered the sentiment of nationalism: they saw in this combination a guarantee against the eventual return of the settlers and a possible change of

heart among the Bois-Brûlés. They set out to aggravate in every way the exasperation of the Métis against the colony of Assiniboia. A. N. McLeod expressed his delight at the death of a Bois-Brûlé who had been wounded in the battle, in the hope that it would revive the hatred of the Métis for the killers of their kinsman.³⁷⁴ Confident of the tenacity of this hatred and the ferocity of their instincts the North Westers left to the Métis the task of defending the colony and its environs. Fifty of them mounted guard along the Red River as far as the clearings of Image Plain, about twelve miles downstream from Fort Douglas.³⁷⁵ For greater security, the freemen were ordered to reinforce this surveillance, under the threat of immediate expulsion from the territories of the North West.³⁷⁶ All settlers and the traders of the Hudson's Bay Company were to be kept out of the plains of the Red River.³⁷⁷ The North Westers were able to take pride in what had happened, and congratulate themselves that it had been achieved, without any failure of will and without any infraction of discipline, by the very men whose essentially volatile character had been demonstrated by the events of 1815, and whose loyalty, only a few months before the conflict, had seemed so doubtful.³⁷⁸

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE DISLOCATION OF THE METIS "NATION"

THE APPARENT INCLINATIONS OF THE BOIS-BRULES

What would happen, on the morrow of the dispersion of the Assiniboia colonists, to the convictions that seemed to animate the Metis? Would their nationalism survive the scattering of the elements who had been represented to them as the usurpers of their country?

At first the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company believed that the patriotic upsurge would survive the events that had provoked it. In fact the Métis seemed intent on carrying their depredations far beyond the Red River and on proclaiming their sovereignty over the immensities of the prairie. Thus, on the Swan River, they carried off the herd of horses concentrated there for the use of the colony, and afterwards insisted on the capitulation of Fort Hibernia and the surrender of all its merchandise.¹ Near Lake Manitoba they arrested Peter Fidler and looted his baggage.² James Bird saw in these actions the prelude to wider enterprises directed against the trading posts with a view to eliminating the European traders, and he thought that only a counteroffensive on the part of the Indians could hinder these manifestations of nationalism.³

The murder of Owen Keveney, treacherously slaughtered in his canoe on Lake of the Woods with the complicity of Métis voyageurs, when he was on his way to the Red River to take over the government in place of Robert Semple, seemed to justify such forebodings. In congratulating the murderers, the bourgeois of the North West Company did not fail to find a justification for the attack in the need to destroy all possible ravishers of their lands.⁴

THE FIRST BACKSLIDINGS

But this attitude could not, in 1816 any more than in 1815, justify an absolute confidence in the inclinations of the Bois-Brûlés. The memory of their waverings in the preceding year remained with the North Westers. On the very day after the attack on Fort Qu'Appelle, Peter Fidler had observed among some of the Métis a visible weakening of their will to act.⁵ It is possible that, if it had not been for the accidental circumstance that brought them into conflict with Robert Semple's troop, the Métis would have been reduced to the slow task of besieging the colony, and, influenced by its inhabitants, might not all have been able to maintain their fidelity to the cause of the North Westers. "By a little flattery and good management," wrote Alexander Ross, "the half breeds and Indians might have been diverted from their mischievous projects, since they are by no means unreasonable people when an appeal is made to the better feelings of their nature."⁶

Even in the attack they made on Owen Keveney, the Métis voyageurs revealed the usual volatility of their inclinations: one among them refused to take part, and expressed frank indignation at the actions of the murderers.⁷

In such circumstances, it was enough that the news of the capture of Fort William by Lord Selkirk's troops should reach the Métis who had followed the bourgeois Daniel Mackenzie to Bas de la Rivière for the ardor of their nationalism to be seriously shaken. The dislocation of the Métis "nation" now seemed inevitable at the very moment when, impelled by its recent success, it seemed most solidly established and on the point of undertaking the great offensive James Bird foresaw. The North Westers were so aware of the fragility of the situation that, as soon as they learnt of the entry into the field of the forces of Lord Selkirk, they tried to prevent defections by threatening both freemen and Métis with eviction from the North West if they did not immediately take up arms.⁸ That they should have felt obliged to resort to such tactics when the events at Red River seemed to have cemented the national cohesion of the Métis and to have inspired them with such hatred of the usurpers of their territory showed the little confidence they had in the solidity of the group they relied on for the realization of their plans. No less symptomatic was the trickery with which, following a procedure that had been successful in 1815, they tried to impose on the Métis in the hope of preventing

the dislocation of their forces. Having obtained in July a proclamation of the governor-general of Canada which condemned the violences and disorders in the territories of the North West and threatened those who were guilty with judicial proceedings, they had given Cuthbert Grant and Joseph Cadotte the task of transmitting a falsified version to the illiterate Métis. The trick failed because of the intervention of a clerk of the North West Company, who revealed the real text.⁹ None the less, such a procedure constituted an admission of weakness on the part of the North Westers and a proof of the contempt they felt for their men.

For the North West Company the situation was one of extreme gravity. Lord Selkirk was personally in charge of the expedition which had just entered the territories of the North West with the intention of retaking from the partners the positions they had seized and re-establishing the settlers in the peaceful enjoyment of their properties. Provided with a commission as Justice of the Peace which he held from the governor-general of Canada, Sir Gordon Drummond, he had engaged in Montreal, with promises of land concessions on the Red River,¹⁰ a hundred men belonging to the regiments of De Meuron and De Watteville who had partly been recruited, after the disaster of Bailen, from among the prisoners from General Dupont's army;¹¹ the ending of the war of 1812 had led to their disbandment.¹²

As soon as the little army had occupied Fort William, the freemen of the region and some of the Métis had shown the timidity of their convictions by abandoning the cause of the North Westers.¹³ Even more disquieting was the fact that a number of Canadians, who now felt sure of finding a home for themselves and their families under the protection of the troops who were now making their way to Red River, gladly welcomed the idea of establishing themselves there.¹⁴ Soon it would be the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, who like Bird had deplored the destruction of the colony,¹⁵ and now would take their families to Assiniboia and so swell the numbers of the colonial population in an atmosphere freed of the quarrels and prejudices of the early days. At Rainy Lake, Selkirk had made further recruits among the freemen.¹⁶ The North West Company, at the end as at the beginning of the conflict, saw itself reduced to having no more support than the forces of the Métis group and the loyalty of the leaders who controlled it.

Alexander Macdonell had indeed recommended to the partners,

on 30 July 1816, even before the capture of Fort William had weakened their position, that they should prevent the dispersion of the Bois-Brûlés, an event which, if it took place would have the gravest consequences for the Company.¹⁷ But the concentration of the Métis forces, which had temporarily been achieved in opposition to the colony of Assinibora, had not survived the latter's destruction. Most of them had already departed toward the Qu'Appelle River, and the Red River and the shores of Lake Winnipeg were stripped of men, so that the North Westers declared they were unable to sustain an attack there.¹⁸ The approach of Lord Selkirk's expedition, the success it had achieved against the headquarters at Fort William, the impression that could not fail to be created by the arrival of these new forces whose standing as soldiers of the king the partners imprudently recognized¹⁹—all these factors were bound to make difficult any regrouping of the Bois-Brûlés. If the partners had been able to stifle among the latter the scruples inspired in them by Christian teachings,²⁰ they had never ceased to preach to them respect for royal authority, in which they had skilfully cloaked themselves to give an appearance of legality to all their actions. It was "in the king's name" that Duncan Cameron had established his authority; it was by representing Keveney as an "enemy of the king" that the partners at Rainy Lake had persuaded the voyageurs who escorted him to commit their murder.²¹ Warned now of the arrival of Lord Selkirk's forces, the Métis would hesitate to take up arms against the authority they represented. At the same time, they had lost their cohesion through dispersal; the resentment they felt toward the colony and which had been the prime element in their discipline was already somewhat blunted; they were no longer obedient to that collective hatred which had been sustained by the great number of men gathered together and the influence of their chiefs; and all this meant that they would lend themselves less easily to the manoeuvres of the partners and give in with less docility to either commands or threats. Duncan Cameron, whose influence had always been decisive, was no longer there.²²

The first weakening of support took place at the beginning of September, at Bas de la Rivière, where a small group of Métis had followed Alexander Macdonell, with some of the more energetic leaders, Grant, Shaw, Pangman, and Cadotte. At Macdonell's suggestion that they set up an ambush for Selkirk's soldiers who were approaching Red River, one Métis refused categorically to

take part, remarking that Selkirk was protected by "soldiers of the king" and that he personally, rather than fight them, would dress himself in a buffalo skin and live on the prairie like an Indian.²³ His argument won the support of his companions. A few of them agreed merely to go under the command of Grant and Cadotte on a scouting expedition as far as Rainy Lake.²⁴ None of them supported Macdonell's proposition. He was left without any recourse except the fidelity of the leaders who had always served him and, perhaps, that of the Métis gathered at Qu'Appelle who as yet were unaware of the approach of an armed force invested with royal authority. Macdonell set off to join the latter, in the hope that they would not abandon the cause of their leader and of the North West Company. Cuthbert Grant went with him, transporting the weapons that had been seized in the colony.²⁵

THE ARRIVAL OF SELKIRK'S TROOPS AND THE DEFECTION OF THE BOIS-BRULÉS

At the beginning of November the advance guard of the expedition, consisting of thirty-five men under the command of Captains Miles Macdonell and d'Orsonnens, seized the post at Rainy Lake.²⁶ Then they skirted Lake of the Woods, and, by Lac Roseau and the Roseau River,²⁷ they reached Fort Daer on 31 December 1816.²⁸ At dawn on 10 January they seized Fort Douglas by surprise.²⁹ The freemen at Pembina had already warmly welcomed them.³⁰ The Indians of Red River, indifferent to the pressing exhortations Alexander Macdonell had addressed to them after the defections at Bas de la Rivière,³¹ showed their sympathy by bringing provisions of meat.³² The partners, who at first had handled them tactlessly, and whose conciliatory tone now showed the sense they had of their own weakness,³³ had lost all influence over them.

At this point the Métis finally disappointed the hopes that the North Westers had pinned on the solidity of their "nationalism." When d'Orsonnens' company reached Rainy Lake, Cuthbert Grant had received the order to mobilize his men and go to Fort Douglas to take over its defence. On 22 January he reached Fort la Souris and learnt of the capture of Fort Douglas. Immediately discipline weakened among his men and Grant experienced the same refusals to obey as Macdonell at Bas de la Rivière. Several of them resisted the idea of fighting, claiming—an argument they had not

invoked in connection with previous actions—that they had never signed any engagement to do so. The threats of sanctions which Cuthbert Grant addressed to them provoked sharp retorts. If a few of them agreed to approach Fort Douglas, it was only to spy on the movements of the garrison and make a few prisoners when they could do so with impunity; in this way they surprised four men at the home of J. B. Lagimodière, fifteen miles from Fort Douglas, who had gone there in search of supplies of fresh meat.³⁴ To such simple ambushes was now reduced the activity which the Bois-Brûlés—once so violent and so resolute—agreed to carry out in the interests of the North West Company. It was no longer a question of national feeling, of protection of the fundamental rights of the Bois-Brûlés: their aggressive inclinations had vanished at the mere mention of “soldiers of the king.”

A second attempt at intervention toward the middle of February had no better success. Responding to the appeal of Cuthbert Grant and J. Cadotte, whose national spirit remained as lively as their loyalty to the cause of the North Westers, a group of twenty-six Métis left the Qu'Appelle River with the aim of demanding from the governor of Fort Douglas the liberation of the men he had captured there on 10 January, and whom he was holding in prison because of their participation in the murder of Keveney: the North Wester Archibald McLennan, the Canadian Séraphin Lamarre, and the Métis Mainville. But this appearance of resolution concealed only a feeble impulse toward action. Even Grant, despite his sincerity and the violence he preached, did not have the audacity to engage in energetic action. Without daring to admit it, he like all the others was affected by the feeling of unsureness inspired by the appearance of Selkirk's troops and the principle in whose name they acted. At Fort la Souris, on the way to Fort Douglas, he could not overcome the opposition of the Canadians he tried to recruit: stronger of will than the Métis, more concerned about legality, the freemen feared to be led into excesses which their moral upbringing would find repellent. For the first time, we see one of the Canadians, Marsolet, intervening between his Métis son and the leaders who were attempting to enrol him among their men, and forbidding him to become associated with the expedition. A tribunal was improvised to judge him. Marsolet disdained the threats that were offered him; basing his arguments strictly on respect for the governor-general's proclamation which condemned violences and disorders, he continued to oppose his son's depar-

ture. Another Canadian, Hamelin, adopted a similar attitude. Unable to make him give way, Cuthbert Grant forcibly enrolled his Métis son.³⁵

Yet, during the discussion that had taken place, the national idea had not been invoked. The "judges" claimed to command the young Métis not because of the patriotism that tied them to their nation, but of the narrower law of attachment to their bourgeois, which directly contradicted the national idea.

Tainted with the violence of its predecessor, composed of elements some of which bowed only to constraint, and deprived of the national impetus, the expedition was doomed to failure. It was already on the point of dissolution when the news arrived that Fort Douglas was strongly defended, and Cadotte was able to triumph over the unwillingness of his men only by appealing to their vanity.³⁶ In the end, when the troop had reached the neighborhood of the fort and the governor had replied with a refusal to accept Grant's written demand for the liberation of the prisoners, the Métis confined themselves to pointless raiding. For a few days they prowled in the neighborhood of Fort Douglas, trying to drive off any cattle that might be ill tended. But precautions were taken, thefts were unimportant, and when they ran short of provisions, the Métis drifted away. Lacking the impetus which more enterprising men had given them in the beginning, scared by the arrival of a force whose arms alone earned it respect, they seem to have forgotten their claims to sovereignty of the land, to have ceased to be aware of the perils to their nation that the colony harbored, and to have decided to accept the presence of the troops who were meant to protect the settlers. Cuthbert Grant himself vacillated. When Cadotte talked of going to Pembina and doing honor to the warlike repute of the Bois-Brûlés by massacring a few of the adherents of Lord Selkirk who had gathered there, he refused to support him. "We are not barbarians," he declared. His attitude immediately determined that of his men.³⁷ Humiliated by the refusal of the governor of Fort Douglas to accept his demand for the liberation of the prisoners,³⁸ and realizing that his threats had aroused only derision, Cuthbert Grant was visibly discouraged.

His role of Captain General gradually faded away. Neither at Qu'Appelle nor at Fort la Souris did he manifest any activity. It would have been difficult in any case for him to fight against the growing disintegration of the nation which for a time he had

united under his command. The Métis of the Saskatchewan and Churchill rivers, who had been distinguished for the ardor of their nationalism and for their violence, had returned to their various territories; they now refused to respond to the appeals of the energetic Simon Fraser.³⁹ In the area of Fort la Souris, where most of the Métis were gathered, several openly passed over to Lord Selkirk's side, making their submission to Miles Macdonell, who had resumed at Fort Douglas his functions as governor; they accepted the mission of arresting J. Cadotte who was trying in the region of Qu'Appelle to deter the Métis from coming to terms with the representative of the Scottish lord.⁴⁰ At Red River some of them accepted renewed engagements in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company and agreed to protect Fort Daer against a possible attack.⁴¹ The rare instances of opposition were overcome by strict measures.⁴² Finally the fidelity of the Indian chief Peguis kept in awe the prairie tribes, whose undecided attitude had raised fears of hostility.⁴³

Only the Métis of the Qu'Appelle River, without openly pronouncing themselves against the settlers, appear to have felt a more solid patriotism and a more reliable attachment to the North West Company.⁴⁴ But Alexander Macdonell could only seriously count on a small number of men: Fraser,⁴⁵ Cadotte,⁴⁶ Shaw, Bonhomme Montour. Even among those who seemed the most committed, there were some whose conduct gave the lie to the sentiments they professed. Joseph Peltier, better known by his nickname of Assiniboine, a half-brother of Bostonois Pangman and one of the leading Bois-Brûlés, could not resist the effect of a personal contact with Captain d'Orsonnens, and promised him that he would seek to create a more conciliatory attitude among his fellows.⁴⁷ And though Montour himself gave the appearance of standing aside and adopted a contemptuous and almost hostile attitude toward d'Orsonnens' men, he nevertheless paid visits to the personnel of Fort Douglas, where his brother-in-law was held among the prisoners,⁴⁸ and in this way ran the risk of relaxing his attitude.

The news also spread that commissioner-magistrates had been appointed by the governor-general of Canada, in the name of the Prince Regent of England, with the mission of carrying out an enquiry into the events of 1815-16.⁴⁹ Thanks to the protection that was henceforward assured to them, the colonists gradually returned to the banks of the Red River. The fears they still felt,

which led them to cluster around Fort Douglas,⁵⁰ did not prevent their resuming in the spring the farm work that had been so brutally interrupted the year before. A certain number of the De Meurons, in conformity with the terms of their engagements, took up land and began to clear it.⁵¹ Once again the colony had taken root in the territory of Assiniboia. It was protected by a military force, and by a new legality which banished the North Western spirit from the Red River, which destroyed the national claims of the Bois-Brûlés, and which announced the advent of different conceptions that it would have been vain to think of turning back.

The final attempt which the Métis now made to oppose the events that were overtaking them was, like the incidents at the beginning of the year, no more than a gesture without future and without consequences. It was provoked by the arrival in June 1817 of Lord Selkirk in person at the head of a column of reinforcements. Cuthbert Grant and his faithful followers appeared anxious to emerge from their retreat and to bar the way to the master of the colony, who reached the Red River by way of Bas de la Rivière and Lake Winnipeg. They entrenched themselves in a strong position near Fort Douglas. But the Métis were deeply divided, and Lord Selkirk's arrival was sufficient to disperse them. Grant and Cadotte, with the more compromised of their followers, took refuge in the Canadian post at Brandon.⁵²

At Fort Douglas 21 June was marked by rejoicings. The Indians gathered to be present at the entry of the lord into his domains. Liberal distributions of tobacco and alcohol were made to them. Then the Indians invited Lord Selkirk and Miles Macdonell to take part in a council at which were also present, besides the chiefs of the Cree, the Saulteaux, and the Assiniboine, the partner Angus Shaw and the Métis Pangman: there they exhorted the whites to live in harmony and to come in greater numbers into their country so as to increase commercial activity.⁵³

For a few days one saw once again, in the environs of Fort Douglas, some of the Métis who had been directly associated with the attacks of 1815 and 1816. The presence of Angus Shaw reassured them. His own son, William Shaw, was with him.⁵⁴ The latter was not unaware that Commissioner Coltman, who arrived in the colony on 5 July to carry out the enquiry already mentioned, to establish responsibilities, and to ensure respect for the Proclamation of the Prince Regent (1 May 1817) which enjoined the opposing parties to cease all hostility and restore to each other their

respective properties,⁵⁵ was animated by an evident partiality toward the North Westers.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, in the presence of this personage who was endued with supreme authority by the Regent and whose powers temporarily supplanted all other jurisdictions, including that of Lord Selkirk,⁵⁷ the Métis could not hide their fearfulness. On 14 July the majority of the Bois-Brûlés took themselves off, under the leadership of Bostonois Pangman, and resumed their nomad existence some thirty miles from the colony.⁵⁸

Shortly afterward, on 11 August, Peter Fidler reoccupied the post at Brandon. The buildings, looted in 1816, had fallen into ruin during the winter months. A number of Métis had settled in with their families and, helped by the Indians, they had completed the destruction.⁵⁹ Yet Peter Fidler was welcomed by the native people, since his return would remedy the shortage of merchandise from which the Canadian fort had suffered during his absence.⁶⁰ Undoubtedly, hard words were still being said against the colony. But it was the partners who spoke them to the Métis, and the bitterness of their reflections hindered neither the freemen nor the Métis nor even the employees of their own company from helping to revictual the Hudson's Bay Company's post.⁶¹ By his personal qualities, by the confidence he was able to inspire, Peter Fidler quickly established contact with the Métis who had taken refuge at Brandon, and he was able to calm the suspicions and the resentments of the most violent among them. A change in attitude had taken place even in the Grants and the Cadottes since the most recent events. Called to answer for their actions before Commissioner Coltman, they did not think of evading the responsibilities they had incurred. They docilely gave themselves up as prisoners.⁶² In anticipation of appearing before the Canadian tribunal, they made their way to Fort Douglas, where the commissioner was gathering the depositions of the Métis.⁶³ There they were freed on parole.⁶⁴ From Brandon to Red River, they travelled with Peter Fidler, and between Fidler and Grant a firm friendship and confidence were established. Sharply affected by the foundering of the ambitions he had developed for the nation of the Bois-Brûlés, and by the rapid dissolution of the group he had for a while united around a national ideal, Grant spoke to Fidler of his disappointments with open bitterness. Accusing the North West Company of having incited him to the violences he had committed, he offered to betray the interests of the partners between whose hands he had been nothing but a tool.⁶⁵ He denied the idea he had once

passionately defended, he renounced the role of leader of the Métis nation which he had so recently assumed with vigor, he even offered to serve the British company that had been represented as the usurper of the land over which, by right of birth, the Bois-Brûlés claimed sovereign rights of property.

THE FRAGILITY AND THE FATE OF METIS NATIONALISM

For the time being, it was all up with the Métis nation, with its cohesion, with its ambitious projects, with its aspirations to independence. It had been born of the calculated suggestions of the North Westers. It had been fostered by the errors of the whites, who were too much inclined to ignore the traditional Métis way of life and to give the impression that it would no longer be tolerated when they were masters, and who were also incapable of gaining the goodwill of these men whose suspicions they never succeeded in quelling. Thus the national idea rested on foundations that were too narrow to provide any real solidity. It had not yet resulted in the formation of any principle of union, nor had it inspired the Bois-Brûlés as a whole with a precise political program or led them to assert by means of a regularly organized government the aims of sovereignty and independence that had been so fleetingly expressed and adumbrated.

Even to achieve what they had done, the North Westers had been obliged constantly to stimulate among the Métis a feeling of national pride that was always ready to flicker or even to go out; they had constantly to resort to means that stressed the weakness of an urge toward action that was incapable of developing from its own resources without the artificial sustenance of external stimuli, such as incitement to looting, repeated appeals to atavistic Indian instincts, distributions of presents or of alcohol, threats of reprisal, or bare-faced attempts to take advantage of the ignorance or naiveté of the Bois-Brûlés in an unscrupulous attempt to deceive them. In the events that had happened in such rapid succession and had given an appearance of vigor to their nationalism, the Métis had sometimes responded with passing indignation which the attitude of the settlers—and especially of the governors—had aroused in them; sometimes they were moved by the fidelity which they sustained to the North West Company and to the desire to defend a cause that seemed to be identical with that of their race; sometimes

by the fear of their bourgeois and by the provocations with which the latter stimulated their animosities; and perhaps rather more often by the impetus provided by those leaders who knew how to dominate them and inspire their confidence; seldom had they acted from a genuinely spontaneous conviction.

Thus the importance which some people gave to the acts of aggression that had recently taken place, the consequences for the future of Canada⁶⁶ which they attributed to them, and the strength they found in the Métis group⁶⁶ were in fact exaggerated impressions resulting from a false understanding of the realities of the situation. Better informed, the settlers who had observed the various changes of attitude among the Métis were able to reduce to their true proportions the events that had temporarily swept away the colony; they saw in them merely the effects of the propaganda carried on by the North Westers.⁶⁸ James Bird himself, who had been misled in his estimate of the power of the Bois-Brûlés, doubted their strength of character and hardly believed they were capable of pursuing to the end the satisfaction of the claims they had formulated.⁶⁹

What in fact were the bases of their nationalism?

They had grouped themselves under the leadership of chiefs of their own race, whose whim it had been to give them a government based on popular consent and free choice by individuals: the model had been vaguely inspired by Indian concepts and by the regular pattern of discipline among the Canadian voyageurs. They had received a national flag from the partners. Under the name of Bois-Brûlés they had proclaimed the independence of their nation, and, in the name of their culture, some of them had claimed that they were disavowing the teachings of Christianity. In the immense territories of the North West, whose possession they claimed despite the anterior rights of the Indians, they appeared among the native peoples as a distinct group, they did not hesitate to harm the Indians' interests, to limit their possibilities of subsistence, and often an active resentment divided the two groups.⁷⁰ They did not become incorporated into the framework of the native societies, and openly proclaimed that they were not "barbarians," but they did not mingle any more closely with the Canadians, some of whom showed contempt for them and declared that "their souls were as black as their faces."⁷¹

The active role they had just played moreover revealed their characteristic traits. Less open than the Canadians, they seem to

have inherited from their Indian ancestry a propensity for introversion. Capable of controlling their reactions, they surprised Europeans by the silence they could maintain regarding events in which they had taken an active part.⁷² Cuthbert Grant evaded the questions posed to him by George Simpson, and with an impassive reserve refused to give him the slightest explanation. Yet their nature was more outgoing than that of the Indian, more openly inclined to cordiality and jesting, among their own group as well as in their relations with whites. Their reserve would always dissipate as soon as confidence was established; if they sometimes misled their interlocutors by the silence they presented to them, they could also anticipate their intentions and, without being asked, offer them abundant information.⁷³ Inevitably this created among the whites an impression of dissimulation, but it was nothing to compare with that of the Indian, who would sometimes hide his feelings for long years so as to take his adversary more easily by surprise. The lack of frankness which Europeans attributed to the Métis found expression rather in the perpetual oscillations of his conduct, in the impression he gave of betraying one after another the causes for which he had declared his support. But here we must see, not so much a deliberate or spontaneous process of deception, as a reflection of his emotional temperament and of his unsettled upbringing in contact with two cultures only superficially assimilated. Hence came that weakness of will which was manifest not only in the hesitations of his behavior, in the lack of conviction with which he defended his own interests,⁷⁴ but also in his propensity for drinking,⁷⁵ the freedom of his manners; in a phrase, by the absence of a clearly defined morality. Undoubtedly, by trying to free the Métis from the shackles of Christianity, and by making them accustomed to treat lightly the engagements they had entered into with its adversaries,⁷⁶ the North West Company had made its special contribution to the development of this lack of morality; the disorders of which both Indians and Canadians had often provided them with examples could only influence them further in the same direction. Thus it was with an appearance of exactitude that Lord Selkirk was able to accuse them of reproducing the worst aspects of the two races that had given birth to them.⁷⁷ Finally, the timidity they felt in the presence of the whites, combined with the scanty regard the latter showed toward them, militated against any kind of spontaneous confidence between the races, paralysed openness of reaction among the Métis, and ex-

aggregated even more the impression of deceptiveness which the European retained of him.⁷⁸ The same causes were responsible for that excitability we have often noted in the Métis, which was an expression of the inferiority complex he felt among whites and which could only increase as the relations between the two groups took on a permanent stamp. Indeed, the Métis mingled with the whites more easily than an Indian could do. But if he got on well with the personnel of the trading posts, he felt uneasy in his contacts with the Assiniboia settlers, who were more alien to his way of life; this inhibited any freedom of relations and often deformed in his eyes the significance of both the actions and the attitudes of the white men. His sensitivity found further nourishment in a natural pride. By flattering his vanity, one could lead him to modify his line of conduct completely.⁷⁹ On the other hand, he adapted himself with difficulty to the constraints which others attempted to impose on him; no more than the Indian could he accept the humiliation of imprisonment or submit to commands that were too absolute.

In the personality of the Bois-Brûlés, the habits and tendencies of the native peoples were linked with those of the Canadians, but both in the process underwent a noticeable attenuation. The self-control so pronounced in the Indian did not retain enough strength among the Métis to repress entirely the exuberance of the more passionate Canadian nature, the manifestations of cruelty to which he might abandon himself were sometimes tempered by humanitarian reactions alien to primitive man; his natural pride was not strong enough to impel him to efforts as energetic as those motivated by the voyageurs' vanity, and his warlike enterprises, launched at random under the influence of some personal feeling of resentment, were neither the consequences of the demands of some code of honor nor the effects of a temperament that was strongly vindictive or bellicose. Many of these traits, which seem to be modified reflections of the particular characteristics of primitives and Canadians, appeared even, despite his Scottish ancestry, in the personality of a Cuthbert Grant.⁸⁰ Only his greater will-power and his superior energy distinguished him from the general run of the Bois-Brûlés. In such ways he showed the value of the better and stricter upbringing he had received during his youth.

It would be equally difficult to find in the Métis way of living any elements that were strictly peculiar to them. Their economy was inspired by that of the Indians in so far as it was based essen-

tially on the practice of hunting bison, but it drew near to that of the Canadian voyageurs because of their use in navigating the craft of the two companies from the wintering posts to the depots on Lake Superior and vice versa. According to the evidence gathered by Commissioner Coltman in 1817, this last practice had already become a regular one among the Métis of the West.⁸¹ At the same time, the scanty rudiments of an agricultural life which the younger Métis carried on in the freemen's colonies of which we have already spoken brought their economy nearer to that of the whites.

In all this there was nothing truly original: simply a series of borrowings from the cultures of the ancestral races, adapted to the demands of the physical environment. Nor in their domestic life was there anything that suggested originality: their log houses, walls packed with clay, were those of the freemen; their lodges or tepees reproduced purely and simply the skin tents of the native tribes.⁸² Their clothing imitated that of the voyageurs but was derived also from Indian examples: to the Canadian capote, the Métis added the leather trousers and moccasins of the native people and the bead ornaments with which, again following Indian example, they liked to decorate their clothes.⁸³ Their diet consisted of game and fish, of roots and wild fruit, of vegetables and of wheat flour from which, like the Canadian voyageurs, they made their galettes.⁸⁴

As to the language in which they expressed themselves, it normally alternated between the Indian dialects habitually used in the families,⁸⁵ and the French of Quebec, modified by expressions translated from the Indian tongues or loaded with terms directly borrowed from the language of their mothers,⁸⁶ and modulated by singsong intonations that recalled the accents of the natives and even today remain very characteristic of the Bois-Brûlés.

In brief, there existed, neither in their material culture, nor in their personality, nor in their achievements, any element that was really likely to provide a solid foundation for the national ideal. This found expression only in a sporadic fashion, under the effect of passing grievances. It was too fragile to constitute a principle of cohesion and to bring about among these men, without either education or political concepts, an ideal and a will to action likely to assure their domination of the North West. The Métis had not derived such national aspirations either from the teachings of their Indian mothers or from those of their Canadian fathers who, on

the contrary, had urged them to accept the royal authority. The example of the Canadian Marsolet opposing the enrolment of his son in a rebel troop witnesses to the disaccord which, on this point, could set the father and the son in opposition, and the case is not an isolated one.⁸⁷ The national feeling was too recent in date, and too lacking in spontaneity, for it to be strongly rooted yet among the Métis.

In any case, the nation that for such a brief period came together under the authority of Cuthbert Grant was too limited in its composition to merit the name that was accorded to it. With the exception of the leaders who had assumed direction, the nation of the Bois-Brûlés consisted essentially of Canadian Métis. In this way it was formed in the image of the North West Company. On the upper level were the sons of the Scottish bourgeois, destined by their upbringing and higher learning for the direction of the new nation; below were the descendants of the voyageurs and the lower grade employees, almost all of them Canadian by origin. The Métis of Canadian and halfbreeds of Anglo-Saxon origin who belonged to the personnel of the Hudson's Bay Company had not entered into a movement which logically—as the partners and Cuthbert Grant may have hoped—should have included all the people of mixed blood in the North West, whatever their descent. Only in such circumstances might the new nation have been able to form a political and racial entity.

Perhaps we must see in the neutrality of the Scottish group during that first rebellion of the Métis one of the reasons that led to its quicker and more complete assimilation into the society that in the end would impose its authority and its methods on Rupert's Land. It is obvious, of course, that the events of the years 1815 and 1816 must have left in the hearts of the settlers a violent resentment against the men who had devastated their territory; apart from their leaders, those men were none other than the Canadian Métis. Inevitably, feelings of distrust, fear, even malice greeted the representatives of a group whose actions had in the early days been so harmful to the newly founded colony. Fanned by religious prejudice, hostility toward the Canadian Métis steadily increased, while the Scottish halfbreeds escaped the resentment that gathered around their cousins in the employment of the North West Company. Apart from the education some of them had received, history intervened to offer the Scottish halfbreeds of the Red River an access to local white society, which from the beginning was div-

ided from the French-speaking Métis by barriers of suspicion and religious bias. Such factors, rather than any intrinsic difference of character between the mixed blood population of Canadian and Scottish descent, favored an alliance between the Scottish halfbreeds and the more active elements of the society that had taken shape on the banks of the Red River. For even if, as Sir John Franklin asserted, the Scottish halfbreeds exceeded the Canadian Métis in moral worth, the fact remains, to judge from the scanty allusions that have survived,⁸⁸ that they were equally prone to loose conduct, to drinking, to lack of self-discipline, to a touchy sensibility—and, in a modified way, to lack of will: in all, to that whole cluster of reflexes which stemmed from the quality of their origins, and which seem to have found frequent expression in the character of Cuthbert Grant.⁸⁹ Yet a variation remained between the two groups, linked to their different origins and antecedents, and to the different degrees to which the Canadians and the Scots (or Orkney men) had assimilated the concepts of native cultures. Remaining closer to the culture of their homeland, the Scots had transmitted its traditions to their children of mixed blood: the latter in turn were less inclined than the Canadian Métis to accept Indian ways of living. The basic upbringing they received at the schools in the English posts undoubtedly reinforced this inclination which, latent though it may at first have been, would reveal itself clearly as soon as the agrarian economy had taken control; from that time onward the Scottish Métis, many of them willing to accept the settlers' life, appeared in opposition to the openly nomadic group of the French-speaking Métis.

As it manifested itself at this period, the nation of the Bois-Brûlés, in actuality reduced to the group of Canadian Métis that had openly proclaimed its independence and its sovereignty over the lands of the North West, was too unsteady to be able to play a sustained and dominant role. The hesitation the Bois-Brûlés had shown on the mere appearance of the king's soldiers indicated that they were incapable of sustaining, in the face of a superior power, the kind of stand they had first taken up. Yet the weaknesses that from the beginning seemed to condemn to failure the ambitions of the Métis could not prevent the national idea from surviving in a kind of inner urge which they jealously defended. The Bois-Brûlés kept alive the memory of the victorious day at La Grenouillère and of the national grandeur it symbolized in their eyes. They exalted it in fact as the most glorious day in their history, and the bard

Pierre Falcon took it as the theme for a song that would long echo on the prairie.⁹⁰ Nor did they forget the expectations which the North Westers had taught them. Later on, when they were better educated and more familiar with the concepts of white society, they would become convinced that their essential interests had been wronged and then they would once again put forward their claims, based on the rights conferred on them by their birth. We shall see these claims appearing at the outset of the conflict which, in the years of their maturity as a group, would involve the Métis once again in conflict with the Hudson's Bay Company; the same claims would find more violent expression in the insurrections of 1869-70 and 1885.⁹¹ Sometimes the Métis would defend them with the rough energy of timid natures which felt a confused inferiority in the presence of the whites and which in justifying their extreme demands were obeying the vital urges of their emotions. But if Métis nationalism seemed at this stage to shed its original uncertainties, it was always hampered by the small number of strong personalities that the group contained, by the indefinite character of the culture it represented, and by the failure of its achievements to reach the same level as those of the whites.

THE APPEARANCE OF THE MISSIONARIES AND THE PACIFICATION OF THE COLONY

For the present, the events that had taken place left in the hearts of the Métis only a mute resentment against the usurpers of their land. Hostilities might gradually have been resumed if the arrival of the first missionaries in 1818 had not introduced into the country a promise of peace and neutralized the attempts which the North Westers were again making to provoke the Bois-Brûlés. While in York and Montreal the judicial assizes were involved in determining the responsibilities and assessing punishments for the defendants in the Red River cases, Lord Selkirk's colony at last took root in the plains of Manitoba, and the Hudson's Bay Company began to realize its ambitions in Athabasca. In April 1817, work started again in the colony.⁹² On 18 July, the Saulteaux, despite opposition from the partners, had formally sold to Lord Selkirk the lands beside the Red River,⁹³ and on a soil now freed from encumbrances, Peter Fidler had immediately resumed his surveying.⁹⁴ To attract new settlers, Selkirk eased the terms for selling land (10 shillings per acre), no longer insisting on cash down and

proposing reductions for those who distinguished themselves by their activity.⁹⁵ The needs of the colony would soon be taken care of by the opening of a store.⁹⁶ In spite of the numerous difficulties that hindered work in the fields, such as the insufficiency of horses,⁹⁷ the frequency of prairie fires that sometimes ravaged the settlers' farms,⁹⁸ the scarcity and high cost of labor,⁹⁹ and the bad weather,¹⁰⁰ the population succeeded in harvesting modest crops in 1817.¹⁰¹ William Laidlaw even undertook the organization of a model farm, whose rational methods could serve as a stimulant and a guide for the settlers of Assiniboia.¹⁰² At the same time, Selkirk investigated the possibilities of increasing the colony's flocks. He studied the problems of communications with the United States, whose reserves of cattle could augment the herd at Red River,¹⁰³ and with that in view he started negotiations with American breeders.¹⁰⁴ He watched with favor the early efforts to domesticate bison.¹⁰⁵ Finally, he sought outlets likely to absorb the colony's surplus produce.¹⁰⁶

Attracted by the prospects of the security they would find in the colony, the freemen who were former employees of the North West Company welcomed in increasing numbers the idea of settling down there.¹⁰⁷ Several families of employees from the Hudson's Bay Company's posts had already made their way to Red River, and the officers showed their intention of following this example.¹⁰⁸ In Sault Ste. Marie, in the little frontier town of Prairie du Chien in American territory, Canadians and French Métis voiced the same desire.¹⁰⁹ The sympathies that had been expressed in 1814 for Lord Selkirk's creation, but which afterwards nobody had dared to affirm openly,¹¹⁰ reappeared now that they could be expressed with impunity. When Lord Selkirk left his colony on 19 September 1817, he carried away with him the impression of a general pacification.

Between settlers and Métis or freemen harmony was equally re-established. The freeman Poitras returned to Peter Fidler the objects that had been taken from him in the looting of Brandon House. He traded several of his own carts with the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel. Others provided transport for the settlers or the Company, or once again supplied them with buffalo meat. Lagimodière, whose loyalty had never flagged, gave new proofs of his devotion to Selkirk's cause.¹¹¹ This atmosphere of cordiality extended also to the Hudson's Bay Company's more remote posts, where the agitation had been so strong in 1815-16. Tran-

quility had returned to Brandon and the British company soon reoccupied its position on the Qu'Appelle River. It established its fort a short distance from the site it had previously occupied beside the Assiniboine River, and the support it found among Métis and freemen allowed it to resume peacefully its commercial activity.¹¹²

All these changes, visible signs of a new order, could not fail to disturb the North West Company. There was no question of directing a new attack on the colony after Selkirk's departure. But, rather than agree openly to its re-establishment, and thus admit their defeat, the partners tried to regain a little of their prestige through a policy of wrangling and obstruction, and thus to hinder the work of restoration followed by their adversaries. In the presence of Commissioner Coltman, who did not conceal his partiality for them,¹¹³ they provoked petty squabbles, with the intention of irritating Lord Selkirk and of curtailing the territory of the colony or reducing its supplies of wood,¹¹⁴ whose extreme scarcity already posed a distressing problem. The partner J. Grant tried to kill the only bull in the territory of Assiniboia and thus to deprive the settlers of the means of ploughing their fields.¹¹⁵ From his post at Pembina, he resumed his predecessors' attempt to dissuade the freemen from helping to feed the settlers.¹¹⁶ If he failed with most of them, in Montreal the representatives of the North West Company worked on the witnesses called to testify before the tribunals of Lower Canada and succeeded in winning several of them over.¹¹⁷ Unable to regain the confidence of the Indians,¹¹⁸ they aborted the peace treaty which was about to be concluded between the Sioux and the Ojibwa and which would have greatly benefited the security of the colony. In agreement with Selkirk, the trader Duncan Graham had undertaken to bring the two groups together,¹¹⁹ with a view to organizing a trading agreement with the Sioux that would only be possible if peace were established.¹²⁰ In May 1817 he succeeded in establishing between the Ojibwa of the Red River and the representatives of two Sioux tribes the basis for a reconciliation that seemed likely to be extended to the Assiniboine.¹²¹ But while the peace was being concluded, a group of *Saulteaux*, evidently instigated by the North Westers, attacked the employees of Duncan Graham in the neighborhood of Turtle River. The incident destroyed the effect of the negotiations.¹²² The following year the chief who, at Graham's request, had gone to Fort Douglas to negotiate the peace, died in an ambush near to Brandon House into which the *Saulteaux* led him under the guise

of friendship, once again perhaps at the suggestion of the North West Company.¹²³ From this point there was no longer any question of reconciliation. Hostilities were resumed between the two sides, expeditions intent on revenge increased,¹²⁴ and the projected flow of commerce could not be established.¹²⁵ These endlessly renewed uncertainties in their turn slowed down the peopling of the colony.¹²⁶

These initiatives may have been planned as the prelude to a broader action by the partners. At Green Lake, the irreconcilable Alexander Macdonell had mobilized a small group of Métis and it was rumored that in the spring of 1818 he would attempt a new attack on the colony.¹²⁷

But in that year the missionaries arrived in the territory of Assiniboia. With them appeared the moral force that was best fitted to act on the temperament of the Métis, the only one that was really likely to inspire the Bois-Brûlés to a peaceful line of conduct and emasculate the plots and schemes of the North Westers. On 16 July, acclaimed by the population who crowded on the shore where their canoes landed, the two priests called to the evangelization of the plains of Manitoba, Joseph-Norbert Provencher and Joseph Nicolas Sévère Dumoulin, brought to the settlers and to the Métis their message of peace.¹²⁸

The colony that welcomed them looked at its best. The crops promised to reward the labor of its inhabitants. In the section occupied by the De Meurons, thirty-one dwellings had risen from the soil, lining the first artery of the colony, German Street.¹²⁹ New immigrants had come to swell the ranks of the population. Pushing beyond the junction of the two rivers, they swarmed along the Assiniboine, where a group of Orkney men had established themselves on White Horse Prairie.¹³⁰ The missionaries would guarantee the nascent peace of the colony with their moral authority. But their arrival also gave sanction to the establishment of a sedentary economy on the banks of the Red River. Under the guidance of their missionaries, the Métis became reconciled to the very activity which in the beginning they had sought to destroy. And finally, thanks to the pacification which their very presence introduced into the country, the missionaries fostered the triumph of a new legal order, which would soon find expression in the working of the institutions of the colony of Assiniboia, and would banish from this area the violence that had marked the years of domination by the North West Company.¹³¹ To this land so dis-

tant from the valley of the St. Lawrence,¹⁵² and up to now practically unknown to the authorities of Lower Canada, the latter now began to pay attention.¹⁵³ Colonel Coltman's mission demonstrated their intention no longer to leave to the free play of the lawless forces that faced each other in the West the regulation of the conflicts which divided them. By way of the colony of Assiniboia a new legality, permeated by British concepts, quickly appeared on the plains of the West. Though it was limited to a tiny fragment of the vast Rupert's Land, it brought a new spirit to the country, different from the old North West spirit, and it served as a prelude to the organization which, under the authority of the Hudson's Bay Company, would gradually be imposed on the spaces of the prairie.

Faced by the outcome of events on Red River, the North West Company was forced to accept the defeat it had just suffered. It tried hard, by supporting the activities of the missionaries, to gain recognition from the Métis and in this way to snatch from its adversaries the popularity of the happy initiative on the part of Lord Selkirk, to whom belonged the honor of having persuaded the evangelists to begin their work in the West.¹⁵⁴ But it succeeded no better in this than in continuing its retrograde attempts to negate the Charter of 1670 and contest the rights which this guaranteed to the Hudson's Bay Company.¹⁵⁵ In fact, it was forced to concentrate its attention on the more distant region of Athabasca, and to attempt, in a desperate struggle that revived all the violence of earlier years, to make the best of the prestige and the power it still retained there. "The blow which Lord S. struck at Fort William," wrote Colin Robertson in 1818, "the reestablishment of the colony, followed by the Catholic mission are events so strongly impressed on the minds of all as to have completely laid the axe at the root of North West influence . . . in this part of the country. I wish I could say as much for that of Athabaska. There a strong germ exists."¹⁵⁶

Here the proclamation of the Prince Regent was deliberately ignored. A. N. McLeod, acting in defiance of the instructions it contained,¹⁵⁷ led the Métis into new attacks on the personnel of the rival company. Given confidence by the presence of many Canadians in John Clarke's expedition, the Métis had at first shown themselves prepared to enter into more friendly relations with their enemies. A few of them even became engaged among the Hudson's Bay Company's personnel.¹⁵⁸ But soon, under the direc-

tion of the partners who continued to appeal to their most violent instincts, they resumed their former practices, joining in the looting their masters organized,¹³⁹ and accepting the most criminal tasks, such as the mission of murdering John Clarke,¹⁴⁰ which they would have done if the latter had not been forewarned of their plot, and abandoning themselves to attacks and outrages against the officers and men of the Hudson's Bay Company, of which the worst were committed at Green Lake,¹⁴¹ around Ile à la Crosse¹⁴² and at Lesser Slave Lake.¹⁴³ It is true that in acting in this way the Métis of these distant regions were often responding to the fear the partners knew how to inspire in them. But they were also giving in to the inclinations of a character nearer than that of their eastern congeners to primitive man and less imprinted with humanitarian scruples, as well as to the stronger attachment which in this region they felt toward the bourgeois of the North West Company. This was a distinction that would sharpen in the coming years and continue, without changing appreciably, down to our own days.

ABBREVIATIONS

- A.D.C.M.: Archives du Dépôt des Cartes de la Marine, Paris
 A.N.: Archives Nationales, Paris
Am. Anthropol. New Ser.: *American Anthropologist*, New Series, New York (1899-1902), Lancaster (1903-21), Menasha (1921 *et seq.*)
Am. Mus. Nat. Hist. Anthropol. Papers: American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers, New York.
 Arch. Arch.: Archives de l'Archevêché, St. Boniface, Manitoba
 Arch. Edm.: Archives de l'Archevêché, Edmonton
 B.D.C.M.: Bibliothèque du dépôt des Cartes de la Marine, Paris
 B.N.: Bibliothèque Nationale
 C.C.F.: Cooperative Commonwealth Federation
 C.H.B.E.: *Cambridge History of the British Empire* vol. VI, Canada
 C.G.J.: *Canadian Geographical Journal*, Montreal
 Can. Hist. Assoc.: Canadian Historical Association, Ottawa
 C.H.R.: *Canadian Historical Review*, Toronto
Col. St. Hist. Soc. Wisc.: *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, Madison
Col. St. Hist. Soc. N. Dak.: *Collections of the State Historical Society of North Dakota*, Bismarck
 F.F. Nouv. Acq. Fonds Français, Nouvelles Acquisitions (Bibliothèque nationale, Manuscrits)
 H. of Rep. Ex. Doc. 31st Cong. 1st ses.: House of Representatives, Executive Documents, 31st Congress, 1st session
 H.B.C.: Hudson's Bay Company
 Ho.: House
 I.O. Wash.: Indian Office, Washington
Jes. Rel.: *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* (R. G. Thwaites, editor)
 Macdonald P.: Sir John A. Macdonald Papers (Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa)
Man. H. and Sc. Soc.: *Transactions of the Manitoba Historical and Scientific Society*, Winnipeg
 M.S.R.C.: *Mémoires de la Société Royale du Canada* (title of the French section of the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*)
Minn. Hist. Col.: *Minnesota Historical Collections*, St. Paul, Minnesota
 Minn. Hist. Soc.: Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota
Minn. Hist.: *Minnesota History*, St. Paul
 Misc.: Miscellaneous
Miss. Valley. Hist. Assoc. Proc.: *Proceedings of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association*, Cedar Rapids, Iowa
 Mus. Nat. Hist.: Museum of Natural History, New York
 N.D.H.C.: *North Dakota Historical Collections*, Bismarck
 N.D.H.Q.: *North Dakota Historical Quarterly*, Bismarck

- N W.R.: North-West Rebellions
 O M.I.: Oblats de Marie Immaculée
 P A C : Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa
Rapport de l'Arch.: *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec*
 Riel P.: Riel Papers (Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa)
 R R.S.: Red River Settlement (Colonie de la Rivière Rouge)
 Selk. P.: Selkirk Papers (Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa)
 Sibley P. Sibley Papers (Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minn.)
 Smith Misc. Col. Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Washington
Can. Ant. and Num. Journal *The Canadian Antiquarian and Numismatic Journal*
 Montreal
 T R.S.C.: *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Ottawa, Montreal
 T.R. Can. Inst. *Transactions of the Royal Canadian Institute*, Toronto
 V B.: Vimy Building, Ottawa (Stationery Branch of the Department of the Interior)
Wisc. Hist. Col. *Wisconsin Historical Collections* (abridged title of the *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*), Madison
Wisc. Hist. Proc. *Wisconsin Historical Proceedings* (abridged title of the *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*), Madison

NOTES

PART I: THE PRIMITIVE ENVIRONMENT

Chapter One: The Physical Environment

- 1 R. M. Ballantyne, *Hudson's Bay or Every Day Life in the Wilds of North America* Edinburgh and London, 1848, p. 252; J. Long, "Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter and Trader, 1768-82" (in R. G. Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, Cleveland, 1904, II, p. 74).
- 2 G. Simpson, "Memorandum respecting the HBC posts in Lake Huron and Lake Superior," D4/52, p. 128: "broken up by hills and ridges."; Arch. de l'Arch. Taché, Isle à la Crosse, 5 Jan. 1847; Alexander Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal . . . through the Continent of North America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans in the Years 1789 and 1793* London, 1801, p. lxi: "The face of the country offers a wild scene of huge hills and rocks, separated by stoney valley, lakes and ponds." pp. lxi, 403 "A dark grey granite is to be found along the whole extent north of this country. . . ." Andrew Graham, "Observations on Hudson's Bay," E2/12, p. 3: "Fresh water lakes are very numerous everywhere for 500 miles up the country . . ." (1792); Rainy Lake Report, B105 e/2 (1822-3); David Thompson, *Narrative of His Explorations in Western America*, ed. by J. B. Tyrrell (Champlain Society, Toronto, 1917), p. 55.
3. Graham, *op. cit.*, p. 2: "The lands near the coast are low, marshy, but the banks of the rivers rise gradually as they recede from the sea."
4. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
- 5 Ed. Smith, Athabaska Report, B39 e/4, p. 6 (1822). "The soil being sand or a stiff stubborn clay."
6. G. M. Dawson, *Report on the Geology and Resources of the Region in the Vicinity of the 49th Parallel, from the Lake of the Woods to the Rocky Mountains* Montreal, 1875, p. 277. "The areas formerly occupied by small lakes show better soil than the ridges and higher grounds, which are generally sandy or gravelly." Arch. de l'Arch.: Taché, Isle à la Crosse, 5 Jan. 1847
7. W. Brown Athabaska Report, B39 e/3, pp. 4-5 (1820-1): "There is very little soil around lake Athabaska, except in the valleys, and there it is only a few inches of a black mossy earth upon a bed of sand or gravel.", Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
- 8 Dawson, *op. cit.* p. 277; D4/99, p. 26. Simpson's Report, York Factory, 10 Aug. 1832: "When there is any soil, it is so thin that nothing but stunted pines are to be seen."
9. Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, pp. lvi, lxi; W. A. Mackintosh, *Prairie Settlement: The Geographic Setting*, Toronto, 1934, p. 3, fig. 24.
10. A11/27, p. 22: Richard Staunton, Moose Factory, 17 Aug. 1739. "There is

- no right natural earth here but what is occasioned from the many trees which have been blown down and are yearly, they rot and turn the ground into a sort of black soil 9 inches deep and under that nothing but dry sand. When that is cleared and dug up, planted and sown, the heat in the summer scorches it up, having a sandy foundation."
11. W. S. Wallace, "Sir Henry Lefroy's Journey to the North West in 1843-4" (*T.R.S.C.*, Section 2, 1938, p. 74). "Everywhere wooded banks and never a distant view." Cf. Map 1.
 12. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-7; W. E. Halliday, "Forest Regions of Canada" (*C.G.J.*, Oct. 1939; A. Graham "Observations . . ." E2/5, p. 55; Kaj Birket-Smith, "Contributions to Chipewyan Ethnology" (*Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition*, 1921-4 Copenhagen, VI, no. 3, 1930, p. 17).
 13. See note 7, p. 5; B49/c/I (1815); Ile à la Crosse report, pp. 1-2.
 14. Dawson, *op. cit.*, p. 275.
 15. Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, p. 24; J. McLean, *Notes of a Twenty-Five Years Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory*, edited by W. S. Wallace (Champlain Society, Toronto, 1932), I, p. 69.
 16. D4/99, p. 26 York Fy, 10 Aug. 1832. "Fire has made such ravages that in many places nothing remains to show that vegetation had ever existed, but a few scorched trunks of trees standing upright among the ruins of immense forests laid waste by that over-whelming element . . ." D4/118, p. 16 v. Fort Alexander, 11 Sept. 1822. Roderick Mackenzie jr. to G. Simpson: "The country hereabouts has been overrun with fire, so that wood such as boats would require is extremely rare, even timber for house building."
 17. D4/91, p. 10 Moose Fy 5 Sept. 1827. "The levels of high and low water are at many points five miles apart."
 18. Graham, "Observations . . ." E2/12, p. 2; *ibid.*, 1768-9. E2/4, p. 4. "The shores from Churchill to Moose river are flat, but soundings pretty regular . . . Along the shores and inland to the distance of 10 miles are plenty of willows and young junipers, and in the swamps and marshes grows fine grass of different kinds and shoots up surprizingly quick and to a good length. The shores are sand and limy mud with gravelly ridges, and low banks lying in small spots, and in different forms between high and low water marks." Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-7. "Although around Hudson's Bay there is a wild belt of earth of about 100 miles in width . . . yet it is mostly a cold wet soil, the surface covered with wet moss, ponds, marshes and dwarf trees", B42/a/I, p. 22. Churchill River, 8 Sept. 1718. "This place is so bare that it affords neither fish nor flesh." J. B. Tyrrell, *Documents Relating to the Early History of Hudson's Bay* (Champlain Society, Toronto, 1931) Letter of Father Marest, missionary of the Company of Jesus, p. 137: "There are no real woods in that country, there is almost nothing but brushwood and thorn-trees, in some places fairly thick and in other broken by open savannas."
 19. A11/72 York Fy, 17 Sept. 1716. J. Knight to London. "I have designed to erect a settlement at Churchill River, but it will be very difficult piece of work by the scarcity and distance of the timber."
 20. E2/5, p. 58. Graham, "Observations . . ." (1768) In the marshes "grows a fat feeding grass in great plenty, which is cut and made into hay in August for the sustenance of the cattle kept at the Forts, some of which keep 30 or 40 head."
 21. E2/1, p. 47. Isham, "Observations on Hudson's Bay" (1743) "At the breaking up of the ice . . . great deluges. The ice being frozen to the ground confines the water that it has no passage to the sea. This occasions a

- rising of water some fathoms deep which breaks all the banks of the river down. . . ."; E1/12, p. 505 *et seq.* A. Graham. "Observations . . ." (1792) 27 Apr 1773, Severn Fy: "The river ice is blown up about two miles above. The water has risen to the height of a spring tide and running rapidly over the ground ice." "23 May 1773: River clear of ice. By the force of the river ice a channel of open water has found its way quite out to sea."
22. E 2/5, p. 58. Graham, "Observations . . ." (1768). "Barley and oats have been sown several times in the gardens at Albany and Moose, have grown fine, but have not filled, because the frosty night begins so soon in August. In the latter end of July frosty nights impair our gardens."
 23. E2/12, 19 Feb. 1773. "People who were hunting ptarmigans into the open marsh could not keep from freezing, while others who were gunning hares in the woods, complained they were too hot"; E2/1, p. 45. Isham, "Observations . . ." (1743). "The men we bury at 6 feet underground continue hard froze for many years. That cold excessive by the seashore is much milder further inland."
 24. E2/4, p. 3. Graham, "Observations . . ." (1768-9). "Latter part of October, lakes, ponds, creeks froze fast. Ice driving thick and heavy in the rivers . . ."
 25. E2/1, p. 46. Isham, "Observations . . ." (1743). "Port Nelson seldom freezes over till January as it is nine miles across, whereas the shallow narrow rivers freeze middle of summer."
 26. B42 a/136-a (1810-1). W. Auld's memorandum book. "York Factory, established at a great distance from the woods, is built in a swamp. Cellars full of water, flimsy building, deranged every winter by the freezing of the soil."
 27. E2/4, p. 5. Graham, "Observations . . ." "End of November the beams of our houses begin to crack and rend with the frost as do the trees and rocks."
 28. B42 a/1 (1719), p. 41 v.
 29. B239/a/2 29 Sept. 1715. "I killed my sheep and ram, not thinking it worth to raise any of that cattle, the winter being so long here and the summer so full of mosquitoes that they live in constant misery. They are all summer mad and all winter creeping into holes."
 30. E2/12, p. 505 *et seq.* Graham, "Observations . . ." (1792). "January 1 1773. - 30°F. Sharp and serene. The beams of the house have now given over cracking. The water contained in wooden vessels of 5 gallons freeze near the fire. January 15. About the first hour the mercury appeared out of the bulb and at the second hour it stood at - 32°, at the nineteenth hour - 59°, then it fell into the bulb which is 100° minus. January 24. The cold has now got so much into our houses that it is difficult to save anything from freezing."
 31. See note 7, p. 8. "January 1 1773. The open water at sea discovers itself by a smoke bank over it, but not a speck perceptible anywhere"; E2/4, p. 9. Graham, "Observations . . ." (1768-9). "The seas are frozen fast to the distance of ten leagues."
 32. E2/4, p. II V, E2/1, p. 45 V. Isham, "Observations . . ." (1743). "Damp fogs and chilly cold."
 33. D4/102, pp. 12-13. Medical Report, York Factory. 31 Aug. 1835. "The cases were catarrh of a severe character and inflammation of the lungs and membranes"; McLean, *Notes of a Twenty-Five Years Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory*, ed. by W. S. Wallace (Champlain Society, Toronto, 1932), II, p. 248.
 34. E2/12, p. 505, *et seq.* A. Graham, "Observations . . ." "9 June 1773. + 65°

- to 80°F. Immoderately warm, no working out of doors. The adjacent country all in smoke from the heat and from the natives setting the woods on fire. Bad policy as it kills all creatures." B239 2/3 (1716-7). "11 August 1717. If mosquitoes and horse flies disappear we have such swarms of a small sand fly that we can hardly see the sun through them."
- 35 E2/5, p. 17. Graham, "Observations" (1768). "In 1767 The Company by sending an order against burning the brush and sprigs off the firewood was wise. In the winter the servants cut down a large thick spot of wood letting one tree fall across another promiscuously. In summer they burn it, which burns the standing wood all round. . . . This shocking devastation has laid open the woods about York Factory river. This is practised every summer by the natives. From York Factory to Albany along the coast and for many miles inland are spots of burnt woods from 100 yards to 20 miles in length." Samuel Hearne, *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean*, ed. by J. B. Tyrrell (Champlain Society, Toronto, 1911), p. 294.
- 36 A6/1, p. 133. "A brief Account of a voyage made to Churchill River from Pt. Nelson River in the Hayes sloop anno 1686," by Michael Grimington. "The land on both sides low, on the South side full of trees and underwood, the north side stony and barren, no trees."
- 37 Hearne, *op. cit.*, p. 138 (note).
- 38 David Thompson's *Narrative of His Explorations in Western America 1784-1812*, ed. by J. B. Tyrrell (Champlain Society, Toronto, 1916), pp. 16-17. "The whole is a dreary monotonous coast of rocks and moss without hills or mountains to the Mackenzie river . . ."; W. A. Mackintosh, *Prairie Settlement: The Geographic Setting*. Toronto, 1934, p. 19.
- 39 L. R. Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, Quebec, 1889-90, vol. II, p. 100. "The surface of the country . . . is level, interspersed however with mountainous rocky precipices and an immense number of lakes . . . The soil is remarkably barren of no depth . . . pure sand. The best spots afford a mixture of clay with fine sand and moss of a black colour. The country is . . . full of marshes and poorly wooded."; Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 255-7; Sir John Richardson, *Arctic Searching Expedition*. London, 1851, pp. 96-7, 132, 320-1; Warburton Pike, *The Barren Ground of Northern Canada*. New York, 1892, pp. 39-40; Birket-Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 16. "It is a low, rolling country where ice-worn hills of Precambrian formation rise up over lower Quaternary deposits.", E. Petitot, *Exploration du Grand Lac des Ours*. Paris, 1893, pp. 61-4.
- 40 Vilhjalmur Stefansson, *The Northward Course of Empire*. New York, 1922. "The Barren Grounds of Northern Canada are in reality a vast pasture, covered not only with lichens and mosses, but mainly with the flowering plants of more southern latitudes, sedges, blue-grass, timothy, goldenrod, dandelion . . ." Richardson, *op. cit.*, pp. 320-1; Pike, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40; Hearne, *op. cit.*, p. 313.
- 41 Birket-Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
- 42 Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-15; E2/5, p. 32 v. Graham, "Observations . . ." (1768). "They pass and repass along the coast spring and fall in herds of many thousands . . . They are plenty along the seashore only in the height of summer. They cannot remain inland on account of the musketoes, but are obliged to come near the sea where it is cooler.", B239/2/117, p. 3 (1810-11). B239 a/118 (1811-12), p. 5 v, 10 vols.
- "Relation du Detroit et de la baie d'Hudson par Monsieur Jérémie" (J. F. Bernard, *Recueil de Voyages au Nord*. Amsterdam, 1724, p. 406.

- "Around Fort Bourbon there is nothing remarkable except that during the summer there are enormous numbers of caribou who are driven from the woods by the great multitude of mosquitoes and gadflies and find their way toward the coast," On the migrations of the caribou: *ibid.*, p. 423 E. T. Seton, in *Life Histories of Northern Animals*, New York, vol. III, pp. 122-8, attributes to the migrations of the caribou a more erratic nature than does Hearne, whose description we reproduce here, D. T. Hanbury, "A journey from Chesterfield Inlet to Great Slave Lake," *Geographical Journal*, London, 1898-9, vol. XVI, pp. 63-77.
43. Seton, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 191-2.
 44. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-3.
 45. Mackintosh, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
 46. Isham, "Observations (1743)" E2/1, pp. 90-1, A. Skinner, "Notes on Eastern Cree and Northern Saulteaux" (*Anthropological Papers*, Am. Mus. Nat. Hist. New York, vol. IX, pt. I, 1911, p. 134), Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 58-9.
 47. John Macoun, *Manitoba and the Great North-West* Guelph, 1882, p. 186.
 48. E. E. Jenks "Wild Rice Gatherers of the Upper Lakes" 19th Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology. Washington, 1900, pp. 1011-60; Trevor Lloyd, "Wild Rice in Canada" (*C.G.J.*, Nov. 1939).
 49. E2/2, p. 14 v J. Isham, *op. cit.* (1743), Thompson *op. cit.*, pp. 95-6, 102-3 E. T. Seton, *Life Histories*, vol. I, pp. 191-2, III, pp. 55-64.
 50. B60 c/1 (1815) B49 c/1, pp. 4-5 (1815); *The Voyages of Pierre Esprit Radisson*, ed. by G. D. Scull, Prince Society Boston, 1885, p. 153, L. R. Masson, *Bourgeois II*, p. 240 (Duncan Cameron, *The Nipigon Country*, p. 341 (Peter Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians*); Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-6.
 51. B89 c/1 (1822-3. B39 e/6, p. 2 (1823-4; B49 c/1 (1815); Mackenzie, *op. cit.* p. lxxxii.
 52. E. T. Seton, *Lives of Game Animals*. London, vol. III, 1927, p. 706; R. I. Dodge, *The Plains of the Great West* New York, 1877, p. 144.
 53. B60 c/1 (1815). Radisson, *Voyages*, p. 210; Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 185.
 54. D5/19, Abitibi, 22 Feb. 1847 Thos. Fraser to G. Simpson. "Our Indians do not complain of the scarcity of food. The rabbits are tolerably numerous, which is their main support during the winter season."; A. Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 24 *et seq.*
 55. E2/1, p. 74 v Isham, "Observations": "One of our main dependences is on geese . . . The white geese are the best. They breed to the North in the summer, to the south in the winter. They fly to the North beginning of May, staying three weeks or four in the marshes, return in August and are all gone to the South by the 1st of October."
 56. B39 e/6, p. 2 (1823-4). On the distribution of fur-bearing animals, cf. B. Brouillette, *La Chasse des animaux à fourrure au Canada*. Paris, 1931.
 57. D4/92, p. 18 Simpson's report, 10 July 1828; Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 24 *et seq.*, Masson, *op. cit.*, II, p. 309.
 58. B104 a/2, p. 46 (1819-20); Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 10, 181; Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 59; A. S. Morton, *The Journal of Duncan McGillivray*. Toronto 1929. *Introd.* pp. lxiii-iv.
 59. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 159; McLean, *Notes of a Twenty-Five Years' Service*, II, p. 260.
 60. P. E. Radisson, *Voyages* (Scull), p. 201, Masson, *op. cit.*, II, p. 242, Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 24 *et seq.*; D. Jenness, *The Indians of Canada* National Museum of Canada. Ottawa, Bulletin 65. Anthropological Series no. 15 1934, p. 285.

61. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 156 (Winter at Reim Deer Lake December 18/1796: -56° F) "It was a day of most intense cold. The ice on the lake was splitting in all directions, the smoke from the chimneys fell in lumps to the ground." pp. 300-4, D5/43, p. 89. Isle à la Crosse, 20 Jan. 1857. G. Deschambault to G. Simpson. "Thermometer very low, -40°C -45°C F". B39 e/3 p. 5 (1820-1) W. Brown's Report (Athabaska Department). "The frosty dews start end of August. . . The ice sets fast about 15 november . . . The weather then becomes clear and the air keen, but the severe cold does not set in till after Christmas."
62. B60 a/22 (1823-4), p. 15. The thickwood Cree (Cree des bois) "could live more easily on buffalo in the plains than in the strong woods, where the means of subsistence are very precarious . . . but where they have a chance of making better fur hunts . . . No sooner did the time arrive when the buffalo was expected to approach this river than they rushed out to the plains to meet them . . ."; Masson, *Bourgeois* . . . , II, p. 308. "Though no people are more attached to their native soil, yet the abundance of game (is powerful motive for them to desert their country)."
63. Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, pp. lxx, lxxii-iii, St. Boniface. Archives de l'Archevêché. Mgr Grandin, Mission de St Jean Baptiste, 24 Aug. 1866. "[From Carlton to Green Lake] the caravan travels across hills and ravines interrupted by boggy marshes and by trunks of trees brought down by fire whose presence is all the more dangerous because they are hidden by high grass."
64. B49 e/1, pp. 1-2 (1815); Maclean, *op. cit.*, II, p. 369.
65. Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, p. 129. In 1802, Peter Fidler saw this, because of the abundance of bison, caribou, and moose, as a site extremely favorable for the establishment of a trading fort. B39 e/1, pp. 37 B39 a/I, p. 1 (1802-3), B39 e/3, p. 5 (1820-1); Macoun, *op. cit.*, p. 123; C. A. Dawson and R. W. Murchie, *The Settlement of the Peace River Country* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement). Toronto, 1934, pp. 15-26.
66. Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, p. 108-9.
67. Gabriel Franchère, *Narrative of a Voyage to the North West Coast of America* (1811-14). New York, 1854 (Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, VI, p. 372), B60 e/1 (1815) "The country north of the Saskatchewan is mostly thick woods, from the Rocky Mountains to old Buckingham House." Cf. Plate VII.
68. Selk. P. (P. A. C.), p. 17 3418 (Colin Robertson, 1 July 1815). "Both sides of the Red River are clothed with stately oaks, elm, maple and poplar . . . The woods deepen as you approach the Lake, but from the settlement to the Limestone Quarry, about twenty miles, the woods are about a mile in depth, in bays they are more, and at points the plains run to the river . . .", *Lettres de Monseigneur Joseph-Norbert Provencher*, St. Boniface (Manitoba), 1913, p. 27 "The Red River . . . is bordered with oaks, elms, aspens, etc. Behind that barrier of woods the prairies extend out of sight."
69. Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, pp. lxxii-iii: "The males take refuge here during the winter, and so do the females when the cold is particularly rigorous.", Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. liv-v.
70. *The Kelsey Papers*, with an introduction by A. G. Doughty and Chester Martin. Ottawa, 1929, p. 3.
71. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 183; A.D.C.M. Manuscrits de l'Isle, D5-x, p. 57. Letter of Le Sueur from Natchez, 4 Apr. 1700 "There are only bare prairies cut by rivers which have their sources in large or small lakes. A Frenchman and several savages who have traversed all these prairies told me that in the great heat of summer, after heavy rains, certain areas of these prairies are

- white with salt, which attracts all kinds of animals ". J. Macoun, *Autobiography* Ottawa, 1929, p. 141 "Rising out of the depression . . . we reached the summit of a slight rise and we were struck almost speechless by the sight that lay before our eyes. We were now on the verge of the real prairie . . . Looking west, north or south, a level expanse of green meadow lay stretching out before us to the horizon, without a break and without anything resembling a live animal or shrub."
- 72 B27 v/1 (1815) "The country . . . is principally immense plains, covered with grass and herbs more or less luxuriant according to the quality of the soil . . . "; Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 22. Cf. Plate VI, 2.
- 73 Masson, *Bourgeois*, I p. 269. "The plains are near the banks and so extensive that a man may travel . . . without passing a wood a mile long. All the wood here, as in the rest of the plains, being only small tufts . . . called by the French *îlets de bois* " (J. McDonell, "Some account of the Red River," 1797?), A. Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, p. lxiii. *et seq.*, Provencher, *Lettres*, p. 27, *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, Quebec, Mar. 1853, pp. 44 *et seq.*, R. Lafleche, 4 Sept. 1841. "The prairies into which the Metis go each summer are immense. They include the whole area between the Assiniboine River to the North, the Red River to the east, the Cheyenne River and the Grand Coteau to the South "
74. See note 4, E. Coues, *New Light on the Early History of the Greater North West* New York, 1897, I, pp. 314-15. H. Youle Hind, *Report on the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition* Toronto, 1859, p. 31
- 75 J. Macoun, *Manitoba*, p. 258. Cf. Plates VI B, VII A.
76. Twining (Capt. W. J.), *Reports upon the survey of the boundary between the Territory of the United States and the Possessions of Great Britain*.. Washington, 1878, pp. 61-2, G. M. Dawson, *Report on the Geology and Resources of the Region in the Vicinity of the Forty-Ninth Parallel* Montreal, 1875, pp. 218-29, 248
- 77 W. A. Mackintosh, *op. cit.*, p. 18
- 78 B 60 v/6, (1823-4). "The tracking ground along the North Saskatchewan is two days march above Cumberland House and continues to Edmonton. The men consider this as a kind of relaxation of their duty. It is about 100 miles long. The boat is dragged at 3 miles per hour, the men being relieved every two hours."; Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
79. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 185, Coues, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 229, 406-15; Macoun, *Manitoba*, pp. 87, 98, 249. "The Cypress Hills form a series of plateaux extending from east to west about 100 miles. At the eastern end they rise abruptly from the plain to the height of 400 feet, but at the northwestern extremity they were found 2000 feet above the plain north of Fort Walsh "; Mackintosh, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8; J. Hesketh, "History of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa" (N D H C. V, 1923, pp. 85-9), *History of the Red River Valley, Past and Present*. Chicago, 1909, pp. 34-9, Cf. Map I.
- 80 E. Coues, *op. cit.*, I, p. 307.
- 81 E2/11, pp. 52-3 "A Journal of a Journey Performed by Mr. Matthew Cocking, Second Factor at York Factory . . . 1772-1773"
82. "Journal of a voyage to ascertain the boundary line," by Capt. George Taylor (B 235 I/10, 1827-8, p. 28 v. "The mountain (Turtle Mountain) appears to be very swampy . . . and in these swamps the muskrat is to be found in abundance. Also throughout the mountain martins, foxes, badgers, red deer. . . ."
83. *Ibid.* (B 235 a/9, p. 29 v.).
- 84 Cocking, "Journal," E2/11; p. 53 v.
- 85 L. Lafleche St. François Xavier, 1 June 1845 (Archives de l'Archevêché

- de Saint-Boniface), R Lafleche St François Xavier, 4 Sept 1851 (*Annales de la Prop. de la Foi*, Quebec, Mar, 1853).
- 86 Cocking, Journal, E2/11, p. 53; Henday, "Journal" B 239 a/40 (1754-5). "Nearing Red Deer river we come across pines and birch along the creeks (I had not seen one pine tree since I left Steel river)", Youle Hind, *op. cit.*, p. 31. "The South Branch from the elbow to the Moose Woods flows through a treeless region, as far as relates to the prairie on either side; but in the ravines leading to the river detached groves of small timber occur."
 87. A Henday B 239 a/40, p. 10 (1754-5, B 27 e/1 (1815). "The kinds of woods are the pine, birch, fir, poplar, aspen and a few small trees here and there about the banks of the river", *Journals and Letters of Pierre Gaultier de La Vérendrye and His Sons*, ed. by Lawrence Burpee (Champlain Society, Toronto, 1927), p. 485 "Abridged description of the map representing the establishments and discoveries of the sieur de la Vérendrye and his sons" (1749) "Only the shores of the rivers [Assiniboine and Red rivers] are planted with trees, and the usual woods consist of white oaks, elms, ash, whitewood, birch and unknown trees. All the rest is prairie, where there are isolated copses of oaks and wild plums."; W. H. Keating, *Narrative of Long's Expedition* Philadelphia, 1824, vol. II, p. 36, Youle Hind, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11, 30, 31.
 - 88 Cocking, "Journal," B 239 a/69, pp. 10-11, Macoun, *Manitoba*, pp. 77-8, 189, 238 *et seq.*; *Autobiography*, pp. 59, 141.
 - 89 Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 186, D 5/46, p. 413 Fort Pembina, 27 July 1857 Captain Palliser to the Colonial Office: "The soil consists of one foot black vegetable mould resting on a free clay loam. The clay mud is very tenacious and renders access to the banks of the Red River very difficult, and great care is required in passing a cart or waggon across"; L. Lafleche, St François Xavier, 1 June 1845 (Archives de l'Archevêché, St Boniface), Dawson, *op. cit.*, pp. 277-8; Macoun, *Manitoba*, p. 102.
 - 90 Cocking, "Journal" E2/11, pp. 50-7, B27/c/1 (1815). "The soil is generally sandy, but in the points of rivers it is blackish mould for about 10 inches deep, but three feet from the surface it is pure sand."; Dawson, *op. cit.*, p. 291, Macoun, *Manitoba*, p. 107 Macoun, *Autobiography*, pp. 176-7.
 - 91 M. Cocking, "Journal," E 2/11, pp. 55-6. "We proceed broadly along little Eagle Creek. Buffalo feeding on all sides. Barren sandy soil, very little grass, mostly wild wormwood which the natives name Mustoose Wekosquah or Buffalo liking."; Macoun, *Manitoba*, pp. 77, 238, 244., Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 138.
 92. Macoun, *Manitoba*, pp. 104-5, F. G. Roe, "Buffalo as a Possible Influence in the Development of Prairie Lands" (C. H. R., Sept. 1937 pp. 275-87).
 93. Coues, *New Light* I, pp. 123, 210-11, 225; Alexander Ross, *The Red River Settlement Its Rise, Progress and Present State* London, 1856, pp. 14-15, E. I. Seton, "Prairie Fires" (*Man. H. and Sci. Soc.* 16), L. Lafleche, St François Xavier, 1 June 1845 (Arch. de l'Archevêché St Boniface): "Fire breaks out in the prairie each year in October and immediately after the thawing of the snows." S. B. Steele, *Forty Years in Canada*, London, 1915, pp. 258-9.
 94. Macoun, *Manitoba*, pp. 104-5; *Ibid.*, *Autobiography*, p. 175; Seton, *op. cit.*
 95. Jason Lothrop, "A Sketch of the Early History of Kenosha County, Wisconsin" (Col. St. Hist. Soc. Wisc. 1855, p. 450.) "After the first frost, in the autumn of 1835, had killed the millions of tons of grass west of us, we began at Pike river to see the rising smoke at a distance. The Indians probably had fired the prairies as early as they could for hunting purposes. It was some time in the latter part of september. We began to see the advancing

fire towards evening on the prairie. . . The blaze and burning of fragments being blown by the wind caught the tops of the high grass and the raging fire continued to advance so swiftly that a deer would hardly escape it. . . The roaring terror came through the woods with awful grandeur. Large trees, as well as all smaller vegetation, quickly fell before the ruthless invader. This was when the prairies were uncropped by the countless herds that now roam over them."

96. B235 a/4, p. 6. 27 Sept. 1822. "The sky is so obscured by smoke that it is changed almost into night.", Archives des Sœurs Grises (St. Boniface), II, p. 59 *et seq.* Journal de la Mère McMullen (1859).
97. G. P. de l' Glazebrook, *The Hargrave Correspondence, 1821-1843* (Champlain Society, Toronto, 1938), pp. 96, 250. "Th. Simpson to J. Hargrave. Red River, 28 Nov. 1836. The Catholic population of the main river have lost much of their hay by fire. And several families . . . have in consequence gone to winter at the Turtle Mountain ", D 5/18, p. 544. J. Rowand to G. Simpson, Edmonton, 29 Dec. 1856. "What hay we made in the fall and summer was all burnt by the fire raging in the fall. For thousands of miles around Carlton the plains are black ", J. E. Harnot, Red River Settlement, 22 Nov. 1853 (Arch. de l'Archevêché, St. Boniface); Monseigneur Grandin, St. Albert, 13 Oct. 1870 (Arch. de l'Archevêché, St. Boniface). "The prairie is all on fire. For several days we have been trembling for our buildings, and most of our horses are probably dead. Our poor hunters in the prairie have also been overtaken by the fire. Several have lost their horses, their dwellings, their belongings. One man has died in the fire ", G. Dugast, St. Boniface, 2 Oct. 1871 (Arch. de l'Arch., St. Boniface). "Fire ravages. We have been enveloped in smoke for eight days. All of the Sisters' hay is burnt."
98. D4/86, p. 5. (23 June 1823); D4/122, p. 19. "J. Clarke to the Governor. Northern Department. Fort Pelly, 6 January 1829. Fire has been raging through the plains for three months. The grass is so completely burnt that it is not easy for us to find a spot our poor horses may feed upon."
99. D5/23, p. 216. "J. Rowand to G. Simpson, Edmonton, 6 Nov. 1848. The fire has been raging, the fort was very near going. All our hay, wood for boats, firewood were burnt. The Strongwood Indians are starving "; D5/18, p. 544, *loc. cit.*
100. D4/1.17, p. 45. "J. McDonald to G. Simpson, Beaver Creek, 8 April 1823. The failure of provisions in the Saskatchewan and this district both in the same year is a rare circumstance which will be severely felt next summer. The cause . . . is the burning of the plains last fall from lake Quinipique to Fort des Prairies and the Missouri "; *Lettres de Monseigneur Provencher*, p. 81. "St. Boniface, 20 Nov. 1822. Not only has the fire run to the Red River, but it has spread as far as the Fort of the Prairies, from which the Company brings many provisions by the last barges that come from the Bay "; D5/35, pp. 281-2. A. W. Buchanan to G. Simpson, Fort Garry, 6 Dec. 1852. "The only place unburnt is a strip of land extending from the Missouri to the Turtle Mountain, and to this place the buffalo resort."
101. D5/5, p. 301. A. Thom to G. Simpson, Red River, 31 July 1840.
102. B60 2/11, p. 2 v. (1812-13).
103. "Regulations passed at a meeting of the council of Assiniboia, held at Fort Garry, 25 June 1841" (Archives de l'Archevêché, St. Boniface).
104. D4/118, p. 16 v. Roderick Mackenzie to G. Simpson, Fort Alexander, 11 Sept. 1822. "The country hereabouts has been overrun with fire, so that wood such as boats would require is extremely rare, even timber for house

- building". Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 248; Youle Hind, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-3, 59, Steele, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
105. *Ibid.*, p. 118; Dawson, *op. cit.*, p. 224.
106. B60 a/24, p. 10 v. 13 Oct. 1826, "Plains on fire. It must either be done accidentally by Joseph la Douceur tenting with our hunters, or by the Assiniboines as a revenge for the affray."
107. F. U. Graham, *Notes of a Sporting Expedition in the Far West of Canada (1847)*, London, 1898 (printed for private circulation only). "The country full of smoke from the fires caused by Indians' carelessness in raising camp or lit intentionally when desirous of hiding the traces of their 'travols' from their enemies". Coues, *op. cit.*, I, p. 123. B60 a/22, p. 19 v. (1823-4) B60/c/6, p. 2 (1823-4). Keating, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 40-1.
108. *History of the Expedition under the Command of Lewis and Clark*, ed. by E. Coues. London, New York, 1893. I, p. 249. P. 77: "We set the surrounding prairies on fire. This is the customary signal made by traders to apprise the Indians of their arrival. It is also used between the different nations as an indication of any event which they have previously agreed to announce in that way, and as it is seen it collects the neighboring tribes."
109. B 60 2/24, p. 10 v., *loc. cit.*
110. D 5/12, p. 589 "Al Christie to G. Simpson. Red River Settlement, 27 December 1844"; McLean, *op. cit.*, II, p. 377.
111. B 60 2/25, p. 28 "30 October 1827. The appearance of the country is nearly winter, very cold and covered with snow", B 60 c/1 (1815). D 4/74, p. 418 "Simpson to London. Fort Garry, 30 June 1854. Winter very severe. Great depth of snow has impeded the movements of the traders". D 4/89, pp. 75-6 (1826), Glazebrook, *op. cit.*, p. 226 "D. Ross to J. Hargrave, Norway House, 22 Febr. 1836. There has not been two days on an end without snowing since the middle of November."
112. B 235 2/8, p. 5. 4 July 1827 "Showers of rain promise excellent crops."
113. F. U. Graham, *op. cit.* "People tell me that the scarcity of water in the plains is becoming alarming. Springs have dried up. The Indians say that they shall soon be obliged to stick to the main rivers". B 60 2/15, p. 3 v. "Weather uncommonly dry. . . ."
114. B 60 c/6 (1823-4), p. 2.
115. B 27 c/1 (1815). "The thaw generally commences the latter end of March and about the middle of April the snow is all off the ground. . . ."; B 235 a/6 (1825-6) p. 30, notes the thaw on 13 Apr. 1826. The wild geese and ducks appear, Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 186; Monseigneur Taché, *Esquisse sur le Nord-Ouest de l'Amérique*. Montreal, 1901, p. 12 "The melting of the snows is very rapid in the prairies so that the ground can often be sown in the last fortnight of April."
116. B 239 a/40, p. 24 v. 25v (A. Henday's journal); E 2/4, p. 53, 54 (A. Henday's journal, 1755-6); "January 1756. I observe the bad weather is of no continuance, and the cold is nothing like so severe as at York Factory."
117. B 235 a/8, p. 17 "April 19 1828. After cold and snow the wind changes to the South and warm weather succeeds the cold weather almost instantaneously.", B 60 e/6 (1823-4), p. 2 "Astonishing variation in the weather: beginning of January was very mild last year and the last 10 days of January again mild"; Taché, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
118. Winter 1807-8 at Pembina (N. D. H. Q. V-4, 1930-1, p. 239 *et seq.*) D 4/69, p. 57 "Simpson to London, Norway House, 1 July 1847. The winter has been unusually severe -48° on several occasions."; Selk. P. p. 16879, Journal of M. Macdonell: Jan. 1814, "weather extremely cold, -40°S."
119. Cocking's journal (1772-3), E 2/11, pp. 61-2; Clark Wissler. Material

- culture of the Blackfoot Indians (Am. Mus. Nat. Hist. Anthropol. V, 1910), p. 20.
120. Carlton Journal, 1815-16, p. 4; Coues, *op. cit.*, II, p. 616-17; Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 58, 59, 185; D. W. Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels in the Interior of North America* (Andover, 1820) p. 81; Nicollet (Jean Nicolas) Diaries, 1838. Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; McLean, *op. cit.*, II p. 85; J. Hesketh, "History of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa" (N.D.H.C. V, 1923, p. 853), Macoun, *Manitoba*, pp. 102, 182-3.
121. Keating, *op. cit.*, I, 370; John Charles Frémont, *Memoirs of My Life* (Chicago, New York, 1887, p. 45.
122. B 60 a/25, p. 4 "June 7 1827 I send men to the Pine Hummock for raising timber for boatwork. La Douceur took some horses to drag the logs, accompanied by a number of women and children for gathering the sap from the poplar and birch trees, which is a very sweet refreshment", B 104 a/2, p. 56v (1819-20), "April 1820. Men making troughs for the women to put birch water in. Sugar is made from this"; Coues, *op. cit.*, I, p. 173.
123. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-90; Hesketh, *op. cit.*, p. 85 *et seq.*
124. A. S. Morton, *The Journal of Duncan McGillivray*, Toronto, 1828, " . . . numerous as the locusts of Egypt. . . . To give us passage, they were forced to range themselves on both sides, and we were no sooner passed than they closed their ranks as before."
125. Carlton Journal, 1815-16, p. 9; Coues, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 491-6; Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 188; Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-14; C. D. Forde, *Habitat, Economy and Society* (London, 1937, pp. 49-50. "The dryness of the 'semi-arid' climate of the prairie, and the insufficiency of drainage, explain the great number of saline lakes and the expanses of whitened soil, covered with efflorescences which surround their shores in Manitoba and Saskatchewan saline lakes and marshes were gathering places for the herds of bison" (Coues, *op. cit.*, I, p. 138. Dawson, *op. cit.*, p. 229).
126. D 5/46, p. 418. Montreal, 8 Dec. 1857 "We came in sight of the Saskatchewan. . . . This is the heart of the buffalo country. It may be called the buffalo preserve, being the battleground between the Crees and Blackfeet where none go to hunt for fear of meeting enemies. The whole country, as far as the eye could reach, was covered with buffalo in bands varying from hundreds to thousands. The grass was eaten to the earth."
127. D 4/116, p. 20. A. Kennedy to G. Simpson. Cumberland Ho. 13 Mar. 1822, Morton, *op. cit.*, introd. p. lv: "The distinctive part played by the Forts des Prairies . . . was to provide the provisions for the post haste journey to and fro of the northern brigades."
128. D 4/86, p. 20 (1823).
129. Charles Mackenzie, *The Missouri Indians* 1804 (Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, pp. 336-7; Coues, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 145-51 II, p. 406; R. Lafleche, St. François Xavier, 4 Sept. 1851 *Ann. la prop. de la Foi*, Quebec, Mar. 1853)
- Provencher, *Lettres*, p. 22 "It takes several days by way of the Souris or the Assiniboine River to reach the forts of the two companies. They derive from this area a small quantity of furs and dressed leather, but mostly provisions which consist of dried meat which form the cargoes of the canoes that go to the northern posts."
130. "Across the plains in 1863-5. Journal of W. H. Clandenning" (N.D.H.Q., II-4, p. 247 *et seq.*): "The buffalo and wolves cover the plains. Buffalo are in clouds all over the country. I think we have seen 15,000 this day." (This refers to the region of the Grand Coteau of the Missouri). Coues, *op. cit.*, p. 138, Youle Hind, *op. cit.* p. 53, Manuscrits de l'Isle (A.C.D.M.).

- 115-X Letter of Le Sueur, to Natchez, 4 Apr. 1700, p. 57 "A Frenchman and several savages who have traversed all the prairies told me that in the great heat of summer, after heavy rains, certain areas of the prairies are white with salt, which attracts all kinds of animals."
131. D 4/117, p. 45 J McDonald to G. Simpson Beaver Creek, 8 Apr. 1823 "The Indians being continually at war on the Missouri tribes who are too powerful for those of this river", Coues, *op. cit.*, 1, p. 91, *Journal de F. A. Larocque*, 1805. Ottawa, 1911.
132. Coues, *op. cit.*, 1, p. 64.
133. D 4/85, p. 8 (16 July 1822) "the consequence [of the non-appearance of buffalo in the Red River country] is that we find great difficulty in getting our brigades to and from their wintering grounds."
134. J Rowand Edmonton, Dec. 1846 (Archives de l'Archeveche, St Boniface)
135. Provencher, *Lettres*, p. 42 "St Boniface, 24 Nov. 1819 It is frightening to see the fire breaking out among the dry grass and propelled by a great wind. It moves with astonishing speed, and even though it may be poorly fed, it can burn large herds of cattle which cannot escape its progress and, even if they do not die immediately, do not long survive."
136. *Ibid.*, p. 81 "St Boniface, 29 Nov. 1822 The season has been a very dry one so that almost everywhere the prairies have been burnt over, which will probably involve us in shortages, at least of meat."
137. D 4/77, p. 321. G. Simpson to W. G. Smith. Lachine, 1 Mar. 1858
138. D 4/117, p. 24 J Leith to G. Simpson Cumberland Ho., 10 Feb. 1823 "the natives set fire to all the country on both sides the river (Assiniboine), so that not an animal was to be seen out of the mountains of Fort Dauphin."
139. D 5/35, pp. 281-2. A. W. Buchanan to G. Simpson Fort Garry, 6 Dec. 1852.
140. D 5/19, 9 Feb. 1847 A. Christie to G. Simpson Fort Garry "From the extensive fires of last autumn no buffalo are to be found until they approach the banks of the Missouri, which is too far distant to be of any benefit to us."
141. D 5/4, p. 224 J Rowand to Simpson Edmonton, 4 Jan. 1837; D 5/7, p. 10 *Ibid.*, 4 Jan. 1843 "Fire has been raging in this vicinity for a long time in the fall. The buffalo having nothing left to eat have kept away", B 60 a/9, p. 5 (Jan. 1811). "Great difficulty in getting provisions on account of the burning of the plains between the Red Deer and South Branch rivers", B 60 a/11, p. 25 (12 Oct. 1812) "The plains have been for several days burning in the most dreadful manner. No prospect of provisions if dry weather continues", B 60 a/12, pp. 1-7 (Oct. 1813) "Weather still remarkably dry, fires still raging, another poor year for provisions", D 5/4, p. 234 (1835-7); J. P. Pruden to G. Simpson, 1 Jan. 1837 "Plains burnt last fall to great extent. No buffalo consequently"; D 5/19 Jan. 1847 J. Rowand to G. Simpson; D 5/10, p. 61 (1844) J. Rowand to G. Simpson, 4 Jan. 1844. "Owing to the Prairies being all burnt last fall far to the south of Red Deer's river, the buffalo did not approach the Rocky Mtn. Ho."
142. D 4/122, p. 12. F. Heron to G. Simpson, Brandon Ho., 10 Dec. 1828 "The plains were burned during last autumn, whereby the buffalo and Stone Indians were driven beyond our reach."
143. D 4/122, p. 15 J. Stuart to Simpson, Ft. Garry, 15 Dec. 1828, D 5/19, 9 Feb. 1847 A. Christie to Simpson, D 5/12, p. 589 *Ibid.*, Red River Settlement, 27 Dec. 1844 "No hunting as a result of extensive fires in the plains", D 4/120, p. 40 J. Bird to G. Simpson, R.R.S. 18 Feb. 1827 "The plains having been burnt to a considerable extent beyond Pembina, those who have de-

- pended on buffalo for their support have suffered great privation . . ."; B 239 b/85, p. 29 J. Sutherland, Jack River, 28 Feb. 1815. "Lack of fresh provisions at all the houses in the Red River owing to the fire passing over the plains from the Forks to Brandon."
144. *Ibid.*, p. 22, note 2. Provencher, *Lettres*, pp. 80-1 (1822).
145. D 4/71, p. 321 Simpson to London, Norway Ho., 26 June 1850.
146. D 5/12, p. 166. D. Ross to G. Simpson Norway Ho., 14 Aug. 1844.
147. D 4/17, p. 321 Simpson to London, Norway Ho., 26 June 1850 "the whole country between the Saskatchewan and Missouri having been overrun by fire without the large supplies from Red River we should be unable for want of pemmican to conduct our transport service."
148. D 4/102, p. 39: Simpson's report, R.R.S., 10 June 1835.
149. B 235 a/5, p. 26v. "March 17 (1825) Several settlers arrived from the plains with sledloads of fresh meat, which they brought from a great distance beyond Pembina, the buffalo in consequence of the late warm weather having moved far out into the plains"; D 5/52, p. 122 W. J. Christie to G. Simpson, Ft. Garry, 3 June 1860. "Owing to the mildness of the winter or other causes, buffalo were not within reach of any of the Saskatchewan Plain posts"; D 4/120, p. 29. J. Stuart to G. Simpson Edmonton, 5 Jan. 1827 "Our sole dependence is upon Carlton alone where in the latter part of the summer and early part of the fall buffalo were very abundant, but the uncommon mild weather and absence of snow will enable them again to return to the wide extended plains"; D 4/126, p. 59 J. P. Pruden, Carlton, 4 Feb. 1834 "No buffalo again in this quarter. . . . The unusual mildness of the winter and no snow up to new year's day has been against us in procuring food for the servants and families of the establishment."; D 4/75, p. 397v Simpson to London, Ft. Garry, 29 June 1855. "Deficiency of buffalo robes and pemmican as a result of the mildness of the winter and the great distance of buffalo", B 22 2/6, p. 10. "November 1798 The warm weather keeps the cattle from coming"; D 4/89, pp. 75-6 Simpson's report, 20 Aug. 1826; D 4/90, pp. 77-8, 25 July 1827
150. D 4/120, p. 40. J. Bird to G. Simpson Red River, 18 Feb. 1827 "The Plains have been burnt to a considerable extent beyond Pembina, those who have depended on buffalo for their support have suffered great privations, and some lves have been lost in unnecessary attempts to cross large open plains."
151. B 235 a/5, p. 26 v. *loc. cit.*
152. Sibley P. (Minnesota Historical Society). M. McLeod to H. H. Sibley, St. Paul, 2 Jan. 1851.
153. B 239 b/69, p. 53. Cumberland Ho., 28 May 1804
154. B 60 c/1 (1815). "A very mild winter, which admits of the buffalo's wintering in the large plains of the south. . . ."
155. Selk. P., p. 477 *et seq.* W. Auld to Selkirk "In Red River little snow fell except in the woods near the banks of the river. Buffalo went far off in the plains and it was summer in the latter end of May before these animals began to repair in numbers near the houses", B 239 b/83, p. 19. Fork of Red River, 1 June 1813 M. Macdonell to W. Auld. "The winter was mild, cattle consequently scarce."
156. Selk. P., p. 769 M. Macdonell to Selkirk, Forks Red River, 17 July 1813: "Provisions usually scarce, the mild winter having added to the plains being burned last fall in our neighbourhood and caused the buffalo to keep at a distance from us."
157. D 4/88, p. 50. Simpson's Report, Norway Ho., 21 June 1825; D 4/88, p. 82;

- ibid.* York Factory, 1 Sept. 1825.
- 158 Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 109–10
- 159 D 5/52, p. 122 W J Christie to G. Simpson Ft Garry, 3 June 1860; I Cowie, *The Company of Adventurers: A Narrative of Seven Years in the Service of the Hudson's Bay Company*, Toronto, 1913, p. 425.
160. B 27 c/4 (1827) "as the winter was uncommonly mild with very little snow, the buffalo never advanced towards the woods and the Indians have suffered much from starvation. Were it not for barley and potatoes, we should have suffered as much."
161. F U Graham, *Notes of a Sporting Expedition in the Far West of Canada in 1847* London, 1898, M S Wade, *The Overlanders of 62 Victoria*, 1831 (Archives of British Columbia, Memoir 120 IX, p. 76)
- 162 D 5/52 p. 122 W J Christie to G Simpson Ft Garry, 3 June 1860.
163. D 4/37, pp. 112–13. G Simpson to W. Todd. Norway Ho. 21 June 1848: "in regard of the extraordinary depth of snow preventing the buffalo from escaping to the woods and scraping the necessary depth for pasture, it is to be feared a great mortality has taken place, likely to render buffalo scarce for several years"; F. G. Roe, "Buffalo and Snow" (C H R, June 1936, pp. 129, 133); E. T. Seton, *Lives of Game Animals* London, 1927, III, p. 677; R P Leduc St Albert, 5 May 1870 (Arch Arch., St. Boniface): "Traveling in the prairie looks like being very precarious this year, the great quantity of snow having reduced the animals to death from hunger."
- 164 D 4/125, p. 88 v. Colin Robertson to G Simpson Fort Pelly, 13 Feb. 1831: "Last winter made dreadful havoc among the larger class of animals owing to the amazing depth of snow where they were walked down and slaughtered with the knife", D 4/69, p. 728. G. Simpson to London. Norway Ho. 24 June 1848 "(The large herds of buffalo around Ft Pelly and Ft Ellice) owing to the extraordinary depth of snow have been wantonly destroyed by the natives in great numbers. . . ."
- 165 D 4/37, pp. 112–13, *loc. cit.*; D 4/69, pp. 727–8, *loc. cit.*
166. D 4/123, p. 111. J. P. Pruden to G Simpson, Carlton, 30 May 1830: "Winter unusually long and severe. The snow was very deep and the ground had been burnt last fall. Nevertheless buffalo was within reasonable distance . . ."; D 5/29, p. 383 J Rowand to G Simpson, Edmonton, 24 Dec. 1850, "the buffalo . . . makes for the woods at this time", Youle Hind, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
167. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 333; Charles Mackenzie, *The Missouri Indians* (1804, Selk. P., pp. 1802–4. *Journal of John McNab* (1816))
- 168 Sibley P. (Minn Hist Soc.) M. Macleod to H. H. Sibley Lac qui Parle, 3 May 1842 N W Kittson to H H Sibley, Pembina, 4 Feb. 1852; J. C. Fremont, *Memoirs of My Life* Chicago, New York, 1887, pp. 49–50
- 169 Provencher, *Lettres*, p. 33 Fort Daer or Pembina, 15 Jan 1819 "The good weather, more temperate than one can usually expect at our latitude, is the reason why the herds have gone away; cold weather and blizzards would have sent them to the rivers . . . where there are trees among which they could shelter"; R P Decorby. Qu'Appelle Lake, 1 Jan 1872 (Arch Arch., St. Boniface) "The herds are not yet out of reach. They must still be this side of the South Saskatchewan. But a great deal of the prairie has been burnt. A glacial wind is blowing from the Rockies, and our hunters hesitate to venture into the prairie in such weather. But we should not complain. The herds have the wind behind them, and we can afford to be cold if it brings us some fresh meat", Coues, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 161–8, J Hesketh, "History of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa" (N.D.H.C., V, 1923, p. 85 et

- seq., Youle Hind, *op. cit.*, pp. 53, 105.
170. Masson, *Bourgeois*, loc. cit., I, p. 337.
171. D 4/74, p. 418 Simpson to London, Ft. Garry, 30 June 1854, Wade, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
172. Dawson, *op. cit.*, pp. 295-6, Twining *op. cit.*, p. 63; D 4/125, p. 90 c Robertson to G. Simpson Ft. Pelly, 13 Feb. 1831: "The buffalo seldom or ever approach nearer than the Montagne de Lime (File Hills), about 130 miles from this place, . . ."
173. Macoun, *Manitoba* . . . pp. 258-9.
174. Hesketh, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-91 Youle Hind, *op. cit.*, pp. 53, 105. In the same way the Cypress Hills and Boss Hill were famed for the abundance of their herds (B22 a/12, p. 25, 1804-5). The *Nor' Wester*, 14 Aug. 1860
175. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, pp. D 4/74, pp. 336-7. Simpson to A. Barclay, Lachine, 22 Apr. 1854: "the buffalo are in great numbers on the Swan and Red River plains . . . The severity of the winter drove them towards the Thickwood country."
176. D 5/19. J. Rowand to G. Simpson. Fort Edmonton Jan. 1847.
177. D 4/123, p. 57. J. Rowand to G. Simpson. Edmonton, 8 Jan. 1830
178. D 5/43, p. 89 G. Deschambault to G. Simpson. Ile-à-la-Crosse, 20 Jan. 1857.
179. D 4/100, pp. 18-18 v Simpson's Report York Factory, 21 July 1834
180. B 60 2/25, p. 42, D 4/117, p. 45 J. McDonald to G. Simpson Beaver Creek, 8 Apr. 1823 "There never were more cattle than last fall before burning, but they soon disappeared. The severe weather about Christmas brought a few back."
181. Coues, *op. cit.*, I, p. 169.
182. D 5/20, p. 613. A. Christie to G. Simpson. Ft. Garry, 7 Dec. 1847.

Chapter Two: The Human Environment

1. R. H. Lowie, "The Assiniboine" (Anthropological P., Am Mus Nat Hist., IV, New York, 1909, pp. 7, 10); Manuscrits de l'Isle (Paris, A.D.C.M.), 115-X. Letter of Le Sueur to Natchez, on the Mississippi, 4 Apr. 1700, p. 57; "The Cree call the Sioux *poelles*, which means soldiers or warriors . . . and the word *Assinipoils* in the Cree language means warriors of the stone village." For the distribution of the native tribes, cf. Map II.
2. Radisson, *Voyages* (Scull edit), pp. 153-4: "they (Nation du Sault) had a cruell warre against the Nadoneseronons. Although much inferior in numbers, nevertheless that small number of the salt was a terror unto them since they had trade with the french."
3. Coues, *New Light on the Early History* . . . I, pp. 131, 144, Keating, *Narrative of Long's Expedition*, I, p. 377; C. M. Gates, *Five Fur Traders of the North West*. Minneapolis, Toronto, 1933. Introduction by Miss G. L. Nute, pp. 7-8.
4. "Some account of the Department of Fond du Lac or Mississippi," by George Henry Monk, Esq. Provincial Archives, Toronto.
5. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 308, Peter Grant, *The Santeaux Indians*. "Though no people are more attached to their native soil, yet the abundance of game (is powerful motive for them to desert their country)."; B 122 c/I. Report on the Manitoba district (1818-19), p. 7: "All the Indians of this quarter are Saulteux. A number of them live in the plains where buffalo is plentiful."
6. Keating, *op. cit.*, II, p. 15; Youle Hind *Report on the Assiniboine* . . . *Exploring Expedition*, p. 109.

7. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, pp. 346-7 (Peter Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians*); A. E. Jenks, "Wild Rice Gatherers of the Upper Lakes" (19th report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1900, pp. 1011-1160), p. 1038
8. Youle Hind, *op. cit.*, loc. cit.
9. A Skinner, "Notes on Eastern Cree and Northern Saulteaux" (Anthropological P., Am Mus Nat Hist, IX, pt 1, New York, 1911)
10. D. Jenness, *The Indians of Canada*. National Museum of Canada. Anthropological Series No 15. Bulletin 65. Ottawa 1934, p. 316).
11. Radisson, *Voyages*, pp. 156-7.
12. E 2/9, p. 8lv. Graham, "Observations 1779 . . ." "they have retired further inland to the buffalo, and they now extend from the head of York Fort and Nelson rivers to Musquagamy or Red River at the bottom of Christinaux Lake". Jenness, *The Sarcee Indians of Alberta* (National Museum of Canada, Bulletin 90. Anthropological Series, pp 2-3)
13. Thompson, *Narrative of His Explorations*, p. 327; H. Innus, *The Fur Trade in Canada*. Yale University Press, 1930, p. 125.
14. Manuscrits de l'Isle. Lettre from Le Sueur, 4 Apr. 1700, p. 55
15. *The Kelsey Papers*, with an introduction by A. G. Doughty and Chester Martin. Public Archives, Ottawa, 1929, pp. 9, 16.
16. Manuscrits de l'Isle, loc. cit., pp. 43-4.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 55
18. Coues, *New Light* . . . , II, p. 516; Youle Hind, *op. cit.*, p. 109.
19. D 4/116, p. 31 F Heron to G Simpson. Moose Lake, 14 Mar 1822.
20. Isham, . . . "Observations on Hudson's Bay (1743)." E 2/1, p. 71v; Graham, "Observations . . ." E 2/9, p. 82 (1779): "The Archimues (Pieds Noirs) are their inveterate enemies (Assimboine)"; Coues, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 557-8
21. Masson, *Bourgeois* . . . I, p. 268.
22. B 22 a/7, p. 23 (1799-1800); B 22 a/8, p. 4 (18 Oct 1800): "Three families inform us they have defeated the Sioux. They drank and sang and danced all night."
23. Graham, "Observations . . . (1771)." E 2/7, pp. 38-9.
24. D 4/116, p. 33. F. Heron to G. Simpson, Moose Lake, 14 Mar. 1822 "For the Thickwood Indians . . . outposts have been kept up in the Thickwoods on the North side of the Saskatchewan . . . to prevent them deserting the woods . . . and spending in the plains the most valuable part of their time (winter) Latterly however in defiance of all remonstrances, they have proceeded to the buffalo."
25. D 5/12, p. 166. D. Ross to G. Simpson. Norway Ho , 14 Aug 1844. "The best Chipewyan hunters of the English river district have left their usual hunting grounds and taken to the plains in the neighbourhood of Fort Pitt, attracted by the love of liquors and the pleasure of feasting on buffalo."
26. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, pp. 308, 311-12, C. Wissler, "The Influence of the Horse in the Development of Plains Culture." (*Am. Anthropol.* New Series, XVI, pp 1-25); F Haines, "The Northward Spread of Horses among the Plains Indians." (*Am Anthropol* XL, pp. 429-37). "Where Did the Plains Indians Get Their Horses?" (*ibid.*, XL, pp. 112-17), F G. Roc, "From Dogs to Horses among the Western Indian Tribes" (*T.R.S.C.* 3rd series, sect. II, 1939, p. 209 et seq.); Thompson, *Narrative of His Explorations*, p. 330; C. D. Forde, *Habitat Economy and Society*. London, 1937, pp 46-7
27. Jenness, *The Sarcee Indians of Alberta*, pp. 2-3, 8.
28. L. R. Masson, *Bourgeois* . . . , II, pp. 346-7 (Peter Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians*, 1804).
29. B 239 b/63, pp. 23-4. Buckingham Ho., June-Aug. 1799. "The Edmonton

- Ho Indians are going down to steal horses from the Indians of Touchwood Mountain and will return in the fall"; Graham, "Observations . . . (1779)." E 2/9, p. 82; Coues, *op. cit.*, II, p. 517, C. D. Forde, *op. cit.*, p. 66.
30. D 4/97, pp. 37-9. Simpson's Report, York Factory, 26 Aug. 1830.
 31. J. B. Tyrrell, *Documents Relating to the Early History of Hudson Bay* (Chaplain Society, Toronto, 1931). Letter of Father Manest, Jesuit missionary, p. 140.
 32. *Op. cit.*, pp. 112-13.
 33. D 4/117, p. 29. J. Rowand to G. Simpson. Carlton, Mar. 1823; D 5/23, p. 540. *Ibid.*, Edmonton, 30 Dec. 1848: "The Plain Indians all last summer and in the fall have been in quest of scalps and horses. . . ."
 34. Grant, *The Sauteaux Indians* (Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, pp. 346-7).
 35. D 4/117, p. 45; J. McDonald to G. Simpson. Beaver Creek, 8 Apr. 1823.
 36. Coues, *op. cit.*, II, p. 516.
 37. *Ibid.*; A. S. Morton, *The Journal of Duncan M'Gillivray*. Toronto, 1929. Introd., pp. lxii-iv; Graham, "Observations (1768)," E 2/5, p. 16v.
 38. C. Wissler, "Material Culture of the Blackfoot Indians" (*Am. Mus. of Nat. Hist. Anthropol.*, V, 1910, p. 10 *et seq.*).
 39. *Ibid.*
 40. *Ibid.*
 41. D 4/116, p. 31; F. Heron to G. Simpson. Moose Lake, 14 Mar. 1822; C. Wissler, *op. cit.*, p. 9; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 326.
 42. Jenness, *The Sarcee Indians of Alberta*, pp. 6-8 C. Wissler, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
 43. Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal . . .*, London, 1801, pp. lxxii-iii.
 44. Coues, *op. cit.*, I, p. 196.
 45. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 319.
 46. Graham, "Observations . . . (1768)" E 2/5, p. 16v; B 60 c/6, p. 3 (Edmonton Report, 1823-4).
 47. D 4/117, pp. 28-28v; J. Rowand to G. Simpson. Carlton, Mar. 1823; B 239 b/74, p. 28; J. Bird. Edmonton, 23 Dec. 1806; B 239 b/85, p. 29; J. Sutherland. Jack River, 28 Feb. 1815: "the Crees and Stone Indians have all fled to the woods to find shelter from the Slave tribes on whom they had committed hostility during the summer."; A. Lacombe, St. Albert, 23 Apr. 1870 (*Arch. Arch.*).
 48. B 22 2/7, p. 23 (1799-1800).
 49. D 4/93, pp. 22-4. Simpson's Report. York Factory, 18 July 1831.
 50. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 320-1, 322-7.
 51. B 60 c/6, p. 34 (Edmonton Report, 1823-4); B 60 c/8, p. 3 (*ibid.*, 1824-5).
 52. D 4/116, p. 31. F. Heron to G. Simpson. Moose Lake, 14 Mar. 1822.
 53. A. Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, p. lxx. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 324.
 54. Coues, *op. cit.*, II, p. 516.
 55. Youle Hind, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
 56. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 327, J. Mooney, *Aboriginal Populations of America* (Smith Misc. Coll., LXXX; no 7 Washington, 1928), pp. 12-3, Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 316; B 27 c/1 (Carlton Report 1815), B 60 c/6 (Edmonton Report 1823-4), p. 3. G. Simpson estimates the total population of the prairie at 25,000 (D 4/766, p. 135, Simpson's Report, Lachine, 26 Jan. 1857).
 57. B 27 c/1 (Carlton Report 1815): "The Crees live (a small part) in the woods. . . . Most live in the plains with the Assiniboines and feed and dress on buffalo."; B 239 a/64, p. 14; W. Tomison's journal 1769-70.
 58. Wissler, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-8, 50-1; Jenness, *Sarcee Indians of Alberta*, pp. 11-16; R. G. Thwaites, *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition 1804-6*, New York 1904. II, p. 93.

59. R. H. Lowie, *The Assiniboune*, p. 11, Coues, *op. cit.*, II, p. 517; Jessess, *Indians of Canada*, pp. 56-8.
60. M. Cocking in Graham's "Observations" (1779), E 2/9, p. 125v, Coll. Masson (McGill University). Journal of John Macdonell (1795), Forde, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-3.
61. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 57.
62. Lowie, *op. cit.*, p. 11, Thwaites, *op. cit.*, II, p. 93; Journal of John Macdonell, 1795 (Coll. Masson, McGill University).
63. Journal of M. Cocking, B 239 a/69, p. 23 (1772-3).
64. D. Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels in the Interior of North America* Andover, 1820, p. 111; Coues, *op. cit.*, II, p. 517, Lowie, *op. cit.*, p. 10, Forde, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-3.
65. Jenness, *Sarcee of Alberta*, pp. 11-12, *ibid.*, *Indians of Canada*, p. 310; Lowie, *op. cit.*, p. 10. The pound would reappear as soon as the number of hunters became large enough to allow its use. Macdonell, *op. cit.*, Coues, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 512-13; Forde, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-3.
66. D 4/117, pp. 28-28v. J. Rowand to G. Simpson Carlton, Mar. 1823.
67. D 4/88, p. 94, Simpson's Report, Fort George, 10 Mar. 1825.
68. Coues, *op. cit.*, II, p. 517, Wissler, *Material Culture of the Blackfoot Indians*, p. 20, Lowie, *op. cit.*, p. 12; *ibid.*, pp. 27-8.
69. B 60 a/22, p. 40 (1823-4). "They only wear skins of buffalo and deer against the violent cold of the winter"; Macdonnell, *Some Account of Red River* (Masson, *Bourgeois* I, pp. 277-9), Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 111, Wissler, *op. cit.*, pp. 63, 71, 75.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 115, Lowie, *op. cit.*, p. 155, Thwaites, *Original Journals of the Leu is and Clarke Expedition*, I, p. 310, G. B. Grinnell, "The Lodges of the Blackfeet," *Am. Anthropol.* III, 1901, pp. 650-68; S. Campbell, "The Cheyenne Tipi," *Ibid.*, XVII, 1915, pp. 685-94.
71. Graham, "Observations," 1768 (E 2/4, p. 34), "A Journal of a Journey performed by M. Cocking . . ." (1772-3) E 2/11, p. 61. "Much more cleanly clothing and food . . .", Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80; Mgr Taché, *Esquisse sur le Nord-Ouest de l'Amérique*, Montreal 1901, pp. 98-9. On the utility of the bison in the economy of the Indians of prairie, cf. D. I. Bushnell, "The Various Uses of Buffalo Hair by the North American Indians," *Am. Anthropol.*, 1909, pp. 401-25; Brinnell, *op. cit.*
72. "A Journal . . . by M. Cocking," E 2/11, p. 58, B 239 a/69, p. 18v.
73. B 22 a/15 (1807-8), p. 3. "Passed at Nettle creek. . . We found a number of natives here who have made gardens"; S. Hall and W. T. Boutwell, Report to Prudential Committee, 7 Feb. 1823 (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions): "The Ojibwas subsist on fish, wild meat, wild rice, maple sugar. Most of the bands cultivate some small gardens during the summer . . .", House of Representatives Executive Documents no 51 H. of Rep. Ex. Doc. 1st ses. p. 36 *et seq.* Letter of G. A. Belcourt, missionary priest, Pembina, 20 Aug. 1849.
74. Manuscrits de l'Isle (A.D.C.M.) 115-X, pp. 43-4. Lettre of Le Sueur, from Natchez, 1 Apr. 1700, Keating, *Long's Expedition*, I, pp. 421-2.
75. *Ibid.*, II, p. 166; H. of Rep., *loc. cit.*, p. 36 *et seq.*
76. Nicollet Diaries (1838). Library of Congress, Washington.
77. Journal of John Macdonell (1795). McGill Univ.
78. Journal of a Voyage Inland . . . by captain Anthony Henday" (1754-5) B 239 2/40, p. 19; L. Burpee, "The Journal of A. Henday" (T R S.C. 3d ser I, sect. II, 1907), p. 338; Graham, "Observations (1768)" E 2/5, pp. 8-9.
79. Wissler, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

- 80 Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 311; *ibid.* p. 248.
- 81 Journal of J. Macdonnell. McGill Univ., Coues, *op. cit.*, I, p. 153. According to A. Ross (*The Red River Settlement*, London, 1856, p. 13), the North West Company intended to introduce many Ojibwa into the Red River area to intensify the hunt for fur-bearing animals there.
- 82 Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 249.
- 83 W. Tomison's journal (1769-70). (B 239 a/64, p. 9), B 122 c/1 (Report on the Manitoba district, 1818-19), p. 7v.
- 84 Graham, "Observations (1779)." E 2/9, p. 82; *ibid.*, (1771) E 2/7, p. 16 v, W. Tomison's journal (1769-70). B 239 2/64, pp. 13-15.
85. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- 86 Graham, "Observations (1771)." E 2/7, pp. 38v-39. "York Factory trade falling visibly since 1762 is occasioned by that numerous and valuable tribe of Keskachewan Indians leading an indolent life among the Archithinue and Assinipoet Indians, neglecting to get furs and come down as formerly "; M. Cocking's journal (1774-5) B 239 2/72, p. 6; Coues, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 512-13.
- 87 Journal of J. Macdonnell (1795). McGill Univ (Masson Coll).
88. D 4/102, p. 40 Simpson's Report. Red River Settlement to June 1835; B 27 c/1. Carlton Report (1815).
89. D 4/97, pp. 37v-39 Simpson's Report York Factory, 26 Aug. 1830.
90. Journal of A. Henday (1754-5) B 239 a/40, p. 19v, M. Cocking's Journal (1772-3) E 2/11, p. 61.
- 91 D 4/102, p. 40, *loc. cit.*, D 4/106, p. 31. Simpson's Report Red River Settlement, 8 July 1839, B 22 2/1 p. 21 (1793-4). "The Canadians bring only rum, tobacco, ammunition, cutlery, Cloth has no value here "; Coues, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 512-13, 526, *Journals of S. Hearne and Ph. Turnor*, ed by J. B. Tyrrell Champlain Society, Toronto, 1834), p. 274.
92. Coues, *New Light on the Early History . . .*, II, p. 517.
- 93 D 4/116, pp. 29-30. Francis Heron to G. Simpson. Moose Lake, 14 Mar 1822; *ibid.*
- 94 D 4/102, p. 40. Simpson's Report (1835); Sir John Franklin, *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea*. London, 1823, p. 105.
95. Coues, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 512-13.
- 96 Journal of A. Henday E 2/4, p. 44; L. Burpee, *The Journal of Anthony Henday*, p. 338.
97. Coues, *op. cit.*, II, p. 724.
- 98 B 60 2/27 (1832-3), p. 48v.: "the usual indolence of well fed Indians is the cause of their making no dried provisions"; D 5/52, p. 123. W. J. Christie to G. Simpson. Fort Garry 3 June 1860. "The Blackfeet, even when in the midst of buffalo, give us very little provisions. They are too independent a race to labour and make pounded meat.", Coues, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 512-13.
- 99 Journal of A. Henday (1755-6), E 2/4, p. 53.
- 100 D 4/117, pp. 25-6. D. Mackenzie to G. Simpson. Red Deer River, 1 Mar. 1823.
- 101 B 60 a/22, p. 39 (1823-4) The greatest part of the Plains tribes "have something barbarious and savage in their dispositions and genius, a sort of ferocity violence and cruelty Plunder and war are their education . . ."; D 4/98, pp. 22-4 Simpson's Report, York Factory, July 1831.
102. Milton (Viscount) and W. B. Cheadle, *The North-West Passage by Land*, London, 1865, p. 84.
103. D 4/106, p. 31. Simpson's Report. R.R.S., July 1839.
104. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 346.

105. D 4/117, p. 28v. J. Rowand to G. Simpson. Carlton. Sept. 1822; F. W. Howay, "Crowfoot: The Great Chief of the Blackfeet" (Can. Hist. Assoc. 1930).
106. D 4/116, p. 31 F. Heron to G. Simpson. Moose Lake, 14 Mar. 1822, Coues, *op. cit.*, II, p. 723; A. Lacombe. St. Albert, 23 Apr. 1870 (Arch. Arch., St. Boniface).
107. B 60 a/22, pp. 40-1 (1823-4): "Such people cannot be managed but by people thoroughly acquainted with their nature. Their trader must know what advantages may result from a single word rightly timed, from an obliging courage, from a little praise in granting a favour and from softening a refusal with expressions of concern and goodwill, he must ingratiate himself in their favour. . . ."
108. D 4/117, pp. 28-28v, *loc. cit.*: "The Slaves . . . insist on being supplied for nothing by way of duty upon us for being on their lands, and did they not understand our measures of defence they would scalp us to a man"; D 4/98, pp. 22-4 Simpson's Report. York Factory, July 1831, D 4/99, p. 42v. *Ibid.*, Aug. 1832; D 4/121, pp. 48v-49. J. P. Pruden to G. Simpson. Carlton, 24 Jan. 1828: "we were visited by a party of Blackfeet, Blood Indians and Sauteaux. They had met 6 of our men making hay which they carted to the fort. they robbed them of all, broke the carts, stripped the men naked. . . .", D 5/4, p. 359; J. Rowand to G. Simpson. Edmonton, 28 Dec. 1837: "The Stone Indians have been very troublesome last summer at Carlton. They killed some of our cattle, leaving it for their dogs to feast upon, and they killed one of our Fort hunters, a half breed, while assisting in trading . . . a fine brave fellow."
109. See below p. 231.
110. Blair (E. H.), *The Indian Tribes of Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes* as Described by Nicolas Perrot . . . Cleveland, 1911-12, I, p. 120.
111. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 318.
112. Forde, *op. cit.*, p. 50; Jenness, *Sarcee of Alberta*, pp. 11-2.
113. D 4: 116, p. 31 F. Heron to G. Simpson. Moose Lake, 14 Mar. 1822, Forde, *op. cit.*, p. 49; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 319.
114. Lowie, *Assiniboiné*, p. 33.
115. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 317.
116. Journal of J. Macdonnell (1795). McGill Univ.
117. B 60 a/22, p. 39. (1823-4): "Though they have a number of chiefs and leaders, yet every father is supreme head of his own family, arbiter and judge of whatever contests and divisions may arise within it, but such sons as are come to the years of maturity, their fathers have no further authority or control over them, nor do they acknowledge any master, but their own will and pleasure."
118. Fred Eggan, *Social Anthropology of North American Tribes*. Chicago. 1937 pp. 348, 365, 368.
119. B 60 a/22, p. 39 (1823-4).
120. D 4/116, p. 31 F. Heron to G. Simpson. Moose Lake, 14 Mar. 1822: "An indefinite number of chiefs preside over each of these tribes, whose influence is in proportion with their renown as warriors, but which ceases with their fame, unless as orators, or doctors they continue to command respect." D. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 346, 364-6; Jenness, *Sarcee of Alberta*, pp. 11-12, Lowie, *Assiniboiné*, p. 35; Forde, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-1, Jessie Bernard, "Political Leadership among North American Indians" (*American Journal of Sociology*, XXXIV, no 2, Chicago, Sept. 1928), pp. 302-5, 307, 312-13, D. Rodnuck, "Political Structure and Status among the Assiniboiné

- Indians." *Am. Anthropol.*, 1937, pp. 408-16.
- 121 D 4/116, p. 31, *loc. cit.*, Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, pp. 127-8; Bernard, *op. cit.*, p. 297.
 - 122 Forde, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-1.
 - 123 Jenness, *Sarcee of Alberta*, pp. 11-12.
 - 124 C 11 A, 28 (A.N.), pp. 62-62v: Vaudreuil and Raudot, Quebec, 13 Nov 1708. "Undoubtedly they have chiefs among them, but these give counsels and do not impose their will." Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 364; Jenness, *Sarcee*, pp. 11-12; Forde, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-2.
 - 125 Lowie, *Assinibome*, p. 35; Eggan, *op. cit.*, pp. 344-5. Eggan, *op. cit.*, pp. 344-5.
 - 126 Journal of A. Henday (1755-6) E 2/4, p. 47v: "The Archithine seem to be under proper discipline and obedient to their leader who orders a party of horsemen evening and morning to reconnoitre, and other parties to bring in provisions." Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 358-61; Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 358-61; Forde, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-7; Jenness, *Sarcee*, pp. 11-12. *Indians of Canada*, pp. 128-9, Egan, *op. cit.*, pp. 346, 363-4.
 - 127 Forde, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-7.
 - 128 Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 359-61.
 - 129 Lowie, *Assinibome*, p. 35. *The Origin of State*, New York, 1927, p. 74; Forde, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57; Eggan, *op. cit.*, pp. 348, 351-4; A. Hoebel, "Associations and the State of the Plains" *Am. Anthropol.*, 1936, pp. 433-8.
 - 130 Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 358, Lowie, *Assinibome*, p. 35, Forde, *op. cit.*, 56-7; Eggan, *op. cit.*, p. 348-9.
 - 131 Eggan, *op. cit.*, p. 352.
 - 132 M. W. Smith, "The War Complex of the Plains Indians" (*Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Philadelphia, LXXVIII, 3 Jan. 1938), p. 445.
 - 133 B 60 a/22, p. 39 (1823-5) "As they (the Plains tribes) must make head against their enemies, a chief starts off, and all those that are for the war follow, without any previous arrangement further than smoking and a few absurd ceremonies on which they believe the issue depends. The one who collects the greatest number of trophies has a chance to be promoted to the rank of the chief" (Duncan Finlayson, clerk, Edmonton) Jenness, *Sarcee*, p. 30.
 - 134 B 60 a/22, p. 40 (1823-4); Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 347.
 - 135 Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 452-3.
 - 136 C E-16 (A.N.), p. 82 Pachot (enseigne), "Maniere de faire la guerre par les Sioux" (1719) Bib. Nat. F.F. Nouv. Acq. (Coll. Margry) 9273, p. 262. "Relation par lettres de l'Amérique septentrionale" (Memoire de Raudot fils, 1710).
 - 137 Keating, *Long's Expedition*, II, p. 166.
 - 138 Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, pp. 277-8.
 - 139 A. Skinner, "Notes on Eastern Cree and Northern Saulteaux" (*Anthrop. P.*, *Am. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, IX, pt I, New York, 1911), pp. 8-11.
 - 140 Graham, "Observations (1771)," E 2/7, pp. 38-9.
 - 141 Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, pp. 255, 284, A. S. Morton, *Under Western Skies* Toronto, 1937, p. 77.
 - 142 B 39 c/1 Simpson's report on the Athabaska Department (1821), p. 15.
 - 143 Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 284.
 - 144 *Ibid.*, p. 285.
 - 145 Graham, "Observations (1771)," E 2/7, pp. 38-9.
 - 146 Thompson, *Narrative of His Explorations*, p. 108. B 49 c/1, pp. 4-5. Cumberland Ho. Report 1815.
 - 147 D 4/91, pp. 9-10. Simpson's Report. Moose Factory, Sept. 1827.

148. Census of the population at Albany post, May 1858 (HBC London) B 89 c/1 Ile a la Crosse District Report 1822-3. For an estimate of the densities of the native populations on the American continent, see A. L. Kroeber, "Native American Population," *Am. Anthropol.*, 1934, p. 1 et seq.
149. Nicolas Perrot, *Mémoire sur les mœurs, coutumes et religion des sauvages de l'Amérique septentrionale*. Ed. Tailhan, Leipzig-Paris, 1864, p. 54, P. Godsell, *Red Hunters of the Snows*. London, 1938, p. 129
150. D 4/88, p. 94. Simpson's Report. Fort George, Mar. 1825; Milton and Cheadle, *op. cit.*, p. 84.
151. D 4/92, p. 18. Simpson's Report York Factory, July 1828 B 239 b/8, p. 4 G Spence to J. Isham, Albany 13 July 1751: "We have had but very few upland Indians down here this year. The reason is our factory is so far off that they cannot at all times provide provisions enough to serve them during their journey, and deer is so scarce at this river and sometimes fish that they are almost starved with hunger before they can get back to their country . . ."
152. A 11/72, p. 22. Th Mackhish to London York Factory, 23 Aug. 1723: "it is impossible to make all years trade alike, many of the natives don't come down to trade but once in two or three years, and often hard winters, not having provisions to tent long at the same place. . . ." D 5/17, p. 278 D Ross to G. Simpson Norway Ho., 20 May 1846 "The Indians of the outposts cannot be induced to go twice to the Factory in one season, nor are they very able to perform such a duty. Their precarious mode of living owing to the poverty of the country and their improvident habits renders them weak, and they possess that roving, but indolent and inert disposition which has ever been the bane of their race."
153. B 49 e/3 Cumberland Ho Report (1823), D 4/92, pp. 42-4. Simpson's Report. York Factory, July 1828; B 239 a/117, p. 8 (1810-11)
154. D 4/116, p. 33 F. Heron to G. Simpson. Moose Lake, 14 Mar. 1822; Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-6.
155. Graham, "Observations (1771)." E 2/7, p. 36, B 32/d64, p. 35 (1771-2), B 239 a/118, p. 10v. (1811-12) 9 April 1812. "The scarcity of furs around the factory in every direction is without a parallel. The Indians are in a continued state of starvation. When at chance the deer come about them, they are so improvident as not to provide for the future."
156. Radisson, *Voyages*. Scull, ed., p. 155.
157. Isham, . . . "Observations (1743)" E 2/4, p. 21: "(The Indians) often starve in winter, especially those who stick to the sea. At that time upland Indians have beasts."
158. B 239 a/105, p. 7, 30 Oct.-Nov. 1800: "Thirty-five Indians now on the plantation. How they are to be supported I wonder. When a little stronger, I shall endeavour to put them off a small distance to support themselves and trap a few martins. They had not brought a single fur. When asked what they had been doing for the whole winter, they replied rather unconcernedly that it was not the custom of Indians to look for furs when they were starving." B 239 a/120, pp. 8v-9 23 Dec. 1812 "Mr Cook's daughter with an Indian man and his wife came to the Factory with sad accounts of the starving condition of her father's family, but still more so of the Indians reduced to digging out of the ice the putrid rotten carcass of deer." B 42 a/8 (1727-8); B 135 a/8, p. 17v 27 Mar. 1740: "Sixteen Indians come from the southward starving. . . . I must keep them until geese come." B 198 a/3, p. 25. 9 Apr. 1767: "I had this winter 40 people to maintain, which bears hard upon my oatmeal." Graham, "Observations (1768)." E 2/4, pp. 80-1.

- 159 Radisson, *Voyages*, Scull, ed., p. 201.
- 160 Skinner, *op. cit.*, pp. 8–11.
- 161 *Ibid.*, p. 68 *et seq.*
- 162 D 4/96, pp. 28–30. Simpson's Report. Norway Ho. June 1829.
163. B 135 a/33, p. 23 (1760–1); A 11/1, p. 169v Th. White to London. Moose Factory, 18 June 1755.
164. B 3 a/57, p. 19 (1764–5) "Terrible starvation among the Indians, they have been obliged to kill six of their children for food." J. Isham, "Observations (1743)." E 2/1, p. 63v "I have known one family who, being starved, have eaten their children. When coming back to their senses, they usually adopt other children and bring them up."
165. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. xcii; J. Isham, "Observations" (1743), pp. 69–69v.
166. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 80–1; *Journals of S. Hearne and P. Turnor*. Toronto, 1934, pp. 273–4; Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, p. xciii.
167. Isham, "Observations (1743)" E 2/1, pp. 56v–57; "They all live in skin tents. When they travel or approach to the English settlements, they make a sort of hut or stick up a few branches of the trees to windward, others sticking up their paddles and a piece of rye around to keep the wind off. . . . The tents are made of dried deer skin. . . ." Graham, "Observations (1768)." E 2/4, p. 22. "They think nothing of coming 200 or 300 miles in the winter with furs on sleds to the forts, journeying all day, cutting at night a parcel of young pines which they stick up in the snow in a half moon form, tops bending to the leeward." Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, pp. 284–5.
- 168 Isham, "Observations," E 2/1, p. 51v (1743).
- 169 Graham, "Observations," E 2/9, pp. 56–64 (1779); *ibid.*, E 2/7, p. 8v (1771).
- 170 Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 79–80.
171. Graham; "Observations (1768)." E 2/4, p. 23.
- 172 D 5/17, p. 278. D. Ross to G. Simpson, Norway Ho., 20 May 1846 B 89 c/1; Isle à la Crosse District Report 1822–3.
- 173 Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 165.
174. B 89 c/1 Isle à la Crosse Report 1822–3; Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 111; Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 323
175. Isham, "Observations (1743)" E 2/5, p. 50; D 4/96, pp. 28–9. Simpson's Report. Norway Ho., June 1829. Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 24 *et seq.*, Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 285.
- 176 Isham, "Observations (1743)" E. 2/1, pp. 58, 64.
- 177 B 39 c/3, p. 18 W. Brown's Report, Athabaska Department (1820–1)
178. B 198 a/3, p. 34 (1760–1); B 105 a/2, p. 20v (1794–5).
179. B 49 e/1, p. 4–5. Cumberland Ho. Report (1815)
- 180 Graham, "Observations (1771)" E 2/7, p. 6v "Their good nature and affability towards the Company's servants who go yearly inland with them plainly prove them to be a harmless people. . . ."
181. B 27 c/1, Carlton Report (1815).
182. J. Isham (1745). E 2/2, pp. 11–13.
183. Morton, *The Journal of D. M'Gillivray*. Introd. pp. lxiii–iv.
- 184 Graham, "Observations (1779)." E 2/9, p. 84v.
185. *Ibid.*, (1768). E 2/4, p. 29, Isham, "Observations (1743)" E 2/2, p. 5v.
- 186 Graham, "Observations (1771)" E 2/7, p. 16v. W. Tomison's journal (1769–70. B 239 a/64, p. 13.
- 187 Graham, "Observations (1768)." E. 2/4, p. 22.
188. E. Pettitot, *Monographie des Déné-Dindjé*. Paris, 1876 On the Déné or Athabaskan tribes, see A. G. Morice, "The Great Déné Race." *Anthropos*.

- Molding, Vienne, 1906-I, 1909-IV, 1910-II; "Les Dénés du Nord," *Bul. de la Soc. de Géographie de Québec* June-Sept. 1928, pp. 146-90.
- A. G. Morice "Northwestern Déné and Northeastern Asiatics" *Trans. R. Can. Inst.* X, 1913-15, pp. 131-93, R. H. Lowie, "The Chipewyans of Canada" *Southern Workman*, Hampton, Virginia, XXXVIII, 1909, pp. 278-83.
189. P. Grant (Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 307).
190. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 389.
191. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 85 (Correspondence of W. F. Wentzel).
192. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 390.
193. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 81 (W. F. Wentzel).
194. *Ibid.*, I, p. 84, *ibid.*; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 390.
195. J. McLean, *Notes of a Twenty-Five Years Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory* ed. by W. S. Wallace (Champlain Society, Toronto, 1932, pp. 312-13 342-3).
196. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. 35.
198. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 384.
199. B39 c/1, p. 49 Simpson's Report on the Athabaska Department, 1821.
200. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 383, Godsell, *Red Hunters of the Snows*, p. 200.
201. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 383.
202. B39 c/1, pp. 37-8 Simpson's Athabaska Report (1821), Godsell, *op. cit.* pp. 207-12.
203. B39 c/3, pp. 4-5. Brown's Athabaska Report. (1820-1).
204. *Ibid.*, B39 c/1, p. 50 Simpson's Athabaska Report (1821); Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 383.
205. B39 c/1, p. 50. Simpson's Athabaska Report (1821).
206. Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians* (Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 309), Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels* . . . pp. 45-7; Skinner, *op. cit.*, pp. 134, 149; W. Jones, "The Central Algonkin" *Ontario Annual Archaeological Report*, Toronto, 1905, pp. 138-9; F. Densmore, *Chippewa Customs* (Smithsonian Institution. Bureau of American Ethnology. Bull. 86 Washington, 1929), pp. 39-40; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 279.
207. Grant, *op. cit.* (Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 341).
208. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 246-7; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 278.
209. Grant, in Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 326, E. Umfreville; "Journal of a Passage in a Canoe from Pais Plat in Lake Superior to Portage de l'Isle in Rivière Oumpegue, 1784" (ed. by R. Douglas, *Nipigon to Wunipeg*, Ottawa 1929); Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 179, n. 2.
210. *Ibid.*, p. 277.
211. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 246 (D. Cameron, *The Nipigon Country*).
212. Skinner, *Notes on Eastern Cree and Northern Saulteaux* . . . , p. 161.
213. Graham, "Observations (1768)" E2/4, p. 26 v. "The Indians about the sea coast of Hudson's Bay are always at variance with the Esquimaux . . ."
214. B42 a/56, p. 41 v. (1761-2) The terms "Northern" and "Southern Indians" here mean the Chipewyan and the Cree. A 11/7, p. 178 Ferdinand Jacobs to London. Prince of Wales Fort, 26 Aug. 1762.
215. A 11/7, p. 7: R. Norton to London. Prince of Wales Fort, 14 Aug. 1726, p. 11: A. Beale to London, July 1729.
216. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 383.
217. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 346; Milton and Cheadle, *op. cit.*, p. 84; Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 89 (W. F. Wentzel); A. Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 118.
218. B 49 c/1, pp. 4-5. "They live together in little parties, pitching or wandering about in the winter, never more than a fortnight in the same place."

- Radisson, *Voyages* (Scull, ed.), p. 210; Morton, *The Journal of D. M'Gillivray*, introd., pp. lxiii-iv; Godsell, *op. cit.*, p. 136.
219. Graham, "Observations (1779)" E 2/4, p. 84 v: "In march the foreign or upland Indians assemble on the banks of a particular river agreed upon by common consent before they separated for the winter. Here they build their canoes which are completed very soon after river breaks."
220. *Ibid.*, "Observations (1768)" E 2/4, p. 21.
221. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 121.
222. *Ibid.*, pp. 279-80; Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 149
223. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 254 (D. Cameron, *The Nipigon Country*); *ibid.*, II, p. 326 (Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians*).
224. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 384.
225. *Ibid.*, p. 391.
226. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 89 (correspondence of W. F. Wentzel).
227. Skinner, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-9; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 286.
228. Graham, "Observations," E 2/9, pp. 70-1: "They have no manner of government or subordination amongst them. The father or head of family owns no superior, obeys no command."
229. *Ibid.*: "He gives his advice or opinion of things, but has no authority to enforce obedience, the youth of his family obey his directions, but (it) is rather from filial affection or reverence than in consequence of a duty exacted by a superior."
230. *Ibid.*: "When several tents of families meet to go to war or to the factories to trade, they choose a leader, but it is only a voluntary obedience. Everyone is at liberty to leave him when he pleases, and the notion of a commander is quite obliterated when the voyage is over."
231. *Ibid.*: "Merit alone gives the title to distinction. . . . Thus a person who is an expert hunter, one who knows the communications between lakes and rivers, can make long harangues, is a conjuror and has a family of his own. . . . will not fail of being followed by several Indians when they assemble in large parties at the building of their canoes. They follow him down to trade at the settlements and stile him Uchimow. . . . but he is obliged to secure their attendance by promises and rewards as the regard to his abilities is of too weak a nature to purchase subjection. In war a mutual resentment against the enemies forms the union for perpetrating their revenge. Personal courage, patience under hardships, and the knowledge of the manners and country of their adversaries are the qualifications sought for in the choice of a leader. They follow him with fidelity and execute his projects with alacrity. But their obedience does not follow from any right in the leader to command, but what is founded on his merit, the affections of his followers and the desire of subduing their antagonists."
232. Graham, "Observations (1768)" E 2/4, p. 19 v: "There are Indians who are made and stiled captains by the factors. They must be good hunters, great talkers and conjurors. . . ."
233. Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 67; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 286
234. Skinner, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-9, 60-3.
236. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 326 (Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians*).
235. *Ibid.*, p. 149; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 179.
237. Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 149.
238. R. Landes, *Ojibwa Sociology*, New York, 1937, p. 1.
239. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, pp. 179-80.
240. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 246 (Cameron, *The Nipigon Country*); Skinner, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-50
241. Landes, *op. cit.*, pp. 31, 52, Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

242. Landes, *op. cit.*, p. 2; Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 137.; P. Jones, *History of the Ojibway Indians*, London, 1858, p. 108, Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 150; Masson Coll., McGill Univ.: Dr. McLoughlin. The Indians from Fort William to Lake of the Woods.
243. Landes, *op. cit.*, p. 2; Densmore, *op. cit.*, p. 132; Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 137
244. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 137; Keating, *Long's Expedition*, II, p. 154.
245. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 137.
246. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 348 (Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians*)
247. *Ibid.*, II, p. 350; Masson Coll., McGill Univ.: Dr. McLoughlin.
248. *Ibid.*
249. *Ibid.*, Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 278 (Cameron, *The Nipigon Country*); *ibid.*, II, pp. 349-50 (Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians*).
250. Jenness, *op. cit.*, pp. 280-1; Skinner, *op. cit.*, pp. 154, 156-60
W. J. Hoffman, "The mide'winn or 'Grand Medicine Society of the Ojibwa'" (Bur. of Am. Ethnol. 7th annual report, Washington, 1891). These practices and institutions made the Ojibwa especially resistant to the concepts of Christianity (J. de Smet, *Missions de l'Oregon et voyages aux Montagnes Rocheuses en 1845-6*, Paris, 1848, p. 138).
251. Densmore, *op. cit.*, p. 97.
252. Kaj Birket-Smith, "Contributions to Chipewyan Ethnology" (*Report of the 5th Thule Expedition, 1921-4*, VI, n° 3), pp. 13-15, 16
253. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, pp. cxxvi-cxxvii.
254. Thompson, *Narrative of His Explorations*, p. 129; A 11/7, p. 150 F. Jacobs to London, Prince of Wales Fort, 16 Sept. 1758
255. *Ibid.*, p. 43: R. Norton to London, 17 Aug. 1738, B 39 a/18, p. 73
G. Simpson Journal of the Athabaska Department (1820-1 "It is an unfortunate characteristic of the Chipewyans that, if unsuccessful for any length of time in the early part of the season, they become so fully impressed with the idea that some evil genius haunts them that they give themselves up entirely to despair. They become careless, neglect their hunts, lie dormant in their encampments for weeks, while a morsel of leather or babiche remains to keep them living. At length, to escape the miseries of famine, they murder their families and perish without exertion." P. Fidler, *Journal of a Journey with the Chipawians or Northern Indians*, in 1791 and 1792 (Champlain Society, Toronto) pp. 541-2
256. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 129, D 4/97, pp. 22-4 Simpson's Report, York Fy, 26 Aug. 1830; B 39 e/6 Athabaska Report, 1823-4, p. 3 "...The Chipewyans are of a cold, phlegmatic temper, industrious and persevering . . ."
257. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, pp. cxxvi-vii.
258. Birket-Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
259. D 4/97 22-4, *loc. cit.*
260. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 265; Birket-Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-1.
261. See note 259; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 386.
262. Fidler, *op. cit.*, p. 504, Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. cxxiii, B 39 a/18, p. 31. Simpson's Athabaska Department Journal, 1820-1 "Cree are more expert at killing buffalo and deer. . . ."
263. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, *op. cit.*, Birket-Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 386.
264. *Ibid.*,
265. *Ibid.*,
266. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. cxix; Birket-Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-31.
267. J. Macdonell (?) Lake Athabaska and the Chippewean, 1793 (McGill Univ.), B 89 e/1. Ile à la Crosse District Report, 1822-3. "During the

- winter, they disperse into parties of 2 or 3 families, generally observing a link of communication with the whole tribe "
- 268 E 2/2, p. 333 v: Isham "Observations" (1743); B 39 c/6, p. 3. Athabaska Report. 1823-4.
269. Birker-Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-1.
- 270 S. Hearne. *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Sea*, ed. by J. B. Tyrrell (Champlain Society, Toronto, 1911), pp. 211-12
271. A. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. cxxi.
272. J. Macdonell (?). Lake Athabaska and the Chippewean, 1793 (McGill Univ.).
273. B 39 c/6, p. 2 Athabaska report, 1823-4; Mackenzie, *Voyages*, pp. cxxvi-vii; Birker-Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-1.
274. Isham, "Observations" (1743) E 2/2, p. 33.
275. J. Macdonell (?). Lake Athabaska, 1793 (McGill Univ.).
276. Ann. de la Prop. de la Foi, Quebec, Mar. 1853 (A Tache. Isle à la Crosse, 4 Jan. 1851.)
- 277 B 39 c/8, p. 27-8. Athabaska Report, 1824-5 "Few deserve the name of chiefs, their influence being little known beyond the circle of their own family and immediate dependants." Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 386
- 278 B 89 e/1 Isle à la Crosse District Report. 1822-3 "There are no native chiefs in the district . . . A few heads of families still retain some shadow of former powers, but operate more by gentleness or persuasion."
- 279 B 39 c/8, p. 27-8 Athabaska Report, 1824-5. "Their estimation and treatment by the whites . . . never fail to insure the individual a proportionate share of attention or contempt from his own tribe."
280. Birker-Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-15.
- 281 D 4/97, pp. 22-4 Simpson's Report, York Factory, 26 Aug. 1830.
- 282 J. Macdonell (?). Lake Athabaska, 1793 (McGill Univ.)
283. Below, p. 75.
284. Isham, "Observations" (1743). E 2/2, p. 34.
285. C. B. Osgood, *The Ethnography of the Great Bear Lake Indians* (Nat. Mus. of Canada, 1932 Bul. 70. Annual report for 1931), pp. 32-5 For a more complete enumeration of the Dene-Dindjée, see Petitot, *Monographie des déné-Dindjée*, pp. 26-7.
286. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, pp. 388-95. The population was reduced to small densities. In 1864, Father Pentot estimates at 2,500 persons the population dependent on forts Good Hope, Norman, Franklin, and Anderson, or, on that area of 72,000 square leagues, a density of 0.03 per square league.
287. Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
288. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. 35.
289. Masson, *Bourgeois* II, p. 107 (Correspondence of G. Keith: Bear Lake, Mackenzie's River Department, 19 Nov. 1812), Osgood, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-1; Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 393, gives a different viewpoint.
290. Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 38; Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 122; C. Wissler, *An Introduction to Social Anthropology*. New York, 1929, p. 123.
291. Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
292. *Ibid.*
293. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-1
294. Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 121
295. Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 74; Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 395.
296. McLean, *op. cit.*, II, p. 341.
297. Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
298. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-1; Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 121.
299. Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

300. *Ibid.*,
301. Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 63; Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 389.
302. Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 63; Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 389.
303. Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 63.
304. Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 392; Warburton Pike, *The Barren Ground of Northern Canada*. New York, 1892, pp. 119–22.
305. Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 38; Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 394.
306. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 107; Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 393.
307. Jenness, *op. cit.*, pp. 388, 393.
308. *Ibid.*, p. 393.
309. *Ibid.*, p. 395.
310. *Ibid.*, p. 394; Osgood, *op. cit.*, pp. 38–9.
311. Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 394.
312. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, pp. 96–7 (Correspondence of G. Keith Bear Lake. 5 Jan. 1812).
313. D 4/28, pp. 50–1. G. Simpson to J. Lee Lewes R.R.S., 5 June 1843. D 4/62, pp. 14–15. G. Simpson to London R.R.S., 21 June 1843. Mgr Taché, *Esquisse*, pp. 105–6; E. Petitot, *Quinze Ans sous le cercle polaire*. Paris, 1889, p. 39 *et seq.*
314. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 115 (G. Keith, 19 Nov. 1812); Osgood, *op. cit.*, pp. 32–5; Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 394; A. G. Morice, *Histoire de l'Eglise catholique dans l'Ouest canadien*. Montreal, 1912. II, p. 96.
315. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 103 (G. Keith, 19 Nov. 1812).
316. *Ibid.*, II, p. 119; E. Petitot, *Monographie des Déné-Dindné*, p. 32.
317. Jenness, *op. cit.*, pp. 371–2; F. Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man*. New York, 1911, p. 160 *et seq.*
318. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 371–2; R. G. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, Cleveland, 1896 *et seq.*, III, p. 62.
319. Isham, "Observations," 1743. E 2/1, p. 65; Graham, "Observations," 1779. E 2/9, p. 56.
320. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 104–5.
321. Isham, "Observations" 1743. E 2/1, p. 65; Graham, "Observations" 1768. E 2/4, p. 22.
322. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 371–2.
323. *Ibid.*, B N Collection Margry (F F. Nouv. Acq.), 9275, p. 139. "Journal du voyage que Joseph Laurent Normandin a fait dans le domaine du Roi en Canada . . . 1732." "One certain thing is that a savage who has never been in a place where there is something hidden, if another person—whether French or Indian—tells him merely where the sun is when one reaches that cache, he will need no other sign to find the place, but will go to it as directly as if he himself had made the cache."
324. Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 209. G. B. Grinnell, "The Lodges of the Blackfeet." *Am. Anthropol.*, 1901, pp. 650–68.
325. Graham, "Observations 1768." E 2/4, p. 29; Hearne, *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort . . . to the Northern Ocean*, pp. 134–5.
326. Isham, *Observations* 1743. E 2/2, p. 5–6.
327. *Ibid.*, E2/2, p. 4.
328. *Ibid.*, E2/1, p. 73. Champlain had noted early on the great manual dexterity of the Hurons. (Biggar, *The Works of S. de Champlain*, II), pp. 83–4.
329. Isham, "Observations" E2/2, p. 4; Duchaussois (R. P.), *Aux Glaces polaires*. Paris, 1930, p. 59 *et seq.*
330. Graham, "Observations 1768." E2/4, p. 22, 29v; Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 42 *et seq.*
331. Osgood, *op. cit.*, pp. 49–54. On the role of dogs as beasts of burden or

- draught animals in the three North Wests, cf F G Roe, "From Dogs to Horses among the Western Indian Tribes (T R S C.) 3rd series, sect II, pp 209-17 H Baulig, "Sur la distribution des moyens de transport et de circulation chez les indigènes de l'Amérique du Nord." *Annales de géographie*, Paris, 1908, pp. 433-46
332. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. cxxxi.
333. Isham, "Observations, 1743." E 2/1, p. 57
334. Keating, *Long's Expedition*, II, p. 166.
335. B 39 e/6, p. 3 In 1634, Father Le Jeune made a similar judgment on the tribes of Lower Canada. (Thwaites, *Jes. Rel.*, VI, p. 102 *et seq.*).
336. Graham, "Observations 1768." E 2/4, p. 22.
337. Isham, "Observations 1743." E 2/1, p. 60. On the surgical practices of the Dene, cf A F. Morice, *Déné Surgery*. *T R Can Inst*, VII, 1901, pp 15-27.
338. *Ibid.*, E 2/1, p. 66.
339. Hearne, *op cit.*, pp. 130-1.
340. Isham, "Observations 1743." E 2/1, p. 51. Hearne, *op cit.*, p. 113; Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. xcvi, Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 85 (Correspondence of W F Wentzel, Forks Mackenzie River, 27 Mar. 1807), II, pp. 118-19, 131 (Correspondence of G. Keith, Bear lake, 19 Nov 1812); Keating, *op cit* II, p. 167; Mgr Taché, *Esquisse*, pp. 86-7.
341. Thwaites, *Jes Rel*, VI pp 238-40, 250, 258, 282, VIII, pp 126-8
342. B N. Collection Margry, 9306, p. 179.
343. Lowie, *The Assiniboine*, p. 15; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 103.
344. D 4/88, p. 94. Simpson's Report, York Factory, 1 Sept 1825, Journal of J. Macdonell, 1793-5 (Masson Coll., McGill Univ.).
345. Graham, "Observations 1771." E 2/7, p. 8v. "They have become so meagre, small and indolent through drunkenness that they are scarcely able to bear the hardships of the country."
346. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, pp 30. 293-4; Thompson, *Narrative of His Explorations*, p. 455.
347. Osgood, *Ethnography of the Great Bear Lake Indians*, p. 38.
348. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 417; B 239 a/124 (1813-14), p. 59v. "Indians in a shocking state of starvation (Nelson river). Still they blindly pursue the same improvident course, conceiving that the wrath of the Great Spirit will soon be appeased."
349. Graham, "Observations 1768." E 2/4, p. 21. "I have known the home natives destroy above 5000 deer in one summer about York Factory Part they sell to us for brandy, and the remains putrify and drive about in the rivers. Their idea being the more they kill the more they'll have."
350. B 239 a/117, p. 8 (1810-11). B 239 a/118, p. 10v (1811-12) 9 April 1812. "The Indians are in a continued state of starvation When, at chance times, the deer come about them, they are so improvident as not to provide for the future."
351. Graham, "Observations 1768." E 2/4, p. 21.
352. Isham, "Observations 1743." E 2/1, p. 52.
353. Graham, "Observations 1768." E 2/4, p. 21, D 5/7, p. 200 D Ross to G. Simpson. Norway Ho., 15 Aug. 1842.
354. Coues, *New Light on the Early History of the Greater North West*, I, p. 114.
355. Youle Hind, *Report on the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition* Toronto, 1859, p. 55 "Within a circular fence 120 feet broad lay tossed in every conceivable position over two hundred buffalo."
356. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

357. Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-9, 90 *et seq.*, 144-57; Fidler, *op. cit.*, p. 529.
358. D 5/17, p. 200; *loc. cit.*, D 4/85, pp. 31-2. Simpson's report, York Factory, 16 July 1822, D 4/96, pp. i-iv. *Ibid.* Norway Ho., 30 June 1829, D 4/103, pp. 9-9v; *ibid.*, Norway Ho., 6 July 1830.
359. D 4/96, pp. i-iv; *loc. cit.*, D 4/97, p. 39. Simpson's report, York Factory, 26 Aug. 1830; D 4/99, p. 52. *Ibid.*, 10 Aug. 1832, D 4/18, pp. 17-18. Simpson to J. L. Lewes, Fort Garry, 18 Dec. 1830.
360. D 5/8, p. 38² to G. Simpson, Fort Alexander, New Caledonia, 21 Jan. 1843. "The only safeguard by which the total extirpation of the beaver is prevented, is the hereditary privilege of hunting upon certain tracts of territory, invested by the Carrier laws in individuals or families, a principle which has proved so efficacious a protection in the Tenuscamingue quarter. The prudence of some forbids the total destruction of the chief source of revenue. But all are not equally prudent."
361. Isham, "Observations 1743," E 2/1, p. 69v.; Graham, "Observations 1779," E 2/9, p. 56. "Necessity only drives them to exercise."
362. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 359; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, pp. 158-9.
363. Coues, *op. cit.*, II, p. 153; B 105 c/6. Rainy Lake Report, 1825-6.
363. Coues, *op. cit.*, II, p. 153; B 105 c/6. Rainy Lake Report, 1825-6.
364. B 22 a/13, p. iv. (13 June 1805).
365. B 3 a/42, p. 21. "May 1751 Mr Isbister (Henley ho) intimates that they had a warm winter with a great deal of snow, and that the Indians had such plenty of deer that it made them surprisingly indolent and that they did not catch furs."
366. D 5/6, p. 100. R. Mackenzie to G. Simpson, Isle à la Crosse, 1 Mar. 1841, D 5/27, p. 321. R. Grant to G. Simpson, Fort Hall, 22 Feb. 1850.
367. B 49 e/5. Cumberland Ho. Report (1825), Cocking's journal (1774-5) B 239 a/72, p. iv; Sir John Franklin, *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea* (1819-22). London, 1823, p. 63.
368. B 39 e/1, p. 50. Simpson's Athabaska Report, May 1821.
369. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
370. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, pp. 115-19 (G. Keith, correspondence, Nov. 1812).
371. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 293.
372. D 5/17, p. 278. D. Ross to G. Simpson, Norway Ho., 20 May 1846. "They (the Indians) possess that roving, but indolent and inert disposition which has ever been the bane of their race." A. A. Goldenweiser, *Early Civilisation*, London, 1921, pp. 403-5.
373. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80; John Long, *Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter and Trader, 1768-1782* (*Early Western travels*, II, pp. 88-9), B 60 c/1. Edmonton Report (1815) "They have no idea of regular labour, though capable of the greatest hardships."
374. D 4/98, p. 17 v. Simpson's report, York Factory, 18 July 1831.
375. B 39 a/18, p. 73. G. Simpson, Athabaska Department Journal, 1820-1. "The belief of certain tribes in the high latitudes that 'animals' are former men . . . metamorphosed into quadrupeds' could also explain the discouragement of the unlucky hunter and his systematic renunciation of effort. The animal lets himself be killed only to help the hunter; if he hides away, it is a sign of scorn or antipathy, and in that case all efforts to reach him are useless." E. Petitot, *Autheur du Grand lac des Esclaves*. Paris, 1891, p. 12.
376. B 39 e/1, pp. 32-3. Simpson's Athabaska Report, May 1821.
377. Hearne, *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort . . .*, pp. 122-3; B 39 e/6, p. 3. Athabaska journal (1823-4).
378. B 39 e/9, p. 6 v. *Ibid.*, (1825-6), B 89 e/1. Isle à la Crosse District Report,

- 1822-3. "Peaceable, provident and enterprising, fond of European property and exceedingly artful, as well as capable of great exertion to procure it." D 4/92, p. 42 Simpson's Report, York Factory, 10 July 1828, D 4/97, pp. 22-4. *Ibid.*, 26 Aug. 1830, Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. cxxii, J. Macdonell (?), Lake Athabaska and the Chipewewan, 1793 (Masson Coll., McGill Univ.).
379. B 39 3/1, pp. 32-3, *loc. cit.*; B 39 c/3, p. 18 W. Brown's Athabaska Report, 1820-1. "While the North West (Co) was unopposed, the Chipewyans were industrious, paying high for every article. But, being liberally treated by the opposition, they became indolent and dissipated. They considered themselves as of greater consequence than before . . ."
380. B 39 c/3, p. 18. W. Brown's Athabaska Report (1820-1); B 39 c/1, pp. 5-6. Simpson's Athabaska Report.
381. B 39 c/3, p. 18. "They are beginning to change as they have sense enough to perceive that, without fur returns, the opposition must cease."
382. *Voyages*, p. cxx.
383. Masson Coll., McGill Univ. (J. Macdonell (?), Lake Athabaska, 1793), B 39 c/1, pp. 32-3, *loc. cit.*
384. *Ibid.*, p. 49; McLean, *op. cit.*, II, p. 135.
385. W. S. Wallace, *Sir Henry Lefroy's Journey to the North West in 1843-4* (T.R.S.C., II, 1938), p. 86.
386. Birket-Smith, *Contributions to Chipewyan Ethnology*, pp. 7-9, Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 92 (W. F. Wentzel).
387. *Ibid.*, II, p. 326 (Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians*, 1804), Mgr Taché, *Esquisse*, p. 104, *ibid.*, *Vingt Années de missions*, Montreal, 1869, p. 120; Bernard, *op. cit.*, pp. 304-5. Father Le Jeune said the same of the peoples of Lower Canada. "Very liberal among themselves. They do not seem attached to material things." (Thwaites, *Jes. Rel.*, VI, p. 236).
388. Graham, "Observations, 1768." E 2/4, p. 14 v. Dr. McLoughlin's journal The Indians from Fort William to Lake of the Woods (Masson Coll., McGill Univ.), N. Jérémie, "Relation du Detroit et de la Baie d'Hudson" (J. F. Bernard, *Recueil de voyages au Nord*, Amsterdam, 1734, V, p. 430).
389. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 124.
390. Hearne, *op. cit.*, p. 247.
391. Thompson, *Narrative of His Explorations*, pp. 80-1.
392. Dr. McLoughlin's journal (Masson Coll., McGill Univ.), Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 326, *op. cit.*.
393. *Ibid.*, I, p. 89 (correspondence of W. F. Wentzel).
394. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 358.
395. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, cxxv.
396. Masson, *Bourgeois* II, p. 326, *loc. cit.*; McLean, *op. cit.*, I, p. 138, II, p. 264.
397. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-1.
398. Graham, "Observations, 1779." E 2/9, p. 60. "They are courteous, benevolent, humane and kind, relieving the necessities of one another to the utmost of their power. They frequently take the children of other people and adopt them as their own." McLoughlin's journal (Masson Coll., McGill Univ.), Franklin, *op. cit.*, p. 66; Warburton Pike, *The Barren Ground of Northern Canada*, pp. 119-22.
399. Graham, "Observations, 1779," E 2/9, p. 61.
400. Wissler, *An Introduction to Social Anthropology*, p. 76; G. B. Grinnel, "Tenure of Land among the Indians," *Am. Anthropol.*, IX, 1907, pp. 1-11.
401. Birket-Smith, *Contributions to Chipewyan Ethnology*, p. 69, F. G. Speck, "Land Ownership among Hunting Peoples in Primitive America and the World's Marginal Areas" (Atti del XXII Congresso internazionale degli

- Americanist, Roma, 1926, vol. II, pp. 323-32, p. 327, F. G. Speck, "The Family Hunting Band as the Basis of Algonkian Social Organization," *Am. Anthropol.*, 1915, pp. 289-305.
402. B 49 c/1, pp. 4-5. Cumberland Ho. Report, 1815.
403. Landes, *Opiuma Sociology*, p. 99; Jones, *The Central Algonkin*, p. 137. Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 150.
404. Landes, *op. cit.*, p. 99; Jones, *op. cit.*, 137.
405. Landes, *op. cit.*, p. 99.
406. Osgood, *Ethnography of the Great Bear Lake Indians*, pp. 70-1, Birket-Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
407. Osgood, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-1; Speck, *Land Ownership* . . . , pp. 326-7; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 124.
408. F. W. Howay, "Crowfoot: The Great Chief of the Blackfeet" (Can. Hist. Ass. 1930).
409. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 137; Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 124.
410. Jenness, *op. cit.*, pp. 130, 162.
411. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 363.
412. *Ibid.*; Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 113 (correspondence of G. Keith, 1812).
413. Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 124.
414. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 150; Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 150; Speck, *op. cit.*, p. 327.
415. Forde, *Habitat, Economy and Society*, p. 60.
416. Birket-Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
417. Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-9; Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. cxix.
418. Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-2; Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 161 B 90 e/1 *Isle à la Croix* Report 1822-3, A. G. Morice, "La femme chez les Déné." Congrès International des Americanistes, 150 session "Quebec, I, 1906, pp. 261-94.
419. B 39 a/18, p. 30. Simpson's Athabaska Journal, 1820-1 "The Chipewyans leave an old man, head of a family, to die on Bustard Island, as he is too infirm to travel. This barbarous practice is, I understand, peculiar to the Chipewyans."
420. Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 99, 118, 219, 322.
421. *Ibid.*, p. 272, Mgr Tache, *vingt années de missions*, p. 21, *ibid.*, *Esquisse* . . . , p. 103, *Ann. de la Prop. de la Foi*, Quebec, Mar., 1853; Petitot, *Monographie des Déné-Dindje*, p. 34, *ibid.*, *Autour du Grand Lac des Esclaves* Paris, 1891, p. 137.
422. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 107 (Correspondence of G. Keith), Pike, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-22. Sir John Richardson, *Arctic Searching Expedition* London, 1851, pp. 383-4.
423. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 86 (Correspondence of W. F. Wentzel, 1807); Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 75; Jenness, *op. cit.*, 391, 393; Petitot, *Exploration de la région du Grand Lac des Ours* Paris, 1893, pp. 106-7, 169. Among the Hares, abortion and infanticide were thought of as the application of the father's right of life and death over his children (Petitot, *Quinze ans sous le cercle polaire*, Paris, 1889, p. 154).
424. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 86 (*loc. cit.*).
425. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 129.
426. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, pp. 69-70 (correspondence of G. Keith, 1807).
427. Graham, "Observations, 1771," E 2/7, p. 8 v "They pay a due regard to old age. No man or woman who has had children is ever thrown aside. But, if they have been unfruitful, they are despised."
428. Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-1.
429. Cocking's journal (1772-3) E 2/11, pp. 61-2; F. Denimore, *Chippewa*

- Customs Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology Bul 86 Washington, 1929, p. 6; Jenness, *The Sarcee Indians of Alberta*, p. 26
430. Mgr Taché, *Esquisse*, p. 187.
431. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 350; Jenness, *Sarcee Indians of Alberta* p. 24
432. Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-1.
433. B 105 c/6, pp. 7-8. Rainy Lake Report, 1825-6.
434. Graham, "Observations, 1771." E 2/7, p. 9 v. "The women are wretched slaves in their society" Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, pp. 320-1 (P. Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians*, 1804)
435. Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-8 Lowie, *The Assiniboine*, p. 41; McLean, *Notes of a Twenty-Five Years Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory*, II, p. 260
436. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. cxix.
437. Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-9.
438. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 393; Coues, *New light*, I, p. 211.
439. Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 151.
440. *Ibid.*, pp. 56-9.
441. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 93, Graham, "Observations, 1768" E 2/4, p. 19 v
442. Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
443. Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-9; Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 350.
444. J. W. Powell, "Wyandot Government" (1st annual report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1879-80), pp. 57, 65; Goldenweiser, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-4
445. G. Sagard Théodat, *Le Grand Voyage du Pays des Hurons*, Paris, 1632, p. 173; Thwaites, *Jes. Rel.*, III, p. 142; H. P. Biggar, *The Works of Samuel de Champlain*, Toronto, 1922-3, vol. III, p. 142.
446. Isham, "Observations, 1743" E 2/1, pp. 58-9; Graham, "Observations, 1768." E 2/4, p. 15 v, Dr McLoughlin's journal (Masson Coll., McGill Univ.); Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 93; Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, p. xcvi, Franklin, *op. cit.*, p. 68.
447. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, pp. 323-4 (Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians*, 1804).
448. Long, *Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter*, p. 97.
449. Keating, *Narrative of Long's Expedition*, I, p. 403.
450. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 361.
451. Hearne, *op. cit.*, p. 99, *Ann. de la Prop. de la Foi*, Quebec, Mar. 1853 (Letter from A. Taché, Isle à la Croix, 4 Jan. 1851).
452. Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 73
453. J. N. Provencher, "Mémoire sur l'établissement de la Rivière Rouge et ses progrès depuis 1838," Mar. 1836 (Arch. Arch., St Boniface; Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization*, pp. 402-5, Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man* pp. 224-5
454. Masson, *Bourgeois* I, p. 90 (Correspondence of Wentzel), Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-4, Skinner, *Notes on Eastern Cree and Northern Saulteaux*, p. 151; Landes, *Ojibwa Sociology*, p. 2.
455. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 346; Keating, *op. cit.*, I, p. 403; B 60 a/22 p. 39 (1823-4) "To suffer heat and cold, to be exercised continually in hunting, in running on foot and horseback and to be inured to wounds which they, upon the death of the relations, inflict upon themselves, so as to vent neither complaints nor grievances, these are things to which they are accustomed." Skinner, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-6; Jenness, *Sarcee of Alberta*, pp. 18-19
456. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 90 (Correspondence of Wentzel), Thompson, *op. cit.*, I, p. 129, Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 722, Jenness, *Sarcee of Alberta*, pp. 18-19 Landes, *op. cit.*, p. 429; S. H. Sutes, *Economics of the Iroquois* (Bryn Mawr College Monographs, I, 1095, n° 3), pp. 144-6 (On the condemnation of false witness, G. B. Grinnell, "Coup and Scalp among the Plains Indians" (*Am. Anthropol.*, XII, 1910), pp. 196-310.

457. Birket-Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-9.
458. Skinner, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-9. Lowie, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
459. F. G. Speck, "Ethical Attributes of the Labrador Indians" (*Am Anthropol.*, 1933, pp. 559, 594).
460. B 60 a/22, p. 40 (1823-4) "Theft is severely punished, even by death, and this with good reason, as their horses being their only property and never shut up, how could they subsist if depredations of this kind were left unpunished." Eggan, *Social Anthropology of North American Tribes*, pp. 344-5, 368.
461. Coues, *New Light*, I, pp. 105-7.
462. Dr. McLoughlin's journal (Masson Coll., Masson, *Bourgeois* II, p. 350 (Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians*, 1804); Lowie, *op. cit.*, p. 35, Eggan, *op. cit.*, p. 348).
463. Eggan, *op. cit.*, pp. 348, 368.
464. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 263, 353; Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. xcvi, Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 722, Long, *op. cit.*, p. 130, McLean, *op. cit.*, I, p. 138.
465. Densmore, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
466. Nicolas Pertot, *Mémoire sur les mœurs, coutumes et religion des sauvages de l'Amérique septentrionale* (ed. Tailhan) Leipzig, Paris, 1864, p. 78 "The savage does not know what it is to obey. He must be invited rather than commanded. Nevertheless he will do anything that is asked of him, particularly when he imagines there is glory or profit to be expected."
467. Hearne, *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort*, pp. 157-8; B60 1/22, p. 25 v "Altho the Plains Indians are in general very jealous of their fair consorts, and a crime of this nature when discovered among them, is frequently punished with the greatest severity . . . yet they do not at a moment hesitate to cultivate an intimacy between their wives and our men." Jenness, *Sarcee of Alberta*, p. 22.
468. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
469. Isham, "Observations, 1743." E2/1, p. 52, Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-8, Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. xcvi.
470. Graham, "Observations, 1779." E2/9, p. 61 "Fornication and adultery are no vices among them. They think no harm in either." Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. xcvi.
471. Graham, *ibid.*; "Observations, 1771." E2/7, p. 2 v. "An Indian will at any time oblige an Englishman with his wife and daughter for a short lend. . . . But, would she use such familiarities with his countrymen, she would be beaten and turned out."
472. Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 72; Pike, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-22.
473. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 353.
474. *Ann. de la Prop. de la Foi*, Quebec, Mar. 1853, *op. cit.*
475. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. xcvi, Franklin, *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea*, p. 68, Wallace, *Sir Henri Letroy's Journey*, . . . , p. 93.
476. "Marriage and Family life among the Plains Indians" (*Scientific Monthly*), New York, May 1932, pp. 462-4).
477. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 93.
478. Graham, "Observations, 1768." E2/4, p. 16.
479. "Marriage and Family Life . . ." (*Scientific Monthly*).
480. Isham, "Observations, 1743." E2/1, p. 60.
481. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, pp. 320-1 (Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians*); *Ann. de la Prop. de la Foi*, Quebec, Mar. 1853 *op. cit.* Similar observations are noted by the first missionaries of New France (Sagard, *Hist. du Canada*, 1636, pp.

- 315-20; *Jes. Rel.*, VI, 252) as well as by Champlain (Biggar, *The Works of S. de Champlain*, I, pp. 119-20, III, 47, pp. 137-9).
- 482 B 39 a/18, p. 32. Simpson's Athabaska journal, 1820-1.
483. Graham, "Observations, 1768." E 2/4, p. 16; Landes, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
- 484 Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. 149; B 39 c/1, p. 50. Simpson's Athabaska report, May 1821. "It is against their religious tenets to have connections with the civilized, so that there are no Beaver Indian halfbreeds." *Ibid.*, p. 49. "They are particularly uxorious, and the very suspicion of incontinence is attended with tragic consequences." Godsell, *Red Hunters of the Snows*, pp. 192-7.
485. R. Grousset, *L'Empire des Steppes*. Paris, 1939, p. 10.
- 486 Theodat, *Grand voyage*, pp. 202-3, Champlain, *Voyages*, 1632, Part II, pp. 122-4.
487. Forde, *op. cit.*, p. 66.
- 488 Smith, *War Complex of the Plains Indians*, pp. 429-30.
489. *Ibid.*, pp. 452-3, Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 348 (P. Grant, *op. cit.*), G. M. Grant (Rev.), *Ocean to Ocean*. Toronto, 1877, p. 153.
- 490 Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 452-3, Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels*, pp. 353-4.
- 491 Grinnell, "Coup and Scalp among the Plains Indians." *Am. Anthropol.*, CII, pp. 296-310; Thompson, *Narrative of His Explorations*, pp. 335-7.
- 492 Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 346.
- 493 Hearne, *op. cit.*, p. 333.
- 494 B89 c/1 Isle à la Crosse District Report, 1822-3. "The general character of Northern Indians is peaceable, provident and enterprising. . . But they occasionally assume a haughty and tyrannical attitude with any tribe which they consider weaker than themselves. . ."
495. Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 175, 266.
496. Graham, "Observations, 1768." E 2/4, pp. 26-7. "The Indians about the sea coast of Hudson's Bay are always at variance with the Esquimaux and destroy many of them who inhabit on the eastern coast of the Bay in a most shocking cowardly manner, attacking at daybreak the Esquimaux who are off their guard and defenceless." Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 92 (Wentzel), II, p. 348 (Grant); Fidler, *Journal of a Journey with the Chipewyans*, p. 551; J. Long, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-8. Similar examples of barbarism are to be found, in more southerly latitudes, among the Indians of the Atlantic coast (R. Beverley, *History of Virginia*. London, 1722, p. 162).
497. Fidler, *op. cit.*, p. 551.
- 498 B 60 a/22, p. 40 (1823-4). "They seldom give quarters to their enemies, children are slaughtered. If any relations of the war party have been previously killed by their enemies, the lives of a few prisoners may be saved in order to replace the deceased, but such as are taken in this way lead a wretched life, and their existence ends in barbarities."
- 499 H. P. Biggar, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier*. Ottawa, 1924, p. 259, *ibid.*, *The Works of S. de Champlain*, I, pp. 110-1, 399-400.
500. Stites, *Economics of the Iroquois*, pp. 144-6.
501. Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 595.
502. Jonathan Carver, *Travels through the Interior Parts of North America, in the Years 1766, 1767, 1768*. London, 1781, p. 237.
503. Goldenweiser, *op. cit.*, pp. 402-5.
504. Isham, "Observations 1743." E 2/1, p. 59 v; Graham, "Observations 1768." E 2/4, p. 15, Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 248 (Cameron, *The Nipigon Country*).
505. Graham, "Observations, 1779." E 2/9, p. 63.

- 506 S. Hall and W. T. Bourwell Report to Prudential Committee, Feb. 1823 (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions).
- 507 Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 93.
- 508 B 60 a/24, p. 22 (1826-7): "Poor Sinnum who has been accidentally wounded by one of our young men who mistook him for a stealer during the affray has a firearm under his pillow to draw vengeance from that man. To deprive him of the arm would be to incur the ill will of all those connected with him. The young man being at the Fort was sent on a hunting expedition."
509. B60 a/22, p. 10v (1823-4). "If we could punish thieves who steal our horses, we should willingly do it. But the consequences that may attend such action deter us from doing it. The Indian carries revenge in his bosom for a length of time, and will not rest satisfied until he has retaliated. . . regardless of his being innocent or not, provided he belongs to the same nation." D 4/121, p. 47; J. Rowand to the Governor, Edmonton, 15 Jan. 1828: "A party of Blackfeet and Bloods went down to meet the Crees and Slave Indians upon terms of peace. But the first Crees they saw became so much alarmed that they fired upon the Blackfeet, and thereby caused a retaliation upon the whites. They did much mischief to everything they could find outside the fort." D 4/3, p. 86. G. Simpson to J. McLoughlin, Fort Garry, 16 Feb. 1824, Arch. Arch., St. Boniface. Letter from A. Christie, Fort Garry, 20 Aug. 1845.
510. S. Champlain, *Des Sauvages ou voyage fait en la France nouvelle* Paris, 1603, p. 8, *ibid.*, *Les Voyages de la Nouvelle France occidentale* 1632, Part II, p. 119 *et seq.*
- 511 Pitt-Rivers, *The Clash of Culture and the Contact of Races* London, 1927, pp. 151, 154.
- 512 Graham, "Observations, 1779." E 2/9, p. 60: "These Indians are no strangers to the passion of love and friendship. But there seems not that tenderness in either as appears in Europeans when under the influence of those affections. They appear to an Englishman morose, insensible and much on the reserve." Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 325 (Grant). A. Seton, "Life on the Oregon" (*The Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXXVI, Salem, Or. June 1935): "Apathy of character is the distinguishing trait of the Indians. An impenetrable coldness of disposition is common to all. . . . The emotions of love, jealousy, revenge, ambition, insulted honour, chivalrous feelings which prompt other men to do daring deeds don't rule the cold-blooded Indian."
513. B 39 e/6, p. 3 (1823-4).
- 514 F. Blackwell Meyer, *With Pen and Pencil on the Frontier in 1851* St. Paul, 1932 (Publications of the Minnesota Histor. Soc. Narratives and Documents, I), p. 135.
515. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 230.
516. *Ibid.*, p. 348.
517. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-1; Mackenzie *Voyages*, pp. 293-4, Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 373 (Mackenzie, *The Missouri Indians*, 1804), Carver, *op. cit.* pp. 237-9.
518. *Ibid.*, pp. 240-1; Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 109.
519. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 372 (Mackenzie, *op. cit.*)
520. Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man*, p. 109.
521. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 531.
522. *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.
- 523 E. Grouard, *Mission de la Nativité* (Lake Athabaska) 14 Sept. 1862 (Arch. Arch.); W. C. Macleod, *The American Indian Frontier* London 1928: "The stoical and phlegmatic Indian is a myth. . . . At home, among friends, like

- his Chinese cousins, he was nervous, laughter-loving, emotional, and a passionate gambler."
524. Long, *Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter*, p. 65
525. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 319 (Grant, *op. cit.*): "Nothing, in their opinion, can be more derogatory to the character of a man than an abject adulation towards the fair sex."
526. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 372-3. (James Mackenzie's journal, 1799).
527. Hall and Boutwell, *op. cit.*
528. Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 322-3; Mgr Taché, *Esquisse*, p. 103.
529. Graham, "Observations, 1768." E 2/4, p. 17
530. N. Perrot (ed. Tailhan), p. 78.
531. Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 72-3
532. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 349, 366.
533. Thwaites, *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clarke Expedition*, II, pp. 283, 361, 365; Helen Crawford, "Sakakawea" (*N. D. Hist. Quart.*, I, 1926-7, n° 3, pp. 5-15); Seton, *op. cit.* (*Or. Hist. Quart.*, June 1935)
534. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-1.
535. *Ibid.*; Osgood, *Ethnography of the Great Bear Lake Indians*, p. 81; Godsell, *Red Hunters of the Snows*, pp. 141-3.
536. Father Le Jeune had already observed this spontaneous renunciation to the ethics of the tribe: "Lying comes naturally to them, not among themselves, but towards strangers." Thwaites, *Jes. Rel.*, VI, p. 246.
537. Graham, "Observations 1768." E 2/4, p. 25 v: "The small children who are brought up about the forts learn cursing, swearing and dirty language from the Europeans."
538. N. Perrot (ed. Tailhan), p. 77.
539. Graham, "Observations, 1771." E 2/7, p. 2 v. Below, p. 72, n.4.
540. *Ibid.* 68 E 2/4, p. 16 "Altho a jealous people amongst themselves, an Indian man will allow his wife to visit a European in hopes of getting a quart of English brandy, and should a child turn out from their guilty commerce, he not only takes care of it as his own, but is proud of it as also is the woman."
541. Hearne, *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort*, pp. 157-8.
542. B 60 a/22, p. 25v (1823-4): "They [the Plains Indians] do not a moment hesitate to cultivate an intimacy between their wives and our men. And when their property which they bring for trade is insufficient to purchase the articles of which they immediately stand in need, then they are most officious and have recourse to this most shameful kind of traffic. We however use our endeavours to prevent such dealings by punishing our people "
543. See above, p. 73, note 1.
544. E 2/1 p. 60 Isham, "Observations, 1743": "The French had formerly a settlement up River where native women were forced into against their will. Under cover of the night on a signal of their wives, husbands got in 8 French were massacred. Some of which Indians are now alive and have told me the same." See below, p. 284, note 8.
545. McLean, *Notes of a Twenty-Five Years Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory*, I, p. 135; Mgr Faraud, *Dix-huit ans chez les sauvages* Paris, 1866, pp. 344-5.
546. B 60 a/21 p. 7 (182-3), B 60 a/22, p. 40 (1823-4); B 60 c/1 Edmonton Report (1815)
547. B 60 a/22, p. 24v (1823-4) "Such is the propensity of the Plains tribes to theft that no threat nor anything could hinder them from committing depredations on us. You should hear how loudly they talk on behalf of honesty and how unanimous they are all in their cry against all thieves "

- 548 Graham, "Observations, 1779 " E 2/9, p. 61: "Thieving is so common among them that it is hardly reckoned as a crime. Therefore no resentment follows the commission of it."
- 549 Biggar, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier*, pp. 221-2.
- 550 Isham, "Observations, 1743 " E 2/1, pp. 52-52v: "They are a crafty sort of people, cheating, stealing and lying. . . ."
551. *Ibid.*, E 2/1, p. 55
552. *Ibid.*, E 2/11, p. 65v, Graham, "Observations, 1768 " E 2/4, p. 15; *ibid.*, 1771 E 2/7, p. 6. "The natives have a deal of cunning in their dealings with us. All their schemes are tending to get from us whatever they can."
- 553 Graham, "Observations 1768 " E 2/4, pp. 18-19. "They will not do us the least service without a return, not even the sea-shore natives who are supported by us are (?) paid for hunting and carrying letters from fort to fort."
554. B 3/1/57, p. 3 (1764-5): "The green scalps of the unhappy wretches they murdered are presented as a trophy of their valour and they demand rewards for killing those they call our enemies."
555. B 39 c/1, p. 50. Simpson's Athabaska Report, May 1821.
556. McLean, *op. cit.*, I, p. 135, 138
557. Birket-Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-9.
- 558 B 39 c/1, pp. 32-3 Simpson's Athabaska Report, 1821; B 39 c/6, p. 3 Athabaska Report, 1823-4, McLean, *op. cit.*, I, p. 135, Hearne, *op. cit.*, pp. 299-300
- 559 Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 325 (Grant, *op. cit.*). B 105 e/6, p. 7 Rany Lake Report, 1825-6; B 60 c/1. Edmonton Report, 1815.
- 560 D 4/25, p. 170 v G. Simpson London, 18 Sept. 1840 "I have never known any Indian sufficiently staunch who could not be influenced by an extra blanket."
- 561 J. Macdonell (?), *Lake Athabaska and the Chipewyan*, 1793 (Masson Coll., McGill Univ.)
562. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, pp. 89-92 (Correspondence Wentzell, 1807) In 1634, Father Le Jeune noted, among the peoples of New France, this dissolution of the native culture in contact with that of the whites. *Jes. Ret.*, VI, p. 232 *et seq.*
563. B 60 1/22, pp. 40-1 (1823-4).
- 564 Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 89, D. Thompson's Papers Provincial Archives Toronto Book 17, I Cowie, *The Company of Adventurers A Narrative of 7 Years in the Service of the Hudson's Bay Co.* (1867-74). Toronto, 1913, pp. 19, 194-5.
565. Long, *op. cit.*, p. 65.
566. J. Macdonell (?), *Lake Athabaska*, 1793 (Masson Coll.)
- 567 Petitot, *Monographie des Déné-Dindjê*, p. 31.
- 568 Graham, "Observations, 1771," E 2/7, p. 6 v "A good word, a smile, a mark of attention, interest or respect attached them [the Indians] . . . for ever." Petitot, *Autour du Grand Lac des Esclaves*, p. 329
569. B 60 2/22, p. 41 (1823-4).
570. B 39 3/9, p. 6v (1825-6): "The Chipewyans are . . . morose and stubborn when roughly treated, though open to reason and conviction when leniently treated."
571. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, pp. 372-3 Mackenzie, *The Missouri Indians*, 1805: "I believe that whoever has studied the Indians and the nature of their passions must have been struck with their versatility." Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 722-3.
572. Hearne, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

- 573 Champlain, *Voyages*, 1632. Part 1, p. 156 *et seq.*, pp. 254-70: "They are not warriors, and in any case they want neither discipline nor correction and do only whatever seems good to them" (p. 258). Ed. Biggar, III, p. 71.
- 574 L. A. Tohill, "Robert Dickson: British Fur Trader on the Upper Mississippi" (*N.D.H. Quart.*, 1928-9, III, n° 2, p. 103), *A.N.C. 11A*, XXIX, p. 441. Rapport du Sieur d'Aigremont, 14 Nov. 1708.
- 575 Boas, *op. cit.*, pp. 106, 109.
- 576 B 60 2/22, p. 24v (1823-4).
- 577 J. Macdonell (?), *Lake Athabaska*, 1793 (Masson Coll.).
- 578 Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. 149; B 89 c/1. Isle a la Cross Report, 1822-3: "The Cree tribe is of a much more lively disposition, less robust, provident, enterprising or industrious, they are sociable, fickle, fond of gambling to excess."
579. There can be no question here, however, of a general law. The Hares, despite the difficulties of their existence, are represented as "alert and loquacious," in contrast to the Dene tribes established in their neighborhood. Petotot, *Quinze ans sous le cercle polaire*, 1889, p. 32.
580. Mgr Taché, *Esquisse*, pp. 95, 99.
581. Isham, "Observations, 1743," pp. 33 v - 34: "They [the Northern Indians] are not of that ambitious nature of the Indians to the South, dressing very plain, seldom trading any finery, only necessities for life."
- 582 One cannot attribute these transformations with certainty to the difficulties of existence. The Beaver, despite their easier life, despise, according to George Simpson, all finery and decoration (B 39 c/1, p. 50. Simpson's Athabaska report, May 1821) while the Loucheux of the Yukon, less well off than the Beavers, possess a very lively taste for them. At the same time, the relations which the latter people maintain with the peoples of the oceanic slope may explain this apparent anomaly. On the other hand, Thompson (*op. cit.*, p. 206) shows us the populations of the Swan River renouncing their customary feasts, ear-rings, and wampum necklaces under the influence of growing poverty, which would confirm the preceding hypothesis.
583. Thwaites, *Jes. Rel.*, VI, pp. 105, 282, P. Boucher, *Histoire véritable et naturelle des moeurs et productions de la Nouvelle France*, Paris, 1664, pp. 52, 61, 64.
584. Isham, "Observations, 1743" E 2/1, p. 58, B 42 a/24, p. 15v 18 Nov 1742: "The Indians being drunk last night quarrelled. One had his nose and ear bitten off and the first joint of one finger." Long, *op. cit.*, p. 93; McLean, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 108-11, S. B. Steele, *Forty Years in Canada*, London, 1915, pp. 55-8, 77.
- 585 B 105 c/6, pp. 7-8. Rainy Lake District Report, 1825-6; Keating, *op. cit.*, II, p. 154.
586. Isham, "Observations, 1743" E 2/1, p. 64 v "It is a pity that liquor was introduced among them. It has been the cause of all their lewdness. Now there are some few that drink none, what may be called virtuous women. But there is no way to break them from it except to kill our fur trade." Franklin, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
587. Isham, *op. cit.*, E 2/1, p. 68 v, Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. cxxiv; J. Macdonell (?), *Lake Athabaska*, 1793 (Masson Coll.).
588. B 39 c/1, p. 50. Simpson's Athabaska Report, 1821.
589. Graham, "Observations, 1768," E 2/4, pp. 80-1 "The native brandy kills many before the young ones grow to maturity. Indeed they are so degenerated as scarcely to be able to endure their native labours and climate."

- 590 *Ibid.*, "Observations, 1771 " E 2/7, p. 8 v. "The natives live to a good old age, and for the most part retain all their senses to the last hour. I wish I could say the same of the natives who harbour near our settlements. They have become so meagre, small and indolent through drunkenness that they are scarcely able to bear the hardships of the country."
- 591 "Observations, 1771." E 2/7, p. 81 v.
- 592 Isham "Observations, 1743" E 2/1, p. 50, Graham. "Observations, 1771 " E 2/7, p. 35 "An Indian brings in his canoe 100 M B, trades enough to get every necessary. The other 30 beaver he does not know what to do with. To my urging to trade more powder, he answers he had traded enough to live on till summer. So he trades brandy and baubles " Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80.
593. *Ibid.*; Isham, "Observations," E 2/1, p. 51.
- 594 J. Macdonell (?) Lake Athabaska, 1793 (Masson Coll.).
- 595 Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 723.
- 596 D 4/92, p. 26-26 v. Simpson's report York Factory, July 1828; B 239 b/52, pp. 18-20 P. Turnor to the Council (York Factory), York Fy 9 July 1792 "few moose and buffalo to be procured as the Chipewyans are not fond of liquor."
- 597 Macleod, *The American Indian Frontier*, pp. 41-2.
- 598 Coues, *New Light*, I, pp. 167, 225, 228, 276; Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 315, R. G. Ferguson, "Some Light Thrown on Infection, Resistance and Segregation by a Study of Tuberculosis among Indians " (*Trans. of the American Clinical and Climatological Association*, 1934), Charles H. A. Walton. "A Study of the Racial Incidence of Tuberculosis in the Province of Manitoba for the Year 1932 (Memorandum)."
- 599 B 39 c/1, p. 50 Simpson's Athabaska Report, May 1821, Keating, *Narrative of Long's Expedition* II, pp. 161-2, Skinner, *Notes on Eastern Cree and Northern Saulteaux*, p. 161.
- 600 Graham, "Observations, 1768 " E 2/4 p. 23. "[They] are subject to several disorders, chiefly consumption and swelling and breaking out in lumps in and about the neck (sometimes the wounds are dry and hard, at other times they are soft and discharge a watery matter. This never attacks young people as the King's evil does)."
601. Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. cxxiv; Hearne, *op. cit.*, p. 320
- 602 Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. 35, Masson, *Bourgeois*, I p. 85 (Correspondence of Wentzel, 1807).
603. B 60 e/3, p. 6 v. Edmonton Report, 1819-20, B 89 a/4, pp. 11-12, 22 Oct. 1819. In 1751, the journal of Prince of Wales Fort notes the appearance of measles among the natives, "a disorder never known among them before " B 42 a/36, p. 65.
- 604 B 39 c/1, p. 15. Simpson's Athabaska Report, 1821.
605. D 5/18, p. 13. R. Mackenzie to G. Simpson York Factory, 12 July 1846. "The whites are not generally affected yet. But both the Indians and half-caste races are at this time widely under its influence " D 4/27, p. 342. D. Manson to G. Simpson Vancouver 20 Apr. 1853. "The smallpox is sweeping off the Indian population . . ." *Ibid.*, p. 240, "For the last fifteen years it has already taken off two thirds of the remainder of the Indian population." A 10/2, p. 242. P. Fidler to London. Norway Ho., 12 Aug. 1820 "Measles and chincough have been introduced last spring . . . from the Grand Depot of the NWC^o on Lake Superior. As it was expected that the small pox might be introduced from the same great numbers of the

- halt breed children have been inoculated ' *Annales des Sœurs de Charité de l'Hôpital Général de Saint-Boniface*, 1, pp. 145-6. Letter from Sister Lagrave, 1846.
606. J. Bryce, *The Relations of the Advanced and Backward Races of Mankind* (Oxford, 1902, p. 10).
607. Thompson *op. cit.*, pp. 318-19, 322-3, 336-7; B 239 a/80, pp. 71-3 (July 1782); Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 251; Morton, *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-1*, London, n.d., pp. 330-3.
608. D 5/4, p. 358. J. Rowand to G. Simpson. Edmonton Ho., 28 Dec. 1837; D 5/5, pp. 88-9; *Ibid.*, 5 Jan. 1839. "I suppose that three fourths of the Blackfeet have fallen victims to the epidemic."
609. D 5/5, p. 49. Hudson's Bay Ho., 1 June 1838. "We are sending to each of the factories packets of vaccine matter. . . ." D 4/23, p. 164v. G. Simpson to J. Keith, London, 12 June 1838.
610. D 5/37, p. 98. P. S. Ogden to G. Simpson, Fort Pelly, 5 Feb. 1857; A. M. Carr-Saunders, *World Population* (Oxford, 1936, pp. 236, 197).
611. See above, note 605; D 5/21, p. 484. P. S. Ogden to G. Simpson, Vancouver, 16 Mar. 1848. "Last fall more than 3,000 American citizens arrived from St. Louis, introducing the measles among the Indians. In a fit of desperation the Indians attacked the American mission at Waulatpoo near Walla Walla. . . ."
612. D 4/102, pp. 12-13. Medical report. York Factory, 31 Aug. 1835.
613. D 4/92, p. 26. Simpson's Report. York Factory, 10 July 1828, D 5/21, p. 54. Edmonton, 5 Jan. 1848. J. E. Harriott to G. Simpson. "The Indians were attacked by severe influenza in december, which slackened their operations. . . ." D 5/48, pp. 111-14. G. Deschambault to G. Simpson. "The hooping cough has now dissappeared after making havoc for two years among us. . . . An influenza of the worst kind is now raging." B 239 a/126, p. 31v, June 1819.
614. Wissler, *An Introduction to Social Anthropology*, p. 37.
615. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 252.
616. Pitt-Rivers, *The Clash of Culture and Contact of Races*, pp. 122, 224, 270-1.
617. *Ibid.*
618. D. Jenness, "The Indian's Interpretation of Man and Nature" (*T.R.S.C.* 3d series, sect. II, 1930, pp. 57-62); J. W. Powell, "Philosophy of the North American Indians" (*Journal of the Am. Geogr. Soc.*, New York, VIII, 1876, pp. 251-68).
619. Thompson, *Narrative of His Explorations*, p. 204; Osgood, *op. cit.*, p. 81; Birket-Smith, *Contributions to Chipewyan Ethnology*, p. 79.
620. Jenness, "Indian's Interpretation. . . .", *ibid.*, *Indians of Canada*, p. 171; Wissler, *The Relation of Nature to Man in Aboriginal America*. New York, 1926, pp. 90-1; Boas, *op. cit.*, pp. 198, 205.
621. Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, pp. 173-4; Peutot, *Exploration de la region du Grand Lac des Ours*, p. 15.
622. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 129; Osgood, *Ethnography of the Great Bear Lake Indians*, p. 81.
623. B 60 a/26, p. 33. "March 11 1829 [Our men] had two buffalo calves alive. Passing a camp of Blood Indians, one of these Indians kills the animals. . . . They are such brutes and so superstitious that they imagine by trading or giving away any of those animals alive, it will be the cause of drawing off from their lands the whole species."
624. Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 68; Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 173.

- 625 Jenness, *Sarcee of Alberta*, pp. 68-9; Godsell, *Red Hunters of the Snows*, pp. 131-2; W. H. H. Rivers, *Dreams and Primitive Culture* Manchester, 1917-18, pp. 11, 13.
- 626 Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 362.
- 627 Pelhot, "Sur quelques mots d'Asie Centrale, III, Chaman" (*Journal Asiatique*, Paris, Mar.-Apr. 1913, p. 466).
- 628 Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 178, Skinner, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-7, 156-60.
- 629 Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 180.
- 630 McLean, *op. cit.*, I, p. 99.
- 631 R. Grousset, *L'Empire des Steppes* Paris, 1939, pp. 249-50.
- 632 Skinner, *op. cit.*, pp. 59, 68, 73.
- 633 Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-66.
- 634 B 3 a/47, p. 8 v "Oct. 18 1754. Last night our Indian hunters came and said they had seen an Indian run up alongshore who was not of their tribe and seemed to be the devil whitico. They were so frightened that I admitted them within the palisades for the night." The Dene are equally subject to superstitious terrors: provoked by the fear of death, "the torture of hunger" becomes personified by them in "an imaginary enemy," yet they are not so constantly haunted by it as the Cree are by the Witigo, Petitot, *Monographie des Déné-Dindjée*, p. 32.
- 635 Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 170.
- 636 *Ibid.*, p. 171.
- 637 *Ibid.*, p. 183; *ibid.*, *Sarcee of Alberta*, pp. 68-9.
- 638 *Ibid.*, *Indians of Canada*, pp. 27, 161.
- 639 *Ibid.*, p. 316. This was especially so with the Blackfoot.
- 640 Thompson, *Narrative of His Explorations*, p. 348.
- 641 *Ibid.*, p. 417.
- 642 B 104 3/6, pp. 7-8. Rainy Lake Report, 1825-6.
- 643 Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 171.
- 644 *Ibid.*, p. 281.
- 645 *Ibid.*, p. 183.
- 646 *Ibid.*, p. 387, Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. cxix; J. Macdonell (?) Lake Athabaska, 1793 (Masson Coll.).
- 647 Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, p. 165.
- 648 *Ibid.*, p. 167.
- 649 *Ibid.*, pp. 165-6.
- 650 Denmore, *Chippewa customs*, p. 87.
- 651 Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 309; Pitt-Rivers, *The Clash of Culture and the Contact of Races*, London, 1927, p. 151.

PART II:

THE PENETRATION OF THE WHITE RACE

Chapter Three: The Southern Current

- 1 Mss de l'Isle A. D. C. M., 115-x (Le Sueur aux Natchez, 4 Apr. 1700), pp. 46, 48; P. Margry, *Découvertes et établissements dans l'Ouest et dans le sud de l'Amérique septentrionale*, Paris, 1879-88, II, p. 330, VI, pp. 21-3.
- 2 J. Nicolet had in 1634 reached Lake Michigan and Green Bay (J. B. Brebner, *The Explorers of North America* London, 1933, p. 188, Butterfield, *History of the Discovery of the North-West by Jean Nicolet in 1634*, Cincinnati, 1881, pp. 37-71, C.H.B.E., Canada; Shortt and Doughty,

Canada and Its Provinces, I, pp. 60-1, Thwaites, *Jes. Rel.*, XXIII, pp. 274-6, XVIII, pp. 227-32.) During their expeditions from 1654 to 1660 Radisson and Groseillers, crossing Green Bay, completed the observations of Nicolet on the peoples verging on the basin of the Mississippi and reached the southern shore of Lake Superior, which was already frequented by anonymous explorers. (*Canada in C.H.B.L.*, p. 44, *Canada and Its Provinces*, I, pp. 74-6; Brebner, *op. cit.*, pp. 228-31, B. Sulte, "Les coureurs de bois au lac Supérieur," *T.R.S.C.*, 3rd series, 1911, sect. 1, p. 249 *et seq.*, Radisson, *Voyages* (Scull), p. 137, Thwaites, *Jes. Rel.*, XLII, pp. 218-62, XLIV, pp. 244-8, XLV, p. 160, XLVI, p. 68, Goodrich and Nute, *The Radisson Problem*, Minn. Hist., XIII, Sept. 1932, p. 251 *et seq.*

The Jesuits soon followed the same route. In 1665, Father C. Allouez established in the little bay of Chagouamigon a mission complementing that of Sault Ste. Marie; thence the intendant Talon hoped to establish the base of a French empire that would reach as far as the "Vernilion or Southern Sea" (Thwaites, *Jes. Rel.*, XLIX, pp. 240-8, L, pp. 286-96 LI, pp. 26-72 260 A N, C II A-3, pp. 81, 96v, 162-3; Margry, *Découvertes*, I, pp. 87-93, *Canada and Its Provinces*, I, pp. 81-2; C.H.B.L., p. 74, J. Winsor, *Cartier to Frontenac*, London, 1894, p. 230 E.

In 1671, the Jesuits founded, at the farthest end of Green Bay, a new mission (*Jes. Rel.*, LIV, pp. 196, 216-24, LV, pp. 184, 220-2, LVI, pp. 120-46) and, in 1673, Joliet and Father Marquette reached from there the shores of the Mississippi (*Jes. Rel.*, LVIII-LIX, Bacqueville de la Potherie, *Histoire de l'Amérique septentrionale*, Paris 1753, II, p. 130; Borgia Steck, *The Joliet-Marquette Expedition*, Glendale, 1928).

For an account of all these first expeditions, see D. Pasquet, *Histoire politique et sociale du peuple américain*, Paris, 1924, I, p. 16 *et seq.* G. I. Jaray, *L'Empire français d'Amérique*, Paris, 1938.

- 3 Margry, *Découvertes*, II, p. 330 (La Barre to Colbert, Nov. 1683)
4. *Ibid.*, p. 88 (Memoir from Talon to King, 10 Nov. 1670); *ibid.*, VI, pp. 59-67, 81; Mss de l'Isle A.D.C.M. Le Sueur, 4 Apr. 1700), A N C II E-13, pp. 155-6 (Etat des Services de M. de La Ronde Denis), *ibid.*, C II A-10, p. 12v (Denonville Quebec, 6 Nov. 1688), Thwaites, *Jes. Rel.*, IV, p. 340; V, pp. 322-6.
5. *Ibid.*, XLII, p. 218 *et seq.* XLIV, pp. 244-8.
6. *Ibid.*, LV, p. 94; LIX, p. 108.
7. Margry, *Découvertes*, XLV, pp. 236-8; Brebner, *Explorer*, pp. 232-3.
- 8 C II A-3, (A-N), p. 81 Talon to Colbert, 10 Nov. 1670; C II A-4 (A N), p. 5 Letter of Father Nouvel, Jesuit, at Ste. Marie du Sault, 29 May 1673: "The English have already created a great diversion of the savages from the area around Lake Superior." C II A-6 (A.N.), p. 61 Lefebvre de la Barre, 12 Nov. 1682, Winsor, *Cartier to Frontenac*, pp. 202-3 Regarding the enterprises of the Hudson's Bay Company, see below, Chapter 4.
- 9 Margry, *Découvertes*, VI, pp. 30-1 Dulhut to Frontenac, 5 Apr. 1679
10. The post figures on the map made by the Baron de Lahontan, *Nouveaux Voyages*, The Hague, 1703, I, under the title of Fort Dulhut or Camanistigay. H. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, p. 47.
- 11 Margry, *op. cit.*, VI (introd., p. vii). In fact, Dulhut's letters mention neither a post on the Kaministiquia River nor on Nipigon River or the lake of the same name. Nevertheless, L. J. Burpee gives the date of 1678 for the construction of the fort that must have been built in the neighborhood of the future Fort William (*Canada and Its Provinces*, I, pp. 104-6), and which appeared on an anonymous map in 1723, prepared in accordance with the

- memoirs of J. de Catalogne (B D C.M. 4404B, Map 82) See also L. J. Burpee, *The Search for the Western Sea*, Part II, Chap. 1.
- 12 C 11 A-6 (A.N.), p. 301 Extract from the letter written by the sieur Du Lhut to Monsieur de la Barre, 10 Sept. 1684: "All the nations that are to the west of the northern sea have promised to be next spring at the fort I have made on the river La Manne at the bottom of Lake Alemepigon, and in the summer I shall make one in the country of the Cree that will bar them off completely. . . . For me to do what I have promised you it is necessary that my brother should return early this spring with two canoes filled with powder, shot, muskets, axes and tobacco. . . ." Dulhut thus declared that he himself established the post on the river La Manne (whose situation corresponded to the mouth of the Ombabika River - Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, p. 47; R. Douglas, *Nipigon to Winnipeg* (Ottawa, 1929, p. 7), whose foundation it is customary to attribute to his brother Claude Greysolon de la Tourette (*Canada and Its Provinces*, I, p. 105. Innis, *op. cit.*, p. 47) In fact, since the two brothers operated in the same region, a certain confusion must have come into being between their respective enterprises (the fort of La Manne River, designated under the name of Fort La Tourette in L. Franquelin's Map, 1688, B D C.M., 4040B, Map 68, figures under the name of "Fort of the Sieur Duluth" on P. Coronelli's map, 1668. B.D.C.M., 4404B, Map 7). It is difficult to say if a new post, the fort of the French, which has been located near the confluence of the Albany and Kenogami rivers, was constructed in 1685 (Innis, *op. cit.*, p. 47). Dulhut certainly announced his intention of establishing a post "in the country of the Cree," but one is unable to say whether he carried out his intention. L. A. Prudhomme ("La Baie d'Hudson," *M.S.R.C.*, 1909, sect. I, p. 3 *et seq.*), erroneously attributed the previously cited letter to Greysolon La Tourette.
 - 13 Ms. Margry (B.N.), F. F. Nouv. Acq. 9288, p. 278. Deliberation of the council of New France, 23 Aug. 1681, C 11 A-6 (A.N.), p. 284 La Barre, 9 July 1681.
 - 14 C 11 A-6 (A.N.), p. 471 v. Memoir presented in 1684
 - 15 C 11 A-6 (A.N.), p. 178. De Meulles. Quebec, 4 Nov. 1683
 - 16 C 11 A-7 (A.N.), p. 103. Denonville, 13 Nov. 1685.
 - 17 C 11 E-16 (A.N.), pp. 13-14. Vaudreuil and Begon, 12 Nov. 1716
 - 18 C 11 E-16 (A.N.J.), pp. 13-14.
 - 19 Margry, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 21-2. It is in the course of his expedition in the country of the Sioux (1680) that he collects the first information relating to the habitat and way of life of the Assiniboine (Margry, *op. cit.* I, p. 483).
 - 20 Margry, VI, pp. 21-2, 29-31.
 - 21 C 11 E-16 (A.N.), p. 7v. Memoire from Dulhut to Seignelay, 1685
 - 22 Margry, VI, p. 6. 52, C 11 A-Y (A.N.), p. 138 (La Barre, 4 Nov. 1683). p. 178 (De Meulles, 4 Nov. 1683).
 - 23 "As I left Lake Almenigon, where I had given the presents necessary to prevent the savages from continuing to take their beavers to the English, I encountered the Sieur de la Croix with his two companions who handed me your despatches in which you instruct me to make every effort to get your letters to Sieur Chouart on the Nelson River. It was to execute your orders that Monsieur Pere went there himself, the savages having all scattered over the countryside to gather their berries. The said Monsieur Pere who has been gone for the whole month of August will have delivered your letters to Sieur Chouart." C 11 A-6 (A.N.), p. 301, Du Lhut to Monsieur de la Barre, 10 Sept. 1684.
 - 24 A 6/1, pp. 77, 102-3, 120-1. Correspondence of the Hudson's Bay Com-

- pany relative to the enterprises of the French on the shore of Hudson Bay
- 25 B D C M., 4040B, No. 6-6b (L. Franquehn's maps, 1686-8) The "Bourbon river" (Nelson River) is here directly linked with Lake Nipigon. Evidently this name has been given to a river belonging to the basin of the Albany River, which would explain the illusion which the governor harbored of easy communication between Lake Superior and Port Nelson. See Fig. 1.
 - 26 Burpee, *The Discovery of Canada*, p. 41, Plate 8.
 - 27 On Pere's stay at Fort Albany, see Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp. 98, 104.
 - 28 C 11 E-16 (A.N.), p. 14. Vaudreuil and Bégon, 12 Nov. 1716.
 - 29 A 6/2, pp. 7-9. London, 2 June 1688. To Governor Geyer at Port Nelson, *ibid.*, p. 20. London, 16 June 1688. To Captain J. Marsh.
 - 30 A 6/2, p. 8, *loc. cit.*
 - 31 Margry, *op. cit.*, V, p. 66, C11 A-15 (A.N.), p. 129. Champigny, 13 Oct. 1697.
 - 32 F 3-2 (A.N.), p. 10. Memoir of De La Chesnaye, 1697; Margry, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 82-6; E 1/1, p. 46, "Relation du voyage (de Radisson). . . es années 1682 et 1683 (H.B.C.)"; Radisson, *Voyages*, ed. Scull, p. 315 *et seq.*
 - 33 Margry, *op. cit.*, pp. 52, 514-17; B 3 a/30, p. 50 (June 1741). "When they go they beg for some victuals as they cried they were starved in coming. . . ."; B 3 a/34, p. 40 (May 1743).
 - 34 H. Lorin, *Le Comte de Frontenac*. Paris 1895, Chap. 2-5.
 - 35 C 11 a-31 (A.N.), p. 17 v. Vaudreuil and Raudot, 2 Nov. 1710; Lorin, *op. cit.*, pp. 450-2.
 - 36 A 6/2, p. 106. London, 30 May 1696. To Gov. Knight and Council, Albany: "Although the French are settled in York Factory, basely surrendered to them October 4 1694."
 - 37 Margry, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 14.
 - 38 Mss de l'Isle, 115-X. De l'Isle to Bobé, missionary priest at Versailles, 1718. "I have sent off, in the month of July last, Sieur de la Noue . . . with the instructions to establish a post on the River Camanistigoya, which discharges into Lake Superior on the northern shore. . . ."
 - 39 C 11 A-35 (A.N.) p. 22, Ramezay and Bégon, 7 Nov. 1715. "We learn that a hundred Frenchmen, who found their way furtively to Michilimackinac two years ago, after having used up the merchandise confided to them by the merchants, have proceeded to the Thamarois on the Mississippi River, where 47 of them are already established." N. Jérémie, "Relation du Detroit et de la Baie d'Hudson" (J. F. Bernard, *Recueil de voyages au Nord*, V, pp. 418-20). Reproduced in the *Bulletin de la Soc. Hist. de Saint-Boniface*, II, 1912. The translation of it that has been published by R. Douglas and J. B. Wallace, "Twenty Years of York Factory," contains some interesting notes.
 - 40 B D.C M., 4044 B, n° 11.
 - 41 C 11 A-31 (A.N.), p. 17v. Vaudreuil and Raudot, 2 Nov. 1710.
 - 42 B 3 a/1, p. 43 (Apr. 1706); B 3 a/2, p. 28 (May 1707), B 3 a/4, p. 26, 28, 34-5 (12 Apr. 1713). "Two Indians come from the southward . . . report that the French and Indians in a great number will be here early in the summer that they are now on their journey. . . ."
 - 43 A 6/3, p. 245: Instructions to Capt. James Knight.
 - 44 A 6/4, p. 13. York Factory, 28 June 1715. J. Knight to R. Staunton. "I found a most miserable place, all the Factory run to ruin, the houses and covering all rotten and fallen in." A 9/4, p. 78. To the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, 3 Oct. 1750.

45. C 11 A-45 (A.N.), p. 152. Vaudreuil, 11 Oct. 1723.
46. A 11/1, p. 27 Th. Macklisch to London, 16 July 1716: "It is certain the French began their new settlement up this river last summer and have built two houses . . . " B 3 a/9, p. 11 14 May 1716: "One canoe of French Indians came here to trade down this river Told me there is thirty canoes of French Indians coming to destroy us . . . I had this report last fall and this spring. . . ."
47. B 3 a/9, pp. 12, 22, 30. (28 June 1716, 17–18 June 1717, 17 May 1718)
48. A 11/72, p. 13 J. Knight to London, York Factory, 17 Sept. 1716; B 239 a/2, p. 59; 3 June 1716. "The Mountain Indians . . . said that, if they had not come here, they could have gone to the Sea Lake as they call it, which lies about south from their country, where are several settlements of the French woodrunners."
49. D 4/91, pp. 9–10. Simpson's Report. Moose Factory, 5 Sept. 1827.
50. A 11/1, p. 34 v. Th. Macklisch to London, 12 Sept. 1716; Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp. 157–8.
51. C 11 E-16 (A.N.), p. 20. Vaudreuil and Bégon, 12 Nov. 1716; Margry, *op. cit.*, Vol. VI, pp. 514–17;.
52. B 3 1/13, p. 30, 17 June 1725. "Three canoes come down the river . . . They say the French have told abroad among the natives that our ship, the last fall, was lost outwardbound and all her goods, which has been a great hindrance to our trade this spring."
53. B 239 a/2, p. 50, 54, 59: June–Sept. 1716; B 239 a/3, p. 58: 25 June 1717. The Indians who accomplished this useless journey are designated in the journal of York Factory under the name of "Mountain Indians" (B239 a/2, p. 50). They appear to correspond to the "Northern Sinnoe Poets," which the same journal mentions in 1717 (b239 a/3, 58v), which leads us to identify them with the Assiniboine.
54. B239 a/3, p. 58 v, *loc. cit.*
55. C11 E-16 (A.N.), pp. 13–14 Vaudreuil and Bégon, 12 Nov. 1716.
56. C11 E-16 (A.N.), p. 79. Pachot. Memoire for establishment of Tekkamamiouen and Scious, 1718–19; Jérémie, "Relation du Détroit . . .," pp. 418–20.
57. C11 E-16 (A.N.), Beauharnais and Hocquart, 10 Oct. 1731. The enterprise (of de la Vêrendrye) will go slowly "if one gives a little reflection to the measures that will have to be taken to protect oneself among nations to whom one is unaccustomed . . ."
58. Mss de l'Isle, A.D.C.M. 115-X. Letter of G. de l'Isle to M. Bobé, 1818; C11 E-16, pp. 36–8 Vaudreuil and Bégon, 20 Oct. 1717, C 11 A 37 pp. 37–9, Conseil de Marine, 7 Dec. 1717 (report on the correspondence of Vaudreuil and Bégon relative to the "discovery of the Western Sea")
59. Mss de l'Isle, *loc. cit.*
60. C11 A-39 (A.N.), pp. 111–12. Vaudreuil and Bégon, 11 Nov. 1718
61. B 239 a/5, p. 52: 12 June 1719: "Sixty canoes came down this river . . . and they all verify the report of the French being settled at a certain lake Thueummawmewan, and that their chief is called by the Indians Moosoooh. They are about 40 and there will come to them next year about 100 more, and after that they tell the Indians they will come here and drive us into the sea."
62. C11 A-43 (A.N.), pp. 101–2, Vaudreuil, 4 Nov. 1720.
63. Mss de l'Isle, *loc. cit.*, Margry, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 508–9; B 3 1/9, p. 30 v: 17 May, 1718.
64. C11 A-39 (A.N.), pp. 111–12 Vaudreuil and Bégon, 11 Nov. 1718, C 11 E-16 (A.N.), p. 94. La Noue. Quebec, 15 Oct. 1721.

65. C11 A-39 (A.N.), p. 84 Vaudreuil and Bégon 26 Oct. 1719; Margry, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 508-9.
66. C11 A-43 (A.N.), p. 99; Vaudreuil, 4 Nov. 1720
67. *Ibid.*
68. B 239 a/5, pp. 51-2 York Fort, 2 June 1719: "Eight canoes of Uplanders came down. . . They tell me the French woodrunners are very brief up in the Lakes and that they invited some of the Mountain Indians to come and trade with them. So they sent some of their young men to try. But Poetucks came . . . and destroyed most of them." 12 June 1719: "Sixty canoes came down . . . of Stone Indians and Uplanders from Red Deer River, and they all verifie the report of the French being settled at a certain lake Thucum-mavmewan (Rainy Lake)."
69. Mss de l'Isle, 15-X, p. 57. Le Sueur, from Natchez, 4 Apr. 1700: "The Cree call all the Sioux Poelles, which means soldiers or warriors . . . and the word Assinipoils in the Cree language means soldiers or warriors of the stone village."
70. B 239 a/5, p. 51 (2 June 1719).
71. B 3 1/9, p. 30 v Albany, 17 May 1718: "Two canoes of Upland Indians came to trade. They informed me that a nation of Indians called Poets has destroyed a great number of their countrymen that frequented this place, the said Poets being encouraged by the French to destroy the said Indians." The Sioux were at war with the Indians of Carp Lake, halfway between James Bay and Lake Nipigon. C11 A-97 (A.N.), p. 97 *et seq.*: La Jonquière, Quebec, Oct. 1751.
72. C11 A-43 (A.N.), pp. 101-4. Vaudreuil, 4 Nov. 1720. Marc de Villiers, *La Louisiane: histoire de son nom et de ses frontières successives*. Paris, 1929, pp. 45-6.
73. C11 A-43 (A.N.), pp. 101-5: *loc. cit.*, Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*. Paris, 1744, vol. III, pp. 310-12.
74. C11 E-16 (A.N.), p. 94. La Noue. Quebec, 15 Oct. 1721.
75. *Ibid.*
76. C11 E-13 (S.N.), p. 140 *et seq.*, "Estat des soldats destachés dans les postes Outaouas vers 1723-5"; C11 A-45 (A.N.), p. 353. "Estat des permissions accordées par. . . Vaudreuil aux officiers et voyageurs . . .," 1722
77. C11 A-45 (A.N.), p. 1664. Vaudreuil, 11 Sept. 1723.
78. A 11/72, p. 48. Th. Macklish to London, 8 Aug. 1728: "Our kettles are not fit for the Indians, being thin and eared with tender old brass that will not bear their weight when full of liquid."
79. C11 E-16 (A.N.), p. 144. Beauharnais, 15 Oct. 1732, A 11/72, p. 48, *loc. cit.*
80. *Ibid.*, B 239 a/11, p. 18v 12 June 1729.
81. A 11/72, p. 48, *loc. cit.*
82. B 239 a/11, p. 18v 12 June 1729: "I understand by several of our home Indians that last Summer the Poetts went to warrs with our Senipoetts and drove our Senipoetts as far as the head of Churchill River, and that the said Senipoetts are gone to Churchill this Summer to trade, which we are glad to hear of the same. we being informed . . . this Summer that the abovesaid poetts had destroyed most of our Senipoetts by the instigation of the French. It is much to be wished for that our masters could prevent the French constant encouraging of the above said Poetts going to warr with most of the Indians that resort to this place, likewise with those that go to Albany Fort, we have been informed by most of the upland Indians this Summer that eight woodrunners went to warr last Summer with the Poetts against our Sinepoetts with a design to destroy them or force them to trade with them."

A 11/72, p. 53. Th. Macklish to London, 1 Aug. 1729: "On the 3rd August 1728, 350 cannoes at least of our Upland Indians met at the place appointed to war against the Poets and when in sight of their enemy and understanding that eight French woodrunners headed them almost half of our Indians returned towards their families. Several of them, man, woman, child were barbarously murdered."

We are inclined to see in the Poets and the Senipoints of the English texts the Sioux and the Assiniboine. The conflict of the epoch of La Noue was thus prolonged into the years preceding the entry of La Vérendrye on the scene, and it is in this way that we tend to interpret the events related in the Journal of York Factory. At the same time, the theatre of operations here reported is too far away from the territory of the Sioux for one to be able to see in these conflicts with any certainty a simple reproduction of earlier wars. It is possible that we are concerned with quarrels localized in the area around Lake Winnipeg, as suggests Professor Morton, for whom the Poets are the Assiniboine (*op. cit.*, pp. 160-2). But it is difficult then to identify the group or tribe which corresponds to the Senipoints, whom J. Isham, in 1743, formally identifies with the Stone Indians or Assiniboine (E2/2, p. 2v). The term could hardly be applied to the Cree, the tribe established in this sector, on the borders of Assiniboine. Besides, the latter figure among the clients of York Factory (B239 1/5, p. 52). One would consequently hesitate to see in them the aggressors against the Indians frequenting the post on Hudson Bay.

83. B 239 a/13, p. 24 v. 8 June 1732.

84. B 3 a/18, 16 May 1730.

85. B 3 1/20, p. 14, 25, 3 Feb. 17 June 1732, B 3 a/21, p. 17 10 May 1733. "The Strange Indians informed me that several of the French Canadians . . . have several places well fortified . . . and are well stored with all trading goods for the natives and have drawn most part of those Indians to them that used to come here to trade, for they are in the way that those Indians that used to come here, and if they will not trade with them willingly they compel them." B 3 a/22, p. 27, 29, May 1734 B 3 a/26, p. 69 2 Aug. 1738. "Two Indians who were out hunting came to the fort, saying they had seen a large canoe with a great many men in her, about six miles to the southward, and went very near them in the middle of the night, that they could distinguish them having caps on like the French, and a long stick or mast with a flag. I called back our twelve men who were in the wood, to come home with the longboat as quick as possible, and I doubled the watch." A 11/1, p. 74 l. Adames to London, 14 Aug. 1732; *ibid.*, p. 77, 31 July 1733; *ibid.*, p. 81, 12 Aug. 1734.

86. A 11/72, p. 48 v. Th. Macklish to London, 8 Aug. 1728.

87. *Ibid.*, p. 46; *ibid.*, p. 57; *ibid.*, 16 Aug. 1730; *ibid.*, p. 60; *ibid.*, Aug. 1731; L. Burpee, *Journals and Letters of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de La Vérendrye and His Sons* (Champlain Soc., Toronto, 1927), pp. 56-7.

88. A 11/72, p. 64. Th. Macklish to London, 17 Aug. 1732

89. *Ibid.*

90. *Ibid.*, B 239 a/14, 16 June 1732. "24 canoes of Shusuhannah Indians and Sinepoets came here to trade, by whom I understand that most of the Sturgeon Indians are gone to the French to trade and will not be here next year, and that the French woodrunners came this last Winter among most of our Upland Indians and threatened to proclaim war provided they did not come and traded with them." C11 E-16 (A.N.), p. 144 Beauharnais, 15 Oct. 1732.

91. On the presumed sites of the positions occupied by the French Canadians beyond Rainy Lake, see A. Morton, *op. cit.*, note p. 161.
92. La Vérendrye to Maurepas, 1 Aug. 1731 (Burpee, *op. cit.*, p. 70)
93. Burpee, *op. cit.*, Introduction. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 165.
94. Margry, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 545-56; Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 166.
95. Nipigon, Kamanistikwia, Michipicoton.
96. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 65 *et seq.*, Gonner (Père de). "Relation de la Découverte d'une grande rivière qui a flux et reflux . . .", p. 78. Beauharnais and Hocquart to Maurepas, 15 Oct. 1730, p. 83. Mémoire sur la découverte de la mer de l'Ouest, 23 Jan. 1731.
97. *Ibid.*, Maurepas to Beauharnais, 10 Apr. 1731, C 11 E-16 (A.N.), pp. 138-9; Beauharnais and Hocquart, 10 Oct. 1731.
98. *Ibid.*; F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, pp. 80-1. Beauharnais, 19 May 1731, pp. 97-8. Rapport du marquis de Beauharnais sur la découverte de la mer de l'Ouest, 28 Sept. 1733.
99. *Ibid.*, pp. 80-1, *loc. cit.*, p. 82. La Vérendrye Maurepas, 1 Aug. 1731.
100. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 78: *loc. cit.*; p. 83: *loc. cit.*, Morton, *The Journal of Duncan M'Gillivray*, p. xxx; *ibid.*, *Under Western Skies*. Toronto, 1937, p. 74.
101. C 11E-16 (A.N.), pp. 138-9. Beauharnais and Hocquart, 10 Oct. 1731.
102. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 82, *loc. cit.*, Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 169 *et seq.*
103. C11 E-16, pp. 138-9, *loc. cit.* The enterprise will go slowly "at least if one can judge from the measures that will have to be taken to get along with nations to whom one is not accustomed, and are perhaps embroiled and at war with each other." F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 65 *et seq.*
104. *Ibid.*, pp. 80-1, *loc. cit.*; pp. 194-7. "Memoir of the Sieur de la Vérendrye on the subject of the establishments needed to succeed in discovering the western sea," 31 Oct. 1744.
105. C11E-16 (A.N.), p. 234. Extract from the journal of the Sieur de la Vérendrye, Apr. 1741
106. C11E-16 (A.N.), p. 202. Beauharnais, 14 Oct. 1737.
107. The distance is 558 miles by way of the River Kaministkwia, 521 by way of the Pigeon River.
108. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 78. Beauharnais and Hocquart to Maurepas, 15 Oct. 1730; *ibid.*, p. 99. Beauharnais and Hocquart to Maurepas, 10 Oct. 1733.
109. *Ibid.*, p. 51 *et seq.* Memoir of the Sieur de la Vérendrye . . . (letter of 10 Oct. 1730). The "Cree chiefs report to me that they have been beyond the height of land to a great river that descends in the direction of the setting sun, and widens always in its descent, and that in this great river there are only two cascades about three days' journey from its source . . ."
110. *Ibid.*, p. 194 *et seq.* Memoir of the Sieur de la Vérendrye on the subject of the establishments needed to succeed in discovering the western Sea . . ., 31 Oct. 1744. C11E-16 (A.N.), p. 112: R. P. Guignas to Beauharnais. From Beauharnais among the Sioux, 29 May 1728; Margry, *Découvertes et établissements . . .* VI, p. 637.
111. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, pp. 100-1. La Vérendrye to Beauharnais, 11 May 1733
112. *Ibid.*; *ibid.*, p. 194 *et seq.*, *loc. cit.*
113. *Ibid.*, *ibid.*, p. 117. Beauharnais to Maurepas, 8 Oct. 1734; *ibid.*, p. 99, *loc. cit.*

114. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, pp 100-1, *loc. cit.*, *ibid.*, p. 104. "Memoir . . . of all that has taken place at Fort Saint-Charles . . ." (May 1733-July 1734)
115. *Ibid.*, pp 100-1; *ibid.*, p. 143. Memoir of the sieur de La Vérendrye . . . , 2 June 1736; *ibid.*, p. 195. Memoir of the sieur de La Vérendrye . . . , 31 Oct 1744
116. *Ibid.*, pp. 100-1, *loc. cit.*: "I am having plenty of wheat and peas sown . . ."; *ibid.*, p. 104, *loc. cit.*: "The sowing of a measure of peas, after having eaten them green for a long time, produced ten times as many, which I have had sown in the spring, following them with Indian corn "
117. *Ibid.*, p. 143 *et seq.*, 195, *loc. cit.*
118. *Ibid.*, p. 99, *loc. cit.*; *ibid.*, p. 194, *loc. cit.*
119. *Ibid.*, p. 194, *loc. cit.*
120. *Ibid.*, p. 105. "Memoir . . . of all that has taken place at Fort St Charles . . ." "The first of January 1734 . . . they [the Cree and Assiniboine chiefs] all came to a council with the French of the post. I ordered to be carried into the centre 30 pounds of powder, 40 pounds of shot, 200 musket flints, 30 fathoms of tobacco, 20 axes, 60 knives large and small, 60 combs, 60 awls, needles, vermilion. . . ." *Ibid.*, p. 143. Memoir of the sieur de La Vérendrye . . . , 2 June 1736
121. *Ibid.*, pp. 97-8. Report of the marquis de Beauharnais . . . , 28 Sept 1733
122. Burpee, *Journals and Letters*, p. 235.
123. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 104. "Memoir . . . of all that has taken place at Fort Saint Charles."
124. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 105 v, C 11E-16 (A.N.), pp 270-1. Beauharnais and Hocquart, 29 Oct. 1743.
125. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 122. Beauharnais to Maurepas. Quebec, 8 Oct. 1735
126. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 201.
127. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, pp. 144-5. Memoir of the sieur de La Vérendrye . . . , 2 June 1736.
128. Burpee, *Journals and Letters* . . . , p. 291
129. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 99. Beauharnais and Hocquart to Maurepas; 10 Oct 1733; *ibid.*, p. 108. La Verendrye to Beauharnais. Fort St Charles, 11 May 1733; *ibid.*, p. 122. Beauharnais to Maurepas, 8 Oct 1735, C 11E-16 (A.N.), pp 270-1, *loc. cit.*
130. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 99. Beauharnais and Hocquart to Maurepas, 10 Oct. 1733; *ibid.*, p. 194-7. Memoir of the sieur de La Vérendrye . . . , 31 Oct. 1744.
131. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, *ibid.*
132. *Ibid.*, 9286, p. 196, *ibid.*, 9286, p. 182. Beauharnais to Maurepas, 12 Oct. 1742.
133. Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements* . . . , VI, p. 641.
134. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 108. La Verendrye to Beauharnais. Fort St. Charles. 11 May 1733.
135. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 93. Beauharnais to Maurepas, 15 Oct. 1732; *ibid.*, p. 103 *et seq.*, Memoir . . . of all that has taken place at Fort St. Charles (17 May 1733-12 July 1734).
136. *Ibid.*, p. 93, *loc. cit.*
137. Margry, *op. cit.* VI, pp. 568-9; Morton, *History of the Canadian West*, p. 166
138. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 105. Memoir . . . of all that has taken place at Fort St. Charles.
139. *Ibid.*, p. 142. Memoir of the sieur de La Verendrye . . . , 2 June 1736
140. *Ibid.*, p. 183. Beauharnais to Maurepas, 13 Oct. 1744.

141. *Ibid.*, p. 109. Memoir . . . of all that has taken place at Fort St. Charles
142. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, pp. 177-9. Journal of the voyage made by the chevalier de La Vérendrye in 1742.
143. B 239 a/21, p. 26, 14 June 1739: "They inform us for truth that there is three French settlements where there was but one. They likewise inform us that near fifty canoes that was here last summer are some dead that had gone to war against the poets. We also heard that French or woodrunners . . . heads them against the Poets."
144. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 133. Beauharnais to Maurepas, 14 Oct. 1736; *ibid.*, p. 142. Memoir of the sieur de La Vérendrye . . . , 2 June 1736.
145. Baron Marc de Villiers, *La Découverte du Missouri*. Paris, 1925, pp. 73, 125
146. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, pp. 143-4. Memoir of the sieur de La Vérendrye, 2 June 1736.
147. *Ibid.*, p. 108. Memoir . . . of all that has taken place at Fort St. Charles
148. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 95. La Vérendrye to Beauharnais. Fort St. Charles, 21 May 1733; *ibid.*, p. 111. Memoir . . . of all that has taken place at Fort St. Charles
149. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 95. La Vérendrye to Beauharnais, 21 May 1733; *ibid.*, p. 149. Memoir of the Sieur de La Verendrye . . . , 2 June 1736.
150. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 167 et seq., *ibid.*, La Vérendrye, Commandant, Fur Trader and Explorer" (*C.H.R.*, Dec. 1928, pp. 284-98.
151. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 95, *loc. cit.*, *ibid.*, pp. 107-9. Memoir . . . of all that has taken place at Fort St. Charles . . . , *ibid.*, pp. 145-6. Memoir of the Sieur de La Verendrye . . . 2 June 1736; *ibid.*, p. 182, Beauharnais to Maurepas, 12 Oct. 1742
152. *Ibid.*, C 11A-69 (A.N.), pp. 105-7. La Ronde to Beauharnais. Chagouamigon, 28 June, 22 July 1738.
153. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 97. Report of Beauharnais on the discovery of the Western Sea, 28 Sept. 1733.
154. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, 95. La Vérendrye to Beauharnais, 21 May 1733.
155. *Ibid.*, pp. 104-7. Memoir . . . of all that has taken place at Fort St. Charles.
156. *Ibid.*, p. 147. Memoir of the Sieur de La Vérendrye . . . , 2 June 1736.
157. *Ibid.*, p. 95, La Vérendrye to Beauharnais, 21 May 1733.
158. *Ibid.*, p. 148. Memoir of the sieur de La Vérendrye . . . , 2 June 1736.
159. *Ibid.*, pp. 100-1. La Vérendrye to Beauharnais, 11 May 1733.
160. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 174.
161. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, pp. 100-1. La Vérendrye to Beauharnais, 11 May 1733; *ibid.*, p. 93. Beauharnais to Maurepas, 15 Oct. 1732; *ibid.*, p. 194 et seq. Memoir of the Sieur de La Verendrye on the subject of the establishments for succeeding in the discovery of the western sea . . . , 31 Oct. 1744.
162. *Ibid.*, *ibid.*, p. 95, Beauharnais to Maurepas, 15 Oct. 1732; Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 176.
163. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 199; Nellis M. Crouse, "The Location of Fort Maurepas" (*C.H.R.*, Sept. 1928, pp. 206-22).
164. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, pp. 194-5. Memoir of the Sieur de La Vérendrye . . . , 31 Oct. 1744; *ibid.*, p. 121. La Verendrye to Beauharnais, 7 June 1735; *ibid.*, p. 111. Memoir . . . of all that has taken place at Fort Saint-Charles; Burpee, *Journals and Letters*, p. 484; Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 182.
165. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, pp. 146-8. Memoir of the sieur de La Vérendrye, 2 June 1736, Burpee, *Journals and Letters*, pp. 308, 484; Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 191, 195; C. N. Bell, "The Old Forts of Winnipeg" (*Man. H. and Sc. Soc. Trans.* n° 3, new ser., May 1927).
166. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 197. Memoir of the sieur de La Vérendrye, 31

- Oct. 1744; Burpee, *op. cit.*, pp. 378-9.
167. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 146, *loc. cit.*
168. B 239 a/17, pp. 15, 26 (Feb., May 1735).
169. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 147, *op. cit.*; *ibid.*, pp. 196-7, *loc. cit.*, Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 196.
170. C.N. Bell, "The Journal of Henry Kelsey" (*Man H and Soc Sci Trans.* no. 4, new ser., pp. 12-14.).
171. Burpee, *Journals and Letters*, p. 485.
172. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 195. Memoir of the sieur de La Vérendrye, 31 Oct. 1744, Burpee, *op. cit.*, p. 304 *et seq.*, Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 190.
173. B 3a/34, p. 36 (3 May 1743), 39-40 (1743), 43-5 (June 1743).
174. B 3a/34, pp. 38-9 (May 1743); B 3 b/2, pp. 18-19. G. Spence, 22-3 May 1745
175. B 239 a/21, pp. 36-7 (4-10 June 1742). A 11/72, p. 98. J. Isham. York Factory, 27 July 1740; A 6/6, p. 202 To J. Isham York Factory, 23 Apr 1741; A 11/7, p. 71. J. Isham. York Factory, 6 April 1741.
176. A 11/72, pp. 64-94 Th. Macklish, York Factory, Aug. 1732 etc
177. Burpee, *Journals and Letters*, p. 358.
178. A.11/72, p. 109. Th. White. York Factory, 10 Aug. 1742
179. A 11/7, p. 30v, 34. R. Norton, Prince of Wales fort, 17 Aug. 1736, 6 July 1737
180. A 11/72, pp. 88-91. J. Isham York Factory, 20 July 1739; A 11/7, p. 124v General Letter to London. Prince of Wales Fort, 81 Aug. 1752.
181. A 11/7, p. 74 R. Pilgrim. Prince of Wales Fort, July 1742: "The . . . Indians will not trade 3 or 4 (skins) for a beaver the French trading one cat as 4 beaver." A 11/72, p. 100 . . . Isham. York Factory, 27 July 1740.
182. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 190 *et seq.*
183. Burpee, *Journals and Letters*, p. 485
184. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 199. Beauharnais to Maurepas, 15 Oct. 1746
185. C 11A-82 (A.N.), p. 85. Hocquart, 29 Oct. 1744, C 11A-85 (A.N.), p. 15-16 Beauharnais and Hocquart, 22 Sept. 1746; C 11A-92 (A.N.), p. 114, Bigot, 22 Oct. 1748.
186. C 11A-85 (A.N.), p. 82 Beauharnais and Hocquart, 17 Oct. 1746, C 11A-83 (A.N.), p. 59. Hocquart, 23 Oct. 1745, C 22A-83 (S.N.), p. 92, Beauharnais, 17 June 1745.
187. C 11A-87 (A.N.), pp. 123-4. La Galissoniere and Hocquart, 7 Oct. 1747
188. C 11A-85 (A.N.), p. 234 Beauharnais 3 Nov. 1746, C 11A-87 (A.N.), p. 82 La Galissoniere and Hocquart. "Extract . . . from interesting happenings in the colony . . . since the departure of the ships in the month of November 1746" *Ibid.*, p. 101, C 11A-93 (A.N.) p. 179. Legardeur de Saint-Pierre to Monseigneur Roule, Minister and Secretary of State (details of his campaigns); B 239. J. Isbister to J. Isham Albany Fort, 19 May 1747
189. C 11A-87 (A.N.), p. 101, *loc. cit.*; Burpee, *op. cit.*, p. 495.
190. C 11A-83 (A.N.), p. 92. Beauharnais, 19 June 1745. "The exploitation of the posts was very difficult this spring. . . The scarcity, as well as the high price, of trade goods gave rise to such a diminution of commerce that one might consider it totally lost next year if our ships do not arrive in good time. There is reason to fear that this year the small quantity of goods that has reached Niagara as well as the other posts will disgust the savage and lead them to range themselves on the side of the English. . . "
191. C 11E-16 (A.N.), p. 315v; Memoir of the services of Pierre Gaultier de La

- Verendrye, the elder . . . (undated); Burpee, *Journals and Letters*, p. 495
- 192 B 3a/38, pp. 25–27 (May 1747), B 3 a/39, pp. 29, 40 (April–July 1748)
193. C 111A-97 (A.N.), pp. 97–102. La Jonquière, Oct. 1751.
194. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 239.
- 195 C 11E-16 (A.N.), p. 315v, *loc. cit.*
- 196 Burpee, *Journals and Letters of . . . La Vérendrye and His Sons*, p. 187 (La Jonquière to Rouille, Quebec, 27 Feb. 1750).
197. Burpee, *op. cit.*, pp. 185–7, A. L. Burt, *The Romance of the Prairie Provinces*, Toronto, 1931, p. 63
- 198 A 11/72, p. 124. J. Isham York Factory, 18 Aug. 1747; B 239 b/4, b/5. Correspondence Books, York Factory, *passim*.
- 199 A 11/72, p. 162. J. Isham, York Factory, 8 Sept. 1754.
200. B 239 b/4. J. Isham, York Factory, July 12 1747.
201. C 11A-85 (A.N.), p. 234. Beauharnais, 3 Nov. 1746.
202. B 239 b/5, p. 39 J. Isbister, Prince of Wales Fort, 6 July 1751
203. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 231. The only evidence that could be interpreted as indicating the establishment of a post on the same spot at an earlier date would be the already quoted letter of J. Isham (York Factory, 18 Aug. 1747; A 11/72, p. 124). "had but 300 martins from the Keischachewan Indians, who are the martin Indians, this year notwithstanding we had above 80 canoes of this tribe . . . This is a plain case that the French have got our Indians. . . ."
204. B 42 a/36, p. 59 17 June 1751).
205. Margry, *Découvertes et établissements*, VI, p. 642 ("Mémoire . . . du voyage de Jacques Legardeur de Saint-Pierre . . .").
206. *Ibid.*; Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 237–8.
- 207 Margry, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*
208. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 238
209. Morton, *Under Western Skies*, pp. 82–3.
- 210 C 11A-97 (A.N.), pp. 97–102. La Jonquier, Oct. 1751, C. 11E-13 (A.N.), p. 259. Duquesne, 27 Oct. 1752; F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9305, pp. 98–9. Ordinance of La Jonquière for the establishment at Carp Lake; B 3a/46, p. 32v (2 June 1754), 35 (28 June 1754), 40v (20 Aug. 1754): "Arrive two canoes with very little goods, having traded the best of their furs with the French pedlars who are on the branches of this river above Henley" "They acquaint us that the French, about ten days ago, went away with a cargoe of furs, four large canoes deep loaded. These French robbers possess themselves of all the branches of the Compagny's rivers. . . ." B 32/48, p. 28v (27 May 1756); kB 239 b/8, p. 8v; G. Spence. Albany, 23 May 1752; B 86 a/9, p. 3 (Oct. 1752): "Indians . . . tell me that the French are building a large house about 90 miles NW from Henley house, and great part of our Indians are gone there this winter. . . ." B 86 a/10, p. 17 (24 May 1754).
- 211 B 239 a/40, p. 5v; (Journal of A. Henday), 22 July 1754, "On my arrival two Frenchmen came out, when followed a great deal of bowing and scraping between us, and then we entered their fort (or more properly a hogstye) for in short it is no better. They have neither victuals nor drink . . . they are very lacy, not one stick of wood anigh their house. . . ." Margry, *Découvertes et établissements*, VI, p. 640 ("Mémoire . . . du voyage de Jacques Legardeur de Saint-Pierre . . .").
212. C 11A-95 (A.N.), pp. 200–3. La Jonquière, 18 Aug. 1750; C 11A-97 (A.N.), p. 73 La Jonquière, 16 Sept. 1751, C 11A-97 (A.N.), p. 290 Duquesne, 13 Oct. 1754.
213. Margry, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 639, 646–7 (*loc. cit.*).

214. Shortt and Doughty, *Canada and Its Provinces* Toronto, 1914-17, I, p. 111 *et seq*
215. Margry, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 645 (*loc. cit.*).
216. E 2/11, pp. 74-5 (Journal of A. Henday, in Graham's "Observations"). 25 May 1754. "I could not get the natives away to-day. It is surprising to observe what an influence the French have over the natives. I am certain he (the master of Fort la Corne) has got above 1000 of the richest skins."
217. B 239 a/40, p. 5v, pp. 35-6 (Journal of A. Henday).
218. B 42 a/38, pp. 50-1 (June 1752).
219. A 11/72, pp. 141, 146, 152, 158, 162 (J. Isham, Aug. 1752, Sept. 1753).
220. C11A-100 (A.N.), p. 28. Account of expenses in the interior, July 1755. The trading posts were grouped into "farms," whose exploitation was leased to a consignee. The farm of the Western Sea included the forts established beyond Lake Superior.
221. A 11/72, pp. 169-71. J. Isham, July 1754; A 11/73 pp. 36-7 (A. Graham?). "Journal of our proceedings in relation to a Frenchman who came to York Factory, June 20 1759."
222. A 11/72, p. 131. F. Jeromine (to the commandant of York Factory). Fort Bourbon, 17 May 1749. "Monsieur, as we have learned from the bearer of the said letter that you have been prepared to send one of your men on these parties, you can do it in all security and fear nothing on our part. If you have money (in kind or otherwise), we could arrange a small hidden trade. Tell us at what price you are buying beaver. . . I am sending you an oboe and if it can be repaired you will do me a great favour. . . I shall have the honour of sending you the payment next year or of bringing it to you in person."
223. *Ibid.*, A 11-72, p. 131. F. Jeromine (commandant of York Factory). Fort Bourbon, 17 May 1749.
224. A 11/73, p. 31 *et seq*. "A. Graham (?). Journal of our proceedings in relation to a Frenchman. . . ."
225. B 239 a/34, p. 36v (June 1751).
226. A 11/72, p. 152. J. Isham, 6 Aug. 1752: "I am credibly informed that the French actually design to make a settlement at a lake in the Severn river this fall. . . ." B 239 b/8, p. 8v. G. Spence to J. Isham, Albany, 23 May 1752.
227. A 11/72, p. 158. J. Isham, 6 Sept. 1753: "Our friends at Albany inform me their home Indians actually traded last spring with them [the French]. . . and that the French are actually upon the borders of Severn."
228. A 11/72, p. 186. J. Isham, 2 Sept. 1755.
229. B 239 b/10, p. 2v. G. Spence to J. Isham, Albany, 3 June 1753; B 3 a/45, p. 21 (May 1753); A 11/73, p. 27. H. Marten, 28 Aug. 1759: "There is a French settlement but 16 hours paddle from the mouth of Severn where [the Severn Indians] trade the best of their goods."
230. A 11/73, p. 27, *op. cit.*
231. B 239 a/37, p. 31 (4 Aug. 1754): "The sloop returned. They saw several tents of Indians who had goods, which Indians, while they were there, unpitched and went up the river and would not come to the fort. . . they said they would go to the French."
232. A 11/1, p. 160. . . Isbister, 19 Sept. 1754.
233. *Ibid.*, B 3 a/46, p. 35 (28 June 1754); B 3 a/50, p. 26v (27 May 1758).
234. B 239 b/10, p. 3. Th. White to J. Isham, Moose Fort, 27 May 1753.
235. B 239 b/4. J. Isham, York Factory, Apr. 1747: "I have had but one inland Indian the winter by whom I understand the Indians has killed some of the French." B 239 a/36 (19 Aug. 1753): "I am informed. . . the uplanders

- have lately killed two Frenchmen as they were out fishing." B 239 a/43, p. 13 (28 Feb. 1757).
236. B 239 b/10, 2v G. Spence. Albany, 3 June 1753: "if the Compagny doth not put a stop to their incroachments, we shall in a short time have little or no trade here, and what is most surprising the Indians are all fond of trading with them notwithstanding their measure is so small."
237. A 11/73, p. 50v. H. Marten, 5 Sept. 1760; A 3 a/46, p. 35 (30 June 1754)
238. B 3 a/47, pp. 21–2 (6 Mar. 1755): "Three Indians bring me the account of Henley being shattered to pieces, the house full of snow and broken vessels, the casks all staved." A 11/2, pp. 51–51v. R. Temple, Albany, 22 Aug. 1761.
239. B 239 a/41, p. 37 (30 July 1756); A 11/73, p. 27, 41. A. Graham to J. Isham, York Fy, Aug. 1759.
240. B 239 a/52, p. 16 (Joseph Smith's journal, 16 May 1764); W. S. Wallace, "The Pedlars from Quebec" (*C.H.R.* 1932, pp. 387–402).
241. A 11/73, p. 27. A. Graham York Fy, 28 Aug. 1759, B 239 a/46, p. 33 (29 May 1759): "If there is not speedily some method taken to secure Severn river from the encroachments of the French, a very great loss in trade must follow."
242. B 42 a/53 (7 Sept. 1759).
243. A 11/73, p. 50 v. H. Marten. York Fy, 5 Sept. 1760.
244. B 239 A/48, p. 35, 36v, 41v (6 June 1761, 20 June, 21 July).
245. B 239 A/48, p. 41v (21 July 1761).
246. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 254.

Chapter Four: The Northern Current

1. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 50.
2. A 6/1, p. 5 v. To Governor Nixon, 29 May 1680; Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
3. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 80.
4. A 6/1 j p. 14 v. Instructions for Mr John Bridgar: "We having thought fit to make a settlement in the river of Port Nelson . . . have chosen you . . . for such a charge . . ." *Ibid.*, p. 34. To J. Bridgar, 27 Apr. 1683; A 1/1, p. 9 *et seq.*, Minute Books, Feb. 1671, Apr. 1672, etc., A 9/2, p. 9 "An answer to the French paper . . . for justifying the Pretentions of France to the Fort Bourbon, 17 April 1699." *Ibid.*, pp. 20–1. Radisson's affidavit . . . 23 Aug. 1697; Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 52, 88 *et seq.*, J. F. Kenney, *The Founding of Churchill*, p. 16.
5. BB 198 a/3, p. 40 (25 July 1762); R. Douglas and J. N. Wallace, *Twenty Years of York Factory*. Ottawa, 1926, p. 36.
6. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 106; *Hudson's Bay Company A Brief History*, London, 1934, p. 12.
7. A 6/2, p. 42 v. To Governor Geyer, at Port Nelson, 22 May 1690.
8. A 6/4, p. 56. To Richard Stanton, at Churchill River, 4 June 1719 *Ibid.*, p. 125. To Richard Norton, 24 May 1722: "We have considered your industry in traveling with the Indians. . . . We do agree to allow you from the expiration of your apprenticeship after the rate of 16 p. an., besides 10 which we usually give our apprentices at the end of their times."
9. A 6/2, p. 198. To Deputy Governor Kelsey, 29 May 1710.
10. A 6/1, p. 36. "Mémoire présenté à l'ambassadeur de France, en réponse à une lettre du Sieur de La Barre du nov. 1682."
11. B 135 a/30 p. 20 v: "No part of it is proof against a musket shot. . . . A common hunting gun carries a ball through doors and windows." A 11/27,

- p. 60 Th White, 8 Sept 1753; A 11/73, pp. 49–50. H. Marten, 5 Sept 1760, B 42 a/136-a (1810–11) W. Auld's memorandum book, p. 7.
12. A 1/1, p. 9v Minute Book, Feb. 1671.
 13. A 1/1, p. 134 v. *Ibid.*, 27 Feb, 1683.
 14. I Caron, *Journal de l'expédition du Chevalier de Troyes en 1686* Beauceville, 1918, pp. 26, 69; A 6/1, p. 120 (1687. Reports communicated to the Hudson's Bay Company by its officers on the expedition of the Chevalier de Troyes.
 15. J. F. Kenney, *The Founding of Churchill*, p. 29.
 16. A 6/1, p. 120, 127v (1687).
 17. J. B. Tyrrell, *Documents Relating to the Early History of Hudson Bay* Toronto, 1931, p. 137 (letter of Father Marest, Jesuit missionary)
 18. E 2/12. Graham, "Observations on Hudson's Bay (1792)."
 19. A 6/1, p. 133. "A Breife Account of a voyage made to Churchill river from Port Nelson river in the Hayes sloop, ann^o 1686, by M. Grimington "
 20. Caron, *Journal de l'expédition du Chevalier de Troyes*, pp. 83–4.
 21. A 6/1, p. 133, *loc. cit*
 22. B 42 a/2, pp. 47, 51 (June–July 1722)
 23. B 42 a/35 (1750), B 42 a/54, p. 48 (18 Aug. 1761), A 11/7, p. 148 Sailing orders and instructions for Mr James Wood, master of the sloop Churchill
 24. A 6/6, p. 205. To Richard Norton, Prince of Wales Fort, 23 Apr. 1741; A 6/7, p. 15 To J. Isbister, Albany, 5 May 1743.
 25. A 6/6, p. 138 To Richard Staunton. Moose, 1 May 1740, A 11/72, pp. 22–3. Th Macklish York Factory, 23 Aug. 1723, B 86 a/9, p. 11 (Jan. 1753); B 3 b/5, p. 2 H. Marten to W Richards (master at Henley), 21 May 1768: "You are almost as bad an enemy to Albany Fort as is the French." E 2/7, pp. 38–9 Graham, "Observations on Hudson's Bay, 1771 " Inside the posts, jealousies and petty rivalries destroyed all unity of action among the personnel (B 3 a/57, p. 9).
 26. B 198 a/1, p. 4 v, 14, 21v (Winter 1759–60), B 239 a/3, p. 68 v, 74, 82 (1716–17); B 3 a/24, p. 15 (1735).
 27. B 3 a/34, p. 45 (June 1743); B 239 a/3, p. 82 (1717).
 28. A 6/4, p. 13. J. Knight to R. Staunton, chief at Albany Fort. York Fy, 28 June 1715.
 29. A. 11/1, p. 4. J. Fullertine. Albany, 2 Aug 1793; *ibid* , p. 14–15. A. Beale, Albany, 23 July 1706. "We are all sick of the country."
 30. A 11/72, p. 28. Th. Macklish. York Fy, 23 Aug. 1723 "I won't say our men are very obedient in the discharge of their duties."
 31. B 32/28 (1738–9); B 3 a/30, pp. 19–20, 22 (1740–1), B 3 a/31, p. 15v (1740–1). B 3 a/34, pp. 7–9 (1742–3).
 32. B 135 a/6, p. 11 (1736), B 135 a/12, p. 25: "I must freely own that, at my first arrival here, I might justly imagine myself to have dropped down among a nest of free and accepted masons . . . as an intruder on their laws by virtue of the Company's authority." (J. Duffield)
 33. B 135 a/11, p. 15 *et seq.* (1741–2).
 34. B 135 a/11, pp. 7, 9.
 35. A 11/1, p. 59 J. Myatt; Albany, 12 Aug 1727 "The Londoners are so well acquainted with the debaucheries of the town that there is not a labouring man who is not a sotty man."
 36. A 6/2, p. 9 To Governor Geyer, at Port Nelson, 2 June 1688, A 11/72, p. 15. J. Knight. York Fy, 17 Sept. 1716; B 239 a/3, p. 20 (1717).
 37. A 6/8, p. 35 v. To G. Spence, at Albany Fort, 21 May 1750
 38. A 6/4, p. 202 (1725) (Personnel engaged for York, Albany, Churchill

- River), E 2/4, p. 72-3 Graham, "Observations on Hudson's Bay, 1768"
39. A 11/72, p. 15, *loc. cit*
 40. E 2/4, pp. 72-3, *loc. cit*.
 41. B 198 a/1, pp. 28-32 (June 1760)
 42. B 3 a/30 (1740-1), p. 1 *et seq*
 43. A 11/73, p. 187 (1775)
 44. B 3 a/34, pp. 43-6 (3-14 June 1743); B 3 a/37, p. 11 (16 Sept 1745); B 239 a/39, p. 33 (2 July 1755); B 239 a/69, p. 5 *et seq.* (Journal of M. Cocking, June 1772).
 45. A 6/8, p. 46 To J. Newton, at York Fy, 21 May 1750, A 11/7, p. 56. R. Norton. Prince of Wales Fort, 16 Aug. 1739
 46. E 2/11, p. 42. "Observations, 1792."
 47. A 6/3, p. 199. To Capt Mich Grimington, 29 May 1710.
 48. A 11/29, p. 46. J. Thomas. Private journal, 1785.
 49. A 11/74, pp. 5-8. H. Marten. York Fy, 20 Aug. 1776
 50. A 6/1, p. 83, 120 *et seq* (Reports presented to the Company on the expedition of the Chevalier de Troyes); C 11A-33 (A N.), pp. 297-9. "Memoir concerning the rights of the French in the Bay of the North . . .," attached to the letter of the Sieur de Riverin in the month of Jan. 1712; Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 98 *et seq.*
 51. A 6/2, pp. 31-40 Affidavit of Solomon Nichols London, 10 Feb. 1689.
 52. A 6/2, p. 47 v To Governor Geyer, 21 May 1691; *ibid*, p. 51 v To TH Walsh, 21 May 1691.
 53. A 6/2, p. 106. To Governor Knight. Albany, 30 May 1696, Morton, *op cit*, p. 84 *et seq*
 54. A 6/2, p. 106, *loc. cit.*; A 6/2, p., 94. To Governor Knight, 30 May 1694
 55. A 6/3, p. 197 To Governor Fullertine. Albany, 29 May 1710; A 6/7, p. 35 To J Isbister Albany, 10 May 1744; C 11A-30 (A N.), pp. 221-2. Raudot, 20 Sept 1709; *ibid*, pp. 307-8. Raudot, 14 Oct. 1709.
 56. A 11/7, p. 2-3, 19, 23. Moses Norton. Churchill, Aug. 1723; Richard Norton, Aug. 1723
 57. Witness the strategies devised by Radisson to assure himself of the forts and the ships of his adversaries at the mouth of the Nelson River. A 6/1, pp. 41-41 V Affidavit of seven sailors and servants of the Hudson's Bay Co. made prisoners by the French at Port Nelson; *The Voyages of Pierre Esprit Radisson*, ed. Scull, Boston, 1885 p. 260 *et seq*; Douglas and Wallace, *Twenty Years of York Factory*, p. 23 *et seq.*
 58. Caron, *Le Journal de l'expédition du Chevalier de Troyes*, p. 67.
 59. Beckles Willson, *The Great Company* London 1900, 1, pp. 108-9.
 60. A 6/7, p. 37. London to Albany, 1744 (?).
 61. A 6/1, p. 83. J. Butler. Rochelle, 23 Jan. 1687. "For a friend I can tell you that one hundred French who live there can do more in the woods than five hundred that the English can send out of England " A 6/2, p. 81 v. To Mr Sinclair, 17 June 1693: "We observe you take notice of the industry and diligence of the French in all their undertakings, and if they be let alone there in peace, they would soon eat us out of the trade of the whole Bay "
 62. A 6/2, p. 24. To Governor Marsh, 6 June 1689.
 63. A 6/1, p. 123 Narrative of Henry Sergeant, 4 Nov. 1687, A 6/1, p. 126 Narrative of Hugh Verner; A 6/2, p. 51 v. To Th. Walsh, 21 May 1691.
 64. A 9/3, p. 52 v Petition of the Governor and Company of Adventurers . . . , 24 Apr. 1709.
 65. A 11-73, p. 41 J. Isham, 26 Aug. 1759; Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 333.

66. A 6/4, p. 192. To R. Norton (Churchill), 19 May 1725: "Whereas John Butler sr has written to us to let his son go up into the country with the Northern Indians in order to learn the language, we do hereby order you [not] to suffer him or any other person to be absent from his duty on such pretence unless we think it necessary . . ."
67. E 2/6, p. 99. Graham. "Observations on Hudson's Bay, 1769."
68. E 2/11, p. 42 (Journal of A. Henday. "Observations" by A. Graham).
69. B 239 a/40, p. 40v (Journal of A. Henday. "Observations" by J. Isham).
70. A 11/73, p. 67 v. F. Jacobs. York Fy, 4 Sept. 1762.
71. A 11/73, p. 120. F. Jacobs. York Fy, 25 Aug. 1769.
72. A 11/72, p. 28. Th. Macklish. York Fy, 16 Aug. 1724; B 239 a/10, p. 29 *et seq.* (1727-8).
73. B 3 a/34, p. 37 (7 May 1743); B 135 a/12, p. 40 (17 Feb 1743).
74. B 239 a/3, p. 82 (1716-17).
75. A 11/73, p. 50. H. Marten, 5 Sept. 1760, B 198 a/3, p. 50 v. A. Graham. Severn Fort, 16 Aug. 1762.
76. A 11/27, p. 9 v. W. Bevan. Moose Fy, 26 Aug. 1736.
77. A 6/8, p. 47. To J. Newton. York Fy, 21 May 1750; A 6/9, p. 111. To York Fy, 17 May 1759.
78. A 11/73, p. 41. J. Isham, 26 Aug. 1759; *ibid.*, p. 49. H. Marten, 5 Sept. 1760. *Ibid.*
79. A 6/11, p. 106. To York Fy, 25 May 1769, pp. 176, 237, 282. To York Fy, 1770, 1771, 1772, E 2/4, p. 75 *et seq.*, A. Graham. "Observations on Hudson's Bay," 1768.
80. A 11/1, p. 15. A. Beale, Albany Fort, 23 July 1706; A 6/2, p. 107. To Governor Knight, Albany, 30 May 1696.
81. A 6/3, p. 133. To Governor Fullertine. Albany, 30 May 1705.
82. A 6/1, p. 52. Petition of the Hudson's Bay Co., 21 Nov. 1684, A 6/2, p. 52. To Th. Walsh, 21 May 1691; B 3 a/2, pp. 23-4 (10 Mar. 1707); B 3 a/4, p. 32v (15 May 1713).
83. During their brief occupation of Port Nelson, the French were no better provided with manpower than the Anglo-Saxons (Jérémie, "Relation du détroit et de la Baie d'Hudson," in Bernard, *Recueil de Voyages au Nord*, V, pp. 423, 425, 510. A 6/2, p. 7; To Governor Geyer (2 June 1688). Thus they could not follow up any project of penetration. On the other hand, they had no interest in venturing into the interior to increase a trade which, lacking competition, would end at the coast. It seems nevertheless that they were more curious than the English in learning about the nature of the country and the character of its populations, as is shown by the precision of the geographic notes collected by Jérémie among the Indians who visited Port Nelson (Jérémie, *op. cit.*, pp. 417, 419; Douglas and Wallace, *Twenty Years . . .*, p. 30 *et seq.*
84. A 6/3, p. 135. To Governor Fullertine. Albany, 30 May 1705. "You will find in invoice 56 barrels of gunpowder which is French powder and extraordinary good . . . and is much better than ours." A 11/27, p. 5. W. Bevan. Moose, 20 Aug. 1734: "Our powder is so bad that it freezes in the guns during the winter. . . ."
85. B 3 a/33, p. 35 (May 1742): "the French supplying this part of the bay with lighter and handier kettles than ours. For which reason our kettles are not so well liked. . . ." B 3 a/34, p. 13 (1742-3). "An English kettle weighs 4 pounds more than a French one. . . . The French have thereby got the advantage of us in all matters as their kettles suit the fugitive way of the natives more."
86. B 3 a/35, p. 30v (17 May 1744).

87. B 3 a/12 (1723-4), *passim*; B 3 a/28, p. 36 (26 May 1739).
88. B 3 a/13, p. 26v (20 May 1725); B 3 a/14, p. 20, 23-4 (26 May, 26 June 1726): "Indians trading and drinking all day."; B 3 a/21, p. 17 (10 May 1733).
89. A 6/5, p. 1 To J. Myatt Albany, 25 May 1727; A 11/27, p. 1 v. W. Bevan, 23 Aug. 1732, *ibid.*, p. 4. W. Bevan, 15 Aug. 1733.
90. A 11/27, p. 144. J. Favell. Moose, 24 Aug. 1766.
91. A 6/5, p. 89 v. To W. Bevan Moose, 3 May 1734.
92. B 239 a/69, p. 45 (M. Cocking's Journal, 1772-3).
93. B 3 a/34, p. 40 24 May 1743. The leading Indian "replied that we should be more industrious and go up the country as the French do. . . ."
94. B 3 a/34, p. 37 (7 May 1743), 39, 42 (17, 30 May 1743).
95. B 3 a/37, p. 11 (16 Sept. 1745).
96. B 3 a/35, pp. 6-7 (Sept. 1743); B 86 a/1 (1743-4).
97. B 3 a/34, p. 43 *et seq.* (June 1743).
98. B 3 b/2, p. 17. J. Isbister to G. Spence Henley, 17 May 1745, B 3 a/35, p. 46v (8 Sept. 1743); B 86 a/3 (1746).
99. B 3 a/44, pp. 24, 26 (May 1752). B 3 a/47, p. 21 *et seq.* (Mar. 1755 . . .), B 3 a/48, p. 35 (Aug. 1756), A 11/1, p. 173. G. Rushworth. Albany, 8 Sept. 1755.
100. A 6/9, p. 89 To Robert Temple and Council. Albany, 23 May 1758.
101. B 3 a/51, p. 32 (June 1759); B 3 a/52, p. 2 *et seq.* (Sept. 1749); A 11/2, p. 51 *et seq.*, R. Temple, 22 Aug. 1761; B 86 a/11 (1759).
102. B 3 a/57, p. 29 (May 1765), B 3 a/58, p. 34 (26 May 1766); B 3 b/3 W. Richards, Henley Island, 15 June 1766; A 11/2, p. 59 R. Temple. Albany, 26 Aug. 1763 and *passim*.
103. A 6/2, p. 9. To Governor Geyer (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688. Cf. Map. IV.
104. C. N. Bell, "The Journal of Henry Kelsey" (1691-2) "(*Man H and Sc Soc Trans* 4, new ser.); *The Kelsey Papers*. Ottawa, 1929. Introduction by A. G. Doughty and Chester Martin, pp. xxxiv-v; Morton, *Under Western Skies*, pp. 64-5; J. F. Kenney, "The Career of Henry Kelsey" (*T.R.S.C.*, 3d series, section II, 1929, pp. 37-71).
105. A 6/2, p. 47 v. To Gov. Geyer, Port Nelson, 21 May 1691.
106. *The Kelsey Papers*, pp. xxiv-v, 1-2.
107. *ibid.*, pp. 16, 111-12, A 6/2, pp. 72-3. To Governor Geyer, 17 June 1693.
108. A 6/2, p. 47 v, *loc. cit.*
109. E 2/11, p. 42. (Journal of A. Henday, in Graham's "Observations, 1792"); "Before his time, none of the servants at the factories had ventured to winter with the natives."
110. *The Kelsey Papers*, pp. 111-12.
111. B 239 a/1, p. 41 (11 June 1715); B 239 a/2, pp. 28-9, 44 (1715-16).
112. B 42 a/1, p. 23 (10 Sept. 1718), 29 (5 Nov. 1718) "I sent the boy Richard Norton to winter with the Indians to view their motions and so to be a dictator between them by his language."
113. E 2/4, p. 35 (Journal of A. Henday, in Graham's "Observations, 1768")
114. E 2/11, p. 42 (*ibid.*, 1792).
115. B 239 a/37, pp. 15-27 (Feb. June 1754).
116. B 239 a/39, p. 32 (28 June 1755). E 2/4, p. 44 *et seq.* (Journal of A. Henday, in Graham's "Observations, 1768").
117. B 239 a/42, pp. 4-36 (1756-7), B 239 a/44, p. 34 (30 June 1758); B 239 a/45 (J. Smith's Journal, 1757-8).
118. A 11/73, p. 16. J. Isham. York Fy, 16 Sept. 1758.
119. A 11/73, p. 23 v. A. Graham. York Fy, 28 Aug. 1759.

- 120 B 239 a/48, pp. 35–37 (June 1761) B 239 a/49, p. 46 (17 June 1762); B 239 a/50, pp. 39–41 (July–August 1763). B 239 a/51, p. 39–41 (June 1764)
- 121 A 11/73, p. 50 v. H. Marten. York Fy, 5 Sept. 1760.
122. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp. 272–4.
123. B 239 a/40, pp. 6, 9–10, 17 (Journal of A. Henday, 1754–5; L. Burpee, "The Journal of Anthony Henday" (*T.R.S.C.*, 3d ser, 1, 1907, sect. II, pp. 326–8, 334, 336); Morton, *Under Western Skies*, pp. 84–5.
124. B 239 a/43, pp. 9–10 *et seq.* (Remarks and observations of a journey inland performed by Joseph Smith and Joseph Waggoner, 1756–7), B 239 a/42, p. 4 (28 Aug. 1756), B 239 a/44, p. 34 (30 June 1758), B 239 a/52 (Journal of J. Smith, 1763–4, with appended notes by A. S. Morton).
125. *Ibid.*
126. B 239, a/43.
127. B 239 a/48, p. 37 v (25 June 1762). For these various itineraries, see Map IV
- 128 A 11/73, p. 145. A. Graham, York Fy, 26 Aug. 1772; Burpee, "The Journal of Anthony Henday", p. 338.
129. B 239 a/40, p. 19 (Journal of Anthony Henday, 1754–5); Burpee, *op. cit.*, p. 338, E 2/11, p. 70 (Journal of A. Henday, in Graham's "Observations, 1792"); E 2/4, p. 44 (*ibid.*, 1768).
- 130 A 11/73, p. 41 J. Isham. York Fy, 26 Aug. 1759.
131. B 239 a/44, p. 34 (30 June 1758).
- 132 E 2/4, p. 55 v, 57 v (Journal of A. Henday, 1755–6); B 239 b/11, p. 13. F. Jacobs to J. Isham. Prince of Wales, 23 Aug. 1754.
133. E 2/11, p. 77v (Journal of A. Henday, 1754–5), E 2/4, p. 59v (*ibid.*, 1755–6); A 11/73, p. 50. H. Marten (5 Sept. 1760)
134. E 2/5, pp. 11–13. Graham, "Observations, 1768."
135. A 11/72, p. 162. J. Isham. York Fy, 8 Sept. 1754
136. A 11/72, p. 184; *ibid.*, 2 Sept. 1755.
137. A 11/72, p. 186 v–187. J. Isham, Aug. 1756.
138. In 1760, York received 33,642 M.B. The expression "m b" (made beaver) meant the value of a beaver skin. It is applied also to the skins of martens or other animals, related to the value of a beaver skin. A 11/73, p. 49. In 1761, York received 35,120 M.B. A 11/73, p. 49. In 1762 York received 37,342 M.B. *ibid.*, p. 65 B 239 a/48, pp. 35–6 (June 1761). B 239 a/49, p. 42 *et seq.* (June 1762).
139. A 11/73, p. 7, 11. J. Isham. York Fy, 18 Aug. 1757.
140. B 239 a/40, p. 5v (Journal of A. Henday, 1754–5)
141. E 2/11, p. 74–6. (*ibid.*, in Graham's "Observations" 1792).
142. A 11/73, p. 7. J. Isham. York Fy, 18 Aug. 1757, B 239 a/43, p. 10 (Remarks . . . of a journey inland performed by J. Smith and J. Waggoner, 1756–7).
- 143 B 239 a/41, p. 37 (30 July 1756); B 239 b/18, p. 5 v H. Marten York Fy; 6 July 1756
144. A 6/9, p. 124 v. To R. Temple. Albany 15 May 1760.
145. A 11/7, p. 159. F. Jacobs. Prince of Wales, 1 Sept. 1760.
146. B 239 a/46, p. 36 (20 June 1759).
147. A 6/9, p. 125. To R. Temple. Albany, 15 May 1760. A 11/73, p. 36 *et seq.*, "Journal of our proceedings in relation to a Frenchman who came to York Factory," 20 June 1759.
148. A 11/73, p. 88. F. Jacobs. York Fy, 14 Sept. 1765; B 239 b/18, pp. 2–3 H. Marten. York Fy, 3 July 1759.

Chapter Five: The Meeting and Conflict of the Currents of Penetration

- 1 B 239 a/53, p. 43 (22 June 1765).
- 2 W. S. Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North-West Company* (Champlain Society, Toronto, 1934), p. 35; Bradley, *The United Empire Loyalists* (London, 1932).
- 3 W. S. Wallace, "The Pedlars from Quebec" (*C.H.R.*, 1932, p. 398); Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 260.
- 4 Wallace, "The Pedlars from Quebec," p. 398; *ibid.*, *Documents Relating* . . . *loc. cit.*
- 5 B 231 a/69, p. 45v (Journal of M. Cocking, 1772-3) On the attitude of the American frontiersmen toward the Indians, see L. A. Tothill, "Robert Dickson, British Fur Trader on the Upper Mississippi" (*N.D.H.Q.* 1928-9, VI, no. 1, 2, 3).
- 6 Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 263-5.
- 7 H. A. Innis, *Peter Pond Fur Trader and Adventurer* (Toronto, 1930), pp. 18-23, 47-66.
- 8 E 2/12, p. 645. A. Graham to the Company York Fy, 2 Sept. 1772 (in "Observations, 1792").
- 9 A 11/27, p. 120 Moose Fy, 2 Sept. 1761, *ibid.*, p. 144. J. Favell, Moose Fy, 24 Aug. 1766.
- 10 B 3/b/5, p. 17 H. Marten to Major Rogers (Michilimackinac). Albany, 20 June 1768.
- 11 Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 257-62. Cf. Map III.
- 12 B 135 a/33, p. 32v (July 1761).
- 13 B135 a/3, p. 33 (July 1761); A 11/27, p. 144, *loc. cit.*
- 14 B 135 a/34, pp. 54-5 (26-28 Aug. 1762) B 135 a/35, pp. 4-5 (28 Sept. 1762); A 11/27, p. 144. J. Favell, Moose Fy, 24 Aug. 1766, A 6/12, p. 4 v. To H. Marten. Albany, 11 May 1774.
- 15 B 3 a/53 (1760-1) B 3 a/56 (1763-4).
- 16 A 11/2, p. 60. R. Temple, Albany, 26 Aug. 1763 "Peace has put an end to any further apprehensions of opposition in our trade from the French woodrunners."
- 17 B 3 a/57, p. 3 (Aug. 1764), p. 30 (19 May 1765).
- 18 B 3 a/58, p. 36v (7 June 1766); B 3 b/4, p. 5 W. Richards Henley Ho., 5 Oct. 1766.
- 19 A 11/2, p. 92. Albany, 23 Aug. 1766.
- 20 B 3 b/7, p. 17. River Peck, 26 May 1769; "J. Askin to the gentleman who directs the trade at the first English Fort from this towards Hudson's Bay."
- 21 B 3 a/59, p. 33 (6 June 1767). B 3 a/60, p. 5 *et seq.* (1768)
- 22 B 3 a/60, pp. 24-5 (June 1768. B 3 a/62, p. 34 (30 July 1770); B 3 b/7, p. 28. H. Marten. Albany, 8 June 1770.
- 23 B 3 a/62, p. 34 (30 July 1770); B 3 a/64, p. 36v (12 June 1772), B 3 b/6, p. 15. Albany, 22 June 1769.
- 24 A 11/2, p. 128. Albany, 28 Aug. 1769; A 6/12, p. 4v. To H. Marten Albany, 11 May 1774
- 25 Morton, *History of the Canadian West*, p. 425
- 26 *Ibid.*, pp. 425-6.
- 27 B 239 a/58, pp. 4-6 (W. Pink's journal, 1767-8), E 2/4, p. 61v (W. Tomison's journal, 1767-8, in Graham's "Observations").
- 28 B 239 a/51, p. 40 (24 June 1764): [I have been informed by the Indians] "that Mr Isbister is with a body of men of nigh 100 in 15 large canoes coming up to the back of Your Honrs settlements to trade where the French had their

- houses. They also say that J. Patterson is with them and that several Frenchmen are with them as pilots and labourers." A 11/73, p. 83 F. Jacobs York Fy, 24 Aug. 1764: "They would have been up this summer, but got drunk and stove their canoes, wick obliged them to stop and winter." Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 267.
29. B 239 a/63, p. 25v (W. Pink's journal, 1769-70), S. Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North-West Company*, p. 70.
30. *Ibid.*, "The Pedlars from Quebec" (C.H.R., 1932, p. 394).
31. B 239 a/54, p. 42-3 (June 1766), E 2/4, pp. 60 v-61 (Graham, "Observations, 1768").
32. B 239 a/56 (W. Pink's journal, 1766-7) "I have heard several times this year of the people of Canada being coming here again to repair [their house] for staying at again as the French did. But now the Indians say it of a certainty, they say there is five large canoes of them will be there this summer or rather in the fall." B 239 b/26, p. 6v. Moses Morton to F. Jacobs, Prince of Wales, 31 Aug. 1765.
33. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 267.
34. *Ibid.*, pp. 267-8, 285.
35. E 2/6, p. 76 (W. Tomison's journal, in Graham's "Observations") "In the year 1767, hearing by the trading Indians that the Canadian traders were again returned to the great lake and to other proper places inland to intercept the company's trade, I sent my steward William Tomison inland with a trusty leading Indian named Kekek."
36. E 2/6, pp. 76-7 (*loc. cit.*); A 11/73, p. 110. A. Graham York Fy, 23 Aug. 1768.
37. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 268.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 268.
39. B 239 a/58, p. 4v (W. Pink's journal, 1767-8), E 2/4, pp. 61 v-62 (W. Tomison's journey to the great lake, 1767-8).
40. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 169.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 271, 280.
42. B 239 a/61, p. 21 (W. Pink's journal, 1768-9).
43. B 239 a/58, p. 33v (W. Pink's journal, 1767-8).
44. E 2/4, pp. 60-1 (Graham, "Observations, 1768"), E 2/4, pp. 61-2 (W. Tomison's journal, in Graham's "Observations, 1768").
45. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 269. Cf. Map III.
46. A 11/73, p. 110. A. Graham York Fy, 23 Aug. 1768: "the Canada pedlars being all over the heart of the trading Indians country."
47. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 270.
48. *Ibid.*, pp. 270-1.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 271.
50. *Ibid.*, E 2/11, p. 45 (M. Cocking's journal, 1772-3, in Graham's "Observations, 1792").
51. B 239 a/72, p. 17 (M. Cocking's journal, 1774-5).
52. E 2/11, pp. 68-68v (Cocking's journal, 1772-3) "Two Indians . . . inform me that François has six large canoes with him and three canoes more are lying at the Shallow lake. . . . They say four canoes more are in the tract of the natives who are more southward and who paddle down Chukkitanaw river to York Fort, and that several more pedlars are all along to the Grand Portage to intercept the natives who annually trade at Severn, Albany, Moose."
53. E 2/11, p. 63 (*loc. cit.*).
54. E 2/11, p. 68, 71, (*loc. cit.*); B 239 a/69, p. 30 (Cocking's journal, 1772-3).

55. B 239 a/72, p. 20 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5) "The pedlars 'inform me that 40 canoes of their people entered the Sea Lake this year. 18 went up the Saskatchewan, 5 at Kiskapiskow river with 23 men and Blondeau, 5 to the southward with Bruce and 12 dispersed below.'"
56. B 239 a/60, p. 42 (19 June 1769), B 239 a/21, p. 41 (W. Pink's journal, 1768-9); B 239 a/69, p. 33 (Cocking's journal, 1772-3), B 239 a/72, pp. 10-11 (*ibid.*, 1774-5).
57. E 2/11, p. 71 (Cocking's journal, 1772-3, in Graham's "Observations, 1792").
58. E 2/11, p. 48 (*ibid.*), B 239 a/69, p. 9 (Cocking's journal, 1772-3).
59. B 239 a/72, p. 7 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5), B 104 a/1, p. 10 v (P. Fidler's journal from Cumberland Ho. to Red Deer's lake . . . 1799-1800).
60. B 239 a/69, p. 45 (Cocking's journal, 1772-3); B 239 a/72, p. 4 (*ibid.* 1774-5), E 2/11, pp. 63, 71 (*ibid.*, 1772-3, in Graham's "Observations").
61. B 239 a/69, p. 11v (Cocking's journal, 1772-3); B 239 a/72, pp. 12, 21-2, 26-26 v (Cocking's journal, 1774-5).
62. A 11/73, p. 145 (A. Graham. York Fy, 26 Aug. 1772).
63. A 11/73, p. 116. A. Graham. York Fy, 23 Aug. 1768.
64. B 239 a/60, p. 45 (10 July 1769).
65. E 2/11, pp. 61, 67 (Cocking's journal, 1772-3, in Graham's "Observations"), E 2/12, pp. 643-7 A. Graham. York Fy, 2 Sept. 1772 (Graham's "Observations, 1792"): "finding they can procure tobacco and other necessaries so near, and being in liquor, every inducement to visit the Company's factories is forgotten, and the prime furs are picked up . . . the refuse is . . . brought down to us by the leading Indians " A 11/73, p. 142. A. Graham, 26 Aug. 1772.
66. B 239 a/72, p. 6 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5). "Now the pedlars have become so numerous among them that they are indifferent whether they please the chiefs at the factories or not. Their seeming regard for an European ceases as soon as they are likely to receive no great benefits from them."
67. B 239 b/30, p. 4 F. Jacobs. York Fy, 14 Dec. 1768; A 11/73, p. 124 F. Jacobs. York Fy, 20 Aug. 1769. "The Indians are terribly hard to please and constantly threaten to go to the pedlars."
68. B 239 a/54, p. 40v (June 1766); B 239 a/73, p. 51v (1 July 1776).
69. B 239 b/33, p. 10 v. F. Jacobs. York Fy, 20 Aug. 1773: "The Indians part with their goods for scarcely half what they get at our Factories " A 11/73, p. 124. *loc. cit.*
70. B 239 a/72, p. 6, *loc. cit.*
71. B 239 a/72, p. 19 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5): "Refuse to trade a bad beaver skin with a native. He becomes abusive and threatens to burn my goods. . . ."
72. A 22/2, p. 128. Albany, 28 Aug. 1769; B 239 b/32, p. 5 H. Marten. Albany, 29 Nov. 1770.
73. A 11/2, p. 118. H. Marten. Albany, 30 Aug. 1768.
74. B 3/b/11, p. 38 A. Graham. Severn Ho. 25 June 1774; B 239 b/33, p. 5, *ibid.*, 1 Jan. 1773.
75. B 3 b/6, pp. 16-17. F. Jacobs. York Fy, 14 Dec. 1768.
76. B 239 b/34, p. 12 v, *ibid.*, 20 Aug. 1774, A 11/73, p. 104, 110, 118, 132, 136 Correspondence of Graham, Jacobs . . . York Fy, Sept. 1767 Aug. 1772.
77. A 11/73, p. 148 Th. Corry to A. Graham. River de Pane, 2 June 1772. "Wabanassew desires me to let you know that he does not go to see you this spring, but . . . will go to the Grand Portage with me. . . . He has drunk

- so much brandy this winter that he cannot come to you, but must come with me to the Grand Portage to drink two or three casks."
78. B 239 b/33, p. 7 v. H. Marten Albany, 31 Dec 1772, "We are so surrounded by Upland Europeans that scarce an Upland native can escape them. The largeness of the presents they make to Indians leaders is surprising. Our very goose hunters receive presents and invitations from them."
 79. A 11/2, p. 171. H. Marten. Albany, 6 Sept. 1771.
 80. B 239 a/72, p. 4 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5), B 239 b/35, p. 1 F. Jacobs York Fy, 1 Sept. 1774.
 81. B 239 a/69, p. 45 (Cocking's journal, 1772-3).
 82. B 239 a/89, p. 37 (1 July 1789).
 83. B 239 a/72, p. 35 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5).
 84. A 11/73, p. 116. A. Graham. York Fy, 23 Aug. 1768.
 85. B 239 a/72, p. 44 (*loc. cit.*), A 11/73, p. 126 F. Jacobs York Fy, 7 Sept. 1770.
 86. B 239 b/33, p. 10. F. Jacobs. York Fy, 20 Aug. 1773.
 87. B 239 a/68, p. 44 (30 June 1773); A 6/11, p. 271. London to Albany, 20 May 1772. "In case any of the inland traders should presume to trade or settle within the Company's territories, you are to convince them of their improper conduct and require their departure, fully inform them of the Company's undoubted right to all the trade within the limits of the Charter." A 6/12, p. 4. London to Albany, 11 May 1774.
 88. B 239 b/3, p. 7 F. Jacobs York Fy, 18 July 1773; B 3 b/7, pp. 17-18. J. Askin to the gentleman who directs the trade at the first English fort, River Peck, 2 May 1769.
 89. B 239 a/53, pp. 42-4 (June 1767); A 6/10, p. 116. To F. Jacobs (York Fy), 27 May 1766.
 90. B 239 a/54, pp. 39-40, 44-5 (June 1766), B 239 a/55, pp. 39-42 (June 1766); B 239 a/57, p. 39 (June 1768); B 239 a/60, pp. 40, 43 (June 1769). Cf. Map IV.
 91. B 239 a/56, pp. 23-4 (W. Pink's journal, 1766-7), B 239 a/68, p. 32v (28 Aug. 1773).
 92. Morton, *History of the Canadian West*, pp. 277-81.
 93. E 2/11, p. 58 *et seq.* (Cocking's journal, 1772-3, in Graham's "Observations, 1792").
 94. B 239 a/72, p. 10 *et seq.* (Cocking's journal, 1774-5), Morton, *History of the Canadian West*, pp. 303-5.
 95. E 2/4, p. 63 *et seq.* (Tonkinson's journal, 1767-8); E 2/6, p. 76 *et seq.*, *ibid.*; B 3/b/6, p. 18. A. Graham. Severn, 20 July 1769.
 96. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 276-82. See Map IV.
 97. E 2/12, pp. 646-7. A. Graham to London York Fy, 2 Sept. 1772.
 98. B 239 a/55, pp. 39-40 (July 1767), B 239 a/56, p. 23 (W. Pink's journal inland, 1766-7).
 99. E 2/12, p. 647: *loc. cit.* "Isaac Batt and Lewis Primo . . . were coming down here with 160 canoes, but were met in the river Depane by other Indians who told them that the Canadians were at the Cedar lake and had plenty of goods and liquor, upon which they wheeled off to go there, notwithstanding all the arguments of our men." Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 282.
 100. B 239 a/54, p. 40v (June 1766): "I [A. Graham] had one Archithinue man here this summer. He said his countrymen will never come as they ignore paddling."
 101. A 11/73, p. 124. F. Jacobs. York Fy, 20 Aug. 1769.
 102. B 239 b/32, p. 4. F. Jacobs York Fy, 8 Dec. 1770; *ibid.* p. 10. M. Norton. Prince of Wales, 10 Aug. 1771.

103. *Ibid*, B 239 b/33, p. 9 v. M. Norton Prince of Wales, 31 July 1773 "I greatly fear that those pedlars will hurt the Company's trade more and more."
104. B 239 b/35. A. Graham Prince of Wales, 28 Aug. 1774.
105. B 239 a/70, p. 38v (19 June 1774).
106. E 2/5, pp. 10–11 (Graham's "Observations, 1768"), A 11/73, p. 116 F. Jacobs York Fy, 23 Aug. 1768; A 11/73, p. 143 v A. Graham York Fy, 26 Aug. 1772: "The only way to struggle would be to have an inland settlement with tobacco and brandy."
107. B 239 a/69, pp. 5, 52–3 (Cocking's journal, 1772–3). "As to persons proper to be employed on this business, the Company's servants, if healthful and able, would do extremely well with the assistance of one native or two in each canoe until they become acquainted with the manner of managing these vessels."
108. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 302–3.
109. B 239 a/68, p. 52v (28 Aug. 1773). See below, pp. 195–6.
110. B 239 a/70, pp. 39, 42 (June 1774).
111. B 239 a/71, pp. 31–2 (June 1775), A 11/73, p. 181 S. Hearne, York Fy, 30 June 1775: "I visited Basquian to build there, but it would not have been agreeable to the natives I agreed to build about 100 miles higher up the Keiskeecheewan at a part called Pine Island" Morton *op. cit.*, pp. 302–3.
112. A 11/73, p. 181: *loc. cit*
113. *Ibid*
114. A 6/12, p. 47. To H. Marten (Albany), 11 May 1774.
115. A 6/12, p. 53 v. To F. Jacobs (York Fy), 4 May 1775.
116. A 6/12, p. 194 To Albany, 13 May 1778; *ibid*, p. 208. To York Fy, 13 May 1778.
117. A 6/13, pp. 95–102, 105. London to Albany York Fy Churchill, May 1784.
118. A 6/13, p. 131 v, 156 v. London to York Fy, May 1785–6.
119. A 11/74, p. 14. H. Marten York Fy, Aug. 1776; B 239 b/36, p. 3. H. Marten. York Fy, 26 Aug. 1775.
120. A 11/74, p. 49. H. Marten. York Fy, 3 Sept. 1778.
121. A 11/74, p. 75. *Ibid.*, 13 Sept. 1780.
122. B 239 a/80, pp. 71–5 (July 1782); B 239 a/78, p. 46 (Dec. 1779).
123. A 6/13, p. 105. London to York, May 1785.
124. A 11/75, p. 134 J. Colen. York Fy, Sept. 1791.
125. A 11/75, p. 121 *ibid.*; A 11/74, pp. 5–8 H. Marten York Fy, 20 Aug. 1776.
126. B 239 a/73, pp. 8 v–9 (Sept. 1775).
127. B 121 a/2, p. 38 (May 1788)
128. B 239 a/89, p. 37 (July 1789) "Your positive orders for so many servants . . . to return home this season will very much distress the inland trade . . . not half the goods wanted can be taken to the upper settlement. This with the dreadful rage of scurvy at the Fort will enable the Canadians to encroach. . . ."
129. B 239 b/40, p. 23. Th. Hutchins to H. Marten. Albany, 3 July 1780.
130. A 11/75, p. 98. C. Isham. York Fy, 20 July 1791.
131. A 11/75, p. 45 v. P. Turnor. Cumberland Ho. 9 June 1790.
132. B 239 b/39, pp. 7 v–8 H. Marten to Th. Kitchen. York Fy, 4 Feb. 1779 "Our trade inland suffers exceedingly from the want of Europeans to spread over the country as the Canadians do. Twenty were at Cumberland Ho last

- year, but what can twenty do opposed by upwards of 200, nay I firmly believe I might without exaggeration affirm that 300 men are above us inland."
133. A 11/74, p. 67 H. Marten. York Fy, 4 Sept. 1780.
134. B 239 b/45, pp. 9-10 W. Tomison to H. Marten, Cumberland, 4 July 1786, *ibid.*, p. 20. H. Marten to S. Hearne, York, 24 July 1786
135. A 11/74, p. 175. W. Tomison, York, 24 Aug. 1786.
136. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, pp. 240-1.
137. B 239 b/78, jp. 29 v London to York, 28 May 1800: "You say that you have not enough men for the northward. If you mean that you have not enough to oppose the Canadians by feuds and quarrels, do not rely on us for more."
138. B 239 a/89, p. 37, *loc. cit.*
139. B 239 b/65, p. 19 Th Stayner Churchill, 26 July 1801 "Most of the men who are going home from here would have agreed another contract, but the Committee disapprove of our entering into any positive engagement with their servants "
140. B 239 b/63, p. 23 J. Bird, Edmonton, 18 Nov. 1799; B 239 b/65, p. 1, 16. Th Stayner, Churchill, 18 Sept. 1800, 7 July 1801; B 239 b/48, p. 72 v London to York, 20 May 1809: "We have been obliged to determine not to send any new hands this season owing to the little demand for furs at home or abroad "
141. A 11/76, p. 29 v W. Auld York, 26 Sept. 1811. "Our trade has experienced a terrible reduction in the matter of men during the last 4 or 5 years, in which period not a man has come out here excepting 47 young raw boys and old men poured on Churchill three years ago. But every year great numbers have left us, and two years ago no less than 100 came home in your two ships. We have now lost between one third and one fourth of the experienced hands " B 239 b/81, p. 1 v. W. H. Cook, York, 31 Aug. 1810.
142. B 239 b/81, p. 6. W. H. Cook to J. Swain, York, 17 June 1811.
143. B 239 b/49, pp. 8, 12. J. Colen, York Fy, 16 July 1789; B 239 b/78, p. 69. London to J. McNab, York, 20 May 1808.
144. B 239 b/46, p. 15 J. Colen, York Fy, 18 July 1787; B 239 b/79, p. 56 v. J. McNab, York Fy, Sept. 1808 "The few men sent to York for years past . . . lessen our ability and the best set of servants will soon change for the worse."
145. E 2/11, p. 48v (Cocking's journal, 1772-3); B 239 a/89, p. 40 (July 1789). "All the inland servants whose times soon expire are agreed almost to a man to leave us when contracts expire. Not every man can stand the fatigues of such journeys."
146. A 11/74, p. 67. H. Marten. York Fy, 4 Sept. 1780.
147. B 239 a/95, p. 36 (June 1793). "The unhappy dispute between the Cumberland natives and those from Swan river two years ago and the threats made use of to the latter by Mr Tomison have entirely driven a large tribe from the interest of the HBC."
148. B 239 b/62, p. 36 (Aug. 1799), A 11/74, pp. 5-8 H. Marten, York Fy, 20 Aug. 1776 "We can't do without the Indians for carrying our goods inland, and on the least ruffle of temper or being weary the Indian will throw the goods overboard. No small part of our goods sent inland last year was lost that way, for as some of the servants that went separately with the Indians know nothing of the language, manners or customs of the Indians, they were unacquainted how to soothe or intimidate them "
149. A 11/29, p. 46. J. Thomas, private journal, Moose Fy, 1785.

- 150 B 239 a/96, p. 48 (July 1794): "This season we must abandon Chatham ho. Split Lake and Sepawisk settlements as we have no canoes to convey up provisions "
151. B 239 b/41, pp. 5-6. H. Marten. York, 21 Feb. 1781.
152. B 60 a/13, p. 13v (Jan. 1815)
153. B 239 v/56, p. 25 Stayner. Churchill, 13 Aug 1799, B 239 b/62, pp. 34-5, *ibid.*, 31 Aug. 1799.
- 154 B 239 b/82, pp. 17-18. W. H. Cook to M. Macdonell. York. 28 Jan. 1812.
- 155 B 239 b/49, pp. 9-10. J. Colen York, 24 July 1789; B 239 b/51, p. 16. J. Spence to J. Colen. Split Lake, 16 Mar. 1791.
- 156 B 239 b/71, p. 24 v, 27 v, 28 v J. Bird, J. Sutherland , to York, July 1805.
157. A 11/73, p. 111. F. Jacobs. York Fy, 23 Aug. 1768.
158. A 11/74, p. 22. H. Marten. York Fy, 25 Aug. 1777.
- 159 A 11/74, pp. 5-8. H. Marten York Fy, 20 Aug 1776: "Your Orkney servants are very remiss in protecting your goods or acquiring the management of a canoe. By which means they hope to be kept at the Fort. The only way would be to give each 10 per annum."
160. The Canadian livre was the equivalent of 10 pence in English money. The salary of the guide thus represented approximately 41, that of the helmsman 33, that of the middle man 25 (A 11/74, p. 23. H. Marten York Factory, 25 Aug. 1777).
- 161 B 104 1/1, p. 15 (6 Oct. 1799).
- 162 B 239 a/99, p. 19 (June 1796). "The men who have been employed on [the Athapaskow journey] positively refuse to return on account of the extreme scarcity of provision in that quarter." B 239 b/63, p. 13, 15 v Cumberland to York. 5-12 Aug 1799: "We gave orders to the men appointed by Mr Tomison to accompany Mr Fidler to get in readiness to go to Beaver river. The greater part of them absolutely refused. That mutinous disposition has several times appeared, but it has now broken loose with violence "
- 163 A 11/74, p. 22. H. Marten. York Fy, 25 July 1777
164. B 239 a/99, p. 17 (June 1796); B 121 a/6, pp. 26-7 (1791, B 105 a/2, p. 14 (17. Jan. 1795).
- 165 A 11/74, p. 19. H. Marten. York, 25 July 1777; A11/74, p. 41 H. Marten York, 20 Aug. 1778.
- 166 A 11/73, p. 144. A. Graham, 26 Aug. 1772.
167. A 11/73, p. 124. F. Jacobs. York. 20 Aug. 1769.
168. B 239 a/72, p. 43 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5).
- 169 A 11/73, pp. 116, 143 v. A. Graham, 23 Aug 1768, 26 Aug 1772.
170. B 236 a/100, p. 28 (Aug. 1797).
171. A. 11/74, p. 175 W. Tomison York Fy, 24 Aug 1786: "The Indians that used to build canoes for us are all dead. And those that get the birchbark, the Canadians do all to debauch them. . . . This has been done since Humfreville came into their service, and he was the cause of John Plum's leaving our service " B 239 a/99, p. 16 (June 1796): "Two servants ran from this factory last fall and are said to have entered the Canadian service " B 22 a/4, p. 19 (Sept. 1784)
172. A 11/74, p. 2. H. Marten York Fy, 25 Aug 1777; B 239 b/78, p. 12 v London to York, 31 May 1805.
- 173 B 239 b/78 p. 42. London to York, May 1803: "The little regard paid to our wages regulations displeases us." B 239 b/79, p. 28 York to London, Sept. 1799. "The men taking every advantage to make extravagant proposals, we had to deviate from your instructions."

174. B 239 b/44, p. 11 H. Marten. York Fy, 16 Aug. 1785: "I never had more trouble to prevail on the men to return inland. My orders were positive not to advance more than definitive sums. I had to disobey my orders and give notes of hand."
175. A 11/74, p. 22, *loc. cit.*, A 6/15, p. 98, London to J. McNab (Albany), 29 May 1794.
176. A 11/74, p. 42. H. Marten. York Fy, 20 Aug. 1778.
177. B 239 a/99, p. 20 (June 1796), B 104 a/1, p. 15 (6 Oct. 1799).
178. A 11/74, p. 67, H. Marten. York Fy, 4 Sept. 1780.
179. B 239 b/43, p. 9. S. Hearne. Churchill, 30 June 1784, B 239 a/81 (Aug. 1782).
180. B 239 v/56, p. 25. Mr Stayner. Churchill, 13 Aug. 1795: "A Mr Ross settled a house last year in the Reed lake within less than three days walk of where Mr Charles wintered in 1793-4. Again Mr Sinclair tried to prevent Northward Indians to visit our factory. . . . I just mention this to point out the folly of two distinct factories making settlements among the same Indians."
181. B 239 b/68, p. 24 v. W. Auld. Churchill, 31 July 1803: "I am entirely willing to forget the unhappy dispute between York and Churchill. But the same person has continued his practices upon our northern Indians, intercepting them, propagating false and injurious reports which would scarcely become a Canadian."
182. B 236 b/57, p. 24 v. J. Colen. York Fy, 9 July 1796.
183. B 239 b/79, p. 25. J. Colen. York Fy, 21 Sept. 1798.
184. B 239 b/39, pp. 21-2. H. Marten. York Fy, 4 Aug. 1779.
185. B 239 a/73, p. 55 (July 1776).
186. B 239 a/90, p. 52 (June 1790), B 239 b/63, p. 23. J. Bird. Edmonton, 18 Nov. 1799.
187. B 239 b/60, p. 45. Malcolm Ross to Mr Tomison. York Fy, 20 Sept. 1798: "D. Thompson you called a villain and me a rascal. in 1794, for no other reason than endeavouring to engage a few men to proceed with us to the northward." B 239 b/79, p. 3. J. Colen. Fort Augustus, 10 May 1797, B 239 a/96, pp. 33-4 (June 1794): "The Athapascow expedition is entirely knocked on the head. Mrs Ross and Thompson find it impossible to carry on an undertaking from Cumberland so long as Mr Tomison has any command there."
188. B 121 a/4, p. 59v (22 June 1780).
189. B 121 a/4, p. 45 *et seq.* (1780), B 22 a/10, p. 3. Journal of occurrences at Red River by John Mackay (1802-3).
190. B 239 b/51, p. 16. J. Spence to J. Colen. Split Lake, 16 Mar. 1791, B 22 a/1, p. 6 (16 Sept. 1793): "The Indians say that our guns are worse than they used to be whereas our opponents have everything suitable for the business." B 60 a/2, p. 13. J. Bird. Carlton, 28 Nov. 1796: "The Canadian traders have made great improvements in the quality of their goods. The superiority of our cloth and guns had some years ago brought many Indians to us in spite of the brandy delivered by the Canadians. But they are now as well supplied by the Canadians. . . ."
191. B 121 a/5, p. 14 v (1789).
192. B 239 b/68, p. 15. W. Sinclair. Oxford Ho., 5 June 1803: "The Indians complain very much of the bad quality of our hatchets (a lump of burnt iron rubbed over with rosin), and our cloth. They find much better at the Canadian settlements." B 121 a/5, p. 14v (1789).
193. B 239 b/78, p. 3. London to J. Colen and Council (York Fy), 29 May 1794. "We are persuaded, whatever you may think to the contrary, that Canadian goods are inferior to ours."

- 194 B 239 b/78, p. 19 London to York, 31 May 1798; B 239 b/78, p. 67, *ibid* 20 May 1808: "The lamentable state of the whole continent of Europe is such that not the most trifling articles of trade or manufactures of Great Britain can be exported and that we must be confined to the consumption of this country for the sale of the produce of the Bay." A 1/49, p. 92v (The Hudson's Bay Co.) to the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, 21 Dec. 1809, "The beaver and some few inferior furs together with the oil are bought for home consumption and sell for about 30 000, but the fine furs were till after the sale of 1806 bought by the Fur merchants for the fairs of Frankfurt and Leipzig, for Petersburg and before the present war for France. Since that year there has not been a fur sold for exportation . . ."
- 195 B 239 b/59, p. 7 v J. Colen York Fy, 3 Feb. 1797 (York Factory trade) "will in future feel the effects of the mistaken plan of economy adopted in England last year. We have not half the quantity of . . . provisions for the inland settlements."
- 196 B 121 a/6, pp. 10-12 (Sept. 1790)
- 197 A 11/74, p. 73 v H. Marten, York Fy, 11 Sept. 1780; B 239 a/69, p. 40 (Cocking's journal, 1772-3).
- 198 B 239 b/38, p. 15 v E. B. Kitchin to H. Marten, Moose Fort, 17 Dec 1777, "The subtle and active pedlar has it in his power to undertrade you."
- 199 B 121 a/4, pp. 45-6 (Jan. 1780).
- 200 B 121 a/5, p. 14v (1789), pp. 33-4 (1789).
- 201 B 239 a/72, p. 35 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5).
- 202 B 239 a/72, p. 35 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5).
- 203 B 239 a/69, p. 11v (Cocking's journal, 1772-3).
- 204 B 239 a/95, p. 44 (June 1792).
- 205 A 11/74, p. 51. H. Marten, 3 Sept. 1778. "We hear from our officers in Cumberland that the pedlars trade otter skins at a lower rate than your standard (receiving one otter as two beaver)." B 3 a/64, p. 37v (June 1772)
- 206 B 239 v/83, p. 18. W. Sinclair to W. Auld, West Winnipeg Factory, 14 Mar. 1813: "The Canadians distribute their goods by forcing them on the natives with no other view than to put us to as much expense as possible. They say the Athapescow country will make up for the whole."
- 207 B 239 a/96, p. 46 (June 1794). E 2/12, p. 644 A. Graham, York Fy, 2 Sept. 1772 ("Observations, 1792").
- 208 B 239 a/96, p. 46 (June 1794).
- 209 E 2/6, p. 78 (Tomison's journal, 1767-8).
- 210 A 11/73, p. 124. F. Jacobs, York Fy, 20 Aug. 1769, B 239 a/69, p. 11v (Cocking's journal, 1772-3); B 135 a/33, p. 32v (July 1761).
- 211 B 121 a/4, p. 45v (1780); B 121 a/2, p. 17 (12 Nov. 1787); B 239 b/56, p. 16 W. Tomison, Cumberland Ho., 10 June 1795: "The Brazil tobacco sent inland last year was entirely rotten. . . ."
- 212 B 239 a/89, p. 43 (July 1789); B 239 a/90, p. 51v (June 1780), B 239 b/69, p. 53; J. Bird, Cumberland, 28 May 1804.
- 213 E 2/12, p. 644: A. Graham, York Fy, 2 Sept. 1772 ("Observations, 1792")
- 214 Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North-West Company*, p. 90.
- 215 B 3 b/6, p. 18: Severn to Albany, 20 July 1769.
- 216 B 60 a/5, p. 28v (Nov. 1799).
- 217 B 121 a/2, p. 11v (20 Aug. 1787); Innis, *Peter Pond, Fur Trader and Adventurer*, pp. 93-8, Wallace, *op cit*, p. 6 *et seq.*, Morton, *History of the Canadian West*, p. 334 *et seq.*
- 218 B 239 b/79, p. 10: York Fy, General Letter to London, 16 Sept. 1795
- 219 Wallace, "The Pedlars from Quebec" (C H R., 1932, p. 395 *et seq.*).
- 220 Wallace, *Documents* . . . , p. 60.

- 221 B 239 a/69, p. IIV (Cocking's journal, 1772-3)
- 222 Wallace, *Documents* . . . , pp. 1-25
223. Wallace, *Documents* . . . , pp. 1-25. On the great number of "pools" or isolated traders who competed with each other, see, apart from Wallace's work, Morton's *History of the Canadian West*, p. 263 *et seq.* On the formation of the North West Company and the XY Company, and on the conflict between them, see Morton, pp. 342 *et seq.*, 508-18. An outline of the whole situation has been provided by Innes, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, p. 152 *et seq.* and by Gordon Charles Davidson, *The North West Company*, Berkeley, 1918.
224. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 335, 344
- 225 E 2/12, p. 645-6; A. Graham, York Fy, 2 Sept. 1772 ("Observations, 1792") A 11/74, p. 175. W. Tomison, York Fy, 24 Aug. 1786, Wallace, *Documents* . . . , p. 73; Keating, *Narrative of S. H. Long's Expedition*, Philadelphia, 1824. II, pp. 776-7.
226. A 11/74, p. 176, *loc. cit.*
227. B 105 a/1, p. 6 (26 Sept. 1793)
- 228 B 239 a/90, pp. 49-50 (26 June 1780), Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 306-8
- 229 G. L. Nute, *The Voyageur*, New York, 1931, p. 60 *et seq.*
- 230 A 11/73, p. 144 A. Graham, York Fy, 26 Aug. 1772: "The Canadians are chosen men, inured to hardships under which our men would sink. A man in the Canadian service who cannot carry two packs of 80 lbs each half a league loses his trip."
- 231 B 60 a/12, pp. 10v-11 (1813). "[Scarcity of food] is an inconvenience which the Canadians feel less than any other people. They can feast with pleasure on horses, dogs or any substance, support even deprivation of all food a greater length of time than any other man." B 22 a/1, p. 5 (Sept. 1793) "My men work very slow in spite of their having full allowances. The Canadians are far ahead of us and they have not a morsel to eat but what is caught in their journey."
- 232 E 2/12, p. 646. A. Graham, York Fy, 2 Sept. 1772 ("Observations," 1792). A 11/74, p. 23. H. Marten, York Fy, 25 Aug. 1777 "As soon as the pedlars reach their respective tents, they disperse in small parties till the trading season comes. Each man takes a quantity of goods which does not exceed his wages."
- 233 A 11-3, p. 132 Th. Hutchins, Albany, May 1781: "The people of Canada, whose principal commerce arises from the inland trade, have studied everything for its convenience and have arrived at great perfection, having tradesmen on the spot for every branch, some packing the bales properly for the canoes, others making baskets, cases, rundlets in which the nicest attention is paid to the stowage and weight."
- 234 B 239 b/67, p. 18: W. Tomison, Cumberland Ho. 6 June 1802 "the old and new associations have brought into the country last summer above 300 Iroquois or Mohawk Indians hired for three years. . . ."
235. B 60 a/8, p. iv (Aug. 1808).
- 236 Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 109 (W. F. Wentzel's correspondence, Mackenzie River, 28 Feb. 1814).
- 237 Morton, *Under Western Skies*, pp. 149-53
238. *Ibid.*
- 239, *Ibid.*, *History of the Canadian West*, p. 345.
- 240 *Ibid.* pp. 348, 427, B. and J. Frobisher to F. Haldimand, Montreal, 4 Oct. 1784 (P A C Q series, vol. 25, p. 112); memorandum of Simon McTavish, Frobisher and Co., Montreal, 1 Sept. 1803; *ibid.* (Q series, 92, pp. 288-90).

241. Morton, *History of the Canadian West*, pp. 347-8, E 2/6, p. 78 (W. Tomlinson's journal, 1767-8).
242. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 347
243. *Ibid.*, p. 347
244. *Ibid.* pp. 347, 428-9, B 239 b/52, pp. 18-20, P. Turnor to the Council at York Fy, 9 July 1792: "Hence [Peace River] the Canadians get their provisions which enable them to act in the Athabasca country. And the latter is the bulwark of their Company as they carry from it 20,000 made beaver and prime beaver which are of very light carriage" J. B. Tyrrell, *Journals of Samuel Hearne and Philip Turnor* (Champlain Society, Toronto, 1934.) p. 401
245. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 355.
246. Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North-West Company*, p. 73; Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 355.
247. Morton, *op. cit.* p. 355, Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, pp. 234-8. The length of the route which the Athabasca brigades had to traverse, their need to return to their destinations before the freezeup made the waterways impracticable, explains why their canoes could not go beyond Rainy Lake, while the canoes from the less remote areas went to Fort William. In consequence, the goods destined for them were shipped to Rainy Lake, where the transfer took place (B 105 a/1, p. 6, 26 Sept. 1793. "This post is not merely kept for the trade it makes. It's a rendez-vous for the people of the Rabascaw and Slave Lake as they cannot get to the Grand Portage and return the same year. Besides this is the part where the Canada North West Company procure most of their canoes for the inland business") "The Diary of Hugh Faries," Gates, *Five Fur Traders of the North-West*, p. 191)
248. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 348; Davidson, *The North-West Company*, p. 17.
249. Davidson, *op. cit.*, pp. 227-8
250. *Ibid.*
251. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 348.
252. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 378 (J. Mackenzie's journal, 1799), Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 349
253. Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North-West Company*, p. 60
254. B 239 a/69, p. 45 (Cocking's journal, 1772-3), Morton, *The Journal of Duncan McGillivray*, pp. 6-7; A. G. Morice, *Histoire de l'église catholique dans l'Ouest canadien*, Montreal, 1928, I, p. 92.
255. Collection Masson, McGill Univ.: Journal of Great Bear Lake, by A. Mackenzie (28 Nov. 1805)
256. A 11/75, p. 46: Philip Turnor, Cumberland Ho., 9 June 1790; Tyrrell, *David Thompson's Narrative of His Explorations . . .*, p. 171.
257. B 236 a/1 (1797) "A man engages for 300 livres upper country money or 600 livres money of Canada and equipment of 2 blankets, 2 shirts, 1 pair stocking, 1 breech clout, 6 pounds tobacco" Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North-West Co.*, pp. 213-14.
258. The wages of interpreters ranged from 100 to 3,000 livres, those of clerks from 100 to 5,000.
259. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada* pp. 242-5; Collection Masson, McGill Univ.: Some account of the North-West Company . . . by Roderick Mackenzie, 3d part.
260. A 11/74, p. 23 (York Fy, 25 Aug. 1777)
261. A 11/74, pp. 17-18: M. Cocking, York Fy, Sept. 1776.
262. A 11/74, p. 23 (*op. cit.*).
263. Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North-West Co.*, p. 253.
264. B 239 a/69, p. 45v (Cocking's journal, 1772-3).

265. A 11/74, p. 17-18. *loc. cit.*
- 266 B 236 a/1 (1797).
- 267 A 11/4, p. 136: E. Jarvis, Albany, 13 Sept. 1790
- 268 B 105 a/2, p. 14 (17 Jan. 1795)
- 269 Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 377 (*loc. cit.*).
270. A 11/29, p. 127 (12 Sept. 1789); B 22 a/4, p. 19 (Sept. 1796)
- 271 B 239 b/73, p. 40. Mr Sutherland, inland master, to York Fy, Paint Creek, 24 May 1806.
- 272 Collection Masson, McGill Univ.: Some Account of the North-West C° by Roderick Mackenzie, 3d part, B 239 b/82, p. 9. W. H. Cook to J. Swain, York Fy, 17 Dec. 1811, B 239 b/82, pp. 17-18 W. H. Cook to M. Macdonell, York Fy, 28 Jan. 1812.
273. Nute, *The Voyageur*, pp. 201-2.
274. B 239 a/72, p. 43v (Cocking's journal, 1774-5)
- 275 *Ibid.*, B 239 a/69, pp. 52-3 (*ibid.*, 1772-3): "As to the employing of Canadians who are certainly well versed in this kind of business, I am of opinion they are very improper for they would continually be running off to the Pedlars and laying open all they know. Indeed, when they are engaged on the peddling business, they often elope from their employ and go with the natives."
276. B 239 a/72, pp. 43-4 (*loc. cit.*).
277. E 2/12, pp. 648-9: A. Graham, York Fy, 2 Sept. 1772.
278. B 60 a/13, p. 13v (Jan. 1815).
- 279 A 11/75, p. 118: J. Colen, York Fy, 26 Sept. 1791.
- 280 B 22 a/5, p. 5 (1797).
281. *The Present State of Hudson's Bay*, London, 1790, p. 208.
282. A 11/29, p. 127 (12 Sept. 1789), A 6/14, p. 40: To J. Colen, York Fy, 16 May 1788; B 22 a/4, p. 19 (Sept. 1796).
- 283 A 11/4, p. 136: Ed. Jarvis, Albany, 13 Sept. 1790.
284. A 11/4, p. 167. D. Mackay to E. Jarvis (Albany), 1790; A 11/73, p. 165: F. Jacobs and Council, York Fy, 1774 "On the least difference with the chief they would be ready to desert to the pedlars or natives again."
285. A 11/73, p. 158: F. Jacobs, York Fy, 26 Aug. 1774; E 2/11, p. 67 v (Cocking's journal, 1772-3); B 239 a/71, p. 4 (Sept. 1774).
- 286 A 11/73, p. 158: *loc. cit.*
287. A 11/3 p. 130. Th. Hutchins, Albany, May 1781; Morton, *History of the Canadian West*, p. 425.
288. A 11/4, p. 180, 17 Aug. 1791: "The experience we already had of the Canadian servants inclines us to be less desirous to engage them. They will not agree to sign any contract for any term of years, nor will they be tied to any discipline. The Canadians are apt to turn Indians and as such are capable to do much mischief, which is considered an evil of such magnitude by the Quebec Government that the Canadian traders are sometimes invested with a power to seize them and carry them down in irons . . ."
- 289 A 11/75, p. 35 (8 Sept. 1789), A 11/4, p. 94 v E. Jarvis, 30 Aug. 1788; B 239 b/49, p. 5, 12 J. Colen, 16 July 1789, B 239 a/89, p. 40 (July 1789), A 6/14, p. 40: To York Fy, 16 May 1788; A 6/15, p. 98, To Albany, 29 May 1794
290. B 239 a/72, p. 43v (Cocking's journal, 1774-5).
291. B 239 a/99, p. 16 (June 1796): "Joseph Le Rocher . . . came to enter our service but he is a runaway and already under articles with the North West Canadian proprietors. I engaged him conditionally." B 121 a/2, pp. 39-40 (June 1788): "At Grand Rapide we come across the Canadian masters. They ask me to sign a certificate that I should not engage any of their men. I said I

- should engage any good man, but no renegade." Morton, *History of the Canadian West*, p. 429
- 292 B 3 a/111, pp. 14–20 (June–Aug. 1809).
- 293 D 4/31, p. 13 Simpson to the Lord Bishop of Montreal, Lachine, 26 Mar 1844.
- 294 A 11/4, p. 85. E. Jarvis, 1788.
295. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 454.
296. B 239 a/100, p. 25 (15 July 1797). "Two large batteaux arrived with a party of 9 men and loaded with 180 packs of furs. This is a plan I had thought of for seven years. Two large batteaux of 30 feet keel have been brought from the upper settlements to the head of Trout river . . ." The dimensions and the tonnage of these craft were later reduced. In 1836, the Council of Norway House limited to 28 feet the length of the keel, and to 80 "pieces" the size of the cargo (Min. of Council, D 4/103, p. 27). The terms "pack" or "piece" indicate a weight of 90 pounds (see below, note 308).
- 297 B 239 a/100, pp. 25–7 (July 1797). "Eighteen men in two boats perform the same duty as fourty in ten canoes." B 60 a/18, pp. 9–10 (27 Sept. 1819): "Six men in a boat will carry 60 pieces of goods from York Fy to this place [Edmonton], whereas a canoe with 6 men carries only about 20 pieces." D 4/18, p. 7; Simpson to Edward Smith, Fort Garry, 5 Dec. 1830.
- 298 Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 454.
299. B 239 b/57, pp. 13–14: C. Isham to J. Colen Swan river Ho. 12 May 1796.
300. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 289, 304, 305.
301. *Ibid.*, pp. 305, 314, 316.
302. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 318, 321, 331.
303. *Ibid.*, pp. 321–2.
304. *Ibid.*, p. 322.
305. *Ibid.*, pp. 337–9.
306. *Ibid.*, p. 458.
307. *Ibid.*, pp. 463, 466.
308. *Ibid.*, pp. 463, 511.
- 309 B 239 b/79, p. 46 v: J. McNab, Sept. 1808: "From that river [Saskatchewan] the Canadians carry annually upwards of 250 packs or bundles of furs, 90 lb each, amounting to 8,000 beaver skins, wolves and bears in proportion. They in general employ 12 canoes manned with 60 men. These with residents at the houses may be estimated at 100 men employed yearly in the Saskatchewan."
- 310 Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 337.
311. *Ibid.*, p. 511.
- 312 Coues, *New Light* 1, p. 79; Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 318, 329, 340, 432–8.
313. *Ibid.*, pp. 535.
314. B 22 a/9, p. 11 (Sept. 1801).
315. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 438.
316. Coues, *op. cit.*, I, p. 290 *et seq.*
317. Coll. Masson, McGill Univ., Journal of John Macdonell (1795).
318. B 22 a/2, p. 19–21 (Jan. 1795); B 22 a/3, p. 8 v (12 Nov. 1795), B 22 a/5, p. 27 (3 Feb. 1798); B 22 a/6, p. 16 (Jan. 1799), B 22 a/17, p. 12v *etc.*
319. Coll. Masson, *op. cit.*
320. A 11/29, p. 47: J. Thomas, private journal, Moose Factory, 1785, A 11/29 p. 97. *Ibid.*, 1788; B 135 a/91, p. 39: J. Hodgson (Albany) to J. Thomas (Moose), 30 July 1804.
321. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 303, 440–1, 445.
322. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 441.

- 323 B 239 a/84, p. 35 (1 July 1785) B 239 a/88, p. 54 (June 1788). B 239 a/90, pp. 49-50 (26 June 1780). B 239 a/91, p. 25 (June 1791): The Indians "say that Canadians are so numerous that no Indian can rest with his family without having one or more of them continually visiting them." B 239 a/92, p. 32 (June 1792). B 239 b/44, p. 8: G. Hudson to H. Marten, Cumberland Ho., 11 Apr. 1785, B 239 b/51, pp. 9-10: J. Colen, York Fy, Jan 1791, B 239 b/60, pp. 5-7, J P. Whitford to J. Colen, Gordon H., Feb 1798, B 239 b/74, p. 5: Mr Swain to York, Jack River, 29 Sept 1806
324. B 239 a/89, p. 37 (July 1789).
325. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 190.
326. *Ibid.*, pp. 305, 309.
327. Amisk Lake.
328. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 313.
329. *Ibid.*, pp. 31, 318-20, 327.
330. Innis, *Peter Pond, Fur Trader and Adventurer*, pp. 79-80.
331. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 328.
332. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, pp. 152-6.
333. Morton, *History of the Canadian West*, p. 328.
334. *Ibid.*, p. 334.
335. *Ibid.*, p. 411.
336. *Ibid.*, pp. 337-41.
337. *Ibid.*, p. 413.
338. *Ibid.*, pp. 450-3.
339. *Ibid.*, p. 410.
340. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 411-12.
341. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, p. 204.
342. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 412.
343. *Ibid.*, pp. 413-20.
344. *Ibid.*, p. 420.
345. *Ibid.*, pp. 466-8.
346. *Ibid.*, pp. 470-8.
347. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 478, 494.
348. *Ibid.*, pp. 501-5; Washington Irving, *Astoria or Anecdotes of an Enterprise Beyond the Rocky Mountains*. New York, 1873.
349. B 239 b/36, p. 3; H. Marten, 26 Aug 1775 B 22 a/11, p. 10 (1804); Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 436, 447, 453.
350. A 11/74, p. 142.H. Marten, York Fy, 2 Sept 1785, B 239 b/37, p. 24: H. Marten to the commanding officers at Cumberland Ho., 21 July 1777.
351. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-3, 309.
352. *Ibid.*, pp. 317-19.
353. A 11/74, p. 31: H. Marten, York Fy, 27 Aug 1777, B 239 b/36, pp. 14-15: M. Cocking to H. Marten, Cumberland Ho., 1 June 1776 B 239 b/37, p. 18: *ibid.*, 7 Mar. 1777.
354. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 321-2.
355. *Ibid.*, p. 326.
356. *Ibid.*, pp. 329-31.
357. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 338.
358. *Ibid.*
359. B 121 a/4, p. 17v (Oct. 1789).
360. B 22 a/9 (1801-2); Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 433.
361. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 435-6.
362. *Ibid.*, p. 435.
363. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 458.
364. B 27 a/5, pp. 20-6 (Jan.-Mar. 1816).

365. B 60 a/1, p. 7 v: W. Tomison, Edmonton Ho., 20 Dec. 1795.
366. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 463, 511.
367. *Ibid.*, p. 463.
368. *Ibid.*, p. 511.
369. B 239 v/79, p. 1: General letter, York Fy, 22 Sept. 1794; B 239 b/79, p. 8, *ibid.*, 16 Sept. 1795. B 239 v/79, p. 21V; *ibid.*, 13 Sept. 1797.
370. B 239 b/64, pp. 8–10 Th. Stayner (Churchill) to York, 18 Mar. 1800.
371. A 11/3, p. 28: Th. Hutchins, 5 July 1776, B 3 b/12, p. 20 Instructions to Mr John Martin, Albany, 28 Mar. 1775.
372. A 11/27, p. 202: General letter, Sept. 1773.
373. A a/28, pp. 8–14 (20 Sept. 1774).
374. A 11/28, p. 57 (16 Sept. 1777).
375. A 11/28, pp. 102, 113, 128. E. Jarvis, Moose Fy, 14, 21 Sept. 1780, 19 Sept. 1781, A 11/29, p. 46: J. Thomas, Private journal, Moose Fy, 1785 B 239 b/44, p. 9: Moose Fy to York Fy, 13 July 1784.
376. B 239 b/36, p. 9 v. H. Marten to Th. Hutchins (Albany), York, 1 Jan. 1776; B 239 b/38, p. 17. Th. Hutchins (Albany) to H. Marten, 20 Jan. 1778; Morton, *History of the Canadian West*, p. 425.
377. A 11/3, p. 73: Th. Hutchins, Albany, July 1778.
378. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 426.
379. *Ibid.*, pp. 429–31.
380. B 239 b/51, p. 12 v: J. Colen, York, 22 Feb. 1791; B 239 b/52, p. 13 v, *Ibid.*, 11 June 1792, B 239 b/54, p. 24, *Ibid.*, to J. Tate, 20 July 1794, B 239 b/57, p. 30, *Ibid.*, to W. Sinclair, 19 July 1796, B 239 b/79, p. 4 v. General letter, York, 22 Sept. 1794; Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 444–5, 449.
381. B 239 b/55, p. 19: J. Colen to J. Allan, York, 6 July 1794.
382. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 291–300.
383. B 239 b/37, p. 36 S. Hearne to H. Marten, Prince of Wales, 8 Aug. 1777.
384. B 239 b/52, pp. 18–20: Ph. Turnor to the Council at York, York Fy, 9 July 1792; Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 444.
385. B 239 v/52, pp. 18–20: *loc. cit.*; Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 410, 444.
386. B 239 b/50, p. 12 v: J. Colen to Ph. Turnor, York, 20 July 1790: "The hardships of the Canadians in wintering so far north discourage our men and they do not want to go on the Company's conditions."
387. B 239 b/59, p. 39: J. Colen, York, 9 Aug. 1797; B 239 a/100, p. 28 (3 Aug. 1797).
388. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 445–7.
389. *Ibid.*, pp. 447–8.
390. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 453.
391. *Ibid.*, p. 516.
392. *Ibid.*, p. 517.
393. B 239 b/62, p. 35 v: Th. Stayner to York, Churchill, 31 Aug. 1799; B 239 v/63, p. 13: Cumberland to York, 5 Aug. 1799, B 239 b/64, pp. 21–3: Th. Stayner to York, Churchill, 14 July 1800; B 239 b/64, pp. 15–16. *ibid.*, 7 July 1801; B 239 a/109, 29 June 1804.
394. B 239 b/63, p. 16: Cumberland to York, 12 Aug. 1799.
395. *Ibid.*
396. E 2/11, p. 71v (Cocking's journal, 1772–3).
397. B 239 v/35, p. 1: A. Graham to F. Jacobs, Prince of Wales, 28 Aug. 1774.
398. A 11/74, p. 61–2: Holmes to W. Tomison and R. Longmoor, Sturgeon River Fort, 2 Dec. 1779 B 22 a/4, p. 26: 1 Jan. 1797: "Troublesome day The Canadians make the house and yard ring with sabboting The house then filled with them when they all got a dram each. After they were gone

- the house filled a second time with ladies, the wives of the Canadians, with the complimentary kiss of the new year according to their custom, and dressed in their wedding garments, and had a dram to give each of them also."
399. E 2/12, p. 639 (Graham's "Observations, 1792").
 400. B 239 a/73, pp. 8-9 (29 Sept. 1775)
 401. A 11/73, p. 148: Th. Corry to A. Graham, River de Pane, 2 June 1772.
 402. B 22 a/3, p. 8lv (12 Nov. 1795), Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp. 305, 312, 515
 403. A 11/73, p. 124: F. Jacobs, York, 20 Aug. 1769.
 404. B 239 a/61, p. 21 (W. Pink's journal, 1768-9).
 405. B 105 a/1, p. 6 (26 Sept. 1793) "We reach the Canadian settlement [Lac la Pluie] The master Charles Boyer kindly invites me to breakfast." B 105 a/2, p. 6-7 (1794): "I have Mr. Boyer and family at breakfast and dinner. They are six in number." *Ibid.*, p. 13 (25 Dec. 1794). "Mr. Boyer invited me and men to a dance. . . ."
 406. B 22 a/5, p. 19 (15 Nov. 1797); B 22 a/7, p. 19v (1799).
 407. B 239 a/73, p. 55v (July 1776).
 408. B 239 v/38, p. 122 H. Marten to S. Hearne, York, 4 Aug. 1778; *ibid.*, p. 23: H. Marten to W. Tomison, York, 4 Aug. 1778
 409. A 11/74, p. 42: H. Marten, York, 20 Aug. 1778, B 49 a/15, p. 52v (Jan 1785).
 410. A 11/74, p. 137. H. Marten, York, 30 July 1785. "W. Tomison complains that the Canadian masters have now grown so impertinent that no Indian can have free access to our settlements without being intercepted and their furs taken away" B 60 a/1, p. 14 v: W. Tomison, Edmonton, 26 Apr. 1796; B 3 a/58, p. 38 (June 1766); B 135 a/91, p. 17: J. Thomas to J. Hodgson (Albany), Moose, Feb. 1804.
 411. A 11/74, p. 41: H. Marten, York, 20 Aug. 1778; E 2/12, p. 593 (W. Tomison's journal, 1788); B 239 a/75, p. 54 (23 July 1778).
 412. A 11/74, p. 23: H. Marten, York, 25 Aug. 1777.
 413. A 11/74, p. 42 v H. Marten, York, 20 Aug. 1778; *ibid.*, p. 175: W. Tomison, York, 24 Aug. 1786.
 414. A 11/74, p. 175: *Ibid.*, B 49 a/15, pp. 59-60 (Mar. 1785)
 415. B 121 a/2, p. 18v (Nov. 1787)
 416. B *Ibid.*
 417. A 11/74, pp. 5-8: H. Marten, York, 20 Aug. 1776.
 418. B 239 v/69, p. 14v J. Hodgson to York, Albany, 15 July 1803
 419. B 3 a/59, p. 33 (6 June 1767).
 420. B 239 a/75, p. 56 (July 1778).
 421. B 60 a/2, p. 26v (15 June 1797). B 22 a/2, p. 22 (May 1795).
 422. B 239 b/57, p. 26: J. Colen to the North-West proprietors, York, 16 July 1796
 423. B 235 a/1, p. 2v (1797); B 60 a/3, p. 27 (May 1798); B 135 a/91, pp. 22-3 (Apr. 1804), B 239 b/71, p. 17: P. Fidler to York, Nottingham Ho., 12 Jan. 1805.
 424. B 239 b/43, p. 10: E. Jarvis, Albany, 5 June 1784, Wallace, "The Pedlars from Quebec" (*C.H.R.*, 1932, p. 391).
 425. B 239 b/44, p. 11 H. Marten, York, 16 Aug. 1785; B 239 b/56, p. 16 W. Tomison to York, Cumberland Ho., 10 June 1795; B 239 a/109 (20 June 1804)
 426. B 22 a/12, p. 10 (May 1804).
 427. B 239 a/72, p. 5 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5, B 239 a/69, p. 12 v. 36

- (Cocking's journal, 1772-3.
- 428 B 239 a/72, p. 36v (*op cit.*); B 239 b/39, pp. 18-19: H. Marten to S. Hearne, York, 3 Aug. 1779; B 22 a/3, p. 20 (Aug. 1795); B 22 a/10, p. 3 (J. Mackay, "Journal of Occurrences at Red River," 1802-3).
 429. B22 a/12, p. 2 (May 1804); B 239 b/71, p. 17. P. Fidler, Nottingham Ho., 12 Jan. 1805.
 430. B 60 a/7, pp. 3 v-4 (19 Oct. 1809): "This kind of unbounded resentment is an universal characteristic of all the natives of these parts and arises perhaps from their want of courage and perseverance to search out the immediate authors of their injuries. . . ." B 239 b/39, pp. 18-19: H. Marten to S. Hearne, York, 3 Aug. 1779: "The pedlars are very numerous inland and have been very roughly treated by the natives with whom they had a scuffle, in which John Cole and two others were killed, and the master traders were forced to deliver to the natives upwards of 200 gallons of rum." B 22 a/4, p. 8 (1796), B 22 a/4, p. 8 (1796), B 121 a/3, p. 49v (May 1789); B 121 a/4, pp. 23-4 (1789).
 - 431 B 239 b/40, p. 15v: W. Tomison to H. Marten, Cumberland, 29 May 1780: "The Indians are so difficult to deal with. If anything is denied to them they will threaten not to come down. Some offer to shoot me through the stockades." B 239 a/62, p. 43v (June 1769).
 432. A 11/75, pp. 163-5. J. C. Van Driel, South Branch Ho., 24 June 1794; B 239 a/96, p. 51 (July 1794), B 239 b/59, pp. 26-7: A. Shaw to J. Colen, Fort Augustus, 10 May 1797.
 433. B 60 a/2, pp. 11, 15 (1796-7).
 434. B 60 a/7, p. 11 (Dec. 1807).
 - 435 E 2/9, p. 125 (A. Graham's "Observations, 1779"); A 11/27, p. 144: J. Favell, Moose Fy, 24 Aug. 1766, B 3 b/4, p. 17: H. Marten to Major Rogers (Michilimackinac), 30 June 1768.
 436. London, 1816, p. 47 *et seq.*, Masson, *Bourgeois*, I p. 129 (Wentzel's correspondence); Coues, *New Light* . . . 1, pp. 239-40.
 437. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 519.
 438. B 104 a/1, p. 13 (14 Sept. 1799).
 439. B 239 b/67: W. Auld to York, Churchill, 5 July 1804: "W. Clark has been plundered in his small post. W. Linklater has been insulted and beaten."
 440. B 239 b/69, p. 67: *loc. cit.*
 441. B 239 b/71, p. 17: P. Fidler to York, Nottingham Ho., 12 Jan. 1805; B 239 b/73, p. 37: *ibid*, 23 Dec. 1805: "During the summer, the Canadians had privately destroyed our canoes . . . pulled up our garden stuff, and would not suffer any Indian to come near the House. Even the sight of a common Canadian is sufficient to keep them away. Whenever our people went out on duck hunting some Canadians would come to scare the birds." B 239 b/75, p. 41: W. Auld to York, Churchill, 18 July 1808: "Our people in the Deer lake have again experienced all the insults of our opponents. Under the guidance of Campbell they took up our nets, stole the fish, forcibly took a sled of furs belonging to us, even went into Mr. Spence's house with threats of vengeance." B 3 b/42, p. 4: Moose Fy to Albany, 23 Oct. 1805, B 3 b/43, p. 21: J. Hodgson, Albany, 22 July 1807; B 3 b/46, p. 7v: W. Corrigan, Eagle Lake, 18 Oct. 1809: "As soon as Indians come to our launch with a canoe, the Canadians come down armed with axes and pistols and threaten death for the first man that comes to offer to oppose them."
 442. B 3 b/45, p. 25: W. Auld to Albany, Churchill, 10 Aug. 1808; B 3 b/46, p. 13: J. Hodgson, Albany, 2 Feb. 1810: "Our party [Eagle Lake] having

- given debt to an Indian, the Canadians hauled the Indian's canoe ashore and endeavoured to take the goods from the Indian. A scuffle ensued, three of our men were wounded, but the Canadian master, Mr Angus McDonald, was shot by one of our men, John Mowat." B 60 a/8, pp. 13-15 (1809).
443. B 3 b/46, p. 13, *loc. cit.*, pp. 32-3. D. Cameron to the master at Pabana River, Ft Alexander, 3 Oct. 1809.
444. B 239 b/69, p. 73. J. McNab, York, 13 July 1804; B 239 b/73, p. 37. P. Fidler to York, Nottingham Ho., 23 Dec. 1805; B 239 b/75, p. 11. W. Auld to York, Churchill, 9 Mar. 1808, B 239 b/78, p. 72. London to York, 20 May 1809.
445. B 239 b/75, p. 5: Moose to York, 16 Mar. 1807. "Mr. Cameron told us he had determined to evacuate all the sea coasts without exception. They leave for Canada by way of the Abitibi river." B 3 b/43, p. 21. J. Hodgson, Albany, 22 July 1807.
446. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp. 421-2, 468.
447. B 239 b/75, p. 11 *loc. cit.*: "The [Athabaska] Indians complain grievously of the parsimony of the Canadians." Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 469-70.
448. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 422.
449. *Ibid.*, p. 602.
450. B 239 b/78, p. 63v. London to J. McNab, 31 May 1807, B 239 v/84, p. 54: W. Auld to York, Churchill, 5 Nov. 1813: "Three years ago it appeared reasonable that as each of the Factories was separate and independent the officers who trapped or procured furs by their own exertions should receive one half of the price annually affixed by the Company in goods. Now that the profits of all the factories are to be thrown into a common stock, whatever furs killed by the officers will go to the common benefit of the concern."
- B 239 b/85, p. 21-4: Th. Thomas, York Fy, 12 Mar. 1815 (to the Factors and Traders): "The Committee intend to divide half of the profit which has been set aside for the officers into 100 shares. The shares allotted to the present officers do not exhaust that number. The remainder will be held in trust to be distributed among the officers as extraordinary rewards. . . . It . . . becomes the interest of the principal officers to extend our trade inland, as by these means the value of their shares will be increased. . . . Henceforward all the Factories would throw their profits into an aggregate fund out of which shares should be distributed to all the officers."
- A 111/1, p. 122. Instructions to C. Robertson (going to Canada to engage men for Athapascaw): "In case you find a suitable person . . . it is our intention to allot him a share in the profits of our trade at least equal to that which is now allowed to the chiefs of Factories and principal districts. This share will be guaranteed for the first three years to average not less than 500 a year. If that gentleman succeeds in establishing a profitable trade in districts not at present frequented by our servants the share will be enlarged."
- B 60 a/12, p. 7v (1813). Quoted from the General letter received 1813: "We have resolved that the profit of all the Factories should be thrown into an aggregate fund out of which shares should be distributed among the officers of our whole establishments. . . . In this way there will be a more cordial and complete cooperation between the officers at the adjoining factories. . . ." (10 shares to each of the superintendents, 4 to each of the chief factors, 2 to the second of each factory, 1 to each junior or master trader). Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 531 *et seq.*
451. *Documents Relating to the North West C^o*, pp. 26-30.
452. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 501, 603.

- 453 A 10/11, p. 135: To Mr T. Thomas (Churchill River), May 1814; *ibid.*, pp. 256-63; C. Robertson to A. Colvile, Michilimackinac, 12 May 1815; Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 603.
- 454 Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 604.
455. *Ibid.*
456. *Ibid.*, p. 605.
457. *Ibid.*, pp. 605-6.
458. *Ibid.*, pp. 514-15, 525, 608; *ibid.*, "The Canada Jurisdiction Act (1803) and the North-West" (T.R.S.C., 1938, sect. II, 122 *et seq.*).
459. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp. 607-10.
460. *Ibid.*, pp. 613-15, Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North-West Company*, pp. 26-8, 369-71.
461. On the negotiations which led to the fusion of the two companies, see A. S. Morton's remarkable account (*A History of the Canadian West*, p. 613 *et seq.*).
462. That is to say, all the territories forming the basin of the Athabaska and Mackenzie rivers and the Peace River. *Op. cit.*, p. 628.
463. *Ibid.*, pp. 625, 690, 692-3.
464. D 4/54, p. 128, Simpson's Memorandum respecting the HBC's posts in Lake Huron and Lake Superior (1858?). "During high water, vessels of 100 tons burden can cross the bar and enter the river at all other times, it is necessary to anchor outside, about a mile from Fort William. The river has a swift current, and at a distance of 8 miles from its outlet is so shoal that canoes drawing 8 or 10 inches water cannot navigate it full laden."

PART III: THE BIRTH OF THE METIS GROUP

Chapter Six: The Southern Nucleus

1. E. Coues, *History of the Expedition under the Command of Lewis and Clark* New York, London, 1893, I, pp. 6, 21, 31-2; R. G. Thwaites, *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1804-6* New York, 1904, I pp. 176, 183 *passim*; Keating, S. H. *Long's Expedition*, I, pp. 79-80, 164, 172, 237, 245, 286, 312-13, 407 *et seq.*; A. Ross, "Adventures of the First Settlers on the Oregon or Columbia River," London, 1849 (in Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, VII, p. 177 *et seq.*); J. Bradbury, "Travels in the Interior of America in the Years 1809, 1810, 1811," London, 1819 (in Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, V, pp. 164, 180, 248-59); H. M. Brackenridge, "Journal of a Voyage up the River Missouri, 1811" (Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, VI, pp. 30 *et seq.*, 44-5, 130-1); J. M. Hanson, *The Conquest of the Missouri*. Chicago, 1909, p. 152; W. W. Warren, *History of the Osage* (Min. Hist. Col., V, 1885, pp. 21-395, pp. 279, 303, 324-5, 370-1; Bulger P. (P.A.C.), I: An account of the Prairie du Chien during the war of 1812-14. On some of the best known Sioux Métis see: L. A. Tothill, "Robert Dickson, British Fur Trader on the Upper Mississippi" (N.D.H.C., 1928-9, III, no. 1, pp. 5-49; no. 2, pp. 83-128; no. 3, pp. 182-203); "Victor Renville" (N.D.H.C., V, 1923, 251 *et seq.*).
2. F. F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 82 (La Vérendrye to Maurepas, 1 Aug. 1731)
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 100-1 (La Vérendrye and Beauharnais, 11 May 1733).
4. Burpee, *Journal and Letters of . . . la Vérendrye and His Sons*, pp. 140-6
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 235, 256-61; F. F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 146 (Mémor. from Sieur de La Vérendrye, 1736-7); *ibid.*, p. 148.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 142, 145, *ibid.*
7. *Ibid.* p. 195 (Mémoire from Sieur de la Verendrye, 31 Oct. 1744).
8. *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, 1922-3*, p. 192 et seq.; *ibid.*; *Mémoire de M. de Bougainville, 1758-9 (Rapport de l'Archiviste . . . , 1923-4, p. 1 et seq.)*.
9. A 11/72, p. 98. J. Isham, York, 27 July 1740; B 239 b/6, p. 39; J. Isbister to J. Isham, Pce of Wales, 6 July 1751, B 42 a/36, p. 59v (17 June 1751)
10. B 239 a/59, p. 33 v, 35 (W. Pink's journal, 1767-8), E 2/11, p. 71 (Cocking's journal, 1772-3); E 2/6, p. 75 (Tomison's journal, 1767-80).
11. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 351.
12. A 11/74, p. 175; York Fy, 24 Aug. 1786
13. McTavish, Frobisher: General return of the departments and posts occupied by the North-West Co. . . , 1801 (P.A.C. Q ser., LXXXIX, p. 166; Selkirk, "Sketch of the British Fur Trade . . ." (Selk. P. P.A.C., p. 9947), Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, p. 241.
14. *David Thompson's Narrative . . .* (Tyrrell, ed., Champlain Soc., Toronto, 1916), p. 171.
15. B 239 b/65, p. 16. Th. Stayner to York, Churchill, 7 July 1801.
16. Masson, *Bourgeois*, *Introd.*, p. 34.
17. A 11/74, p. 23; H. Marten, York, 25 Aug. 1777.
18. B 32/10, p. 35 v (16 June 1722), B 3 a/20, p. 24 (Feb. 1732).
19. Coues, *New Light . . .*, I, p. 192
20. B 121 2/2, p. 28 (24 Mar. 1788).
21. B 239 a/72, p. 26v (Cocking's journal, 1774-5); *Journal of Ph. Turnor* (Tyrrell, ed.), p. 361.
22. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 21 (John McDonald of Garth, autobiographical notes); Coll. Masson, McGill Univ.. A. Mackenzie, *Journal of Great Bear Lake*, 1805.
23. B 3 a/46, p. 33 (6 June 1754).
24. S. Hall and W. T. Boutwell Report to Prudential Committee, 7 Feb. 1833 (Am. Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions).
25. P. Kalm, *Travels into North America*, London, 1772, II, pp. 224 et seq., 287, 290; Bacqueville de la Pothéne, *Histoire de l'Amérique septentrionale*. Paris, 1722, I, p. 279; F. Parkman, *The Old Regime in Canada*. Boston, 1878, p. 386; J. Douglas, *Old France in the New World*. Cleveland, 1905, p. 167
26. A. Shortt and T. Chapais, "The Colony in Its Political Relations" *Canada and Its Provinces*, II, p. 315 et seq.; G. Lanctot, *L'administration de la Nouvelle France*. Paris, 1929; *ibid.*, "Les fonctions de l'Intendant" (Can. Hist. Ass. 1929), "Les fonctions des gouverneurs" (*Canada français*, Nov. 1929); C. W. Colby, *Canadian Types of the Old Regime*. New York, 1908, p. 5; Douglas, *op. cit.*, p. 17; *Cambridge History of the British Empire*, VI, pp. 37-46.
27. Faillon, *Histoire de la colonie française en Canada*. Montreal, 1865, II, pp. 53, 93; *Cambridge History . . .*, VI, p. 37 et seq.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 65; Parkman, *Old Regime*, p. 387; Casgrain (abbé H. R.), *Une paroisse canadienne au XVII^e siècle*. Quebec, 1880
29. A. Siegfried, *Le Canada, puissance internationale*. Paris, 1937, p. 16.
30. The studies of Abbé Cyprien Tanguay (*Dictionnaire généalogique des familles canadiennes françaises*, Montreal, 1888) and of G. Langlois (*Histoire de la population canadienne française*. Montreal, 1934) have refuted the contrary opinion, too often disseminated in Anglo-Saxon circles.
31. E. Salone, *La colonisation de la Nouvelle France*. Paris, 1905, p. 54 et seq., p. 108 et seq., p. 156 et seq., p. 431 et seq.
32. Faillon, *op. cit.*, III, p. 204; Chrestien Le Clercq, *Premier établissement de la foy*

- dans la Nouvelle France. Paris, 1691, II, p. 12; C 11A-6 (A.N.), p. 401; De Meulles, Québec, 12 Nov. 1684.
33. Le Clercq, *op. cit.*
 34. P. H. Biggar, *The Works of Samuel de Champlain* (Champlain Society, Toronto, 1922), VI, pp. 104-5.
 35. R. G. Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, XL, p. 62. "Every year the ships bring us a number of people who go to swell our colony. This group is mingled like good money and false coin. It is composed of people of the best quality and others who are lowbred and debased."
 36. *Lettres historiques*. Paris, 1681, p. 387, letter XXXI. Québec, 26 Aug. 1644.
 37. *Ibid.*, Faillon, *op. cit.*, p. 212.
 38. G. Goyau, *Une épopée mystique: Les origines religieuses du Canada*. Paris, 1934.
 39. Massicotte, *Montréal sous le régime français*. . . . Montreal, 1919, p. 2; Faillon, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 522-9, III, pp. 25-7.
 40. *Ibid.*, III, p. 384, B. Sulte, *Histoire des Canadiens français*. Montreal, 1882-4, IV, p. 118.
 41. *Lettres historiques*, pp. 641-2; letter LXXXIII, Oct. 1669: "Among the honest people there arrive plenty of riffraff of both sexes, who cause a great deal of trouble. It would have been more to our advantage . . . to have had just a few good Christians rather than this great number of people who cause us so many difficulties." *Jes. Rel.*, LXIII, pp. 150-200; LXVII, p. 72, Faillon, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 389-400.
 42. "Archives judiciaires de Montréal," P.A.C. (ordinance of 2 Apr. 1669 on the taverns of Montreal and their population of "dissolute and debauched men").
 43. C 11A-7 (A.N.), pp. 91-4. Denonville, Québec, 13 Nov. 1685; C 11A-8 (A.N.), p. 13; Denonville, 8 May 1686.
 44. C 11A-26 (A.N.), p. 256 (ordinance of the Sieur Raudot, 26 May 1707); C 11A-33 (A.N.), p. 125. Begon. Québec, 12 Nov. 1712; C 11A-31 (A.N.), pp. 139-40 (ordinance of Raudot on the number of taverns in Montreal) (1710).
 45. C 11A-6 (A.N.), p. 184; De Muelles, 4 Nov. 1683: "Though they are made up of all kinds of people [these folk] live well enough morally." C 11A-8 (A.N.), p. 13; Denonville, 8 May 1686: "The people of the country are peaceful enough, except for a few families who are set on debauchery. We have in the country a number of scamps and particularly a certain number of bad women who live a despicable life. To tell the truth, Monseigneur, we risk losing all the youth of the country. . . ." F. G. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*. New York, 1921, pp. 32-3.
 46. *Jes. Rel.*, IX, p. 170.
 47. G. Sagard Théodat, *Histoire du Canada*. Paris, 1636, pp. 130-1, 190.
 48. *Ibid.*, p. 190; *Jes. Rel.*, V, p. 36.
 49. *Jes. Rel.*, IV, pp. 190-2; V, pp. 124-6; Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, p. 167.
 50. C 11A-11 (A.N.): Champigny, 10 May 1691: "Canadian youth . . . is vigorous and capable of hard toil . . ." C 11A-7 (A.N.), p. 94. Denonville, 13 Nov. 1685: "The Canadians are all tall, well-built and well set on their legs, accustomed to the need to live on little, robust and vigorous. . . ." W. B. Munro, *Crusaders of New France*. London, New Haven, 1920, p. 216.
 51. *Jes. Rel.*, IX, p. 156.
 52. A. L. Burt, *The Old Province of Quebec*. Minneapolis, 1933, p. 2.
 53. Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, pp. 57-65; Champlain, *Voyages*, 1632, Part I, p. 7, *Jes. Rel.*, IX, pp. 164-6; Marie de l'Incarnation, *Lettres historiques*, pp. 605-7 (letter LXXII, 16 Oct. 1666); Innis, *Select Documents in Canadian*

- Economic History*, I, pp. 352-3
54. C 11A-11 (A.N.), p. 95: Frontenac, 12 Nov. 1690; C 11A-12 (A.N.), p. 4: Frontenac and Champigny, 15 Sept. 1692, Innis, *op. cit.*, I, p. 365, J. E. Lunn, "Agriculture and War in Canada" (*CHR*, June 1935)
 55. C 11A-11 (A.N.), p. 262: Champigny, 10 May 1691, *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la province de Québec, 1927-8*, p. 8 (Rapport pour le sieur Comte de Frontenac, 7 June 1689); *ibid.*, 1922-3, p. 64 (Mémoire sur l'Etat présent du Canada, 12 Dec. 1715); *ibid.*, 1926-7, p. 67 (Frontenac to Colbert, 14 Nov. 1674), Innis, *op. cit.*, I, p. 352. W. B. Munro, *Documents Relating to the Seigneurial Tenure in Canada* Toronto, 1908, introd., pp. 70-1, *ibid.*, *Crusaders of New France*, pp. 162-4.
 56. C 11A-6 (A.N.), p. 171v: De Neulles, 2 June 1683. "[To put the Iroquois] out of the situation of being able to affront that colony, having resolved to go and camp in their country and to have a party of Canadians wintering there, who know how to live in the woods like them and are capable of repulsing them. . . ." C 11A-5 (A.N.), p. 14. Relation du voyage de M. le comte de Frontenac au lac Ontario en 1673.
 57. C 11A-5 (A.N.), pp. 50-1: Duchesneau, 10 Nov. 1679.
 58. C 11A-23 (A.N.), pp. 35-42: Duplessis, 17 Oct. 1705.
 59. Munro, *Crusaders of New France*, p. 221; L. Groulx (abbe), *La naissance d'une race*, Montreal, 1919 (2nd ed., 1930), pp. 24S-9, 2S4, V. Morin, "Superstitions et croyances populaires" (*M.S.R.C.*, 1937, 3rd ser. sect. I, pp. 51-60), L. Burpee and M. Barbeau, *The People of Canada* (C.G.J., May 1939)
 60. Munro, *Documents Relating to the Seigneurial Tenure*, pp. 186-7 (Hocquart, 8 Nov. 1737); *ibid.*, p. 50 (Duchesneau, 10 Nov. 1679)
 61. Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, 1744, II, p. 377; C 11A-28 (A.N.), p. 297 v: Raudot, 14 Nov. 1708. "Everyone wanted to be master, and neither subordination nor order nor honesty is recognized in our proceedings."
 62. C 11A-17 p. 68: Champigny, 20 Oct. 1699.
 63. C 11A-3 (A.N.), p. 196 V: Description of Canada . . . (memoir of a missionary, 1671) "We have French households from the Island of Montreal to eight or ten leagues below Quebec, but . . . the houses being usually situated on the banks of the rivers, they are built on acreage—and there are no settlements properly speaking except Quebec, Le Cap. Trois Rivières, the town of Montreal, and a few villages which M. Talon has established in the locality of Quebec." C 11A-3 (A.N.), p. 258: Frontenac, 2 Nov. 1672. Salone, *op. cit.*, pp. 62, 130.
 64. *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, 1926-7*, p. 67 (Frontenac, 14 Nov. 1674); C 11A-7 (A.N.), p. 61. Denonville to the King, 12 June 1686. The colony is "in such a terrible disorder that there is no way of expecting things to go well unless it is consolidated and that cannot be done without abandoning most of the habitations. Each seigneurie has two or three leagues of water frontage, and the most populous have no more than thirty or forty habitants, and most of them only twelve or fifteen, or as few as five or six." C 11A-19 (A.N.), p. 227 v: Vaudreuil, 1 Oct. 1701 "The country is inhabited lengthwise. . . . On every side unpopulated areas are numerous and extensive either because of the lack of people or because of the poor quality of the soil."
- C 11A-50 (A.N.), p. 519: Maurepas to Dupuy (Intendant): "The habitants of New France . . . are always anxious to push ahead without becoming involved with the establishments in the interior because they gain more and more independence when they are farther away." Salone, *op. cit.*, pp. 318-23; *Canada and Its Provinces*, II, p. 559.

65. Salone, *op. cit.*, p. 342 *et seq.* The lure of furs also impelled the habitants to disperse upriver, where the Indians arrived with cargoes of furs (C 11A-7, p. 178v). The absence of continuity is to be explained not only by the absence of a methodical plan for occupying the land, but by the unequal fertility of the banks along which barren spaces were scattered among the cultivated stretches, as well as to the established custom of granting seignuries too vast to lend themselves to quick and complete clearing (C 11A-11, p. 193 Benonville, Jan. 1690. C 11A-11, p. 264, Champigny, 10 May 1691. *Rapport de l'Archiviste* 1930-1, pp. 8, 16; The King to Talon, 27 Mar. 1665. Salone, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-80).
66. C 11A-11 (N.A.), p. 273: Remarques sur ce qui paroist important au service du Roy pour la conservation de la Nouvelle France; *Rapport de l'Archiviste* . . . 1920-1 (Etat présent du Canada . . . par le sieur Boucault), 1754, p. 24; *ibid.*, 1923-4 (Mission de M. de Bougainville en France en 1758-9), p. 1 *et seq.*
67. Innis, *Select Documents* . . . I, pp. 308, 296; C 11A-7 (A.N.), p. 92: Denonville, 13 Nov. 1685, C 11A-13 (A.N.), pp. 17 v-18: Frontenac and Champigny, 5 Nov. 1694; A. Gosselin *L'instruction au Canada sous le régime français* Quebec, 1911, pp. 133-4; I. Caron, *La colonisation de la Province de Québec* Quebec, 1927, p. 186, 223; G. de T. Glazebrook, "Roads in New France and the Policy of Expansion" (Can. H. Ass. 1934)
68. C 11A-12 (A.N.), p. 8v. Frontenac and Champigny, 15 Sept. 1692; C 11A-13 (A.N.), p. 17 V, 18: *loc. cit.*, *Rapport de l'Archiviste*, 1923-4 (Mission de Bougainville), p. 1.
69. Salone, *op. cit.*, p. 17 *et seq.*
70. C 11A-11 (A.N.), p. 187: Demonville, Jan. 1690.
71. Innis, *Select Documents*, I, p. 351.
72. The great extent of the parishes limited the frequency of pastoral visits (C 11A-7, p. 743 v, De Muelles, 28 Sept. 1685: "The time which the priests pass in travelling about is such that most of the people hear mass only three or four times a year."—C 11A-7, p. 92: Denonville, 13 Nov. 1685.—*Rapport de l'Archiviste*, 1926-7, 138; Frontenac to Seignelay, 2 Nov. 1681). Only in 1722 was a plan for organizing the parochial districts undertaken to fix their boundaries and stabilize them by substituting regular priests for missionaries. But this work was not everywhere complete and effective (*Rapport de l'Archiviste*, 1921-2, p. 262 *et seq.*; Procès-Verbaux du Procureur Generale Collet sur les districts paroissiaux de la Nouvelle France); A. Gosselin, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-4.
73. Munro, *Canada and Its Provinces*, II, p. 570.
74. C 11A-11 (A.N.), p. 192 v: Denonville, Jan. 1690.
75. *Ibid.*, Munro, *Crusaders of New France*, p. 210, *Documents Relating to the Seigniorial Tenure*, pp. 186-7; Groulx, *op. cit.*, p. 247.
76. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, p. 18; R. G. Thwaites, *Daniel Boone*. New York, 1902.
77. C 11A-9 (A.N.), p. 140 Denonville, 27 Oct. 1687. "We are finding insurmountable difficulties with the habitant who is accustomed to doing what he likes near his wood and his field, without witnesses to his conduct."
C 11A-10 (A.N.), pp. 330-2: "Remarques sur ce qui paroist important au service du Roy" "[the people] who are neither docile nor very easy to govern."
78. Innis, *Select Documents*, I, pp. 352-8; C 11A-33 (A.N.), p. 234: Mémoire du sieur de Catalonge, 7 Nov. 1712.
79. C 11A-2 (A.N.), p. 346 Arrêt du Conseil Supérieur de Québec; 20 June 1667; C 11A-4 (A.N.), p. 138: 11 May 1676.

80. *Rapport de l'Archiviste*, 1930-1, p. 123 Talon to Colbert, 10 Nov. 1670; Innis, *Select Documents*, I, p. 384.
81. *Rapport de l'Archiviste*, 1920-1, p. 14; Etat present du Canada par le sieur Boucault, 1754.
82. C 11A-8 (A.N.), p. 13: Denonville, 8 May 1686. "The length of the winter during which these people do nothing but keep themselves warm, living in extreme idleness, the nakedness of their children, the slothfulness of the girls and women, all this . . . calls for a little severity if they are going to sow hemp and apply themselves to linen weaving." J. Lunn, "Agriculture and War in Canada" (C.H.R., June 1935, p. 123 et seq.).
83. C 11A-33 (A.N.), p. 233 Mémoire du sieur de Catalongne, 7 Nov. 1712
84. C 11A-9 (A.N.), p. 140: *loc. cit.*
85. C 11A-13 (A.N.), p. 12: Frontenac and Champigny, 5 Nov. 1694, Burt, *The Old Province of Quebec*, p. 2, R. Blanchard, *L'Est du Canada français*, Paris-Montreal, 1935, I, p. 153. On the organization of the market in New France, cf. the interesting article by F. W. Burton, "The Wheat Supply of New France" (T.R.S.C., 3rd series, sect. II, 1939, p. 257 et seq.).
86. Marie de l'Incarnation, *Lettres historiques* Quebec, 16 Oct. 1666, p. 610.
87. Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, 1636, p. 169; Champlain (Samuel de), *Voyages*, Paris, 1613, pp. 192-3 *Ibid.*, *Des Sauvages ou voyage . . . fait en la France Nouvelle*, Paris, 1603, p. 11.
88. *Jes. Rel.*, VIII, pp. 44-6; Champlain, *Les voyages de la Nouvelle France occidentale*, . . ., 1932, Part II, p. 139.
89. C 11A-2 (A.N.), p. 205: Colbert to Talon, 5 Apr. 1666: "To augment the colony . . . it seems to me that without waiting to make use of the few settlers we can send from France, nothing would better contribute to it than to try to civilize the Algonquins, the Hurons and the other savages who have embraced Christianity." C 11A-2 (A.N.), p. 222. Talon, 13 Nov. 1666; Salone, *op. cit.*, p. 194.
90. C 11A-6 (A.N.), p. 140 v: La Barre, 4 Nov. 1683, Salone, *op. cit.*, p. 263, Groulx, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-5.
91. *Jes. Rel.*, VI, p. 327; IX, p. 103; Marie de l'Incarnation, *Lettres historiques* pp. 513, 622-3; 24 Sept. 1654, 17 Oct. 1668.
92. *Ibid.*, p. 513.
93. *Rapport de l'Archiviste*, 1930-1, p. 95 Colbert to Talon, 20 Feb. 1668
94. Marie de l'Incarnation, *op. cit.*, p. 571; *Jes. Rel.*, IX, pp. 226-32, XXX, p. 156
95. Marie de l'Incarnation *op. cit.*, pp. 632-3; C 11A-5 (A.N.), p. 15: Frontenac, 6 Nov. 1679; C 11A-58 (A.N.), pp. 245-6: Hocquart, 10 Oct. 1732; *Rapport de l'Archiviste*, 1926-7, p. 282: Letter from P. Nau, Sault St. Louis, C 11A-2 Oct. 1735; L. Gerin, "La seigneurie de Sillery et les Hurons de Lorette" (M.S. R.C., 2nd ser., Part I, 1900, p. 73 et seq.), Salone, *op. cit.*, p. 250 et seq.).
96. *Jes. Rel.*, IX, pp. 226-32; XXX, p. 156, Marie de l'Incarnation, *op. cit.*, pp. 620, 630, 633, (Oct. 1667-Oct. 1668). C 11A-6 (A.N.), p. 140 v: La Barre, 4 Nov. 1683: "In 1682 you called on the state for 3,000 livres as rewards for marrying savage girls, which was an error, since none were married."
97. *Jes. Rel.* XXIX, p. 180.
98. *Ibid.*, VI, p. 123.
99. *Rapport de l'Archiviste*, 1926-7, p. 67. Frontenac to Colbert, 14 Nov. 1674.
100. C 11A-12 (A.N.), p. 268 v: Champigny, 4 Nov. 1693; C 11A-12 (A.N.), p. 46 v: Frontenac, 11 Nov. 1692; C 11A-15 (A.N.), p. 124 Champigny, 13 Oct. 1697.

101. C 11A-11 (A N.), pp. 66-7: Relation de ce qui s'est passé . . en Canada . . . , 1690-1; *Jes. Rel.*, XXI, p. 120; XLII, p. 226.
102. C 11A-11 (A.N.), pp. 34 v: De Monseignat. Relation de ce qui s'est passé . . . en Canada, 1689-90.
103. 11A-11(A N.), pp. 52-4 Relation de ce qui s'est passé . . en Canada, 1690-1 (Frontenac and Champigny): "The three Iroquois who remained, having fallen into the hands of the habitants, have been burnt at Point aux Trembles, Boucharville and Repentigny. . . ."
104. C 11A-11 (A N.), p. 12 v: De Monseignat, *Relation* . . . , *ibid* 87^v Frontenac, 12 Nov. 1690.
105. C 11A-11 (A N.), pp. 275v-276: Remarques sur ce qui paroist important au service du Roy Pour la conservation de la Nouv. France.
106. Innis, *Select Documents*, I, p. 351.
107. C 11A-7 (A.N.), p. 89: Denonville, 13 Nov. 1685.
108. Kalm, *Travels into North America*, II, p. 379; P. . . . Poirier: "Des vocables algonquins . . . qui sont entres dans la langue" (*M.S.R.C.* 3rd ser., sect. I, Mar. 1917, p. 339 et seq.
109. C 11A-7 (A.N.), p. 91; Denonville, 13 Nov. 1685.
110. I Weld, *Travels through the States of North America* London, 1799, I, pp. 33S-9.
111. C 11A-7 (A.N.), p. 94; C 11A-5 (A N.), pp. 50-1. Du Chesneau, 10 Nov. 1679; Groulx, *op. cit.*, p. 254.
112. C 11A-7 (A.N.), p. 90: Denonville, 13 Nov. 1685.
113. *Jes. Rel.*, IX, pp. 236-32, XXX, p. 156.
114. Among the best known of these mixed marriages figures that of P. Boucher, author of the *Histoire véritable et naturelle des moeurs et productions du pays de la Nouvelle France*, contracted with an Indian woman raised by the Ursulines. she died shortly afterwards, without issue. Nicolas Jérémie, author of the *Relation du Détroit et de la Baie d'Hudson*, married in 1693 a Montagnaise, but the marriage was annulled by the Superior Council of Quebec. A well-known case is that of Baron de Saint-Castin, of French origin, who married an Abenaki princess about 1688, a son was born of the union and served among the royal troops in Canada. *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, July 1903, Mar. 1907. General Correspondence of New France: among others that of an Iroquois, an Onondago, with a Frenchman's widow (C 11A-15, pp. 31v, 147v).
115. Langlois, *Histoire de la population canadienne française*, pp. 59, 79.

	MALE	FEMALE
1665-6	2 034	1.121
1681	5.375	4.302
1692	6.579	5.852
1706	8.552	7.865
1720	12.494	11.940
1765	28.316	26.794

- 116 *Jes. Rel.*, XLIII, pp. 150–200, 226–8; LXIII, pp. 251, 266, LXVII, p. 72; *ibid.*, LXIV, p. 122. "Our bishop published during Lent several matters to be tried in ecclesiastical court. There was only one such in this diocese, that of Frenchmen who sinned with savage women." Letter of P. Chauchetière, Villemarie, 7 Aug. 1694), O'Callaghan, *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of New York*, IX, pp. 278–9 (Extracts from the letters of Myrle Saint-Valhier); Archives judiciaires, Montreal (P.A.C.): ordinances of Paul de Chomedey, 1659, 1662; Faillon, *op. cit.*, III, p. 384.
117. C 11A-50 (A N), pp. 9v–10 Vaudreuil and Raudot, 14 Nov. 1709
118. Kalm, *Travels into North America*, II, p. 321.
119. Biggar, *The Works of Samuel de Champlain*, IV, p. 118 II, pp. 187–8
- 120 *Ibid.*, III, pp. 213–26. V, pp. 96–7; Butterfield, *Brulé's Discoveries and Explorations*. Cleveland, 1989.
121. *Jes. Rel.*, XXIII, pp. 274–6.
122. Biggar, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 225–8.
123. *Ibid.*, VI, p. 63.
124. Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, pp. 940, 979
125. Champlain, *Voyages*, 1632, Part II, p. 249.
126. Biggar, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 127–31; C. Le Clercq, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 127–31; O. Jouve, *Les Franciscains et le Canada*. Quebec, 1915, p. 351.
127. *Jes. Rel.*, VIII, p. 114. XI, p. 141. XI, p. 222, Sagard, *Le grand voyage du pays des Hurons*. Paris 1632, p. 81; *ibid.*, *Histoire du Canada*, p. 250; Biggar, *op. cit.*, III, p. 49.
128. *Jes. Rel.*, XXIII, pp. 274–80
129. Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, p. 378.
130. Le Clercq, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 247–8.
131. Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements des Français*. . . I, p. 134 (Relation de l'abbé de Galinée, 1669–70).
132. J. D. Hunter, *Memoirs of a Captivity among the Indians of North America*. London, 1824, p. 247; J. E. Scaver, *The Life of Mary Jemson*. London 1847, p. 41; *Jes. Rel.* XLIII, p. 262 *et seq*
133. *Jes. Rel.*, I, p. 36, Kalm, *Travels into North America*. London, 1771, III, p. 153.
134. C. Colden, *The History of the Five Indian Nations of Canada*. London, 1742, p. 9; P. Margry, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 124 (Récit de Mathieu Sagean).
135. P. E. Radisson, *Voyages* (Scull, ed.) p. 39 *et seq*, C 11A-18, p. 147v. Le Roy de La Poterie, 11 Aug. 1700; F. H. Severance, "An Old Frontier of France" (Publications of the Buffalo Historical Society, vols. 20–1), I, p. 145 *et seq*
136. D. Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 7; Radisson, *Voyages*, p. 80 *et seq.*, C 11A-18, pp. 82–3.
137. C 11A-18, p. 151 (Le Roy de la Poterie, 16 Oct. 1700).
138. Sagard, *op. cit.*, p. 378; *Jes. Rel.*, XXIII, pp. 274–8; Biggar, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 187–8.
139. Champlain, *Voyages*, 1632, Part I, pp. 174–5.
140. Sagard, *op. cit.*, pp. 668–9.
141. *Ibid.*, pp. 541 *et seq* pp. 643, 709–10; Biggar, *The Works of S. de Champlain*, VI, pp. 104–6; *Jes. Rel.*, XX, p. 19.
142. Sagard, *op. cit.*, pp. 170, 495–7; *Jes. Rel.*, X, p. 62.
143. J. B. Brebner, *The Explorers of North America*. London, 1933, p. 185; Biggar, *The Works of S. de Champlain*, VI, p. 63.
144. Biggar, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier*. Ottawa, 1924, p. 182; *Ibid.*, *The Works of S. de Champlain*, I, pp. 110–20.

- 145 *Ibid.*, III, pp. 45-8, 138-9; Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, pp. 314, 321-2, 351-2; C 11A-3 (A.N.), p. 210: Description du Canada . . . (Memoire d'un missionnaire), 1671, *Jes. Rel.*, X, p. 167 XXIII, pp. 164, 184-6.
- 146 *Jes. Rel.*, VI, pp. 258-60. XX, p. 19.
- 147 *Ibid.*, VIII, pp. 44-6. XIV, pp. 14-20.
148. Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, pp. 378, 891; *ibid.*, *Le grand voyage du pays des Hurons*, pp. 176-8; Biggar, *The Works of S. de Champlain*, II, p. 132 IV, p. 19, 132, *Jes. Rel.*, XXV, p. 85.
- 149 Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, pp. 669-71.
- 150 Biggar, *op. cit.*, V, p. 129.
151. Sagard, *op. cit.*, pp. 456-7.
152. *Ibid.*, pp. 314-31; *Jes. Rel.*, XIV, pp. 14-20
153. *Jes. Rel.*, XXXIII, p. 68.
- 154 Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, pp. 209-10; Le Clercq, *op. cit.*, I, p. 127.
155. Biggar, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 300-1.
- 156 A. A. Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization*. London, 1921, pp. 73-5; *ibid.*, *Anthropology: An Introduction to Primitive Culture*. New York, 1937, pp. 334-8, Stutes, *Economics of the Iroquois* (Bryn Mawr College Monographs, I, 1905, no. 3). L. Hennepin, *A New Discovery of a Vast Country in America*. London 1698 (ed. Thwaites, Chicago, 1903), II, p. 513.
157. J. E. Seaver, *The Life of Mary Jemison*. London, 1847, pp. 75, 96, Lafitan, *Moeurs des Sauvages Amérindiens*. Paris, 1724, I, p. 581, Stutes, *op. cit.*, p. 14, *et seq.*
158. Seaver, *op. cit.*, p. 154, E. H. Blair, *The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes as described by Nicolas Perrot*. Cleveland, 1911 12, I, pp. 64-6; Lafnau, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 581-5, Colden, *The History of the Five Indian Nations of Canada*, p. 12
159. *Jes. Rel.*, XXIV, pp. 274-8.
160. Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, pp. 27, 287, 289. *Jes. Rel.*, IV, p. 202.
161. Stutes, *Economics of the Iroquois*, pp. 13, 20 *et seq.*
162. C 11A-13 (A.N.), p. 452: Charles Aubert de la Chesnaye, Quebec, Oct. 1695; Colden, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
163. C 11A-15 (A.N.), p. 34: Frontenac Relation de ce qui s'est passé . . . depuis le départ des vaisseaux en 1697 jusques au 20 Oct 1698. . . "Four Frenchmen taken several years ago by the Agniers returned to Montreal . . . There are still 7 or 8 left in this village who have wholly forgotten their country and their language so that there is reason to despair of ever being able to oblige them to return here."
164. C 11a-12 (A.N.), p. 259 v: Champigny, 17 Aug 1693; Radisson, *Voyages* (Scull, ed), p. 80 *et seq.*
165. Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 102 *et seq.*, Seaver, *op. cit.*, p. 47 *et seq.*
- 166 C 11A-15 (A.N.), pp. 148-53. Le Roy de la Poterie, 11 Aug.-6 Oct. 1700; Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, 1744, III, pp. 365, 402-3.
167. C 11A-18 (A.N.), p. 154 v. Le Roy de la Poterie, 16 Oct 1700; C 11A-18 (A.N.), p. 83. Paroles de six députés iroquois au Chevalier de Callières, Montreal, 13 July 1700. Réponse du Chevalier de Callières.
168. Charlevoix, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 402, 420.
169. C 11A-18 (A.N.), p. 82. Paroles de six députés iroquois . . . Réponse du Chevalier de Callières, 1700
170. C 11A-18 (A.N.), p. 82; *ibid.*; C 11A 13 (A.N.), p. 147 v Le Roy de la Poterie, 11 Aug. 1700; Seaver, *An Old Frontier of France*, p. 145 *et seq.*
171. C 11A-2 (A.N.), p. 254. Articles de paix demandés par 6 ambassadeurs iroquois de la nation Onontagué, May 1666.

172. C 11A-34 (A.N.), p. 257. Vaudreuil and Bégon, 15 Nov. 1713
173. Miss de l'Isle (A.D.C.M.), 115-X. Mémoire succinct de la naissance et des services de P. Le Moyne d'Iberville, C 11A-30 (A.N.), p. 82. Vaudreuil, 14 Nov. 1709; C 11A-31 (A.N.), p. 67 v. Mémoire de la Marquise de Vaudreuil au Comte de Pontchartrain, 1710.
174. C 11A-32 (A.N.), pp. 206-7. Rapport sur la correspondance du marquis de Vaudreuil (23 Oct., 8 Nov. 1711); C 11A-35 (A.N.), p. 30 v. Ramezay and Bégon, 13 Sept. 1715, C 11A-47 (A.N.), p. 152. Vaudreuil, 18 May 1725.
175. *Jes. Rel.*, LXII, p. 222, C 11A-41 (A.N.), pp. 387-9. Vaudreuil et Bégon, 26 Dec. 1720, C 11A-43 (A.N.), pp. 16-19. *Ibid.*, 6 Oct. 1720, C 11A-49 (A.N.), p. 574. Mémoire sur l'établissement fait à Niagara. Conseil de Marine, 27 Apr. 1727; Severance, *op. cit.*, pp. 224-5.
176. Blair, *op. cit.*, I, p. 210 (Mémoire of Nicolas Perrot).
177. *Jes. Rel.*, XLII, p. 36 et seq., XLIII, p. 132 et seq., XLIV (Relation, 1657-8); Radisson, *Voyages* (Scull, ed.), pp. 36-118, P. J. Robinson, *Toronto under the French Regime*. Toronto, 1933, p. 10.
178. J. J. Bigsby, *The Shoe and Canoe*. London, 1850, II, p. 129.
179. *Jes. Rel.*, XXIII, p. 208 et seq., LII, p. 198 et seq., LIV, p. 130 et seq., LV, p. 100 et seq.; P. Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements*, V, p. 75 et seq., C. de Rochemonteix, *Les Jésuites et la Nouvelle France*, II, p. 343 et seq.
180. L. P. Kellogg, *The French Regime in Wisconsin and the Northwest*, Madison, 1925, p. 165; Long, *Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter and Trader (Early Western Travels, II)*, p. 79.
181. Alexander Henry senior, *Travels and Adventures in Canada*. Bain ed., Toronto, 1901, p. 40, J. A. Van Fleet, *Old and New Mackinac*. Ann Arbor, 1870, p. 9 et seq.; Kellogg, *op. cit.*, loc. cit.
182. On the native populations of Sault Ste. Marie, see *Jes. Rel.*, LII, pp. 198-20, LIV, pp. 130-2; L. Hennepin, *Description de la Louisiane*. Paris, 1683, p. 64; Radisson, *op. cit.*, p. 155, on the native population of Michilimackinac: see *Jes. Rel.*, LVI, pp. 114-18, LVII, p. 250, LXI, p. 102, Hennepin, *op. cit.*, p. 62, Hennepin, *A New Discovery of a Vast Country in America* (ed., Thwaites), I, pp. 114-16; Margry, *Découvertes et établissements*, III, pp. 513-14, V, p. 75 et seq. C 11A-29, p. 68 (d'Aigremont, 14 Nov. 1708).
On the resources and conditions of life at Sault Ste. Marie see Hennepin, *A New Discovery*, I, pp. 116-17; Margry, *op. cit.*, I, p. 163, 448, II, p. 515. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9273, pp. 260-3 (Raudot, *Mémoire sur l'Amérique septentrionale*, 1710); C 11A-29, pp. 68-9 (d'Aigremont, 14 Nov. 1708), C 11A-77, p. 134 (Beauharnais, 24 Oct. 1742), *Jes. Rel.*, LV, p. 160, LVI, pp. 114-18; Henry senior, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-3; Bigsby, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 124-5, 146-7. On the groups of French and French Canadians who frequented these places or lived there see Margry, *op. cit.*, I, p. 163, Mackenzie, *Voyage*, pp. XXXVII-IX. F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9273, p. 263 (loc. cit.), *Jes. Rel.*, LXVI, p. 282, C 11E-13, p. 144 et seq., C 11E-16, p. 247v (Hocquart, 27 Sept. 1741), C 11A-39, p. 258 (Mémoire sur les sauvages du Canada. Sabrevoix, 1718); *Rapport de l'Arch.*, 1927-8, p. 328 (Mémoire sur les postes du Canada. par le chevalier de Raymond, 1754); Hennepin, *Description de la Louisiane*, pp. 294-5; Margry, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 513-15. V, pp. 79-80. Bigsby, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 146-7.
183. C 11A-5 (A.N.), pp. 196-9, Duchesneau, 13 Nov. 1681, pp. 307-8 (Mémoire joint à la lettre de Duchesneau), C 11A-13 (A.N.), p. 449 (Aubert de la Chesnaye, Oct. 1695), pp. 198-9 (Champigny 26 Oct. 1694), C 11A-29 (A.N.), p. 70 (d'Aigremont, 14 Nov. 1708), C 11A-34 (A.N.), p.

- 231v (Vaudreuil and Bégon, 20 Sept 1714); C 11A-35 (A.N.), p. 19 *et seq.* Ramezay and Bégon, 7 Nov 1715; C 11A-35 (A.N.), p. 220 v. De Louvigny; 3 Oct. 1715; F 3-2 (A.N.), p. 8 v. De la Chesnaye, *Mémoire sur le Canada*, 1697, *Jes. Rel.*, XLV, pp 160, 234 XLIX, p. 240; Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, p. 59 *et seq.*
184. Margry, *Découvertes et Établissements*, V, pp 79-80; Kellogg, *The French Regime in Wisconsin*, p. 386 *et seq.*; Innis, *Peter Pond*, p. 25 *et seq.*
185. Margry, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 513-14; C. de Rochemonteix, *Les Jésuites et la Nouvelle France*, III, p. 484.
186. C 11A-14 (A.N.), p. 256. *Mémoire remis à M. d'Aguesseau*. (Frontenac, Champigny) 1696; C 11A-22 (A.N.), p. 358 *et seq.* Riverin, *Mémoire . . . sur les mauvais effets de la réunion des castors . . .* Paris, 12 Feb. 1705; Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, p. 34. *et seq.*
187. C 11A-13 (A.N.), pp. 198-9. Champigny, 26 Oct. 1694; Margry, *op. cit.*, V, p. 83.
188. C 11A-3 (A.N.), p. 96 v. Talon, 10 Oct 1670, *ibid.*, p. 163 v, *ibid.*, 2 Nov 1671; C 11A-13 (A.N.), p. 447 v. De la Chesnaye, Oct. 1695, C 11A-14 (A.N.), p. 256 v, *op. cit.*; C 11A-6 (A.N.), p. 471 v. *Mémoire sur les affaires générales du Canada*, 1700.
189. C 11A-11 (A.N.), p. 188 v. Denonville, Jan. 1690; C 11A-13 (A.N.), p. 449 v. De la Chesnaye, Oct 1695; C 11A-14 (A.N.), pp 44-5, 61-2. Frontenac and Champigny. *Relation de ce qui s'est passé . . . en Canada*, 1695-6, C 11A-18 (A.N.), p. 27. Callières et Champigny, 6 Nov. 1700
- On the first coureurs de bois and their increase, beginning with Talon's intendance, see *Jes. Rel.*, XLVI, p. 138; XLVII, p. 306; XLIX, pp. 240-4. L, p. 248 *et seq.*, LIV, p. 198 *et seq.*, LV, pp 220-2. C 11A-3, p. 274 (Frontenac, 25 Jan 1672); C 11A-5 (A.N.), *et seq.*, p. 40 (Duchesneau, 10 Nov 1679). C 11A-5, p. 168v (Duchesneau, 13 Nov. 1680); C 11A-5 (A.N.), pp 296-7 (Duchesneau, 13 Nov. 1681). *ibid.*, p. 307 (*Mémoire joint à la lettre de Duchesneau*); C 11A-7 (A.N.), p. 58 (Denonville, 20 Aug 1685); Margry, *op. cit.*, I, pp 163-4; B. Sulte, "Les coureurs de bois au lac Supérieur" (*M.S.R.C.* 3rd series, V, pp. 260-6).
- On the measures taken to check this exodus of population and the compromise of "trading permits" to which the authorities of New France had recourse see C 11A-4, pp. 95-6 (Frontenac, 5 Nov 1674), p. 182 (*Ordonnance du 12 May 1678*), C 11A-5, p. 43 (Duchesneau, 10 Nov. 1679), p. 119 (*Ordonnance du 24 May 1679*), pp. 328, 353 . . . ; C 11A-41, p. 84 (*Mémoire sur les congés de traite*, Conseil de Marine, 20 Feb. 1720); C 11A-75, p. 152 (Vaudreuil, 11 Oct. 1723), pp. 326-42 (Ramezay, 12 Oct 1723), p. 351 *et seq.* (*Estat des permissions accordées par . . . Vaudreuil aux officiers et voyageurs*, 1722 C 11A-50, p. 175 (d'Agremont, 15 Oct. 1728). Montreal Arch. judiciaires (P.A.C.), 1675-9. Salome, *op. cit.*, p. 213; H. Lorin, *Le Comte de Frontenac* Paris, 1895, pp. 97, 108-10; Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, p. 67.
190. C 11A-7 (A.N.), p. 89 *et seq.*, Denonville, 13 Nov. 1685.
191. C 11A-13 (A.N.), pp. 415-17. *Mémoire donné en avril 1695, touchant le castor*. C 11A-14 (A.N.), pp. 255, 263-4. *Mémoire remis à M. d'Aguesseau . . .*, 1696; C 11A-22 (A.N.), p. 359. Riverin. *Mémoire . . . à . . . Pontchartrain*, Paris, 12 Feb. 1705
192. C 11A-22 (A.N.), pp. 145-54. Duplessis, 8 Nov 1704; C 11A-40 (A.N.), pp 247. *Mémoire sur l'Estat présent du Canada*, Paris, 12 Dec. 1715.
193. C 11A-6 (A.N.), p. 82. De Meulles, 12 Nov 1682, C 11A-1S (A.N.), p. 27. Callières and Champigny, 6 Nov. 1700.

194. C 11A-5 (A.N.), p. 50 v. Duchesneau, 10 Nov. 1679; C 11A-7 (A.N.), p. 90 Denonville, 20 Aug. 1685; C 11A-8 (A.N.), pp. 144-5 Denonville, 10 Nov. 1686.
195. C 11A-6 (A.N.), p. 409 v. De Meulles, 2 Nov. 1684.
196. C 11A-5 (A.N.), p. 51. Du Chesneau, 10 Nov. 1679; C 11A-9 (A.N.), p. 187 v. Champigny, 26 Aug. 1687; C 11A-18 (A.N.), p. 27, *loc. cit*
197. C 11A-5 (A.N.), pp. 50-1, *loc. cit*.
198. C 11A-11 (A.N.), p. 188 Denonville, Jan. 1690; C 11A-22 (A.N.), pp. 363-4. Riverin, *Mémoire . . . à Pontchartrain . . .*, Paris, 12 Feb. 1705
199. C 11A-5 (A.N.), p. 50 v, *loc. cit*; C 11A-8 (A.N.), p. 110 v Denonville, 10 Nov. 1686; F.F. Nouv. Acq., 9288, p. 269
200. C 11A-5 (A.N.), p. 50 v, *loc. cit*; C 11A-18 (A.N.), p. 27. Callières and Champigny, 6 Nov. 1700.
201. C 11A-8 (A.N.), p. 144. Denonville, 10 Nov. 1686; C 11A-5 (A.N.), p. 7 Frontenac, 9 Oct. 1679, C 11A-6 (A.N.), p. 187 De Meulles, 4 Nov. 1683; Munro, *The Crusaders of New France*, p. 162 *et seq*.
202. C 11A-3 (A.N.), p. 59. Arrest du Conseil Supérieur de Québec, 26 June 1669; C 11A-5 (A.N.), p. 50 v, *loc. cit*
203. C 11A-27 (A.N.), p. 9. Ramezay, 12 Nov. 1707.
204. C 11A-22 (A.N.), p. 362 v. Riverin, *Mémoire . . . à Pontchartrain*, C 11A-3 (A.N.), p. 274. Patoulet, 25 Jan. 1672.
205. C 11A-22 (A.N.), p. 362 v, *loc. cit*.
206. Margry, *Découvertes et établissements*, II, p. 331 V, pp. 48-9. On the vicissitudes of the garrison at Michilimackinac see C 11A-34, pp. 121-2 (Observation sur la guerre des Renards, joint à la lettre de Vaudreuil et Bégon, 15 Nov. 1713); C 11A-35 pp. 8-9 (Ramezay and Bégon, 13 Sept. 1715. C 11A-36, pp. 115-17 (Vaudreuil, Feb. 1716); C 11E-13, pp. 140-4 *et seq*. (Estat des soldats destachés dans les pays outaouas, 1723-5)
Garrisons were maintained, but without any continuity, at Fort Frontenac, Fort Niagara, and Fort Pontchartrain on the Detroit, and on Lake Superior at Sault Ste. Marie, but only after 1750-1. A. Henry sr, *op. cit*, pp. 60-2; F.F. Nouv. Acq. 9305, p. 243 (Duquesne, 27 Oct. 1752). C 11E-13, p. 14 *et seq*, to Chagouamigon (C 11E-13, pp. 40-1 C 11A-40, p. 179; Vaudreuil, 28 Oct. 1719), to Camanestigouya (C 11E-15, pp. 140-1).
207. The orders aimed at immobilizing the soldiers in the posts (C 11A-11, p. 296; Champigny, 12 Oct. 1691) were in fact unenforceable (*Jes. Rel*, LXV, p. 196). The necessities of subsistence made it impossible for them to remain permanently in a fort, and the profits of trading made up for the insufficient pay of the men as well as the officers (C 11A-16, p. 52 v. Frontenac, 10 Oct. 1698 C 11A-52, pp. 187, 222. Beauharnais, 10 Oct. 1730).
208. C 11A-22 (A.N.), p. 252 Vaudreuil, 19 Oct. 1705, C 11A-24 (A.N.), p. 280, La Mothe to Vaudreuil, 27 Aug. 1706; C 11A-25 (A.N.), p. 22 Louviguy, 21 Oct. 1706; Margry, *op. cit*, I, p. 483. II, pp. 225, 233
209. *Jes. Rel*, LXV, pp. 230, 232, C 11A-22, p. 362. Riverin *Mémoire*, 1705.
210. Severance, *op. cit*, I, p. 47.
211. *Jes. Rel*, LXV, p. 238.
212. *Jes. Rel*, XLVIII, p. 126; L, p. 290; LXVIII, p. 282; Margry, *op. cit*, V, pp. 107-16.
213. Margry, *op. cit*, V, p. 94; A. Henry sr, *op. cit*, p. 99.
214. Diéreville, *Relation du Voyage du Port Royal de l'Acadie, ou de la Nouvelle France*. Paris, 1708, p. 200 *et seq*
215. C 11A-11 (A.N.), p. 255. Champigny, 10 May 1691; C 11A-22 (A.N.), p.

- 335 Ramezay, 12 Oct. 1705; Rapport de l'Arch, 1922-3, p. 71 (R. d'Auteuil, *Mémoire*, 1715); Margry, *op. cit.*, V, pp. 12-13.
- 216 C 11A-12 (A.N.), p. 131 Attestation du sieur du Lhut . . . sur les désordres que cause l'ivrognerie. . . ; C 11A-20 (A.N.), p. 135. La Motte Cadillac, 26 Sept. 1702.
217. *Jes. Rel.*, LXV, pp. 192, 194.
- 218 C 11A-50 (A.N.), p. 9 v. Vaudreuil Raudot, 14 Nov. 1709.
219. *Wisc. Hist. Col.*, XIX, p. 1 *et seq.*
- 220 *Jes. Rel.*, LXV, pp. 232-8; C 11E-14 (A.N.), p. 190 La Motte Cadillac, 14 Sept. 1704; C 11A-76 (A.N.), p. 151 *et seq.* Paroles des Outaouas de Missilimakinac à Beauharnais, 16 June 1742.
- On the evolution of the settlement of Michilimackinac, cf. L. P. Kellogg, *op. cit.*, p. 386 *et seq.*, and R. G. Thwaites, *The Story of Mackinac* (*Wisc. Hist. Col.*, XIV, p. 1 *et seq.*). The Métis group of the Sault is described by A. Henry, sr., *op. cit.*, pp. 60-3, 153, Mackenzie, *Voyages*, pp. xxviii-ix, Masson; *Bourgeois*, II, pp. 137-40; Bigsby, *op. cit.*, II, p. 123 *et seq.*; Tassé, *Les Canadiens de l'Ouest* (Montreal, 1878); G. Franchère, *Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America, 1811-14* (*Early Western Travels*, VI), pp. 394-5.
221. B 239 a/72, p. 42 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5), B 239 a/53, (22 June 1765).
222. A 11/3, p. 37. Ed. Jarvis, 9 Sept. 1776.
- 223 E 2/6, p. 76 (Tomison's journal, 1767-8); Franklin, *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea* (London, 1823, p. 240; Journal de Thomas Verchères (*Can. Ant. and Num. Journal*), 1803-4, p. 13.
224. A 11/3, p. 37: *loc. cit.*
225. Masson, *Bourgeois* I, pp. 232, 261, D. Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels in the Interior of North America* (Andover, 1820, p. 109.
226. Nute, *The Voyageur*, pp. 46-7.
227. B 239 a/72, p. 42 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5).
228. H. M. Brackenridge, *Journal of a Voyage up the River Missouri* (*Early Western Travels*, VI) p. 33.
229. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-5; Nute, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-8. A 11/76, p. 23; W. Auld York Fy. 26 Sept. 1811.
230. B 22 a/1, pp. 4-5 (Sept. 1793).
231. Franklin, *op. cit.*, p. 281.
232. B 239 a/72, p. 11 v, 44 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5); Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 247.
233. *Ibid.*; J. McLean, *Notes of a Twenty-Five Years Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory*. Toronto, 1932, I, p. 169.
234. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 247.
- 235 Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-7; Morton, *The Journal of D. M'Gillivray*, pp. 11-12; Mackenzie, *Voyages* . . . , p. 220.
- 236 *Ibid.*, pp. 132, 136
237. B 105 a/2, p. 12 (Dec. 1794).
- 238 Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. 136.
- 239 B 239 a/72, p. 14v (Cocking's journal, 1774-5).
240. E 2/11, p. 71 (Cocking's journal, 1772-3).
241. B 239 a/72, p. 14 *ibid.*, 1774-5; David Thompson's journals, misc. (Toronto, Prov. Arch.), pp. 7-8.
- 242 "Journal of Rev. W. T. Boutwell, July 1833" (Minn. Hist. Soc.).
243. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-7.
244. Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 699.
245. W. S. Wallace "Sir Henry Lefroy's Journey to the North-West in 1843-4"

- (T.R.S.C., 1938, sect. II, p. 75)
246. Masson Coll., McGill Univ. (Continuation of a journal at the Forks, Mackenzie River, 1807 ?).
 247. Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 66; Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 572.
 248. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 21.
 249. E 2/6, p. 76 (Tomison's journal, 1767-8).
 250. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-10, Franchère, *Narrative of a Voyage (Early Western Travels, VI)*, p. 372; Richardson, Sir John, *Arctic Searching Expedition* London, 1851, p. 95.
 251. B 39 c/8, p. 7. Athabaska Report, 1824-5: "The living at this place constitutes one principal objection with the Europeans to returning, though such is the difference of taste, disposition and temperament between these and J. Baptiste that two out of three Canadians that hire for the district, if left to their choice, would stipulate to winter here where the distance is neither so great nor the dunes so laborious and incessant as elsewhere and where subsistence though at times less nutritious . . . is . . . less precarious and uncertain." Franklin, *op. cit.*, p. 84.
 252. Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 326; Thompson's *Narrative* (Tyrrell, ed.), p. 129; Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 179.
 253. Thompson's *Narrative*, p. 443.
 254. B 60 a/12, pp. 10 v-11 (1813).
 255. E 2/4, p. 58 ("Graham's Observations," 1768).
 256. Thompson's *Narrative*, pp. 209-10. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 329-30; Masson, *Bourgeois*, I pp. 12-13; Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 242.
 257. Masson Coll., McGill Univ. Roderick Mackenzie. Some account of the North-West C^o . . . 3d part (1795).
 258. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 168; B 239 a/40, pp. 5-6 (Journal of A. Henday, 1754-5).
 259. Bradbury, *Travels in the Interior of America (Early Western Travels, V)*, pp. 258-9.
 260. Coues, *New Light*, I, pp. 192, 233; McLean, *Notes of a Twenty-Five Years Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory*, I, p. 31.
 261. Masson Coll., McGill Univ., *loc. cit.*
 262. D Thompson's journals, nusc. (Toronto, Prov. Arch.), p. 9, D 4/31, p. 9 Simpson to the Lord Bishop of Montreal, 16 Mar. 1844.
 263. B 22 a/20, p. 2 (1815); B 60 2/15, p. 46 v. (June 1816); B 236 a/1 (Winnipeg Lake journal, 1796-7); B 39 c/1, p. 65 G. Simpson Athabaska Report. 1821; D 4/30, pp. 25-6 Simpson to Donald Ross, Lachine, 20 Dec. 1843.
 264. *Rapport de l'Arch.*, 1929-30. "Répertoire des engagements pour l'Ouest," introd. by Massicotte.
 265. B 39 c/1, p. 65, *loc. cit.*, D 4/30, p. 70 Simpson to W. Nourse Esquimaux Bay, 1 Mar. 1844.
 266. D 4/86, p. 12 v. Simpson's report, 1 Aug. 1823.
 267. D 4/86, p. 23 v, *ibid.*
 268. Thompson's journals, misc (Toronto, Prov. Arch.), p. 12; W J Snelling. *Tales of the North West or Sketches of Indian Life and Character by a Resident beyond the Frontier*. Boston, 1830, pp. 2-5.
 269. Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 89, Thompson's *Narrative* (Tyrrell, ed.), pp. 209-10.
 270. B 60 a/15, p. 45 (June 1816); B 105 c/1, p. 9v (Lac la Pluie report, 1816-18; Coues, *New Light*, I p. 100; Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-7).
 271. Richardson, *Arctic Searching Expedition*, pp. 92-3.
 272. Franklin, *Narrative of a Journey*, p. 259.
 273. Thompson's *Narrative* (Tyrrell, ed.), pp. 104-5, 123.
 274. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-6, 90.

- 275 Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 890.
276. Morice, *Histoire de l'Eglise catholique dans l'Ouest canadien* Montreal, 1928, I, p. 92.
- 277 *Thompson's Narrative*, pp. 89-90; McLean, *op. cit.*, p. 123; Franklin, *op. cit.*, p. 140.
278. Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 63, 102. Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 574; B 39 a/18, p. 37 (21 Oct. 1820): "The Canadians are really worse than Indians. They cannot enjoy themselves in moderation. Greill's treat has thrown the whole fort into confusion." Coll. Masson, McGill Univ. Journal of A. Norman McLeod, 28 Nov. 1800.
279. Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels*, p. 61.
280. *Ibid.*, pp. 102, 196-7; Thompson's journals, misc. Toronto, Prov. Arch., p. 9.
281. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 157, 175-7.
- 282 *Ibid.*, pp. 35-7.
283. Franchère, *op. cit.*, p. 387.
284. A 11/4, p. 180 E. Jarvis, Gloucester Ho., 17 Aug. 1791; A 5/1, p. 101. London to Albany (R. Temple), 31 May 1763; B 49 b/1, pp. 17-19. J. Bird to Lord Selkirk, Cumberland, 22 Dec. 1817: "Canadians would be, if well managed, the best and cheapest men for the more distant and poor posts. But we have reason to know that if not well managed, they may be expensive and troublesome." Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-7.
285. B 39 a/16, p. 31 v. G. Simpson to W. Brown, Fort Wedderburn, 17 Oct. 1820: "Lamalice is engaged as a brigade guide and exempt from every other duty. If politely requested, he will however do it. Flattery is a very cheap commodity and greatly estimated among such people."
286. McLean, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 36-7.
287. B 39 a/18, p. 26. Simpson to Duncan Finlayson, Peace River District, 29 Sept. 1830: "You will bear in mind that it is Canadians you have now to deal with, not cool, phlegmatic Orkneymen. If humoured in trifles, anything may be done with them, but if treated with uniform harshness and severity, they will mutiny to a certainty. Your Fort hunter [Baptiste Bisson] is the best without exception in the North. His temper is capricious. You should therefore study to please him. . . I have made his little boy a present."
288. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 20.
289. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-7; D 4/86, p. 14: Simpson's report, Norway Ho., 23 June 1823.
290. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-7.
291. B 89 a/4, p. 5v (Aug. 1819).
292. See below, pp. 248-9.
293. B 229/5, p. 20 v, (2 Dec. 1797).
294. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-7.
295. Thompson's journal, misc. Toronto, Prov. Arch., p. 8.
296. Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
297. B 239 a/49, 22 July 1754 (Journal of A. Henday, 1754-5).
298. Frank Blackwell Mayer, *With Pen and Pencil on the Frontier in 1851* St. Paul, 1932 (Publications of the Minnesota Historical Society: Narratives and Documents, I), pp. 92-5.
299. Margry, *Découvertes et établissements*, VI, pp. 521-3.
300. S. Wallace, "Sir Henry Lefroy's Journey," p. 72.
301. Coues, *New Light*, I, pp. 317-18; II, pp. 718-22; B 239 b/74, p. 29. J. Bird, Edmonton, 23 Dec. 1806.
302. A 11/75, pp. 163-4, J. C. Van Driel, South Branch Ho., 24 June 1794;

- Franklin, *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea*, p. 166.
303. B 239 a/72, p. 40 v. (Cocking's journal, 1774-5).
304. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-7.
305. Morton, *The Journal of Duncan M'Gillivray*, pp. 6-7.
366. A 11/3, p. 37. E. Jarvis. Albany, 9 Sept. 1776. "The great degree the Canadians approach the Indians in their manners and way of life, being in their infancy accustomed to hard living and great fatigue as well as to use the Indian language constantly, seems to be a [greater inducement to their trading with them than the excellence of their goods . . .]." B 2/6, p. 71 (Journal of A. Henday, 1754-5).
307. A 11/73, p. 101. A. Graham. York Fy, 18 Aug. 1766; Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-7; Thompson's *Narrative* (Tyrrell, ed.), pp. 209-10.
308. Masson Coll., McGill Univ. Journal of John Mardonell, 1793-5 (6 Nov 1793).
309. D 4/85, p. 25; Simpson's report, York Fy, 16 July 1822.
310. B 121 a/1, p. 40 y (19 Apr. 1787).
311. A 11/74, pp. 5-8. H. Marten. York Fy, 20 Aug. 1776.
312. Morton, *The Journal of Duncan M'Gillivray*, pp. 44-6.
313. B 3 a/25, p. 23 v, 1 June 1737, A 11/2, p. 59, 63. R. Temple. General letter to London, Albany, 26 Aug. 1763.
314. A 11/75, pp. 163-4. J. C. Van Driel. South Branch Ho., 24 June 1794, Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 21; Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 733-4.
315. *Wisc. Hist. Coll.*, XVIII, pp. 340, 346 (P. Pond's journal).
316. B 22 a/15, p. 4 (Sept. 1807).
317. B 135 a/8, p. 30 (July 1740); B 3 a/15, p. II v. (2 Feb. 1727).
318. B 235 a/2 (8 Sept. 1799); B 105 a/2, pp. 16-17 (1795).
319. A 11/27, pp. 15-16; R. Staunton, Moose Fy. Aug. 1738; B 135 a/8, p. 24 (May 1740).
320. B 239 a/72, p. 36 v (Cocking's journal, 1774-5).
321. A 11/74, pp. 17-18. M. Cocking, York, 1 Sept. 1776; E 2/7, p. 32v (Graham's "Observations," 1771); Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 286-9.
322. B 3 a/10, p. 35v (16 June 1722).
323. B 3 a/9, p. 12v (28 June 1716).
324. B 135 a/8, p. 29v (14 July 1740).
325. B 239 a/40, p. 5v (Journal of A. Henday, 1754-5).
326. Bigsby, *op. cit.*, I, p. 119.
327. E 2/6, p. 71 (Journal of A. Henday, 1754-5).
328. A 11/3, p. 29. Th. Hutchins. Albany, 5 July 1776. "The Canadians have great influence over the natives by adopting all their customs and making them companions. They drink, sing, conjure, scold with them like one of themselves, and the Indians are never kept out of their houses, whether drunk or sober, night or day."
329. E 2/12, p. 644. A. Graham. York Fy, 2 Sept. 1772.
330. B 239 b/36, p. 6. B. Kitchens to F. Jacobs. Moose Fy, 20 Feb. 1775.
331. B 239 a/72, p. 36v (Cocking's journal, 1774-5).
332. E 2/11, p. 71v (Cocking's journal, 1772-3).
333. Selkirk P. (P.A.C.). pp. 73-9. W. Auld to A. Wederburn. York Fy, 3 Oct. 1811.
334. B 239 b/74, p. 62. W. Auld. Churchill, July 1807; B 239 b/75, p. 11, *ibid.*, 9 Mar. 1808.
335. E 2/11, p. 71v (Cocking's journal, 1772-3).
336. A 11/3, p. 29, *loc. cit.*
337. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 105.

338. Bigsby, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 115, 146-7.
339. M. Barbeau, "Centures fléchées" (*T.R.S.C.*, 1938, 3rd ser. sect. 1, pp. 109-12).
340. E 2/11, pp. 75-6 (Journal of A. Henday, 1754-5); E 2/4, pp. 62-62v (W. Tomison's journal, 1767-8; E 2/6, p. 76. *Ibid.*;; D. Thompson's journals, misc. Toronto, Prov. Arch., pp. 7-8).
341. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 385.
342. Selk. P. (P.A.C.), pp. 71-3. W. Auld to A. Wedderburn. York Fy, 3 Oct. 1811.
343. A 11/72, p. 109 (Th. White, York, 10 Aug. 1742) and A 6/7, p. 21v (London to Th. White, 5 May 1743), E 2/1, p. 63 J. Isham, "Observations . . ." 1743.
344. A 11/27, p. 5. W. Bevan. Moose Fy, 20 Aug. 1734; B 239 b/18, p. 5 v. H. Marten. York, 6 July 1759.
345. A 11/1. p. 74. J. Adames. Albany, 14 Aug. 1732; B 3 a/20, p. 14 (3 Feb. 1732).
346. E 2/6, p. 76 (Tomison's journal. 1767-8)
347. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 211, 228; Mackenzie, *Voyages*, pp. 1-2; B 104 a/1, p. 10v (Aug. 1799).
348. Masson, *Bourgeois*; I, p. 9; Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 78.
349. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 183
350. Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 616-17.
351. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 428-9; Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-58; *The Diary of A. N. McLeod*, p. 154 (Gates, *Five Fur-Traders of the North-West*); Masson, *Bourgeois* I, p. 288 (J. Macdonell's journal, 1793).
352. Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 582, 594.
353. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 283.
354. *Ibid.*, p. 15 (Roderick Mackenzie, *Reminiscences*)
355. B 89 a/2 (June 1810).
356. B 89 a/2 (July 1810).
357. B 105 a/2, p. 11 (1794-5).
358. *Ibid.*
359. *Journal of Philip Turnor* (Tyrrell, ed.). Toronto, 1934, p. 253
360. Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 604.
361. *Ibid.*, II, p. 615.
362. *Ibid.*
363. *Ibid.*, II, p. 572.
364. A. Henry, sr, *Travels and Adventures*, p. 283.
365. F F. Nouv. Acq. 9286, p. 108. La Verendrye. "Memoire "de tout ce qui s'est passé . . . au Fort Saint-Charles. 1733-4."
366. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 252; II, p. 487.
367. Selk. P. (P.A.C.), pp. 18794-800 (Journal of John McNab, 1816).
368. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50, 98.
369. Masson Coll. McGill Univ., Journal of John Macdonell, 10 Jan. 1794
370. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.
371. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 107.
372. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 371-3.
373. Morton, *The Journal of Duncan McGillivray*, p. 60.
374. *Travels and Adventures*, p. 99.
375. Masson Coll. McGill Univ., Journal of John Macdonell (28 Jan. 1794)
376. Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 80.
377. Long, *Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter and Trader* (*Early Western Travels*, II, p. 82).

- 378 Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels*, pp. 120-2.
379. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 293 (Journal of J. Macdonell). This custom of "sexual hospitality," encountered also in American territory (Lewis and Clarke, Coues ed., I, pp. 163-4), is not limited to the Indians. Various peoples have offered examples of it, and European colonization was often facilitated by it (Maurmer, *Sociologie coloniale* Paris, 1932, I, pp. 91-2, 100, 113).
380. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 293.
381. Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 517.
382. *Ibid.*, II, p. 256.
383. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 576-8, 659-60, 735.
384. *Ibid.*, Morton, *The Journal of Duncan M'Gillivray*, pp. 244-6.
385. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 348. II, pp. 659-60, 735, D. Thompson's *Narrative* (Tyrrell, ed.), p. 236.
386. Coues, *New Light*, I, pp. 326-7, 342, 366; D. Thompson's *Narrative* (Tyrrell, ed.), pp. 233-4, *History of the Expedition under the Command of Lewis and Clark* (Coues, ed.), I, pp. 163-4, *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clarke Expedition* (Thwaites, ed.), I, pp. 194, 245, J. Bradbury, *Travels in the Interior of America* (Early Western Travels, V, pp. 140, 175-8).
- 387 Alexander Henry, sr., *Travels and Adventures*, p. 248; Mackenzie, *Voyages*, pp. xcvi-xcvii.
- 388 E 2/1, p. 52. Isham, "Observations," 1743; E 2/2, p. 33 v, *ibid.*, 1743, S. Hearne, *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean* (Tyrrell, ed.) Toronto, 1911, pp. 157-8, Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 107; Masson Coll., McGill Univ. (J. Macdonell's Lake Athabaska and Chippewean, 1793).
- 389 Alexander Henry, sr., *op. cit.*, p. 248.
390. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, pp. 86-9.
391. Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
- 392 Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 206, Ross, *Adventures of the First Settlers on the Oregon or Columbia River* London, 1849 (Early Western Travels, VII, p. 200).
- 393 Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 114, Franklin, *Narrative of a Journey*, p. 86.
394. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 228.
- 395 Helen Crawford, "Sakakawea" (*N.D.H.Q.*, I, 1926-7, no 3, pp. 5-15).
396. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 211.
397. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 320-1 (Grant, *The Saulteaux Indians*).
398. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.
399. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 292 (Journal of J. Macdonell).
400. Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
401. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 206.
402. *Ibid.*, I, p. 228; Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 288.
403. B 239 a/72, p. 36 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5), L. A. Paquet, "L'esclavage au Canada" (*T.R.S.C.* 1913, 3d ser. sect. I, p. 139 *et seq.*).
404. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 288, E. Umfreville, *The Present State of Hudson's Bay*. London, 1780, pp. 187-8, A 11/27, pp. 3-4 W. Bevan, *Moose Ey*, 23 Aug. 1732; B 239 a/72, p. 42 v, 44 (Cocking's journal, 1774-5), *History of the Expedition . . . of Lewis and Clark* (Coues, ed.), I, p. 192.
405. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 185.
406. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 137.
407. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 384-5.
408. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50, 85.
- 409 Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, pp. 320-1; D. Thompson's *Narrative* (Tyrrell, ed.), p. 93.
- 410 Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, pp. 114, 384-5.

- 411 *Ibid.*, II pp. 384–5, Franklin, *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea*, p. 86.
- 412 Masson, I, p. 317, Coues, *New Light*, I, pp. 53–4; Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 356.
- 413 Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North-West C^o*, p. 211.
- 414 *Ibid.*, p. 262.
- 415 Franchère, *Narrative of a Voyage (Early Western Travels, VI, p. 376)*.
- 416 A. Henry, sr., *Travels and Adventures*, p. 248; Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 735.
- 417 B 89 a/2, p. 36 (4 June, 1811).
- 418 B 239 a/1, p. 17: "A copy of the Governor's orders for the men's behaviour . . . That no man do meddle . . . with the Indians nor trade . . . nor affront any person of them, but above all to be careful not to concern themselves any ways with there women, which was the occasion of so many French men being cut off by there jealousy . . ." B 239 a/2, p. 11 (27 Dec 1715), N. Jérémie, *Relation du Detroit et de la Baie d'Hudson* (Bernard, *Recueil de voyages, 1724, Vol. V*), p. 425.
- 419 *Journal of Phillip Turnor* (Tyrrell, ed. Toronto, 1934), pp. 446–53, Mackenzie, *Voyages*, p. 96.
- 420 Coues, *New Light*, I, pp. 209, 238–9. II, pp. 710–11; Morton, *The Journal of Duncan M'Gillivray*, pp. 71–2.
- 421 Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 58, Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, pp. 292–3 (*Journal of J. Macdonell*).
- 422 B 239 a/73, p. 20 (Nov. 1775).
- 423 Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 315.
- 424 Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 516.
- 425 *Ibid.*, II, p. 517.
- 426 *Ibid.*, II, p. 527.
- 427 *Ibid.*, I, 366.
- 428 *Ibid.*, II, p. 516. B 239 a/57, p. 44 v(1768).
- 429 B 239 a/60, p. 41 (June 1769: "Fitting up a large bed-place for Lewis Primo, the Doctor intending to salivate him for the P . . . x, he is full of ulcers and lost the bridge of his nose and one testicle"). B 239 a/73, p. 20 (Nov. 1775), A 11/73, p. 116. A. Graham, York, 23 Aug. 1768.
- 430 Morton, *The Journal of Duncan M'Gillivray*, p. 60; Warren, *History of the Ojibways* (Minn. Hist. Col. V, pp. 382–3).
- 431 Fidler, *Journal of a Journey with the Chepawyan or Northern Indians to the Slave Lake, in 1791–2* (Champlain Soc., Toronto), p. 514.
- 432 Masson Coll., McGill Univ. (*Journal of Michel Curot, 1803–4*).
- 433 Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 15 (Roderick Mackenzie, *Reminiscences*).
- 434 Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 231.
- 435 *Ibid.*, II, pp. 553–5.
- 436 B 39 a/18, p. 3 Simpson's journal, Athabaska Department, 1820–1: 5 Aug. 1820 "On our way to Norway ho, we came up with Brunelle's canoe . . . his wife being taken in labour on the march two days ago. Both she and the child are doing well, and she already assists in paddling to make up for lost time."
- 437 Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 552, 572.
- 438 Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels*, pp. 66–7, 115–16.
- 439 *Ibid.*, p. 181.
- 440 *Ibid.*, p. 78.
- 441 Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 430–1. II, pp. 549, 552.
- 442 B 239 a/23, p. 36v (4 June 1742); E 2/11, p. 53 (Cocking's journal, 1772–3); E 2/12, p. 649. A. Graham to London, York, 2 Sept. 1772.

- 443 Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 15 (Roderick Mackenzie, Reminiscences)
444. G. H. Monk. Some account of the Department of Fond du Lac or Mississippi, Toronto, Prov. Arch. (Apr. 1807).
- 445 Franchère, *Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America*, pp. 366–7
446. *Ibid.*, p. 387.
- 447 Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, pp. 272, 294.
448. B 22 a/4, p. 32v (1797): "A Canadian belonging to the other house eloped last night with a girl in company, intending to go to the Mandals. He was overtaken and brought back with a quantity of stolen goods " B 22 a/9, p. 9v (1801).
449. W. J. Snelling, *Tales of the North West*, p. 86.
450. B 121 a/6, p. 9 (Sept. 1790); E 2/12, pp. 589–90 (Tomison's journal, 1788–9).
451. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 269
452. Selk. P (P A.C.), p. 15, 888 (Deposition de François Bonin, a la Rivière Rouge, 1817).
453. B 60 e/1 (Edmonton Report, 1815); B 60 e/3, p. 5 (Edmonton Report, 1818–20) "I [Francis Heron] have for these two years past done all to disaffect these people towards the NWC^o and attach them to us I hope to succeed."
454. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 269
455. See below, p. 465 *et seq.*
456. B 22 a/13, p. 8v (1805–6).
457. B 22 a/15, p. 3 (Sept. 1807).
458. B 121 a/3, p. 43 (Apr. 1789): "Two Canadians arrived. . . They are free and have been hunting for themselves all winter without the assistance of any Indian " B 121 a/6., p. 9 (1790–1 Masson Coll., McGill Univ.: Journal of A. N. Macleod, 28 Nov. 1800.
459. Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 632.
460. B 22 a/20, p. 34v (24 May 1816). "They [Canadians and half breeds] annually come up every spring in great numbers when the ice goes away, and they appear hereabout [Brandon Ho] 10 or 12 days after it clears away, tho the distance to Lake Winnipeg is 400 miles by the river. They also ascend as high as Shell river 500 miles further, and about the 12 june the last of them passes here on their way down again."
461. Franchère, *op. cit.*, p. 260.
462. *Ibid.*, pp. 367–8.
463. Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 546, 609.
464. B 60 e/1 (Edmonton Report, 1815).
465. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 219.
466. Franchère, *op. cit.*, p. 385.
467. Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 547–8
468. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 470–1
469. B 104 a/2, p. 13–13v (1819–20): "At the Grand Rapid . . . some freemen with their families are staying . . . to trade sugar and salt with the Canadians. . . . At Lac Bourbon we found two families of freemen from Swan river. . . . They sell their sugar and salt extravagantly high, yet the men got some for them and two dogs for eating."
470. B 22 a/18, p. 8 (17 Nov. 1810).
471. B 22 a/4, p. 10 (30 Aug. 1796).
472. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 286; *Thompson's Narrative* (Tyrrell, ed.), pp. 209–10; B 22 a/7 (1799–1800).
473. *Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America*, p. 378; Selk. P

- (P.A.C.), pp. 156-9 (Plainte de Charles Racette contre A. Fergusson)
474. Franchère, *op. cit.*, pp. 366-7.
475. B 60 a/9, p. 6v (Jan. 1811).
476. B 239 b/75, p. 45. J. McNab. York Fy, 23 July 1808.
477. B 60, a/5, pp. 3-4 (14 Sept. 1808), G. Dugas, *La première Canadienne au Nord-Ouest* (Montreal, 1883; *ibid.*, *Un voyageur des Pays d'en haut* (Montreal, 1890), *ibid.*, "The First Canadian Woman in the North-West" (*Man. Hist. and Sc. Soc. Trans.*, p. 62, 12 Dec. 1901).
478. Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 612-13.
478. Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 612-13.
479. B 60 a/12, pp. 10-11 (1813).
480. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 192.
481. Selk. P. (P.A.C.), pp. 789-804 (Journal of John McNab, 1816).
482. Selk. P. (P.A.C.), p. 12 666 (Selkirk's manuscript relating to Red River); *ibid.*, p. 15.911 (Deposition de Jacques Ammelin et Baptiste Marsolaïs, 1817).
483. *Ibid.*, p. 17 735 (C. Robertson, Kamunistiquia River, 1 July 1815).
484. Franchère, *op. cit.*, p. 376; B 239 b/83, p. 3 v M. Macdonell to W. Auld. Pembina, 5 Dec. 1812.
485. Selk. P., p. 1199 (M. Macdonell to Lord Selkirk, R R S, 25 July 1814). p. 3962 (H. Mackenzie, J. Leith to Lord Selkirk).
486. Selk. P., p. 1199 (*loc. cit.*).
487. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 226.
488. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 424-8, 434-8.
489. Selk. P., p. 3899. (M. Macdonell to Lord Selkirk, 3 Aug. 1817); *ibid.*, p. 4015 (Aug. 1817), p. 4128 (D. McPherson, Lac la Plue, 13 Oct. 1818).
490. B 60 a/7, p. 4 (Oct. 1807)
491. B 104 a/1, p. 13 (26 Sept. 1799): "We arrive at Lac la Biche. We found there three free Canadians who had conducted our people from Buckingham ho. . . ." Selk. P., p. 9093 (Hugh McGillis. Lesser Slave Lake, 15 Jan. 1815): "The Iroquois and freemen who used to supply almost all the returns of this place are dispersed."
492. Selk. P., pp. 16. 174. Deposition of François Eno, called Delorme, 1817, Snelling, *Tales of the North-West*, p. 141.
493. Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 484. 188-9; Selk. P., p. 16. 865 (Journal of M. Macdonell, 1812-13).
494. Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 549.
495. Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels*, p. 117.
496. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 47.
497. *Ibid.*, pp. 225-8.
498. *Ibid.*
499. B 22 a/5, p. 9 (1797): "We discover some runaway Canadians lying in ambush to steal our horses." B 22 a/9, p. 9v (1801)
500. Coues, *New Light*, I, pp. 400-1.
501. *Ibid.*, p. 231; II, pp. 612-13.
502. B 22 a/15, p. 3 (Sept. 1807): "We reach the Forks [Red River-Assiniboine] . . . The place is swarming with freemen, all wanting to engage in our service. I would have nothing to do with them, I have had enough of their witchcraft already." B 22 a/17, p. 9 (1809).
503. Coues, *New Light*, I, pp. 415-16.
504. *Ibid.*, I, p. 231; B 22 a/19, pp. 9-13 (Oct. 1814).
505. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 225.
506. *Ibid.*, p. 233

507. *Ibid.*, p. 333.
508. Snelling, *Tales of the North-West*, p. 86.
509. B 22 a/21, pp. 11–14 (July–Aug. 1817).
510. B 22 a/21, p. 12v (Aug. 1817): "Poitras, the late master at Brandon, is now tenting as a freeman at Frog Plain "
511. Franchère, *Narrative of a Voyage to the North-West Coast of America*, pp. 366–8. Selk. P., p. 18.794 (Journal of J. McNab, 1816)
512. *Ibid.*, pp. 18.794–800.
513. B 60 a/12, p. 13 (1813–14).
514. B 22 a/21, p. 22 (24 Nov. 1817).
515. *Op. cit.*, pp. 367–8.
516. B 60 a/7, p. 5 (Oct. 1807).
517. B 60 c/1, Edmonton Report, 1815.
518. B 60 a/8, p. 1v (Aug. 1808).
519. B 60 c/1. Edmonton Report, 1815: "The Canadians can procure several more beaver and musquash than we can, because they have 16 freemen, Canadians and Iroquois, men partly worn out in their service whom they have without making them quite free permitted and go and kill furs on their own account, and they kill beaver with an application unknown to the Indians."
 B 60 a/7, pp. 4–5 (Oct. 1807). "These free Canadians have become numerous here and industrious, giving our neighbours annually many more beaver skins than all the Indians put together. The freemen search (the beaver) out through the greatest difficulties with a perseverance which avarice or a number of fictitious wants only can support, whereas the [Indians] work only for present conveniences and will rather go without these than acquire them by hard labour or even with much inconvenience." On the relations with the English posts, see below, Part IV, Chapter 10
520. B 239 b/75, pp. 53–4. J. Oxford ho, 30 July 1808.
521. Miles Macdonell P. (P.A.C.). 1st vol., pp. 269–70
522. Selk. P. p. 1200 (M. Macdonell, R.R.S., 25 July 1814).
523. B 22 a/4, p. 10 (30 Aug. 1796).
524. B 60 a/12, p. 13 (1812–14).
525. B 22 a/22, p. 53v (1819)
526. B 60 a/19, p. 19v (1820)
527. B 22 a/9, p. 3 (July 1801); Gates, *Five Fur Traders of the North-West*, introd by G. L. Nute, pp. 7–8.
528. Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels*, p. 225.
529. Coues, *New Light*, I, pp. 422–3.
530. B 22 a/20, p. 15 (Jan. 1815), Selk. P., p. 16.865 (Journal of Miles Macdonell, 1812–13).
531. B 239 a/2, p. 29 (1716).
532. B 239 a/64, p. 18 (Tomison's journal. 1769–70), B 60 a/2, pp. 2–3 (Oct. 1811).
533. *Thompson's Narrative* (Tyrrell, ed.), p. 551.
534. Coues, *New Light*, I, pp. 263–4.
535. B 135 a/2, p. 9–9v (Feb. 1732), p. 18v (12 May 1732); B 135 a/4, p. 16v (9 May 1734).
536. B 135 a/13, p. 7 (May 1743).
537. B 3 a/14, pp. 23–4 (28 June 1726).
538. B 3 a/34, p. 38 (8 May 1743).
539. *Travels and Adventures*, pp. 34–5.

540. E 2/11, pp. 74–5 (Henday's journal, 1754–5)
541. E 2/4, p. 18v (*ibid.*, 1755–6).
542. E 2/6, p. 71 (*ibid.*, 1754–5).
543. E 2/6, p. 78 (Tomison's journal, 1767–8).
544. B 239 a/64, p. 7 v, 20v (Tomison's journal, 1769–70).
545. B 239 a/96, p. 43v (June 1794); B 239 b/10, p. 2 v G. Spence to J. Isham, 3 June 1753 (Albany).
546. B 3 b/2, G. Spence. Albany, 18 May 1745 B 105 a/1, p. 5 (18 Sept. 1793). B 104 1/1, p. 23 (1799). B 60 a/5, p. 25 (P. Fidler to J. Bird, Greenwich Ho., 7 Oct. 1799)
547. E 2/12, p. 616 A. Graham to London York Fy, 2 Sept. 1772 (in "Observations," 1792). B 22 a/5, pp. 25–6 (J. Cobb, Manitoba, 6 Jan. 1798).
548. B 105 a/1, p. 6 (26 Sept. 1793).
549. B 39 c/1, p. 5 G. Simpson. Athabaska Report, 1821, B 239 b/73, p. 40. Mr. Sutherland to York. Paint Creek, 25 May 1806.
550. A 11/3, p. 37.

Chapter Seven: The Northern Nucleus

1. Wallace and Douglas, *Twenty Years of York Factory* Ottawa 1926, pp. 23–4.
2. A 6/1, p. 54 The H.B.Co. (Answer to the French Commissioners). London, 6 May 1685, A 9/3, p. 23 The Narrative of Mr. P. E. Radisson
3. A 6/1, pp. 102 v-3 A deduction of the damages sustained by the Company.
4. *Journal of Father Silvy* . . . (Tyrrell, *Documents Relating to the Early History of Hudson Bay* Toronto, 1931), p. 69; Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp. 96–7.
4. A 6/2, p. 7. To Gov. Geyer, at Port Nelson, 2 June 1688
5. N. Jérémie, *Relation du détroit* (J. F. Bernard, *Recueil de voyages au Nord*, Amsterdam, 1724, V), p. 410.
6. This position was retaken by Captains Allen and Grange, commanding the ships *Bonaventure* and *Seaforth* (A. S. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 117). D'Iberville seized it in 1697. It belonged to France up to 1713.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 423
8. B 3 a/2, p. 23–4 (10 Mar. 1707).
9. B 3 a/5, p. 28v (3 June 1714).
10. A 6/1, p. 78. To P. E. Radisson, 20 May 1686.
11. *Journal de l'expédition du Chevalier de Troyes*, pp. 72–3.
12. B 3 a/4 p. 32v (15 May 1713): "One of the Indians that came from the Northward reports he was at Port Nelson the last summer that the Indians had killed nine of them when they were abroad for deer hunting, the reason of it was for some violence they had offered to their women." E 2/1, p. 59v (Isham, "Observations . . . 1743"), Fort Phelipeaux, situated on the Hayes River, was an advance post of Fort Bourbon.
13. A 6/1, p. 16 v. To Governor Nixon, 15 May 1682.
14. E 2/4, p. 74; B 198 a/2, p. 26 (July 1761).
15. A 6/1, p. 16 v. To Governor Nixon, 15 May 1682
16. B 239 a/1, p. 17. "A copy of the Governor's orders . . . That all persons give there attendance to come to prayers without any pretensions or excuses You are commanded to live lovingly . . . without drunkenness or prophaneness." B 239 b/1. Henry Kelsey, Governor, to Richard Staunton (Churchill River): "Above all things we recommend to your care the service

of Almighty God, that publick prayers be dayly performed by some person under your command, according to the use and liturgy of the Church of England, specially on the Lord's day, and that you punish all dissolute . . . persons."

- 17 B 135 a/24 (1752-3); B 239 a/1, p. 35 (17 Apr. 1715). B 239 a/5.
- 18 B 239 b/1. "I do hereby swear . . . to stand steadfast to the reformed protestant religion as they are administered in these kingdoms by law established, and to oppose with all my might all possible pretenders and superstitions . . . of the Roman Catholic religion. . . ."
- 19 B 239 a/51, p. 9v (5 Nov. 1763); B 42 a/6, p. 9v (9 Nov. 1725).
20. A 11/73, p. 88. F. Jacobs, York Fy, 14 Sept. 1765.
- 21 A 6/13, p. 102 London to York Fy, May 1784.
- 22 A 6/1, p. 49 v To Gov. Sergeant, 16 May 1684, A 6/10 *passim*; B 239 a/1, p. 17; *loc. cit.*
- 23 A 6/1, p. 49 v; *loc. cit.*
- 24 A 6/3, p. 213. Instructions for Anthony Beale Governor in Hudson's Bay, 29 May 1711, A 11/72, p. 42. To Th. Macklish, 16 Aug. 1727; B 239 b/78, *passim*.
25. A 6/5, p. 1. To Jos. Myatt (Albany), 25 May 1727.
- 26 B 239 a/10, p. 29 *et seq.* (July 1727-July 1728).
27. A 6/1, p. 16 v. To Gov. Nixon, 16 May 1682: "We cannot expect good services from such whom neither the laws from God or man can restrain from wickedness." A 6/1, p. 28 v To Henry Sergeant, 27 Apr. 1683; A 6/7, p. 1 To J. Isbister (Albany), 5 May 1742: "Take care to hinder as much as possible the detestable sin of whoring."
- 28 A 6/4, p. 163. To Gov. Macklish and Council, York Fy, 10 May 1724, A 11/72, pp. 26-8 Th. Macklish, York Fy, 16 Aug. 1724.
- 29 A 6/1, p. 15 To John Bridgar, 15 May 1682, A 11/1, p. 46. Richard Staunton, Albany, 21 Aug. 1723; B 239 a/5, p. 82 (Aug. 1720).
- 30 B 3 a/4b, p. 5 (1753) B 2/6, pp. 85-6 (Graham, "Observations, 1769").
31. A 6/6, p. 12. To Richard Norton (Prince of Wales), 18 May 1738: "During the time of trade, you do not let any of the servants go out of the Factory to converse with the Indians." A 11/74, p. 75 H. Marten York Fy, 13 Sept. 1780.
32. A 6/2, p. 9. To Gov. Geyer (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688.
33. B 239 a/2, p. 75 (1716); B 239 a/3, p. 42, 55 (May 1717).
34. A 11/2, pp. 51-2. R. Temple, Albany, 22 Aug. 1761.
35. B 239 b/1, pp. 8-9. F. Jacobs to A. Graham, Prince of Wales, 25 Apr. 1761.
- 36 A 6/4, p. 53 To captain Henry Kelsey (York Fy), 4 June 1719; A 6/4, p. 63 To Th. Macklish (Albany), 1719; A 6/6, p. 190 To J. Isbister (Albany), 23 Apr. 1741.
37. B 239 a/99, p. 18v (30 June 1796).
38. B 239 a/2, p. 11 (27 Dec. 1715).
- 39 A 6/6, p. 68. To Thos Bird (Albany), 17 May 1739; *ibid.*, p. 84 To J. Isham, May 1739, A 11/72, p. 84 J. Isham, York Fy, Aug. 1738; A 11/72, p. 95 v *ibid.*, 29 Aug. 1739.
40. A 6/3, p. 198. To Deputy Governor H. Kelsey, 29 May 1710; A 6/4, p. 125 To Richard Norton, 24 May 1722: "We have considered your industry in traveling with the Indians, whereby you have improved in their language."
- 41 A 6/2, p. 9 To Governor Geyer (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688. "That the boy

Henry Kelsey be sent to Churchill river with Thomas Savage because we are informed he is a very active lad, delighting much in Indian's company. Nevertheless would not have him too sound trusted amongst those unknown natives without a pledge from the Indians cautioning our men. . . ."

42. A 6/4, p. 192. To R. Norton (Churchill Fy), 19 May 1725: "Whereas John Butler senior has written to us to let his son go up into the country with the Northern Indians in order to learn the language, we do hereby order you (not) to suffer him or any other person to be absent from his duty on such pretence unless we think it necessary. . . ."
43. A 6/11, p. 60. To Moses Norton (Churchill), 25 May 1768, A 6/11, p. 245. *Ibid.*, 14 May 1771.
44. A 6/8, p. 35 v. To G. Spence (Albany), 21 May 1750.
45. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, pp. 317–21, 385.
46. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 631.
47. B 22 a/6, p. 8v (1798–9).
48. A 11/27, pp. 15–17. R. Staunton, Aug. 1738.
49. B 42 a/38, p. 14 (13 Nov. 1751); A 11/1, p. 106. J. Isbister. Albany, 6 Sept 1741; B 3 a/16, p. 5 (1753).
50. B 135 a/11, pp. 46–7. J. Duffield to R. Pilgrim (Churchill River), Moose Fy, 20 Mar. 1742.
51. B 135 a/14, pp. 33–4 (25 Mar. 1744); B 135 a/15, p. 3 (Sept. 1744).
52. A 11/72, pp. 26–27. Th. Macklish York Fy, 16 Aug. 1724, A 11/2, p. 51 v: R. Temple. Albany, 22 Aug. 1761.
53. B 3 a/33, p. 25 (1741); B 239 a/50, p. 5 (22 Sept. 1762); A 11/7, p. 47. R. Pilgrim. Moose, 4 Aug. 1749.
54. B 239 a/48, pp. 35–36 (15 June 1761).
55. E 2/4, pp. 72–3 (Graham, "Observations, 1768").
56. A 6/4, p. 164 (To Gov. Macklish (York Fy), 20 May 1721), p. 202.
57. B 239 b/65, p. 19. Thomas Stayner. Churchill, 26 July 1701.
58. A 10/1, pp. 87–8. C. Robertson. London, 17 Jan. 1810: "The Orkneyman goes there (Rupert's Land) because he can find employment nowhere else, and as soon as he has gathered a few pounds he leaves a country he does not like." Ed Smith to G. Simpson. Portage la Loche, 28 July 1830 (D 5/3, pp. 437–8).
59. A 6/15, p. 99. To J. McNab (Albany), 29 May 1794.
60. A 6/3, p. 198. To H. Kelsey (York), 29 May 1710; B 121 a/2, p. 15 (8 Oct. 1787).
61. A 11/29, p. 47. J. Thomas, private journal. Moose Fy, 1785, B 239 v/62, p. 36. Stayner to York, Churchill, 23 Aug. 1899. The Hudson's Bay Company's personnel could not avoid praising the perfect knowledge of native languages as one of the main advantages of the Canadians (E 2/4, pp. 61–3, Graham, "Observations," 1768). B 105 a/1, p. 6 (Sept. 1793); B 105 a/2, p. 11 (1794–4). There was, on the other hand, a shortage of interpreters in the English posts (B 22 a/2, p. 9v (1794–5)).
62. A 6/8, p. 35 v. To G. Spence (Albany), 21 May 1750.
63. Thompson's journals, *Misc. Prov. Arch.*, Toronto, p. 2.
64. B 239 b/82, p. 17 v–18. W. H. Cook to M. Macdonell. York, 28 Jan. 1812, B 22 a/1, p. 2, 5 (Aug.–Sept. 1793); A 10/1, pp. 87–8, *loc. cit.*
65. B 22 a/1, p. 5 (Sept. 1793), p. 23 (1794).
66. B 105 e/1, p. 9v (1817).
67. Selk. P., p. 1812 (C. Robertson).

68. Selk P., p. 369, M. Macdonell to Lord Selkirk, 29 May 1812 "They are lazy, spiritless, strongly prejudiced against each other, however beneficial "
69. D 5/8, p. 381-1 (Simpson's correspondence) (1843); D 4/125, p. 47 v Allan Macdonell to J. Keith Temiscamingue, 5 Feb. 1831.
70. D 4/186, p. 14. Simpson's report Norway Ho., 23 June 1823: "The Orkneymen are slow and do not possess the same physical strength and spirits necessary on trying occasions. They are moreover, when not awed by force, obstinate to an extreme and so guarded that it is a difficult matter to discover any plots or determinations they may form until ready to be acted upon." Sir John Franklin, *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea*, London, 1823, p. 6.
71. D 4/186, p. 14, *loc. cit.*
72. Selk. P., p. 1812 (C. Robertson), *ibid.*, pp. 109-10 (M. Macdonell to W. Auld, 25 Dec. 1811).
73. 11/76, p. 23 (W. Auld, York, 25 Sept. 1811): "Orkneymen and Scotchmen are by nature cautious and careful, the lower classes of them prudent in the management of their own property are some time in learning to be indifferent about another's and scarcely anything but the ceaseless desire after money induces your present servants to assume the helm." A 10/1, pp. 87-8. C. Robertson London, 17 Jan. 1810; D 5/3, pp. 437-8 Ed. Smith to G. Simpson Portage la Loche, 28 July 1830; J. Storer Clouston, "Orkney and the Hudson's Bay Co." (*The Beaver*, Winnipeg, Outfit 267, Dec. 1936)
74. B 42 a/136-a, p. 18 (1810-11.)
75. B 239 b/82, p. 17 v-18 W. H. Cook to M. Macdonell, York, 28 Jan. 1812; B 39 e/1, p. 67 Simpson's report. (Athabaska), 1821; Selk. P., p. 369, *loc. cit.*
76. Franklin, *op. cit.*, p. 33
77. D 4/99, p. 2 v Simpson's Report, York Fy, 10 Aug. 1832; A. Ross, *The Red River Settlement* London, 1856, pp. 110-11; An account of the Athabaska Indians by a Partner of the North West C^o (from the copy at the Prov. Arch., Toronto), pp. 30-1.
78. D 4/15, p. 104 G. Simpson to J. McBean, La Chime, 28 Dec. 1827
79. D 4/37, p. 62. Simpson to R. S. Miles, La Chine, 1 Apr. 1848.
80. *Ibid.*; D 4/99, p. 2v. Simpson's report, 10 Aug. 1832.
81. Colin Robertson's journal (London, HBC^o), III, p. 363.
82. B 39 c/1, p. 67. Simpson, Athabaska Report, 1821.
83. Colin Robertson's journal, IV, p. 480.
84. Selk. P., p. 1812 (C. Robertson).
85. C. Robertson's journal, III, p. 355.
86. B 135 a/15, p. 5, G. Howy, Moose Fy, 14 Oct. 1744.
87. B 239 a/41, p. 37 (30 July 1756)
88. B 239 a/54, p. 37v (17 June 1766). "Drum beats at 5 in the morning and 8 in the evening. When the Indians hear drum beat and bell ring in the evening they never call till they hear the same in the morning when I am always ready to receive them."
89. B 135 a/18, p. 25v (1748).
90. Journal, IV, pp. 516-17.
91. B 239 b/44, p. 4. H. Marlen, York Fy, 8 Feb. 1785 "We have 42 Indians to maintain and clothe. The greatest number of them are very young and chiefly orphans, the others old, lame, blind or widows, most of whom would have perished without our assistance." B 3 a/18, p. 1v (1730); B 198

- a/3, p. 25 (9 Apr. 1767), A 11/27, pp. 15–16, Richard Staunton. Albany, Aug. 1738.
92. B 3 a/52, p. 3 (Sept. 1759).
 93. B 239 a/2, p. 59 (Sept. 1716): "Our Indian captain is very uneasy and tells me we are not like the French and that I do not treat them as they did in feasting." B 135 a/15, p. 3 (Sept. 1744).
 94. A 11/1, p. 58, J. Myatt. Albany, 12 Aug. 1727, B 239 a/73, p. 46 (1776).
 95. B 239 b/65, p. 15 v. Thos Stayner. Churchill, 7 July 1801.
 96. *Journal de l'expédition du Chevalier de Troyes*, p. 62, B 239 a/5, p. 82 (Aug. 1720), B 239 a/95, p. 36 (June–Aug. 1792, B 135 a/15, p. 3 (Sept. 1744).
 97. B 239 b/40, p. 15 v. W. Tomison. Cumberland Ho., 29 May 1780, B 121 a/7, p. 13 (Sept. 1791).
 98. B 3 a/47, pp. 39–40 (June 1755).
 99. B 239 a/5, p. 82 (Aug. 1720) A 6/6 p. 34 To J. Isham. (York), May 1738.
 100. E 2/7, p. 39 v. ("Observations, 1771"; B 198 a/2, p. 17v (1761).
 101. E 2/12, p. 641 (Graham, "Observations, 1792"), B 239 b/42, p. 9 S. Hearne. Churchill, 30 June 1784.
 102. B 239 a/1, p. 41. (11 June 1715); B 239 a/2 pp. 28–9, 44 (1716), A 11/72, pp. 15–15 v. J. Knight. York, 17 Sept. 1716.
 103. A 6/1, p. 127 v. Hugh Verner. London, 17 Jan. 1687.
 104. B 3 a/34, p. 34 (June 1743).
 105. B 135 a/8, p. 21v (May 1740); B 239 a/3, p. 74 (Aug. 1717).
 106. E 2/4, p. 71 (Graham, "Observations, 1768").
 107. B 239 a/1, p. 36 (Apr. 1715), B 239 a/51, p. 9v (Dec. 1763), B 3 a/1, pp. 43, 45 (Apr.–May 1706), B 135 a/15, p. 4 (Oct. 1744), B 42 a/19 (Aug. 1739).
 108. A 11/7, pp. 141–141 v. F. Jacobs. Prince of Wales, 23 Aug. 1746, B 3 a/1, pp. 5–6 (Sept. 1705), B 239 a/3, p. 68v (July 1717); B 239 a/10, p. 13v (5 Feb. 1728).
 109. 6 B 3 a/22 (Aug.–Jan. 1733–4); B 135 a/2, p. 9v (Feb. 1732), B 135 a/15, p. 8 (Jan. 1735).
 110. B 135 a/4 (1733–4).
 111. B 239 a/5, pp. 66–71 (Jan.–Mar. 1720), 74v (May 1720), 77–9 (July 1720); B 239 a/117, p. 3 (1810).
 112. B 3 a/1, p. 19 (1705).
 113. B 239 a/1, p. 42 (June 1715); B 135 a/7, p. 4 (1736–7).
 114. B 135 a/7, p. 4 (1736–7); B 239 a/1, p. 25 (1714), B 3 a/22 (Aug. 1733–Jan. 1734).
 115. B 239 a/50, p. 5 *et seq.* (1762); B 239 b/32, p. 6 v. Moses Norton. Prince of Wales, 4 Feb. 1771; B 42 a/53, p. 25 (2 Feb. 1760, B 3 a/22 (Jan. 1734).
 116. B 239 a/3, p. 58v (June 1717); B 239 a/2, p. 38, 41 (June 1716), B 239 a/22, p. 35v (June 1741); B 239 a/51, p. 40 (June 1764).
 117. B 239 a/50, p. 27 (Apr. 1763), B 239 a/53, p. 24 (Feb. 1765), B 239 a/105, pp. 30–47 (1801).
 118. B 239 a/10, p. 27 (July 1728), B 42 b/55, p. 5. W. Auld. Churchill Fy, 3 Mar. 1811; A 6/10, *passim*.
 119. B 239 a/1, p. 41 (June 1715).
 120. B 239 a/1, p. 25 (1714); B 239 a/3, pp. 20–3 (Feb. 1716); B 42 a/1, p. 131v (June 1721).
 121. B 239 a/6, p. 21 (10 June 1721).
 122. B 135 a/8, p. 19v (Apr. 1740), B 42 a/1, p. 46 (May 1721), B 42 a/5, p. 13 (18 Dec. 1724), B 42 a/27, p. 24 (1744–5), B 135 a/34, p. 55v (Aug. 1762).
 123. B 3 a/24, p. 15 (1735–6); B 42 a/1, p. 34v (30 Dec. 1718).

124. B 239 a/5, p. 77 (July–Aug. 1720); A 11/7, p. 141. F. Jacobs. Prince of Wales, 23 Aug. 1756.
125. B 239 a/22, p. 26, 32 (1741)
126. C 2/4, p. 80v (Graham, "Observations, 1768"); B 239 a/54, pp. 5, 21 (Oct 1765, Feb. 1766).
127. E 2/4, p. 80v (Graham, "Observations, 1768").
128. E 2/12, pp. 641–2 (Graham, "Observations, 1792").
129. B 239 a/89, p. 37 (July 1789); B 239 b/79, p. 4 v General Letter to London, York, 22 Sept. 1794.
130. A 11/1, p. 173. J. Isbister, Albany, 19 Sept. 1754.
131. B 42 a/56, p. 47 (July 1762), B 3 b/2, pp. 12–14 Thos. Mitchel to G. Spence, Edmonton Ho., 3 Feb. 1743.
132. B 239 a/1, p. 27 (3 Jan. 1715).
133. B 42 a/1, p. 62 (June 1719).
134. B 42 a/36, p. 20 (Nov. 1750).
135. B 239 a/130, p. 22v (20 Dec. 1821).
136. B 239 a/123, p. 20v (3 Apr. 1816)
137. B 239 a/121, p. 34v (July 1815).
138. B239 a/126, p. 13 v, 28 (Dec. 1818, May 1819).
139. E 2/4, p. 81. (Graham, "Observations, 1768").
140. B 135 c/1, p. 231. To John Thomas. (Moose), 25 May 1803.
141. *Journal de l'expédition du Chevalier de Troyes*, pp. 76–9, Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 101.
142. A 6/4, p. 88, 91 Sailing orders and Instructions to Captain J. Belcher, E 2/4, p. 75 (Graham, "Observations, 1768") E 2/7, p. 27 (*ibid.*, 1771)
143. A 1/51, p. 109 (London. Minutes of Council, 22 Apr. 1818), A 1/52, p. 5v (*ibid.*, 16 Dec. 1818).
144. B 22 a/15, p. 9 (2 Mar. 1808) E. Coues, *New Light*, I, pp. 426–7; B 22 a/21, p. 17 (1817).
145. E 2/1, p. 51v (J. Isham, "Observations, 1743").
146. A 11/7, p. 77. R. Pilgrim. Prince of Wales, July 1742.
147. A 6/1, p. 16 v To Governor Nixon, 15 May 1782, A 6/1, p. 28 v Instructions to Henry Sergeant . . . , 27 Apr. 1683.
148. B 135 a/6, p. 8 (29 Apr. 1736) B 135 a/5, p. 13v (Apr. 1735), B 239 a/2, p. 76 (1715–16)
149. A 6/5, p. 1. To J. Myatt, 25 May 1727.
150. B 135 a/6, p. 2 (26 Dec. 1735). A 6/6, p. 5 (To R. Norton (Prince of Wales, 18 May 1738), p. 16 (To Th. Bird, Albany, 18 May 1738), p. 190 (To J. Isbister, Albany, 23 Apr. 1741); B 239 a/37, p. 16 (Feb. 1754). B 239 a/45, p. 17 (1758–9).
151. E 2/7, p. 2 v (Graham, "Observations, 1771"), E 2/9, p. 61 (*ibid.*, 1794)
152. E 2/7, p. 5v (*ibid.*, 1771) "The men adopt the Englishmen's children and are very kind to them. Both men and women are proud of them, and when any of the married women has a child by an Englishman the husband is not angry with her, but proud of his present. Indeed the affair rivets her firmly in his favour."
153. A 6/1, p. 91. To Governor Geyer . . . 3 June 1687; A 6/1, p. 123 Narrative of Henry Sergeant, 4 Nov. 1687.
154. A 6/1, p. 16 v To Gov. Nixon, 15 May 1682; A 6/1, p. 28 v Instructions to Henry Sergeant . . . , 27 Apr. 1683, A 11/27, pp. 17–17 v. R. Staunton. (Moose), Aug. 1738: "I may say with justice . . . that vice was grown rampant . . . to a monstrous degree of wickedness both among the English and the Indians, . . ." A 11/27, p. 47 R. Pilgrim. Moose Fy, 4 Aug. 1749

- 155 A 11/1, p. 106 J. Isbister Albany, 6 Sept. 1741, A 11/1, pp. 173–4; *ibid.*, 19 Sept. 1754; A 11/7, p. 97 R. Pilgrim, Prince of Wales, 30 July 1746, B 3 a/46, p. 5, 17 (1753) B 135 a/11, pp. 5, 11 (1711–12) B 239 a/50, p. 5 (1762–3)
- 156 B 42 a/38, p. 14, 28 (1751–2) B 42 a/50, p. 40v (June 1758); B 3 a/48, p. 39v (6 Sept. 1756) B 3 a/50, p. 32v (19 July 1758), B 3 a/45, pp. 5–5v (1752–3) B 239 a/50, p. 5 (22 Sept. 1762), A 6/7, p. 1. To J. Isbister, 5 May 1742.
- 157 B 3a/30, pp. 22–22v (1740–1) B 3 a/31, p. 15v (1741–1), B 3 a/34, p. 7–9 (1742–3) B 135 a/11, p. 15 (1741–2), B 239 a/62, p. 48 (July 1770). B 42 a/4 *passim* (1754–5).
- 158 B 42 a/44, p. 27 (1754–5). B 239 a/39, p. 5v (Oct. 1754), A 6/7, p. 9v Orders and instructions to Captain Wm Coats . . . , 1742.
- 159 B 42 a/38, p. 14 (13 Nov. 1751).
- 160 B 42 b/55, p. 5. W. Auld, Churchill Fy, 3 Mar. 1811.
- 161 B 3 a/21, p. 17 (Apr. 1733).
- 162 B 3 a/12, p. 23 (May 1724) B 3 a/13, p. 26v (20 May 1725), B 3 a/14, p. 20 (26 May 1726). B 3 a/35, p. 56 (16 Jan. 1744), A 6/3, p. 101 To Gov J. Fullertine (Albany), 23 June 1702, A 6/6, p. 34 To J. Isham (York), 18 May 1738.
- 163 B 42 a/36, p. 20 (Nov. 1750) B 3 a/13, p. 29 (June 1725); A 11/73, p. 118 F. Jacobs, 25 Aug. 1769: "The Indians trade 48 fine buck deer. They are so drunk with the brandy given to them for that venison that they cannot even take care of their young children." B 135 a/8, p. 2v (9 Aug. 1739): "An Indian killed a seal. I gave him a bottle of brandy, which is the common price for a seal." B 125 a/8, p. 18v (11 Apr. 1740), pp. 22–22v (12 May 1740.)
- 164 B 42 a/24, p. 15v (18 Nov. 1742): "The Indians being drunk . . . quarrelled. One had his nose and ear bitten off and the first joint of one finger." B 3 a/31, p. 52v (30 Aug. 1741). B 3 a/37, p. 46 (27 June 1746), B 239 v/81, p. 8 W. H. Cook to J. Sinclair (Oxford Ho.), 8 June 1811: "If we can prosper under such hideous auspices we shall leave behind us some dark traces of indiscretion that will recoil upon our consciences." E 2/1, p. 65 v (J. Isham, "Observations, 1743"): "It is a pity that liquor was introduced among them [coast Indians]. It has been the cause of all their lewdness."
- 165 B. 135 a/14, pp. 33–4 (25 Mar. 1744). B 239 a/29, pp. 26–32 (1746–7).
- 166 A 6/7, p. 9 v Orders . . . to Captain W. Coats; *Thompson's Narrative* (Tyrrell ed.), p. 53.
- 167 B 135. a/14, pp. 33–4 (25 Mar. 1744).
- 168 B 2/4, p. 16 (Graham, "Observations, 1768"): "Although a jealous people amongst themselves, an Indian man will allow his wife to visit a European in hopes of getting a quart of English brandy . . ." E 2/7, p. 2 v (Graham, "Observations, 1771"); A 11/1, p. 173 v. Geo. Rushworth, Albany, 8 Sept. 1755
- 169 B 42 a/36, p. 20 (22 Nov. 1750). B 42 a/38, p. 14 (13 Nov. 1751); A 6/6, p. 34. To J. Isham (York), 18 May 1738.
- 170 B 239 b/50, p. 18 v. Particulars respecting the murder of William Appleby, late master of the Moose Shallop at Hannah Bay (1788)
- 171 A 11/72, p. 84. J. Isham York Fy, Aug. 1738. A 6/6, pp. 84–98. To J. Isham (York), 17 May 1739.
- 172 B 239 a/66, p. 35v (1771–2). B 42 a/56, p. 34 *et seq.* (1762); E 2/4, p. 23. (Graham, "Observations, 1768"): "The venereal disorder is as common here as in Europe, having known both men and women die of it, and am informed many inland are destroyed by it. The Europeans borrow it from

- them I have known men so far gone with it as to be obliged to undergo a gentle salvation Pine bud tea is used by the natives for the above disorder "
173. A 5/1 pp. 108-9 To John Potts (Prince of Wales), 31 May 1763. "We observe venereal complaints are not uncommon among our servants at Prince of Wales Fort, and that the same disorder has made its appearance among the Indian women there also Which we think to be of the worst consequence as the natives . . . may be greatly reduced by means thereof . . . "
174. A 6/1, p. 16 v. To Governor Nixon, 15 May 1682.
175. A 11/1, p. 174. G. Rushworth. Albany, 8 Sept. 1755
176. A 11/1, p. 173 v, *ibid*.
177. E 2/4, p. 16v (Graham, "Observations, 1768"): "As most of the factors keep an Indian woman . . . "
178. E 2/4, p. 74 (*ibid.*).
179. E 2/4, p. 74.
180. A 11/74, p. 75. H. Marten, York, 13 Sept. 1780.
181. E 2/7, p. 24v (Graham, "Observations, 1771") "The intercourse that is carried on between the Indian ladies and the English is not allowed, but winked at, no natives being allowed to harbour within the Fort " *Ibid* p. 17.
182. B 239 a/3, p. 67 (1717).
183. B 239 a/79, p. 45 (17 July 1781) B 239 a/126, p. 13v (Dec. 1818), B 3 b/2, pp. 12-14. Th. Mitchel to Moose Fy Eastmain, Feb. 1745.
184. B 239 v/78, p. 39 v. London to York, 26 May 1802.
185. Selk P., p. 16. 645. (Journal of M. Macdonnel, 1811-12).
186. B 239 b/82, p. 10 W. H. Cook to J. Swain, York Fy, 17 Dec. 1811.
187. B 239 v/82 "As the colony is at length set on foot and there is a prospect of civilization diffusing itself among us in a few years, I would not advise you for the sake of the rising generation to consent to either officers or men contracting matrimonial connections unless with the daughters of Englishmen, and then only with the previous concurrence of the superintendent."
188. Selk P., pp. 12 642-3. Lord Selkirk. Manuscript relating to Red River
189. A 11/76, p. 30. W. Auld, York Fy, 26 Sept. 1811.
190. Selk. P., p. 369 M. Macdonnell to Lord Selkirk. 29 May 1812.
191. A 11/1, pp. 173-5. G. Rushworth, Albany, 8 Sept. 1775
192. A 11/1, pp. 173-5. *Ibid*.
193. *Ibid*
194. Augustine Frost.
195. B 135 a/11, pp. 63-4, 66 (May 1742).
196. A 10/1, pp. 87-8. C. Robertson. London, 17 Jan. 1810.
197. A 11/76, p. 29 v W Auld York Fy, 26 Sept 1811, A 11/29, p. 46. J. Thomas. Moose Fy, 1785 (private journal).
198. B 239 v/78, p. 29 v. London to York, 28 May 1800.
199. B 239 a/72, p. 44. (Cocking's journal, 1774-5).
200. B 239 a/95, p. 36 (June-Aug. 1792) B 239 a/96, p. 43v (1791).
201. B 105 a/2, pp. 16-17 (Jan. 1795)
202. B 22 a/11 (1803-4) This absence of incorporation in the native society thus weakened the position of the Anglo-Saxons, in the same way as their insufficient numbers in the first years of penetration.
203. B 121 a/1, p. 24v (1786).
204. B 42 a/136 a, p. 5 (1810-11).
205. B 121/7, p. 13 (Sept. 1791).
206. B 22 a/3, p. 23 (15 May 1796).

72. B 239 a/49, pp. 31–2 (1761–2)
73. Lists of Servants. A/30/4.
74. A 6/12, p. 48 v. To H. Marten (Albany), 1775
75. A 6/15, p. 98 v. To J. McNab (Albany), 29 May 1794.
76. Such were Charles Price Isham or the son of George Sutherland, who, at ten years of age, began his apprenticeship, and whose father has been counted as an "excellent employee," or William Walker, who at the age of fifteen began in the service where his father had, as bookkeeper and then as postmaster, enjoyed the consideration of his superiors. B 239 f/5 (Lists of Servants, York, 1797).
77. B 135 f/8 (Lists of Servants, Moose Factory, 1810); A 30/10 (Lists of Servants, 1800).
78. B 239 b/79, p. 33. London to York, Sept. 1800. B 3 a/116, p. 14v (25 June 1813).
79. Five figure among the personnel of Albany in 1795 and 1796, six in 1797 (30/6, A 30/7, Lists of Servants). Moose Factory counted one in 1796 five the following year (A 30/7, Lists of Servants). York Factory delegated four to the interior posts in 1796, and renewed their engagements in 1797 and 1798 (B 239 f/5–6. Lists of Servants. York Factory).
80. B 239 v/78, pp. 73 v–74. London to York, 20 May 1809: "It is the third year trade has been completely prohibited with the continent, and . . . the accumulation in our warehouse is immense without the least prospect of a free export trade."
81. B 239 b/78, p. 57 v. To J. McNab (York), 31 May 1806
82. At York Factory, where they increased from 4 in 1800 to 8 in 1801 and 11 in 1803 (B 239 f/6, f/8, f/9. Lists of Servants, York Fy), at Ft Albany, where they reached a total of 12 in 180 (A 30/10, Lists of Servants, 1800), at Moose Fy, there their number increased from 4 in 1803 to 14 in 1804 (B 135 f/1–f/2. Lists of Servants, Moose Fy), then lowered slightly to 12 in 1813 (A 30/12, Lists of Servants, 1813); in the interior posts as well, where the progression was no less marked: 11 in the Saskatchewan Department in 1813 (A 30/12, loc. cit., B 60 f/1. Lists of Servants, Saskatchewan Department, 1815–16), 7 in the posts on Lake Winnipeg in 1815 (A 30/12) and 28 in the wider area of the Winnipeg Department in 1815 (B 63 f/1). There was hardly a post that from this time did not dispose of a number of mixed-blood employees. Numerically the proportion they represented was very slight: only 28 men out of a total of 108 employees in the Winnipeg Department (B 63 f/1); 14 in a personnel of 46 employees at Moose Fy in 1804 (B 135 f/2). This proportion becomes even lower if one takes into account the number of people of mixed blood who must then have lived around the trading posts. But the importance of the people engaged in this way arises from the nature of the functions they fulfilled and the qualities they displayed in doing so.
83. B 239 a/71, p. 32 (June 1775).
84. A 1/75, p. 98. C. Isham. York Fy, 20 July 1791.
85. B 87 a/4 (Dec.–Jan. 1781–2).
86. B 239 b/83, p. 10. W. Auld to M. Macdonell. York, Jan. 1813
87. *Journal of P. Turnor* (Tyrrell, ed.), p. 225.
88. B 87 a/4 (12 Mar. 1782).
89. *Ibid.* (Nov.–May 1781–2), B 89 a/4, pp. 11–13v (Oct.–Nov. 1819), B 104 a/2, pp. 28–34 (Nov. 1819).
90. *Journal of P. Turnor*, p. 225.
91. B 239 f/1 (Lists of Servants. York, 1783–95; Selk. P. p. 477 et seq. (W. Auld to Lord Selkirk, York, 12 Sept. 1812). The postmaster was charged with the direction of a less important post. The grade was inferior

- to that of "clerk," which generally opened the way for appointment to the role of superior officer (D 4/18, p. 23 v. Simpson to J. G. McTavish, 25 Jan. 1831)
92. B 135 f/2 (Lists of Servants, Moose Fy, 1804).
 93. B 135 f/8 (*ibid.*, 1810).
 94. *Ibid.*
 95. A 30/4 (Lists of Servants, 1787 *et seq.*), B 3 b/32, p. 8 v. N. Spence to McNab, Henley Ho., 15 Dec. 1794
 96. B 135 f/7, f/3 (Lists of Servants, Moose Fy, 1801-10); A 30/12 (Lists of Servants, West Winnipeg, 1813); B 239 f/6 (*ibid.*, York, 1797).
 97. B 135 f/2, f/3 (Lists of Servants, Moose Fy, 1804-5)
 98. A 30/12 (Lists of Servants, Saskatchewan, Eastmain, 1813).
 99. A 30/7, (Lists of Servants, 1797).
 100. B 135 f/8 (*ibid.*, Moose Fy, 1810); A 30/12 (*ibid.*, Albany, 1813)
 101. B 135 f/3, f/7 (*ibid.*, Moose Fy, 1805, 1809).
 102. A 30/12 (Lists of Servants, Eastmain, 1813).
 103. B 135 f/8 (*ibid.*, Moose Fy, 1810).
 104. B 135 f/1 (*ibid.*, Moose Fy, 1803).
 106. B 239 b/51, p. 16 J. Spence to J. Colen. Split Lake, 16 Mar. 1791
 107. A 10/1, p. 135. To Mr Thomas (Churchill), May 1814.
 108. B 239 b/77, p. 6. J. McNab. York, 17 Feb. 1809.
 109. B 239 b/83, p. 22 W. Auld to M. Macdonell Jack River Ho. 13 June 1813.
 110. B 239 f/5 (Lists of Servants, York, 1797); B 89 a/2 (3 Oct 1810).
 111. B 105 e/1, p. 9 v. (Rainy Lake Report, 1816-18).
 112. B 105 e/2, p. 78 (*ibid.*, 1822-3).
 113. B 135 f/2, f/3, f/5 (Lists of Servants Moose Fy); B 239 f/8 (Lists of Servants, York); B 239 f/9 (*ibid.*).
 114. B 135 f/9 (Lists of Servants, 1814-15).
 116. B 3 a/114, p. 12v (6 Aug 1811); B 239 a/49, p. 20 (Jan. 1762)
 117. B 22 a/20, p. 19 (24 Feb. 1816).
 118. B 239 f/5 (Lists of Servants, York, 1797); A 30/7, *ibid.* (Moose Fy, 1797).
 119. A 6/15, p. 98 v. To J. McNab (Albany), 29 May 1794.
 120. E 2/4, p. 73 (Graham, "Observations, 1768"); B 135 f/1, f/3 (1803-5)
 121. B 135 f/1, f/5 (1803-7).
 122. B 135 f/2 (Lists of Servants, Moose, 1804).
 123. H. M. Robinson, *The Great Fur Land* London, 1880, pp. 63-4
 124. J. Thomas, in 1807, son of the officer of the same name who directed the post of Moose Fy (B 134 f/5, f/6 A 30/12); Thomas McNab, in 1813, son of John McNab, commandant of Fort Albany in 1790 (A 30/10, A 30/12, West Winnipeg); Jos. Cook in 1813, presumed son of William Cook, bookkeeper at York Factory, then commandant of the post in 1809 (A 30/12); George Atkinson in 1795, promoted later to the grade of "district master," presumed son of George Atkinson, "master" of the post of Eastmain in 1784 (A 30/10, A 30/12, A 30/6), John Richards in 1794-6, son of the postmaster of Henley House (A 30/6, A 11/3, p. 201 v), Sabbeston Howse in 1797 (B 239 f/6); George Bird, in 1813 (Edmonton) son of Chief Factor James Bird (A 30/12), J. B. Pruden, master trader, at Edmonton in 1813, son of J. B. Pruden, bookkeeper at York Fy in 1800 (A 30/12), John Turner, interim postmaster in the Red River in 1815-16 (B 63 f/1, A 30/12), William Tait, trader at Cumberland in 1815 (B 60 f/1); Charles Cramer, possibly son of Doctor Charles Cramer, of Ft Albany, engaged as "labourer" in 1797, and provisionally assumed the role of postmaster at Frederick House in 1804 (A 30/10, B 135 f/2, f/3).
 125. B 239 f/9; A 30/10, A 30/12 (Albany, Saskatchewan, Winnipeg); B 135 f/8;

126. A 11/3, p. 9 J. Favell jr., Henley, 22 Aug. 1775, A 11/4, p. 197; J. Kipling Albany, 20 Sept. 1791.
127. A 6/4, p. 56 To Richard Stanton (Churchill), 4 June 1719, A 6/5 To Mr. Richard Norton, 20 May 1731, A 6/5, p. 97 To R. Norton, 2 May 1735
128. A 5/I, p. 31. To Moses Norton, 12 May 1756, A 5/11 p. 71, 96. *Ibid.*, 15, 25 May 1762.
129. A 6/12, pp. 64–5 To the Council at Churchill, 4 May 1775; A 6/12, p. 161 London to Prince of Wales, May 1777, A 6/12, p. 273, *ibid.*, May 1779
130. B 239 b/26, p. 6 v. Moses Norton to F. Jacobs, Prince of Wales, 3 Aug 1765, A. C. Laut, *Pathfinders of the West* Toronto, 1904, pp. 246–7
131. B 239 b/28, p. 8. Jacobs to M. Norton, York, 18 Mar. 1768.
132. A 5/1 (Misc.). Captain George Dixon, 18 May 1790.
133. B 42 a/54, p. 48 (18 Aug. 1761).
134. I. Cowie, *The Company of Adventurers*. Toronto, 1913, pp. 62–3.
135. Cowie, *op. cit.*, pp. 62–3.
136. B 135 a/104, p. 15v (24 June 1814).
137. A 1/47, p. 33 v (London, Minutes of Council, 16 Apr. 1794), A 6/15, p. 102 v. London to Moose Fy, 29 May 1794.
138. B 135 c/1, p. 231. London to J. Thomas, 30 May 1795.
139. B 239 b/78, p. 57 v. London to J. McNab (York), 31 May 1806.
B 135 c/1, p. 287. London to J. Thomas, 31 May 1806.
140. A 1/49, p. 62. (London, Minutes of Council, 30 Mar. 1808)
141. B 135 a/97, p. 28 (9 Sept. 1809).
142. B 135 c/1, p. 301. London to Moose Fy, 20 May 1808.
143. B 239 b 78, p. 57 v. London to J. McNab (York), 31 May 1806; *ibid.*, p. 62. *ibid.*, 31 May 1807; *ibid.*, p. 69. *ibid.*, 20 May 1808
144. B 3/a/111, p. 20 (15 Aug. 1809), B 3 a/112 Albany Factory School Journal, by William Harper, 1808; B 239 b/79, p. 56 v J. McNab to London, Sept. 1808, A 1/49, p. 70 (London, Minutes of Council, 29 June 1808)
145. B 239 b/78, p. 62. London to J. McNab (York), 31 May 1807; B 239 b/79, p. 51. London to York, 30 Aug. 1806.
146. B 239 b/79, p. 53 v. London to J. McNab and Council (York), 28 Sept. 1808.
147. *Ibid.*
148. B 239 b/78, p. 69. London to McNab, 20 May 1808
149. B 135 a/96 (26 Sept 1808)
150. B 239 b/79, p. 59 v J. McNab to London. York, 14 Sept. 1809; B 239 a/116 (18 Sept 1809).
151. B 135 a/98 (1810).
152. B 135 a/97, p. 5v (31 Oct. 1808).
153. B 135 a/97, a/98 (1808–10).
154. B 135 a/98, p. 22 (Apr. 1810).
155. *Ibid.*, p. 32 (June 1810)
156. B 135 a/99, a/100 (1810–12)
157. B 135 a/103, pp. 15, 16, 19 (Feb.–Mar. 1813).
158. Twenty children of less than 16 years old here followed the teaching of W. Harper with more regularity (B 3 a/112, Albany School Journal, 1808).
159. B 3 a/112, Albany School Journal
160. B 239 b/79, p. 51. York to London, 30 Aug 1806.
161. B 3/a/112, *loc. cit.*, B 135 a/98, pp. 22, 23, 24, 32 (Apr –June 1810)
162. B 3 a/112, *loc. cit.*
163. Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels* . . . , pp. 65–6. Registres Généalogiques du P. Le Chevallier (Indian School, Duck Lake, Sask.)

164. B 3 a/122. Albany School Journal.
165. B 239 a/53, pp. 40–1 (June 1765).
166. Franklin's witness does seem somewhat idealized. N 22 a/21, p. 20 (Nov 1817)
167. Franklin, *Narrative of a Journey . . .*, pp. 52–3, 85–6.
168. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 81, 257, 269.
169. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, Introd. p. 38
170. *Ibid.*, p. 113, n. 1
171. Miles Macdonell P. (P.A.C.), Vol. I, pp. 1148–9 (J. Macdonell to Miles Macdonell Bas de la Rivière, 27 June 1812).
172. J. B. Tyrrell, "The Re-Discovery of David Thompson" (*T.R.S.C.*, 3d ser., sect. II, 1928, pp. 233–46).
173. Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels*, p. 66.
174. Franchère, *op. cit.*, p. 376; Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 77.
175. Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 150.
176. D. Thompson's *Narrative*, p. 252, R. G. Thwaites. "The Story of Chequamegon Bay" (*Wisc. Hist. Coll.*, XIII, p. 397 *et seq.*). W. W. Warren, *History of the Ojibways* (*Minn. Hist. Coll.*, V, 1885, p. 21 *et seq.*).
177. Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 29; Journal of Colin Robertson (H.B.C.), II, p. 148; E 8/5, pp. 126–7 (Déposition d'Hector McEachern, Montreal, 5 Dec. 1815).
178. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, p. 189.
179. *Ibid.*, I, p. 39
180. Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 546.
181. Masson, *op. cit.*, II, p. 374 (Journal of James Mackenzie, Nov. 1799); Morton, *The Journal of Duncan McGillivray*, p. 41; Franchère, *Narrative of a Voyage*, p. 370; Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels*, p. 78.
182. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 197
183. *Oregon Hist. Quart.*, Mar. 1936.
184. Likewise, F. V. Malhiot (*Wisc. Hist. Col.*, XIX, p. 163 *et seq.*).
185. Masson, *op. cit.*, Introd. p. 113, n. 1.
186. Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 200.
187. E 8/5, pp. 243–4 (Déposition de J. Pritchard, Montreal, Feb. 1817)
188. Selk P., pp. 49–50 M. Macdonell to Lord Selkirk. York, 1 Oct. 1811
189. Macdonell P. (P.A.C.), *loc. cit.*
190. Masson, *Bourgeois*, p. 81 II, pp. 96–7, T. C. Elhott, "Marguerite Wadin McKay" (*Oregon Hist. Quart.*, Dec. 1935), "The Journal of F. V. Malhiot" (*Wisc. Hist. Col.*, XIX, p. 163 *et seq.*).
191. Carlton journal, 1815–16, p. 22.
192. Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels*, p. 104
193. Masson, *Bourgeois*, I, p. 239.
194. Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 546.
195. D. Thompson's *Narrative*, pp. 416, 462–5; B 60 a/13, p. 3 (Sept. 1814); Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp. 478–82.
196. Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 735; Bradbury, *Travels in the Interior of America*, p. 164.
197. A. Henry, sr., *Travels and Adventures*, p. 248
198. Keating, S. H. Long's *Expedition*, I, pp. 107–8, 116, Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*. Paris, 1744. II, p. 54.
199. Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 115–16 The journals of the Hudson's Bay here and there mention the existence of Métis promoted, either by the whites or by the Indians, to the dignity of native chiefs. (B 104 a/2, p. 61 v, 24 May 1820: "Mr Lewes was under the unpleasant necessity of making Nishicabo or Baptiste Desjarlais a chief of the same consequence as Tulibii. He received a flag and a suit of clothes." B 22 a/22, p. 29 v, 2 Sept. 1818.

- "The Rain (?) Lake chief, a Metiff, arrived here yesterday with a few men by way of Fort Daer" Cf P. G. Roy, "Nicolas Jourdain chef Iroquois" (Bull. Rech. Hist., Jan. 1930).
200. *Missions des Missionnaires Oblats de Marie Immaculée* Paris, 1899, p. 147
201. *Wis. Hist. Col.*, 1856, p. 197 *et seq.* (Augustin Grignon, "Recollections of Wisconsin"). On the subject of Métis reabsorbed into the primitive life, see Taché, *Les Cloches de Saint-Basile*, Feb. 1934, p. 50; A. Skinner, "The Cree Indians of Northern Canada" (*Southern Workman*, Hampton, Va., 1909, v. 38, pp. 78-83).
202. B 60 a/10, p. 8 (16 Jan. 1812).
203. Coues, *New Light*, II, p. 546.
204. Franchère, *Narrative of a Voyage*, pp. 366-7.
205. B 104 a/1, p. 10v (Aug. 1799).
206. B 60 a/12, pp. 10 v-11 (1813).
207. *Op. cit.*, p. 81; R. G. Thwaites, *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, I, p. 284.
208. D. Thompson's P. (Prov. Arch., Toronto), Book 78, p. 57.
209. B 60 a/12, pp. 10-11 (1813).
210. A. Henry, sr., *Travels and Adventures*, p. 248; A 11/4, p. 159 J. McNab. "Remarks on Albany Fort, 1798-90."
211. Warren, "History of the Ojibways" (Minn. Hist. Col., XIII, p. 279)
212. Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels*, pp. 115-16.
213. B 3 a/114, p. 12v (6 Aug. 1811); B 239 a/49, pp. 9-11 (Jan. 1762).
214. Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
215. Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North-West Co.*, p. 183
216. Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 197.
217. Masson, *Bourgeois*, II, pp. 36-7 (John McDonald of Garth, Autobiographical notes).
218. Selk. P. (P.A.C.), p. 17.259 (Journal of Miles Macdonell, June 1917)
219. Franchère, *op. cit.*, p. 344. B 89 a/2, 3 Oct. 1810.
220. Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 488, 612-13.
221. D. Thompson's *Narrative*, p. 551.
222. Snelling, *Tales of the North-West*, p. 84 *et seq.*
223. Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 488, 612-13.
224. B 42 a/136-a, p. 18 (1810-11, "The [Canadians] are little removed from savages. Indeed the reader may easily conceive what offspring may shoot from the union of a volatile, vain, shiftless, tho not ruffle-less (?) Frenchman with a toy-loving daughter of an Indian Scalper."
225. Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 488, 612-13.
226. Wallace, *Documents relating to the North-West Company*, p. 211.
227. Yet we should remember the already cited case of Daniel Harmon, and that of David Thompson, who both married Canadian Métis women.
228. Masson, *Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, I, pp. 69-71
229. Dover, *Half-Caste*, pp. 190-1.
230. Coues, *New Light*, II, pp. 441-3, 553 *et seq.*, 569-82, 591-2, 602, 610-14; Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North-West Company*, pp. 219-22. It is not possible to estimate the numbers of the Métis group in this initial period. The dates that have come down to us sometimes depend on estimates without any serious basis, like that of W. J. Snelling who put at 4,000 to 5,000 the Métis population of the North West for the period 1800-20 (*Tales of the North-West*, p. 84); sometimes they concern only the immediate personnel of the trading forts and consequently neglect the numerous individuals who were absorbed into Indian society, or those who, entering the category of free men, ceased to figure on the lists of the employees of the

posts. The figures we find in the work of Alexander Mackenzie, 700 women and children for a personnel of 1,100 employees and voyageurs at the end of the eighteenth century (p. xxvii), or those furnished by the memoirs of Alexander Henry, of 569 children for close to 1,100 employees in 1805 (Coues, *New Light*, I, p. 282) are consequently only approximations. The incidence of births, the ratio of survival, are totally unknown to us, so we are unable to establish the demographic augmentation of the Métis group. We shall continue to experience the same difficulties whenever there is a question of a numerical estimate of the group.

231. Selk P., pp. 12, 768-9 (Lord Selkirk, manuscript relating to the Red River).

PART IV:

THE AWAKENING OF A NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Chapter Nine: *The Enterprise of Assiniboia*

1. B 239 b/82, p. 24. W. Cook to Mr. Snoddie (Spht Lake) York, 14 Mar 1812, Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 540, Chester Martin, *Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada*, Oxford, 1916, pp. 38-9.
2. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 539.
3. Selkirk, *Observations on the Present State of the Highlands of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1806, pp. 23-6, 41-7, P. Hume Brown, *History of Scotland* 1909, III, pp. 45-6.
4. A. C. Garrioch, *First Furrows. A History of the Early Settlement of the Red River Country*, Winnipeg, 1923, p. 21.
5. Selk P. (P A C), II, p. 650 (Selkirk Instructions to M. Macdonell, 12 June 1813).
6. *Ibid.*
7. H. G. Gunn, "The Selkirk Settlement and Its Relation to North Dakota History" (*Col. St. Hist. Soc. North Dakota*, Vol. II, part. 1, pp. 84-6).
8. P. A. C. Q series, vol. 321, p. 128. Norman Stewart to Lord Bathurst, 27 Aug 1816, Selk P., p. 2295 (J. Halkett to Lord Selkirk, Thurso, 24 May 1816), Selk P., p. 2835 (General Dunlop to Lord Selkirk, 14 Oct. 1816).
9. P. H. Brown, *op. cit.*, III, p. 359; Selkirk, *Observations on the Present State of the Highlands*, pp. 123-5.
10. B 239 b/69, p. 48-9. Duncan Cameron, Lake of the Island, 28 Mar 1804.
11. Selkirk, *Observations on the Present State* . . . , pp. 125-9.
12. P. H. Brown, *op. cit.*, III, p. 359.
13. P. A. C. Q series, vol. 321, p. 126 (A. Macdonald to Lord Bathurst, 28 Aug 1816).
14. P. A. C. Q series, vol. 293, pp. 256-8 (Lord Selkirk, Edinburgh, 30 Nov 1802).
15. Selk. P., p. 13 927 (Lord Selkirk to the Secretary of State . . . A proposal tending to the permanent security of Ireland).
16. Selkirk, *Observations on the Present State*, pp. 2-3.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-3.
18. The ideals of patriotism and philanthropy, which Lord Selkirk had tried to apply with mixed success from 1803 onward on Prince Edward Island and in the region of the Great Lakes (P. A. C. Q series, vol. 311 12, p. 90). Selkirk to Francis Gore, London, 31 Mar 1809 Selk P., p. 14 431 *et seq.* Chester Martin, *Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada*, pp. 21-35, Helen I. Cowan, "Selkirk's Work in Canada. An Early Chapter" *C.H.R.*, Dec

1928, pp. 299–308), were accompanied, it is true, by narrower conceptions. If he planned to dissolve the poverty of the Highlanders in the prosperity of a nascent colony, and if he was ready to ignore the indifference or hostility which the public authorities, in both England and Canada, showed to his projects, to engage his fortune and energy without any reservation in the enterprise (Selk P., p. 2299, J. Halkett to Selkirk, 24 May 1816, p. 2530, "Narrative of Peter Fidler," C. Martin, *op. cit.* p. 102), he at the same time recommended, for the Irish who were equally smitten by poverty and stirred up by discontent, a plan of emigration that ignored the most elementary human sentiments. In appearance, he applied to the small tenants, threatened with expropriation by the emergence of a class of "yeomen" who were more prosperous and provided with greater lands, the same remedy as he had conceived for the Highlanders evicted from their farms, and he advised the diversion toward Canada of the current of emigration that since 1768 had been directed toward the Atlantic coast towns of the United States (Selk. P., pp. 13,875–13,892, Selkirk on Irish emigration, Nov. 1806). But he also advised the pure and simple elimination of the Catholic element, whom the memory of the injustices they had suffered inspired with an irreducible resentment toward England and the Protestant landlords. Their presence would constitute a danger of new seditions, and it was necessary to end the peril by expatriating those whose loyalty had definitely fallen away (Selk P., p. 13,909 P.A.C. Q series, Vol. 293, pp. 172–3), leaving one free to fill the void with a Protestant immigration, formed of workmen from Northern Ireland, and Scottish and English farmers, which would give England a guarantee of peace and Ireland the certainty of economic progress, at the same time as the Protestant population would be stabilized there, with the language and customs of the Anglo-Saxons (P.A.C. Q series, Vol. 293, pp. 174–5). It is regrettable that the Earl of Selkirk, who, on several occasions, could examine sympathetically the condition of the Irish (Selk P., p. 20,027, C. Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 90, n. 2) should have reduced the generosity of his feelings by these projects of massive eviction which, moreover, would have been difficult (Selk P., p. 13,864–9).

- 19 A. S. Morton, "The Place of the Red River Settlement in the Plans of the Hudson's Bay Co" (Can. Hist. Assoc., 1929).
- 20 Selk P., pp. 1038–9 (Selkirk's instructions to Macdonell, 12 Apr. 1814); B 42 b/55, p. 17. W. Auld, York Fy, 16 Feb. 1811.
- 21 Selk P., pp. 792–3 M. Macdonell to Selkirk, Red River, 17 July 1813.
- 22 Selk. P., pp. 2208–9. Selkirk to C. Robertson, 25 Apr. 1816.
- 23 J. P. Pritchett, "Selkirk Purchase of the Red River Valley" (*Journal of Economic and Business History*, Aug. 1931).
- 24 Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North-West Co.*, pp. 277–9; Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, p. 283; Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp. 585–7.
- 25 Selk P., p. 9109. Simon McGillivray to the North-West Partners, London, 9 Apr. 1812.
- 26 A. S. Morton, "The Place of the Red River Settlement" (Can. Hist. Assoc., 1929), E. H. Oliver, *The Canadian North-West Its Early Development and Legislative Records*, Ottawa, 1914, I, p. 311.
- 27 See above, pp. 203–4.
- 28 A. S. Morton, "The Canada Jurisdiction Act (1803) and the North-West" (T.R.S.C., 1938, sect. II); P.A.C. Q series, Vol. 327, p. 4 *et seq.* Drummer Powell to Sir Peregrine Maitland, York, 27 Oct. 1819.
- 29 Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 538.
- 30 Selk., p. 6361. W. Wilberforce to Selkirk, 26 July 1819; P.A.C. Q series,

- vol 293, p. 184. Selkirk, A proposal leading to the permanent security of Ireland., 1802
32. Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
 33. A 11/76, p. 30. W. Auld, York, 26 Sept. 1811.
 34. B 239 a/117, p. 13v (24 Sept. 1811).
 35. B 239 a/117, p. 114 (29 Sept. 1811).
 36. B 239 a/118, p. 5 (22 Dec. 1811).
 37. Selk. P. M. Macdonell to Selkirk, 31 May 1812; Selk. P., p. 52. M. Macdonell to Selkirk, 1 Oct. 1811.
 38. Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 40.
 39. A 11/76, p. 23. W. Auld, York Fy., 26 Sept. 1811.
 40. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 542.
 41. B 239 a/120, p. 8-9 (Dec. 1812). B 239 a/124, p. 59 v (1813-14); B 239 b/82, p. 9 J. Swain to W. Cook, Severn, 1811. B 239 b/83, p. 15 v. W. Auld to W. Hillier, York, 27 Jan. 1813.
 42. Selk. P., p. 748 *et seq.*, A. Edwards to Selkirk, York Fy, 10 July 1813.
 43. B 239 a/118, pp. 1-3 (Oct. 1811), Selk. P., pp. 109-10 M. Macdonell. Nelson encampment, 25 Dec. 1811.
 44. Selk. P., pp. 74-5. W. Auld to A. Wedderburn, York Fy, 3 Oct. 1811.
 45. *Ibid.*
 46. *Ibid.*, pp. 153-8. J. McLeod, Hill River Ho., 29 June 1812.
 47. *Ibid.*, p. 70. W. Auld to A. Wedderburn, York Fy, 3 Oct. 1811, *ibid.*, p. 477 *et seq.*, W. Auld to Selkirk, York Fy, 12 Sept. 1812, A 11/76, p. 22. W. Auld, York Fy, 26 Sept. 1811.
 48. Selk. P., p. 70, *loc. cit.*, pp. 153-8: *loc. cit.*; B 239 b/82, pp. 22-3. W. Cook, York Fy, 8 Mar. 1812; B 239 b/85, p. 4. Macdonell to Th. Thomas, Oxford Ho., 26 Sept. 1814.
 49. Martin, *Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada*, pp. 60-3.
 50. Selk. P., p. 764. M. Macdonell to Selkirk, Red River, 17 July 1813; Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 543.
 51. B 239 a/118, p. 24 (5 Sept. 1812); G. Bryce, "The Old Settlers of Red River" (*Man. Hist. and Sc. Soc. Trans.* 19, 1885-6).
 52. Selk. P., p. 382 *et seq.* p. 629 (II) *et seq.* (Selkirk's instructions to M. Macdonell, 5 June 1813; *ibid.*, p. 650 *et seq.* II (Instructions to M. Macdonell, 12 June 1813), *ibid.*, pp. 707-8, 721 (Selkirk to M. Macdonell, 20 June 1812).
 53. *Ibid.*, p. 712 *et seq.* (Selkirk to Macdonell, 20 June 1812), *ibid.*, pp. 1183-4 (M. Macdonell to Selkirk, Red River, 25 July 1814), J. P. Pritchett, in *N.D.H.Q.*, v (1930-1), n° 3, p. 174.
 54. Selk. P., p. 769 M. Macdonell to Selkirk, Red River, 17 July 1813.
 55. Selk. P., p. 789: *ibid.*
 56. *Ibid.*, pp. 766-7. *ibid.*
 57. *Ibid.*, p. 767: *ibid.*
 58. Selk. P., p. 769: *ibid.*
 59. *Ibid.*, p. 769: *ibid.*
 60. *Ibid.*, p. 770-1: *ibid.*
 61. *Ibid.*, p. 769: *ibid.*
 62. *Ibid.*, p. 770: *ibid.*
 63. *Ibid.*, p. 768: *ibid.*
 64. *Ibid.*, p. 585 (II). Deposition d'Hector Macdonald, Fort Daer, 21 Mar. 1813.
 65. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 5521.
 66. Selk. P., pp. 787-8. M. Macdonell to Selkirk, Red River, 17 July 1813.
 67. Selk. P., pp. 788-9: *ibid.* *ibid.*, pp. 16.831-16.835. M. Macdonell's Journal, 1812-13.
 68. *Ibid.*, p. 789. M. Macdonell to Selkirk, Red River, 17 July 1813.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 17.087; *ibid.*, 25 July 1814.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 1184. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 25 July 1814; *ibid.*, p. 4353. Déposition de Miles Macdonell, Montreal, 16 Jan. 1818.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 1184. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 25 July 1814; *ibid.*, p. 4353. Déposition de Miles Macdonell, Montreal, 16 Jan. 1818.
72. *Ibid.*, Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 556.
73. Selk. P., pp. 1194–5. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 25 July 1814. *Ibid.*, p. 16.911. M. Macdonell's journal, 1814.
74. B 239 a/19, p. 4 (25 Aug. 1814); Selk. P., p. 16.490. Archibald Macdonald. Narrative respecting the destruction of the Earl of Selkirk's settlement 1816; *ibid.*, p. 17.089–17.094. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. York Fy, 9 Sept. 1814.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 1184. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 25 July 1814.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 1434. Th. Thomas to the H.B.C. York Fy, 15 Sept. 1815.
77. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 555.
78. Selk. P., pp. 1171–2. M. Macdonell, Red River, 24 July 1814, *ibid.*, p. 1198. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 25 July 1814.
79. Selk. P., p. 1195. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 25 July 1814.
80. *Ibid.*, p. 1699. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Montreal, 19 Sept. 1815.
81. *Ibid.*; *ibid.* p. 1122. A. Macdonald, York, 22 May 1814, P A C Q series, vols. 325–2, p. 357. Matland (Lieut.-Gov.) to the Earl of Bathurst. York Fy, 27 Oct. 1819.
82. Selk. P., p. 1196. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 25 July 1814.
83. *Ibid.*, p. 17.094, *ibid.*, York Fy, 9 Sept. 1814; B 239 b/85, p. 4. M. Macdonell to Th. Thomas. Oxford Ho., 26 Sept. 1814.
84. P.A.C. Q series, vol. 325–2, pp. 354–5. Matland (Lieut.-Gov.) to the Earl of Bathurst.
85. P.A.C. Q series.
86. C. Robertson's journal (H.B.C.), I, pp. 52–3.
87. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 550.
88. Selk. P., p. 477 *et seq.* W. Auld. York Fy, 12 Sept. 1812, C. Robertson's journal, II, pp. 182–4, A. G. Morice, "A Canadian Pioneer: Spanish John" (C.H.R., Sept. 1929, pp. 212–13), *ibid.*, "Sidelights on the Careers of Miles Macdonell and His Brothers" (*ibid.*, Dec. 1929, pp. 308–32).
89. Selk. P., p. 758 *et seq.*; A. Edwards to W. Auld. York, to July 1813.
90. Selk. P., p. 13.457. J. White (?), Outlet of Lake Winnipeg, 17 Aug. 1815, *ibid.*, p. 13.425 *et seq.* J. White (?).
91. Selk. P., pp. 46–7, 56, M. Macdonell to Selkirk. York Fy, 1 Oct. 1811.
92. *Ibid.*, pp. 45–51, B 239 b/82, p. 15. M. Macdonell. Nelson encampment, Jan. 1812, B 239 b/84, p. 36 v. M. Macdonell to Cook. Nelson encampment, 10 Apr. 1812.
93. Selk. P., pp. 49–51, *loc. cit.*
94. A 11/76, p. 25. W. Auld. York Fy, 26 Sept. 1811.
95. A 11/76, p. 30; *ibid.*
96. B 239 b/82, p. 12. W. H. Cook to Macdonell. York Fy, 2 Jan. 1812, B 239 b/82; p. 15. M. Macdonell. Nelson encampment, Jan. 1812.
97. B 239 a/117, p. 13v (Sept. 1811).
98. B 239 b/81, p. 8. W. H. Cook to Sinclair (Oxford Ho.), 8 June 1811.
99. A 11/76, p. 23. W. Auld. York Fy, 26 Sept. 1811.
100. *Ibid.*
101. B 239 b/82, p. 25. W. Cook to Mr Snoddie (Split Lake), 14 Mar. 1812, B 239 b/82, p. 32 v. W. Cook. York Fy, 22 Apr. 1812, B 239 a/118, p. 17 (June 1812); A 11/76, p. 33 b. W. Auld. York Fy, 4 Oct. 1811.
102. B 239 b/82, pp. 4–8. Correspondence, M. Macdonell–W. Cook. Nov.–Dec. 1811.

- 103 B 239 b/82, p. 24 W. Cook to Mr Snoddie (Split Lake) York Fy, 14 Mar 1812
- 104 Selk P., p. 413, M. Macdonell. York Fy, 4 July 1812.
- 105 b/82, p. 8. W. Cook to Macdonell. York Fy, 18 Dec. 1811.
106. B 3 b/49 a, p. 14 16. W. Auld to Th. Thomas York Fy, 22 Feb 1813
107. A 11/76, p. 33 b. W. Auld. York Fy, 4 Oct. 1811.
- 108 B 239 b/82, p. 20. Macdonell. Nelson encampment, 15 Feb 1812.
- 109 Selk P., p. 703 Selkirk to Macdonell 16 June 1813, *ibid*, p. 839 W Auld York Fy, 26 Sept. 1813.
110. A 11/76, p. 33 b. W. Auld. York Fy, 4 Oct. 1811.
- 111 B 239 b/82, p. 25 *et seq* Macdonell to Cook. Nelson encampment, 5 Jan 1812
- 112 B 239 b/83, p. 10 W. Auld to M. Macdonell York Fy, Jan 1813.
113. Selk. P., p. 16.645. M. Macdonell's journal, 1811-12.
114. B 239 b/82, p. 24. W Cook to Mr Snoddie (Split Lake) York Fy, 14 Mar 1812.
- 115 C. Robertson's journal (H.B.C^o), II, pp. 182, 184.
116. *Ibid*, II, p. 182
- 117 Selk P., pp 875-7 W Auld to W Hillier York Fy, 25 Sept 1813; B 239 b/84, p. 50 v. W. Auld. Churchill Fy, 5 Nov 1813; B 3 b/48 a, p. 43. W Auld to Th. Thomas. York Fy, 10 June 1812. "Infamous crews of wretches collected and disgorged on those now fully half damned territories, and no doubt called into action by the open dissension of the two leaders "
118. C. Robertson's journal (H.B.C^o), II, pp. 182-4.
119. *Ibid*, II, p. 260.
- 120 See below, p. 535 *et seq*.
121. Selk. P., p. 16.754. M. Macdonell's journal, 1812-13
- 122 B 22 a/18, p. 11 (1810-11).
123. B 239 b/83, p. 3 v M. Macdonell to W. Auld Pembina, 5 Dec 1812.
- 124 *Ibid*
125. H. G. Gunn, "The Macleod Manuscript" (*Col. St. Hist. Soc. N. Dak.*, II, Part 1, p. 119).
126. C. Robertson's journal (H.B.C^o), II, pp. 182-4.
127. B 239 b/83, p. 13 W Auld to M. Macdonell York Fy, Jan 1813;
128. *Ibid*
- 129 *Ibid*, pp. 7, 20. H. Heney to W. Auld Pembina, 4 Dec. 1812; M. Macdonell to W. Auld. Red River, 1 June 1813.
- 130 B 239 b/83, p. 8. W Auld to H. Heney York Fy, Jan. 1813; *ibid*, p. 13. W. Auld to M. Macdonell. York Fy, Jan. 1813
- 131 B 239 b/83, p. 4 Macdonell to W Auld Pembina, 5 Dec 1812; *ibid*, p. 19. Macdonell to W. Auld. Red River, 1 June 1813.
132. B 239 b/83, p. 9. W Auld to Macdonell. York Fy, Jan 1813; B 239 b/83, p. 15 v W. Auld to W Hillier. York Fy, 27 Jan 1813 *Ibid*, p. 19 Macdonell to W. Auld. Red River, 1 June 1813; Selk P., p. 16.765. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1812-13
- 133 B 239 b/83, p. 19. Macdonell to W. Auld. Red River, 1 June 1813. "I have no cause to rejoice at your congratulation on the personal civilities received from some of the North West C^o's traders. Through all their feigned attention I could perceive myself viewed with a jealous eye. . . . But I thought better policy to conciliate matters until [I was] strong enough to support a contention. . . . "
134. B 239 b/83, p. 15 v W. Auld to W. Hillier. York, 27 Jan. 1813. "I must fear [Captain Macdonell] who appears highly charmed with the Canadians

- is beholden to them for some unfair intervention to Mr Heney's disadvantage as it is well known that he is obnoxious to them."
- 135 B 239 b/83, p. 15 v, *loc cit*, B 239 b/83, p. 20 Macdonell to W. Auld Red River, 1 June 1813., Selk. P., p. 16 765 M. Macdonell's journal, 1812-13, *ibid*, p. 779. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 17 July 1813, *Ibid*, p. 830 W. Hillier to Selkirk. York Fy, 2 Sept. 1813.
 - 136 C. Robertson's journal (H.B.C.), II, pp. 182-4; Selk. P., p. 1174 A. Macdonald to Selkirk. Red River, 24 July 1814.
 - 137 B 239 b/83, p. 20. W. Auld to W. Hillier York Fy, 27 Jan. 1813.
 - 138 Selk. P., p. 1432 Th. Thomas to London. York Fy, 15 Sept. 1815

Chapter Ten: The Transformation of the Métis

1. E 8/6, p. 214 *et seq* Narrative of Frederick Damien Huerter, late acting sergeant major and clerk in the regiment of de Meuron.
2. C. Robertson's journal, IV, p. 427 J. Macdonald to J. McLaughlan, Swan River, 15 Feb. 1816
3. C. Robertson's journal, IV, p. 427
4. Selk. P., pp. 10.237-8.
5. Selk. P., p. 1768. M. Macdonell (to Selkirk?). Récit des événements de sept. 1 1814. à juin 1815; B 60 c/1. Edmonton Report, 1815.
6. Selk. P., p. 1200 M. Macdonell to Selkirk Red River, 25 July 1814.
7. Coll. Masson, McGill Univ. "Some Account of the Mississouri Indians, 1804-7," by Charles Mackenzie.
8. Selk. P., p. 3330. Narrative of F. D. Huerter. Fort Douglas, 7 Apr. 1817
9. B 22 a/18, p. 4 (1810-11).
10. Selk. P., p. 1200, M. Macdonell to Selkirk Red River, 25 July 1814
11. B 60 a/7, pp. 4-5 (Oct. 1807)
12. B 121 a/3, pp. 43-4 (Apr. 1789); B 121 a/5, p. 37 (Apr. 1790).
13. B 239 b/63, p. 25. J. Bird, Buckingham Ho., 30 Aug. 1799.
14. B 60 a/5, p. 16 (31 Aug. 1799).
15. B 60 a/8, p. 11 (29 Mar. 1809).
16. B 104 a/1, p. 13 (26 Sept. 1799)
17. B 104 a/1, p. 30 (Jan. 1800).
18. B 60 a/3, p. 21, 39 v (1798).
19. B 60 a/4, pp. 19 v-20 (Dec. 1798-Jan. 1799)
20. B 60 a/7, p. 4 (Oct. 1807).
21. B 3/b, 45, p. 10, Th. Miller, Healey Ho., 16 Jan. 1809.
23. B 239 b/78, pp. 76-7. London to York, 20 May 1809.
24. B 239 b/79, p. 61. J. McNab. York Fy, 14 Sept. 1809.
25. B 60 a/9, p. 5 (Jan. 1811), p. 10 v-13 (Apr. 1811), p. 16 v; B 160 a/1 (1808-9); B 160 a/4 (1812), B 121 a/3, pp. 43-4 (Apr. 1789)
26. B 60 a/10, p. 8 (6 Jan. 1812), p. 12 v, B 60 a/121, p. 6 (Feb. 1813).
27. B 60 a/13, p. 24v (Mar. 1815), pp. 33-4 (Apr. 1815)
28. B 22 a/20, p. 35 (May 1816).
29. Selk. P., pp. 723-6. Selkirk to M. Macdonell, 20 June 1812.
30. *Ibid*.
31. *Ibid*, p. 1200 M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 2 July 1814
32. E 8/5, p. 51 Déposition de John Davis (de la paroisse de Sorel)
33. B 104 a/2, pp. 40-1 J. L. Lewes to Gov. Wilhams Red Deer's Lake, 12 Jan. 1820.
34. Selk. P., p. 15.919 Déposition de Michel Bourassa (1817); *ibid*, p. 16.365 Déposition de Joseph Peltier, dit Assiniboine.
35. Selk. P., p. 765. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 17 July 1813; *Ibid*, p.

- 16 742-4 Journal of Miles Macdonell, 1812-13, Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp 544-5.
36. Selk. P., p. 16.742-4, *loc. cit*
37. Selk. P., p. 16.738. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1812-13.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 16.751-2. *Ibid.*; *Ibid.*, 16.797. *Ibid.*, *ibid.*, p. 16.800. *Ibid.*
- 39 B 239 b/83, p 3 v. Macdonell to W. Auld Pembina, 5 Dec 1812
40. Selk. P., pp. 49-50 M. Macdonell to Selkirk York Fy, 1 Oct 1811 "I am informed that many of the Company's servants and others from the North-West Company who have families from Indian women will be inclined to join us as soon as they see a settlement begun on a permanent footing." Selk. P., p. 12.316 Narrative of John Pritchard.
41. B 2 a/19, p. 13 (21 Oct. 1814).
42. Selk. P., p. 443. M. Macdonell. Playgreen Lake, 11 Aug. 1812.
43. Selk. P., p. 16.747. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1812-13.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 16.890. *Ibid.*, Mar. 1814
45. Selk. P., p. 618. (II). A. McLean to M. Macdonell. Fort Daer, 11 May 1813
46. *Ibid.*, p. 16.755 Journal of M. Macdonell, 1812-13
47. *Ibid.*, p. 16.755. *Ibid.*
48. *Ibid.*, p. 16.754. *Ibid.*
49. p. 16.755, 16 784 *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*, p. 16.784. *Ibid.*
51. *Ibid.*, p. 16.786, 16 794. *Ibid.*
52. *Ibid.*, p. 766, 793. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 17 July 1813; Selk. P., p. 16 755 Journal of M. Macdonell, 1812-13, B 160 a/1 (1808-9), B 160 a/4 (1812)
53. Selk. P., p. 1220 Macdonell to Selkirk. York Fy, 9 Sept. 1814.
54. *Ibid.*, pp. 16 742, 16 748, 16.773-4. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1812-13. *Ibid.*, p. 766. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 17 July 1813. *Ibid.*, p. 443. Macdonell, Playgreen Lake, 11 Aug. 1812.
55. Selk. P., pp. 16 755, 16.760-3, 16 866 Journal of Macdonell, 1812-13.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 168 *et seq.*, Selkirk's instructions to M. Macdonell, 1811.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 16.755-8 Journal of M. Macdonell, 1812-13.
58. *Ibid.*, pp. 16 754, 16 757-8, 16.803-4 Journal of M. Macdonell, 1812-13
59. *Ibid.*, pp. 16.831, 16.838. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*, p. 999, M. Macdonell to W. Auld, B 239 b/83, p. 20, Macdonell to W. Auld. Red River, 1 June 1813.
61. E 8/6, p. 96. C. Robertson to Selkirk.
62. Selk. P., p. 443. M. Macdonell. Playgreen Lake, 11 Aug. 1812. *Ibid.*, p. 784 Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 17 July 1813 *Ibid.*, pp. 16.674, 16.73, 16.865 Journal of M. Macdonell, 1811-13
63. Selk. P., p. 16.869. Journal of Macdonell, 1813.
64. *Ibid.*
65. *Ibid.*, p. 16.892. *Ibid.*, 1814.
66. *Ibid.*, pp. 791-2 Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 17 July 1813
67. Selk. P., p. 585 (II) Deposition of Hector Macdonald. Fort Daer, 24 Mar 1813; *ibid.*, p. 600 (II) Depositions of Donald MacMillan and Donald McLean, *ibid.*, p. 16 807-8. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1813; B 239 b/83, p. 19 Macdonell to Auld. Red River, 1 June 1813.
68. Selk. P., p. 600 (II), *loc. cit.*
69. *Ibid.*
70. *Ibid.*, pp. 16.808, 16.828. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1813.
71. *Ibid.*, Selk. P., p. 579. W. Hillier to M. Macdonell. Fort Skene, 13 Feb. 1813, *ibid.*, p. 581. McLeod to W. Hillier. Turtle River, 17 Feb. 1813;

- H. G. Gunn, *The MacLeod Manuscript* (Col St Hist Soc N Dak, II, Part I, pp. 117-18).
72. Selk. P., pp. 579, 581, *loc. cit.*
 73. *Ibid.*, p. 16.175. Déposition of François Eno, dit Delorme, 1817.
 74. Selk. P., p. 4351. Deposition of Miles Macdonell. Montreal, 16 Jan 1818
 75. Selk. P., Dossier 46. Deposition of Hugh McLean, 1817.
 76. *Ibid.*, p. 1184. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 25 July 1814.
 77. *Ibid.*, p. 16.828. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1813
 78. B 2 a/19, pp. 2, 4 (July-Aug. 1814)
 79. B 239 a/83, p. 15 v. W. Auld to W. Hillier. York Fy, 27 Jan 1813; B 239 a/83, p. 19. M. Macdonell to W. Auld. Red River, 1 June 1813, Selk. P., pp. 792-3. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 17 July 1813.
 80. B 160 a/4 (1812).
 81. Selk. P., p. 16.174-5. Deposition of François Eno, dit Delorme, 1817
 82. Selk. P., p. 793. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 17 July 1813, B 239 b/85, p. 4. M. Macdonell to Th. Thomas. Oxford Ho., 26 Sept 1814
 83. Selk. P., pp. 916-17. Proclamation of M. Macdonell, 8 Jan. 1814.
 84. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp. 560-1.
 85. *Ibid.*
 86. Selk. P., pp. 923-4. J. Wills to M. Macdonell. Rivière a la Souris, 25 Jan 1814.
 87. Selk. P., *ibid.*
 88. *Ibid.*, 17.081. Macdonell to Selkirk. Red River, 25 July 1814
 89. *Ibid.*, 1184. Macdonell to Selkirk. R.R.S., 25 July 1814.
 90. *Ibid.*, p. 956. Macdonell to W. Auld. Fort Daer, 4 Feb. 1814.
 90. *Ibid.*, Selk. P., pp. 929-31. Correspondence, Macdonell-J. Wills, May 1814
 91. *Ibid.*, pp. 926, 928, 932. Correspondence, M. Macdonell-J. Wills, May 1814; Morton, *op cit.*, p. 563; Martin, *Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada*, pp. 71-2
 93. Selk. P., p. 17.081. 5. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. R.R.S., 25 July 1814.
 94. *Ibid.*, p. 937. M. Macdonell to J. Wills. R.R.S., 28 May 1814.
 95. *Ibid.*, pp. 12.700-12.711. Selkirk's manuscript relating to the R.R.S.
 96. *Ibid.*, p. 938. M. Macdonell to the proprietors of the N.W.C^o. R.R.S., 15 June 1814; *ibid.*, pp. 939-40; D. Cameron, 15 June 1814, Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 563-4.
 97. Selk. P., pp. 1191-2. Macdonell to Selkirk. R.R.S., 25 July 1814
 98. Selk. P., p. 947. Macdonell. R.R.S., 18 June 1814; *ibid.*, p. 1192. Macdonell to Selkirk. R.R.S., 25 July 1814; *ibid.*, p. 16.900. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1814.
 99. *Ibid.*, p. 16.911. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1814.
 100. E 8/6, p. 127. John Pritchard's narrative.
 101. Selk. P., p. 16.912. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1814.
 102. B 239 b/85, p. 32 v. M. Macdonell to Th. Thomas. R.R.S., 23 Dec 1813
 103. E 8/6, p. 127. J. Pritchard's narrative.
 104. Selk. P., p. 1765. M. Macdonell to Selkirk.
 105. B 22 a/19, p. 51 (Sept. 1814).
 106. C. Robertson's journal (H.B.C^o) I, pp. 52-3. Montreal, 9 Oct 1814.
 107. *Ibid.*
 108. Morton, *op cit.*, p. 509.
 109. Selk. P., pp. 13.425-13.430. J. White (?). R.R.S.
 110. *Ibid.*, *ibid.*
 111. J. Halkett, *Statement Respecting the Earl of Selkirk's Settlement of Kildonan*. . . London, 1817, pp. 11-12; E 8/6, p. 127, *loc. cit.*

112. B 22 a/19, p. 1 *et seq.* (1814–15).
113. Selk. P., p. 17.093. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. York, 9 Sept. 1814.
114. *Ibid.*, p. 1767 (M. Macdonell).
115. *Ibid.*, pp. 13–425–13.430.
116. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 200.
117. B 22 a/19, p. 1 v. "This proclamation was quite agreeable to the ideas of the Canadian traders who assisted in drawing it up."
118. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 566.
119. B 22 a/19, p. 1 v.
120. Selk. P., p. 1767 M. Macdonell ("A Sketch of the Conduct of the North-West Co").
121. C. Robertson's journal, II, pp. 218–19. "Here is a proclamation forbidding you on pain of death to kill food for your children."
122. *Ibid.*, II, p. 200.
123. B 22 a/19, p. 4 (Sept. 1814).
124. *Ibid.*
125. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 558–9, 562.
126. *Ibid.*, p. 564.
127. Selk. P., p. 1809 A. Colville to London. Langly farm, 5 Dec. 1815, E 8/5, p. 51. Deposition of J. Davis, 1817, J. Halkett, "Statement respecting the settlement of Kildonan," p. 15.
128. Selk. P., p. 1088 (Ordre de dissolution, prononcé par le Gouverneur Général du Canada. Quebec, 12 Mar. 1813).
129. E 8/5, p. 51. Deposition of J. Davis, 1817, B 22 a/19, p. 4 (Sept. 1814).
130. E 8/5, p. 51, *loc. cit.*
131. E 8/5, pp. 126–7. Deposition of Hector McEachern. Montreal, 5 Dec. 1815.
132. Selk. P., p. 1765 M. Macdonell ("A Sketch of the Conduct of the North-West Company").
133. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 569.
134. B 22 a/19, p. 5 (Sept. 1814).
135. E 8/5, p. 51. Deposition of J. Davis, 1817.
136. Selk. P., p. 18.567. R. Semple to Selkirk, York Fy, 11 Sept. 1815.
137. B 239 b/85, p. 4 M. Macdonell to Th. Thomas. Oxford Ho., 26 Sept. 1814; Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 566.
138. *Ibid.*, Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North West Co.*, p. 291.
139. Selk. P., p. 1469. M. Macdonell (?), Jan. 1815.
140. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 566.
141. E 8/6, p. 127. Narrative of J. Pritchard.
142. C. Robertson's journal. III, p. 334.
143. B 22 a/19, p. 11 v (Oct. 1814).
144. B 239 b/85, p. 4 M. Macdonell to Th. Thomas. Oxford Ho., 26 Sept. 1814.
145. B 22 a/19, p. 13 (21 Oct. 1814); Selk. P., p. 1250 (21 Oct. 1814).
146. Selk. P., pp. 20.238–9. J. White to Selkirk. Winnipeg settlement, 7 Aug. 1815.
147. *Ibid.*
148. B 22 a/19, p. 12 v (18 Oct. 1814).
149. Selk. P., pp. 125–8. Selkirk to M. Macdonell, 23 Dec. 1811, *ibid.*, pp. 723–6. *Ibid.*, 20 June 1812.
150. *Ibid.*, pp. 125–8. M. Macdonell to Selkirk, York Fy, 1 Oct. 1811.
151. *Ibid.*, pp. 49–50. *Ibid.*
152. *Ibid.*, p. 792. Macdonell to Selkirk. R.R.S., 17 July 1813.
153. *Ibid.*, pp. 960–4. J. Bird to M. Macdonell. Saskatchewan Fy, 8 Feb. 1814.

- 154 B 60 a/15, p. 45v (8 June 1816). "[We hear of the destruction of the colony] where I and many other parents in this country had hoped to find an asylum where our wretched offspring would be instructed in the knowledge and duties of civilized life."
155. Selk. P., p. 1174. A. Macdonald to Selkirk Red River, 24 July 1814.
156. *Ibid.*, pp. 723-6; Selkirk to Macdonell, 20 June 1812.
157. Cf. See p. 360, Note 88.
158. Selk. P., p. 369. M. Macdonell to Selkirk, 29 May 1812.
- 159 *Ibid.*, p. 1242. W. H. Cook to Selkirk York Fy, 24 Sept 1814
- 160 *Ibid.*, p. 4323 Donald McPherson. Pembina, 2 Jan 1818
161. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 182.
- 162 Selk. P., p. 1042. Selkirk's instructions to Macdonell, 12 Apr 1814
163. Selk. P., p. 17.374-5. C. Robertson, Aug 1815
- 164 *Ibid.*, p. 16.989-93. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815; *ibid.*, pp. 1202-3 M. Macdonell to Selkirk, R.R.S., 25 July 1814.
165. *Ibid.*, Selk. P., p. 441. W. Auld to Macdonell, York Fy, 8 July 1812
- 166 B 239 b/83, p. 10. W. Auld to Macdonell York Fy, Jan 1813
167. C. Robertson's journal, II, pp. 197-8.
168. *Ibid.*, II, p. 197-8.
169. Selk. P., p. 17.450-1. C. Robertson, 1815.
170. Robertson's journal, IV, pp. 520-1.
171. E 8/5, p. 51. Deposition of J. Davis, 1817.
172. B 22 a/19, p. 2, 8v (1814)
173. B 22 a/19, p. 5 (Sept. 1814)
174. *Ibid.*
175. *Ibid.*, p. 5.6.9 v, 13 (Sept.-Oct. 1814).
176. B 22 a/19, p. 7 (Sept. 1814).
177. *Ibid.*
178. Selk. P., p. 15.849. Deposition of Charles Beutineau, 1817
179. B 22 a/19, pp. 5-6. (Sept. 1814).
180. Selk. P., p. 1200. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. R.R.S., 25 July 1814.
181. *Ibid.*, *ibid.*, p. 1199. *Ibid.*
182. *Ibid.*, p. 1200. *Ibid.*
183. Selk. P., pp. 1187, 1200. *Ibid.*
184. *Ibid.*, p. 1200. *Ibid.*
185. *Ibid.*, 1199 *Ibid.*, B 239 b/85, p. 4 M. Macdonell to Th. Thomas. Oxford Ho., 26 Sept. 1814
186. B 239 b/85, p. 4, *ibid.*
187. Selk. P., p. 932.
188. B 22 a/19, p. 5 (Sept. 1814).
189. Selk. P., p. 12.316. Narrative of John Pritchard.
190. B 22 a/19, p. 7 (Sept. 1814.)
191. B 22 a/19, p. 12v (18 Oct. 1814).
192. Selk. P., p. 16.953. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
193. *Ibid.*; *ibid.*, p. 16.886. *Ibid.*, 1813
194. Selk. P., p. 16.953. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
195. B 22 a/19, p. 12v (18 Oct. 1814).
196. Selk. P., p. 1768. (M. Macdonell).
197. *Ibid.*, p. 1184. M. Macdonell to Selkirk R.R.S., 25 July 1814.
198. *Ibid.*, pp. 16.807-8. Journal of Macdonell, 1813.
199. *Ibid.*, p. 16.894. *Ibid.*, 1814.
200. B 22 a/19, p. 12v (18 Oct. 1814).
- 201 E 8/5, p. 126-7 Deposition of Hector McEachern. Montreal, 1815
202. Selk. P., p. 1866. D. Cameron to J. Grant. Forks Red River, 22 Mar 1815

Chapter Eleven: The Attack on the Settlement of Assiniboia

- 1 B 239 b/85, p. 28 J. Sutherland Jack River, 28 Feb. 1815, E 8/5, p. 122. Deposition of G. Sutherland (?).
- 2 E 8/5, p. 118 *et seq.*, Deposition of G. Sutherland (former settler at Red River), Aug. 1815.
- 3 Selk. P., p. 16.947. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
- 4 B 22 a/19, p. 15v (May 1815). Selk. P., p. 17.403-4. C. Robertson, 1 July 1814.
- 5 B 22 a/19, pp. 14 (May 1815); Selk. P., p. 1773-4 (M. Macdonell); *ibid.*, pp. 16.979-82. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 1774 (M. Macdonell).
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 1773 (M. Macdonell).
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 1701 M. Macdonell to Selkirk Montreal, 19 Sept. 1815.
- 9 Selk. P., pp. 17.018-19. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
- 10 B 22 a/19, p. 17 (May 1815).
- 11 Selk. P., pp. 1769-70. (M. Macdonell).
- 12 *Ibid.*, pp. 16.955-56. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
- 13 C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 196.
- 14 B 60 a/13, p. 1 v. (Sept. 17-18 1814).
- 15 Selk. P., p. 17.440. C. Robertson, Nov. 1815 (?).
- 16 *Ibid.*, pp. 16.947, 17.012. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
B 2 a/19, p. 22, 25 (June 1815).
- 17 E 8/5, p. 192. Deposition of J. McLeod (district master in the service of the H B C^o).
- 18 Selk. P., p. 2973 S. La Mar to P. Chrisologue Pambrun. Red River, 6 Dec. 1816.
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 E 8/6, p. 139. Narrative of J. Pritchard.
- 21 A. Amos, *Report of Trials in the Courts of Canada Relative to the Destruction of the Earl of Selkirk's Settlement on the Red River* London, 1820, p. 144.
- 22 E 8/6, p. 95 (C. Robertson to Selkirk); Selk. P., p. 13.377 (Interrogation of W. Shaw by M. Macdonell).
- 23 Selk. P., pp. 1946-7. J. Sutherland "A Narrative of Outrages Committed . . . by the NWC^o at Qu'Appelle House during the Winter 1815-16"; M. McLeod, "Cuthbert Grant of Grantown" (C H R. Mar. 1940, p. 26 *et seq.*; M. Complin, "The Warden of the Plains" (Can. G. J., Aug. 1934); Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North-West C^o*, p. 449.
- 24 McLeod, *op. cit.*, p. 30; B 22 a/20, p. 23 (Mar. 1816).
- 25 Selk. P., p. 8895 C. Grant S. Lamar. Fort John, 2 Dec. 1815.
- 26 B 22 a/20, p. 23 (Mar. 1816).
- 27 E 8/6, p. 95 (C. Robertson to Selkirk); Selk. P., p. 1947. J. Sutherland, "A Narrative of Outrages Committed . . .". B 60 e/2, p. 1 *et seq.*, Edmonton Report, 1816.
- 28 B 22 a/19, p. 25 (19 June 1815); Selk. P., p. 4634 Deposition of Angus Shaw, 1817.
- 29 E 8/5, p. 41 *et seq.* Deposition of J. Bird, 1817.
- 30 B 22 a/19, pp. 32-3 (June 1815).
- 31 Selk. P., p. 17.0002. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1814-15; A. G. Morice, *Dictionnaire historique des Canadiens et des métiers français de l'Ouest* Quebec, Montreal, 1908, p. 152.
- 32 Wallace, *Documents relating to the North-West C^o*, p. 449.
- 33 Selk. P., p. 1882 A. Macdonell to D. D. Cameron Fort John, 17 Apr. 1815.

- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 16 040. Deposition of C. Robertson. London.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 1876. G. Grant to A. Fraser, 13 Mar. 1816.
36. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 205
- 37 Selk. P., p. 4115. A petition of the settlers to the Prince of Wales; *ibid.*, p. 13.387
- 38 *Ibid.*, p. 1622 S. M'Gillivray, 15 Aug. 1815: "[The half-breed Indians are] a daring and now numerous race sprung from the intercourse of the Canadian voyageurs with the Indian women and who consider themselves the possessors of the country and Lords of the soil." Selk. P., p. 1947. J. Sutherland, "A Narrative of Outrages Committed . . ."; *ibid.*, p. 8926-7. William M'Gillivray Fort William, 16 Aug. 1816; C. Robertson's journal, II, pp. 161, 193 "It appears to me that the weakness of the gentlemen in charge of the colony has given such a degree of consequence to . . . the half-breeds that it will require some time to bring them to their proper station."
39. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 193.
- 40 Selk. P., pp. 8926-7. W. M'Gillivray. Fort William, 16 Aug. 1816.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 8937-8. Declaration of François Delorme.
42. E 8/5, p. 52. *Ibid.*
- 43 E 8/16, p. 129v: narrative of J. Pritchard; B 22 a/19, ppp. 32-3 (June 1815)
44. B 22 a/19, pp. 32-3 (June 1815).
45. Selk. P., p. 1553. J. Pritchard to Selkirk, 20 June 1815.
46. E 8/5, p. 192 Deposition of J. McLeod, district master, 1815.
47. Selk. P., pp. 8926-7. W. M'Gillivray Fort William, 16 Aug. 1816
48. B 22 a/19, pp. 32-3 (June 1815).
49. Selk. P., pp. 12.322-3. Narrative of J. Pritchard.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 4634. Deposition of Angus Shaw.
- Ibid.*, pp. 8926-7 W. M'Gillivray's statement. Fort William, 16 Aug. 1816.
51. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 208.
52. E 8/5, p. 51. Declaration of J. Davis.
53. Selk. P., p. 16.379. Deposition of Joseph Peltier (1817).
- 54 E 8/5, p. 213 Deposition of Moustouche, called Botino, and of Joseph Peltier, July 1817.
55. *Ibid.*, E 8/6, p. 87. Deposition of Joseph Boudre, alias Musqua. Edmonton, 2 Jan. 1816.
56. E 8/6, p. 228. "Narrative of Frederick Damien Huerter . . ."
57. E 8/5, p. 192. Deposition of J. McLeod, district master, 1815.
58. B 22 a/19, pp. 18-18v (June 1815).
59. B 22 a/20, p. 37v (June 1816).
60. E 8/6, p. 87. Deposition of Joseph Boudre, 1816.
61. B 22 a/20, p. 1 (1815-16).
62. C. Robertson's journal (H.B.C.), IV, p. 440. C. Grant to A. Fraser, 13 Mar. 1816: "I sent words to the half-breeds that they should all be here by the 1st of May. . . . I beg of you and Bostonois . . . to keep the half-breeds below *united if possible*, as for those here I am sure of them, excepting A. Hoole who I gave a sitdown to this morning and broke him."
- 63 B 22 a/19, p. 16 (29 May 1815), E 8/6, p. 87. Deposition of Joseph Boudre. 1816.
- 64 Selk. P., p. 2019 Deposition of John Cooper. York, Feb. 1816.
65. E 8/5, p. 192 Deposition of J. McLeod Turtle River, 18 Feb. 1815
- 66 Selk. P., pp. 8682-3. Narrative of John Siveright, 16 Mar. 1815; Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 569.
67. Selk. P., p. 16.961. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
68. Selk. P., p. 17.117 M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Winnipeg River, 25 June 1815.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 16.973. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 16.977. *Ibid.*
71. B 22 a/19, p. 15 v, 17 (May 1815)
72. B 22 a/19, p. 15v (25 May 1815).
73. Selk. P., p. 16.979.982. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
74. B 22 a/19, p. 17 v, 18v (June 1815); Selk. P., p. 12.321 Narrative of J. Pritchard; H. G. Gunn "The Macleod Manuscript" (*Col. St. Hist. Soc. N. Dak.*, II, Part I, p. 126).
75. B 22 a/19, p. 17v (19 June 1815).
76. B 22 a/19, p. 14 (May 1815), Selk. P., p. 17.010, 17.032 Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
77. B 22 a/19, pp. 18, 21 (June 1815).
78. B 22 a/19, pp. 23 v-24 (15-17 June 1815).
79. B 22 a/19, p. 24 (June 1815); Selk. P., pp. 1551-2. J. Pritchard to Selkirk, 20 June 1815.
80. B 22 a/19, p. 24 (June 1815).
81. B 22 a/19, p. 19v (11 June 1815); Selk. P., p. 18.477 Journal of Peter Fidler; *ibid.*, pp. 17.027-8. Journal of M. Macdonell, 10 June 1815
82. B 22 a/19, p. 19-19v (June 1815), Selk. P., pp. 18.234-9 Journal of Archibald Macdonald, June 1815; *ibid.*, pp. 17.027-8 Journal of M. Macdonell, 10 June 1815, E 8/6, p. 87. Deposition of Joseph Boudre
83. Selk. P., p. 18.477. Journal of Peter Fidler.
84. B 22 a/19, p. 22 (14 June 1815).
85. B 22 a/19, p. 20 (1815.)
86. Selk. P., p. 17.015. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
87. B 22 a/19, pp. 17-17 v, 20, 21 (May-June 1815).
88. B 22 a/19, p. 24 (1815); E 8/6, p. 87. Deposition of Joseph Boudre
89. Selk. P., p. 17.032. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815
90. B 22 a/19, p. 24 (17 June 1815); E 8/6, p. 87. Deposition of Joseph Boudre.
91. *Ibid.*
92. B 22 a/19, p. 25 (19 June 1815).
93. Selk. P., p. 17.012. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
94. Selk. P., pp. 12.322-3, Narrative of J. Pritchard.
95. *Ibid.*, p. 1551-2. J. Pritchard to Lord Selkirk, 20 June 1815
96. E 8/6, p. 87. Deposition of Joseph Boudre.
97. Ross, *The Red River Settlement Its rise, Progress and Present State*, p. 23
98. Selk. P., p. 13.425. J. White to Selkirk (?).
99. *Ibid.*, p. 1704 M. Macdonell to Selkirk, Montreal, 19 Sept. 1815, *ibid.*, pp. 17.027-8. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
100. Selk. P., p. 17.035. Journal of M. Macdonell, 16 June 1815, *ibid.*, p. 1535. J. Sutherland to Duncan Cameron. R.R.S. 12 June 1815, B 22 a/19, p. 21, 22 (12-14 June 1815).
101. B 22 a/19, p. 25 (19 June 1815).
102. Selk. P., pp. 18.484-5. Journal of P. Fidler.
103. B 22 a/19, p. 25 (19 June 1815).
104. *Ibid.*, (10-4 June 1815).
105. *Ibid.*
106. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-8 (23-4 June 1815) Selk. P., p. 18.367 Journal of P. Fidler
107. E 8/6, p. 87. Deposition of Joseph Boudre.
108. B 22 a/19 pp. 27-8 (June 23-4 1815).
109. B 22 a/19 pp. 27-8, 32-3 (June 23-7 1815).
110. B 22 a/19, p. 29 (25 June 1815), E 8/6, p. 87. Deposition of Joseph Boudre.
111. B 22 a/19, pp. 29-31.
112. E 8/6, p. 87. Deposition of Joseph Boudre.

113. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 146 (14 July 1815).
114. B 22 a/19, p. 31v (June 1815). E 8/6, p. 87, *loc. cit*
115. Selk. P., p. 9160. S. M'Gillivray to the Earl of Bathurst. Montreal, 19 June 1815.
116. B 22 a/19, p. 14 (May 1815); Selk. P., p. 1563. M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Forks R.R., 20 June 1815.
Ibid., pp. 17.004–8. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815
117. B 22 a/19, p. 19 (10 June 1815).
118. *Ibid.*, p. 18 (June 1815).
119. Selk. P., p. 1866. D. Cameron to J. Grant. Forks R.R., 22 Mar. 1815.
120. *Ibid.*, pp. 17.004–8. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
121. *Ibid.*, p. 17.011. Journal of M. Macdonell, 1815.
122. *Ibid.*, pp. 18.369–70. Journal of Peter Fidler; *ibid.*, p. 1965. J. Sutherland. A narrative of outrages committed against the H.B.C.'s servants: "We [the Indians] should have been miserable had not our Great Father taken pity on his children and sent these our White Brothers to show us the value of our soil and I hope they will teach us to live like them. . . . Gather strength and return as soon as possible."
123. *Ibid.*, p. 18.368. Journal of Peter Fidler.
124. *Ibid.*, p. 16.976. Journal of Miles Macdonell, 1815. *Ibid.*, p. 17.013. *Ibid.*, E 8/5, pp. 126–7. Deposition of Hector McEachern. Montreal, 5 Dec. 1815
125. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 572; Martin, *Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada*, p. 98
126. Cf. above pp. 204–5.
127. B 22 a/20, p. 1 *et seq.* (July–Oct. 1815).
128. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 251 (4 Nov. 1815)
129. Selk. P., pp. 2720–1. R. Semple to Selkirk. R.R.S., 20 Dec. 1815.
130. *Ibid.*
131. *Ibid.*, p. 2512. Narrative of Peter Fidler; *ibid.*, pp. 2597–8. Narrative of J. Pritchard. Fort William, 22 Aug. 1816.
132. *Ibid.*, pp. 1813–14. A. Colville to London. Langly farm (?) 5 Dec. 1815
133. *Ibid.*, p. 2510. Narrative of Peter Fidler; *ibid.*, p. 2721. R. Semple to Selkirk, 20 Dec. 1815.
134. Selk. P., p. 2721. *Ibid.*
135. *Ibid.*, p. 2510. Narrative of P. Fidler.
136. *Ibid.*
137. B 22 a/20, p. 11 (Nov. 1815).
138. Selk. P., p. 2725. R. Semple to Selkirk. 20 Dec. 1815.
139. *Ibid.*
140. A 10/1, p. 218: C. Robertson to A. Colville, New York, 14 Mar. 1815: "An attack properly conducted in the South will enable us to conquer with more ease in the North. This is the period for turning the channel of the Fur Trade from the St Lawrence to the Hudson's Bay. . . ." A 10/1, p. 235: C. Robertson to A. Colville. Michilimackinac, 12 May 1815
141. B 22 a/20, pp. 1–2 (July–Aug. 1815)
142. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
143. See above, pp. 204–5.
144. B 60 a/15, p. 5: R. Logan to J. Bird. Ile à la Crosse, 27 Nov. 1815.
145. B 89 a/2 (3 Oct. 1811).
146. B 60 a/13, pp. 14–15, 26–8 (Feb.–Apr. 1815); B 60 a/15, p. 30 (Mar. 1816).
147. B 60 a/15, p. 19 v: J. Bird to François Decoigne (Slave Lake), Feb. 1816
148. B 60 a/15, pp. 37v–38 (1816).
149. B 60 a/15, p. 5: R. Logan to J. Bird, Ile à la Crosse, 27 Nov. 1815, *ibid.*,

- pp 16 v-19 v: correspondence J. Bird-F. Decoigne (Jan.-Feb. 1816).
150. Selk. P., pp 15 673-82: Depositions of J. B. Amelle, Michel Lajeunesse, François Forcier (Norway Ho., 1818).
 151. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 146.
 154. *Ibid.*, II, p. 161.
 155. *Ibid.*, II, p. 196.
 156. *Ibid.*, B 22 a/20, p. 1 (1815).
 157. B 22 a/20, p. 1; C. Robertson's journal, II, pp. 190-2.
 158. C. Robertson's journal, II, pp. 190-2.
 159. C. Robertson's journal, II, pp. 193, 197-8, 200, 218-19.
 160. *Ibid.*, II, p. 191.
 161. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 196-8, E 8/6, p. 95. A. Macdonell to D. Cameron, 23 Oct. 1815: "Our situation is critical and distressing in the extreme. The young Deschamps have turned out to be what I always expected. They are both under engagements to Mr. Robertson. . . ."
 162. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 220.
 164. E 8/6, p. 235: Narrative of F. D. Huerter.
 165. C. Robertson's journal, II, pp. 216, 231, 244; B 22 a/20, p. 9 (31 Oct. 1815).
 166. Selk. P., pp. 8610-11: A. N. McLeod, Fort William, 2 June 1816; *ibid.*, p. 16.085: Depositions of Baptiste Lagimodière and J. Léger, called Parisien, 1817.
 167. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 207.
 168. *Ibid.*, p. 205.
 169. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 210-11 (Sept.-Oct. 1815), E 8/6, p. 87: Deposition of Joseph Boudre.
 170. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 210.
 171. *Ibid.*, II, p. 215.
 172. E 8/6, p. 95: A. Macdonell to D. Cameron, 23 Oct. 1815.
 173. 174. Selk. P. C. Robertson to J. Pritchard, Fort Douglas, 5 Sept. 1815.
 175. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 208.
 176. E 8/6, p. 94: C. Robertson to Selkirk.
 177. C. Robertson's journal, III, pp. 352-3.
 178. Selk. P. C. Robertson to J. Pritchard, 7 Dec. 1815.
 179. C. Robertson's journal, III, pp. 288-90 (Jan. 1816).
 180. Selk. P., pp. 17.416-17.420: C. Robertson, 13 Oct. 1815.
 181. E 8/5, p. 238: Deposition of J. Pritchard, Montreal, Feb. 1817. This was the case with the Canadian Bellegarde, who, despite his violent hostility of the preceding months, considered afterwards serving as interpreter and guide to John Clarke's expedition (C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 224), or of Bottineau, at first one of the most determined in driving the bison beyond the reach of the immigrants, and then one of the busiest on seeking provisions of meat for the colony (C. Robertson's journal, III, p. 368); it was also the case of Bostonois Pangman himself, whose resentment changed into manifest good will.
 182. Selk. P., p. 12.324: Narrative of J. Pritchard.
 183. E 8/5, p. 238: Deposition of J. Pritchard, Montreal, Feb. 1817.
 184. Selk. P., p. 20.255: J. Pritchard to C. Robertson, Fort Daer, 8 Oct. 1815.
 185. C. Robertson's journal, III, p. 362.
 186. B 22 a/20, pp. 20, 26, 31v (Mar.-May 1816).
 187. B 22 a/20, p. 35 (25 May 1816).
 188. C. Robertson's journal, III, p. 363.
 189. Selk. P., p. 18.585. R. Semple to Selkirk, Red River, 30 Nov. 1815.

- 190 C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 210 (13-14 Sept. 1815); *ibid.*, III, pp. 275-6 (Nov. 1815).
191. E 8/6, p. 94: Robertson to Selkirk.
- 192 *Ibid.*
- 193 Selk. P., pp. 17.402-4: C. Robertson's journal, Sept. 1815.
194. A 10/1, p. 358: R. Semple to London. Red River, 20 Dec. 1815; B 60 c/2, p. 1 *et seq.* J. Bird. Edmonton Report, Sept. 1816, Selk. P., p. 1799; J. Sutherland, "A Narrative of Outrages Committed against the H.B.C.'s Servants at Qu'Appelle House."
195. B 22 a/20, p. 10v (Nov. 1815).
196. C. Robertson's journal, II, pp. 241-2 (15 Oct. 1815).
197. Selk. P., p. 18.585. R. Semple to Selkirk, Red River, 30 Nov. 1815
198. *Ibid.*
199. *Ibid.*, pp. 1946-50: J. Sutherland. A narrative of outrages committed.
200. E 8/6, p. 95: C. Robertson to Selkirk, B 22 a/20, p. 12v (1815).
201. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 205 (4 Sept. 1815).
202. *Ibid.*, III, p. 334 (Mar. 1816).
204. E 8/6, p. 181: Deposition of J. R. Mackay, July 1817.
205. C. Robertson's journal, II, p. 211 (Sept. 1815).
206. E 8/6, p. 97: Private papers of D. Cameron.
207. Selk. P., p. 18.585: R. Semple to Selkirk. Red River, 30 Nov. 1815.
208. A. S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 573, C. Robertson's journal, III, p. 362 (May 1816); A. Amos, *Report on Trials in the Courts of Canada*, p. 234.
209. Selk. P., p. 20.255: J. Pritchard to C. Robertson. Fort Daer, 8 Oct. 1815
210. C. Robertson's journal, III, p. 359 (Apr. 1816). "If we drive the métis and freemen into the arms of the North-West Co., the colony is again at the mercy of our enemies."
211. Selk. P., p. 18.606 (R. Semple).
212. C. Robertson's journal, III, pp. 361-2 (May 1816).
213. *Ibid.*, III, p. 370 (May 1816).
214. *Ibid.*, III, pp. 288-300 (Jan. 1816). "I now apprehend more from our own people than from the North-West Company." Selk. P., p. 13.419; Narrative of J. White.
215. C. Robertson's journal, III, p. 296.
216. *Ibid.*, III, pp. 317, 366-7. E 8/6, p. 95v: Robertson to Selkirk
217. C. Robertson's journal, III, pp. 317, 366-7.
218. *Ibid.*, III, pp. 366-7.
219. *Ibid.*, pp. 340, 355.
220. E 8/6, p. 97v: Robertson to Selkirk.
221. C. Robertson's journal, IV, pp. 393-5.
222. E 8/6, p. 97v: Robertson to Selkirk.
223. E 8/6, p. 97v: Robertson to Selkirk.
224. C. Robertson's journal, III, pp. 294-5.
225. IV, p. 396.
226. *Ibid.*, III, pp. 275-6 (Dec. 1815), 323 (Mar. 1816).
227. E 8/5, p. 238: Deposition of J. Pritchard. Montreal, Feb. 1817
228. C. Robertson's journal, IV, p. 440: C. Grant to A. Fraser. Qu'Appelle, 13 Mar. 1816
229. *Ibid.*, III, pp. 294-5, 308-10.
230. E 8/6, p. 96: C. Robertson to Selkirk.
231. E 8/6, p. 96: Robertson to Selkirk; Selk. P., p. 1950: J. Sutherland, "A Narrative of Outrages committed. . . ."

- 232 E 8/6, p. 96: Private papers of D. Cameron (A. Macdonell to D. Cameron, 1 Dec 1815. "Mr. Fraser will inform you of the intended expedition which the Hudson's Bay Co by no means relishes. . . ."
233. C. Robertson's journal, III, pp. 288-90
234. E 8/6, p. 96: Robertson to Selkirk.
235. B 22 a/20, p. 25 (Mar. 1816).
- 236 C. Robertson's journal, III, p. 214.
237. B 22 a/20, p. 25.
238. E 8/6, p. 96-97: Private papers of D. Cameron.
239. *Ibid.*
- 240 B 22 a/20, pp. 22 v-23 (C. Grant to J. D. Cameron, at Sault Ste Marie. "I am as yet safe and sound, thank God, for I believe it is more than Robertson or any of his sutt dare to offer the least insult to any of the Bois-Brules, altho Robertson made use of some expressions which I hope he shall swallow in the spring. He shall see that it is neither 15, 30 nor 50 of his best horsemen that can make the Bois-Brules bow down to him. The half-breeds of Fort Dauphin, Des Prairies and English river are all to be here in the spring. It is hoped we shall come off with flying colours and never see any of them again in the colonizing way in Red River. In fact the traders . . . shall pack off themselves for having disregarded our orders last spring. According to our arrangements we are to remain at the Forks and pass the summer for fear they should play us the same trick as last summer of coming back, but they shall receive a warm reception."
241. B 22 a/20, p. 31.
242. Selk. P., p. 2161: J. Sutherland. Qu'Appelle, 2 Apr. 1816.
- 243 B 22 a/20, p. 22 v, Mar. 1816.
- 244 C. Robertson's journal, III, pp. 338-9, 23 Mar. 1816; E 8/3, p. 220: Deposition of P. C. Pambrun; Selk. P., p. 2602: Narrative of J. Pritchard, 22 Aug. 1816.
245. C. Robertson's journal, III, pp. 338-9, 23 Mar. 1816.
- 247 *Ibid.*, III, p. 352, Apr. 1816.
- 248 E 8/6, p. 98; Robertson to Selkirk.
- 249 E 8/6, p. 98; B 22 a/20, pp. 27-9 (Apr.-May 1816).
- 250 Selk. P., pp. 2265-7: P. Fidler to R. Semple Brandon Ho., 11 May 1816.
251. B 22 a/20, pp. 30, 37, May-June 1816.
252. Selk. P., p. 2737: A. Macdonell. York, 23 Sept. 1816.
- 253 *Colin Robertson's Correspondence Book*, ed. E. E. Rich. Toronto, 1939, p. 17.
254. B 60 a/15, p. 44. June 1816
255. C. Robertson's journal, III, p. 361, May 1816; Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp. 574-6.
256. Selk. P., p. 13.823: Deposition of Michael Heden.
257. *Ibid.*, *ibid.*, p. 2604: Narrative of J. Pritchard, Fort William, 22 Aug 1816; *ibid.*, p. 17.537: Narrative of C. Robertson, May 1816.
- 258 *Ibid.*, p. 13.823. Deposition of Michael Heden; E 8/5, p. 238: Evidence of J. Pritchard, Montreal, Feb. 1817.
259. B 22 a/20, p. 40: R. Semple to P. Fidler Fort Douglas, 12 Apr 1816
260. Selk. P., p. 2161: J. Sutherland. Qu'Appelle, 2 Apr. 1816.
261. B 22 a/20, pp. 25-6.
262. B 22 a/20, p. 31 v May 1816, Selk. P., p. 1876. C. Grant to A. Fraser, 13 Mar. 1816, *ibid.*, pp. 2098-9; J. Sutherland to R. Semple Qu'Appelle River, 22 Mar. 1816, *ibid.*, pp. 2277-8; P. Fidler to R. Semple Brandon Ho., 21 May 1816.
263. B 89 a/3, p. 19, 22 Apr. 1816.

- 264 Selk. P., p. 1876 C. Grant to A. Fraser. Qu'Appelle River, 13 Mar. 1816; *ibid.*, p. 2147: P. Fidler to R. Semple. Brandon Ho., 1 Apr. 1816; B 22 a/20, p. 23, Mar. 1816.
- 265 Selk. P., pp. 12.301, 12.305: Narrative of P. C. Pambrun.
- 266 B 60 c/2, p. 1 *et seq.*: J. Bird. Edmonton Report, Sept. 1816.
- 267 Selk. P., p. 12.30 *et seq.*: Narrative of P. C. Pambrun; Carlton journal, 1815-16, p. 27 v.
- 268 Selk. P., p. 12.301 *et seq.*: Narrative of P. C. Pambrun; B 89 a/2, p. 25v (1811).
- 269 Selk. P., p. 12.301 *et seq.*: Narrative of P. C. Pambrun.
- 270 *Ibid.*, pp. 1947-50: Sutherland. "A Narrative of Outrages Committed. . . ."
- 271 Selk. P., p. 1951.
- 272 E 8/5, p. 213: Deposition of Moustouche, called Botino, and of J. Peltier; E 8/5, p. 228. Deposition of Joseph Peltier called Assiniboine.
- 273 Selk. P., p. 1950: "A Narrative of Outrages. . . ."
- 274 B 22 a/20, p. 36, 1 June 1816.
- 275 Selk. P., p. 2.515: Narrative of P. Fidler.
- 276 *Ibid.*, p. 1951. Sutherland, "A Narrative of Outrages Committed. . . ."; Selk. P., p. 2673: D. McPherson to Selkirk. Fort William, 4 Sept. 1816, E 8/5, p. 213 *et seq.*, Deposition of Moustouche, called Botino. . . .
- 279 B 22 a/20, p. 36 (June 1816).
- 280 B 22 a/20, p. 40: R. Semple to P. Fidler. Fort Douglas, 12 Apr. 1816; E 8/6, p. 97v; Robertson to Selkirk.
- 281 B 22 a/20, p. 26 (Mar. 1816); Selk. P., p. 1952. Sutherland, "A Narrative of Outrages Committed. . . ."
- 282 *Ibid.*, p. 2161: J. Sutherland. Qu'Appelle, 2 Apr. 1816.
- 283 B 22 a/20, p. 19, Feb. 1816, p. 31, May 1816.
- 284 B 22 a/20, pp. 31, 34, May 1816.
- 285 B 22 a/20, p. 37, June 1816.
- 286 B 22 a/20, p. 36, 1 June 1816.
- 287 B 22 a/20, p. 19, Feb. 1816, p. 32, May 1816, p. 39, June 1816.
- 288 B 22 a/20, p. 39, June 1816.
- 289 B 22 a/20, p. 39. *ibid.*
- 290 B 22 a/21, p. 10 v, Aug. 1816.
- 291 Selk. P., p. 1876: C. Grant to A. Fraser. Qu'Appelle River, 13 Mar. 1816; A. Amos, *Report of Trials*, p. 97; C. Robertson's journal, IV, p. 440, C. Grant to A. Fraser, 13 Mar. 1816.
- 292 C. Robertson's journal, IV, pp. 462-3, 11-14 June 1816, E 8/5, p. 213: Deposition of Moustouche, called Botino. July 1817; B 22 a/20, p. 35 May 1816; E 8/5, p. 41 *et seq.* (Deposition of J. Bird).
- 293 B 60 a/15, p. 41, May 1816.
- 294 C. Robertson's journal, IV, p. 473 (Aug. 1816).
- 295 B 60 a/15, pp. 49-50 (July 1816) "All the half-breeds, sons of servants of the Hudson's Bay Co., that are here have expressed a wish to embody themselves under officers of their own choosing, and to come forward to arrest the alarming influence which the Canadian half-breeds may now acquire by their achievements in Red River. They are perhaps rather inferior in point of number to their enemies, yet if collected from all parts of the country and regularly organized, they cannot fail to be a powerful check on those lawless rascals which the North West Co. have . . . brought into notice and rendered of consequence." B 60 c/2, p. 2 *et seq.*, J. Bird. Edmonton Report, Sept. 1816.

296. B 60 a/15, pp. 49–50
297. Selk. P., p. 3874: J. Bird to W. B. Coltman Fort Douglas, 27 July 1817.
298. *Ibid.*, p. 1879: A. Macdonell to the agents and proprietors of the N.W.C^o, 13 Mar. 1816
299. E 8/5, p. 238: Evidence of J. Pritchard, Montreal, Feb. 1817
300. E 8/5, p. 242. *Ibid.*
301. E 8/5, p. 241. *Ibid.*
302. E 8/5, p. 218: Deposition of Alexander Murray, settler, B 22 a/20, p. 38 (June 1816)
303. E 8/5, p. 276: Deposition of J. Sayer, clerk and interpreter in the service of the N.W.C^o; Selk. P., pp. 1817–18: J. Sutherland to R. Semple Qu'Appelle River, 16 Dec. 1815; *ibid.*, p. 1833: P. Fidler, Brandon Ho., 27 Dec. 1815.
304. *Ibid.*, pp. 2849–50: M. Macdonell to Selkirk, 20 Oct. 1816.
305. *Ibid.*, p. 9213 (Projet de discours préparé par les North-Westers pour les Indiens de Ft William).
306. *Ibid.*
307. C. Robertson's journal, III, p. 313.
308. *Ibid.*, p. 332; E 8/5, p. 276: Deposition of J. Sayer.
309. E 8/5, p. 41: Deposition of J. Bird, 1817, B 22 a/20, p. 23 (26 Mar. 1816), 26.
310. B 22 a/20, p. 30 v, 57 (May–June 1816).
311. B 22 a/20, p. 34 (May 1816).
312. Selk. P., p. 12305: Deposition of P. C. Pambrun
313. Cf. below, 461, nn. 6 & 7.
314. E 8/5, p. 213: Deposition of J. Peluer B 60 a/15, p. 41, May 1816, E 8/5, p. 41 *et seq.*: Deposition of J. Bird.
315. E 8/6, p. 139: Narrative of J. Pritchard
318. *Ibid.*
319. E 8/5, p. 218: Deposition of Alexander Murray, settler.
320. E 8/5, p. 41 *et seq.*: Deposition of J. Bird.
Ibid., p. 134: Sutherland, "A Selk. P., pp. 1955–6: Sutherland, "A Narrative of Outrages Committed. . . ."; B 22 a/20, pp. 30–30v (May 1816)
321. Selk. P., p. 1959: Sutherland, "A narrative of outrages. . . ."
322. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, p. 575.
323. B 22 a/20, pp. 32–3 (May 1816).
324. B 22 a/20, pp. 36–7 (June 1816).
Selk. P., pp. 2521–3: Narrative of P. Fidler.
Ibid., pp. 2315–17: P. Fidler to R. Semple, Brandon Ho., 2 June 1816
325. Selk. P., pp. 2471–6. P. Fidler to R. Semple, Brandon Ho., 2 June 1816.
326. *Ibid.*, pp. 2521–3: Narrative of P. Fidler.
327. B 22 a/20, p. 36–38, June 1816.
B 22 a/20, p. 37 v.
328. E 8/5, p. 256: Deposition of Pierre Lemaire St Germain
329. E 8/5, pp. 244–5. Evidence of J. Pritchard, Montreal, Feb. 1817.
331. Selk. p., p. 2525: Narrative of P. Fidler.
Ibid., p. 3799. W. B. Coltman, Record of a visit to the route whereby the Metis or halfbreeds proceeded past Ft Douglas . . . , 10 July 1817; C. Martin, *Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada*, pp. 110–11.
332. Selk. P., p. 2525: Narrative of P. Fidler
333. E 8/5, p. 218: Deposition of Alexander Murray; C. Robertson's journal, IV, pp. 463–6.
334. E 8/5, p. 218: Deposition of J. Peltier.

- 335 *Ibid*, *ibid*, p. 218. Deposition of A. Murray. The fight took place on the site of the village of Seven Oaks. Among the Métis it was still known as the Battle of La Grenouillière.
336. E 8/5, p. 213 *et seq.*: Deposition of J. Peltier.
- 337 *Ibid*.
338. E 8/5, p. 59: Deposition of Michael Heyden, p. 213, Deposition of J. Peltier, pp. 243–4, evidence of J. Pritchard; B 60 c/2, J. Bird. Edmonton Report, Sept. 1816.
- 339 Selk. P., pp. 2352–3: Return of the killed and wounded in the action; *ibid.*, p. 2375: W. Morison to A. Clarke. Fort Wilham, 23 July 1816
340. E 8/5, p. 218; Deposition of A. Murray.
- 341 E 8/5, pp. 244–5: Evidence of J. Pritchard; Selk. P., p. 2673: D. McPherson to Selkirk. Fort Wilham, 4 Sept. 1816.
342. C. Martin, *Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada*, p. 110.
343. E 8/5, p. 213 *et seq.*: Depositions of Moustouche and Joseph Peltier.
344. B 60 a/15, p. 43v (June 1816).
345. This is what one is led to assume by the threats expressed in the correspondence seized by Colin Robertson, and several times proffered on behalf of the settlers in the year 1816. The antecedents of the North-Westerns, their frequent recourse to violence, and the congratulations they offered the Métis on the barbarism with which they mutilated the bodies of the victims justify the same supposition.
- 346 E 8/5, p. 218: Deposition of A. Murray. Taken prisoner by the Métis on the eve of the skirmish, the settler A. Murray heard Cuthbert Grant saying that in failing to slaughter the prisoners he was failing to carry out the orders that A. Macdonell had given to him on the Qu'Appelle River.
347. E 8/5, p. 213 *et seq.*: Depositions of Moustouche and J. Peltier; *ibid.*, pp. 244–5: Evidence of J. Pritchard, B 60 c/2, J. Bird, Edmonton Report, Sept. 1816.
- 348 E 8/5, p. 218: Deposition of A. Murray; Selk. P., pp. 2527–8. Narrative of P. Fidler; C. Robertson's Correspondence Book, p. 55; Amos, Report on Trials, p. 85.
- 349 E 8/5, p. 213 *et seq.*: Deposition of Moustouche and Jos. Peltier, Selk. P., pp. 2527–8: Narrative of P. Fidler.
- 350 E 8/5, pp. 244–5: Evidence of J. Pritchard, Amos, *Report on Trials*, p. 85.
- 351 E 8/6, p. 141: Narrative of J. Pritchard; Amos, *Report on Trials*, pp. 56–60
352. E 8/5, pp. 244–5: Evidence of J. Pritchard.
353. *Ibid.*, Amos, *Report on Trials*, p. 85.
354. E 8/5, p. 220: Deposition of P. C. Pambrun; Selk. P., p. 2375: W. Morison to A. Clarke. Fort Wilham, 23 July 1816.
355. Selk. P., p. 2744: A. Macdonell. York, 12 Sept. 1816; *ibid.*, p. 13.389: Deposition of J. McLean.
356. *Ibid.*, p. 3228: A. Macdonell to Selkirk. Fort Douglas, 6 Mar. 1817.
357. *Ibid.*, p. 3036 (C. Robertson to Selkirk. East Main, 12 Nov. 1816), 3040–1 (Moose Ey, Jan. 1817).
- 359 *Ibid.*, pp. 5154–5: Frederick Matthey, Sault Ste Marie, 3 July 1818.
360. Martin, *Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada*, p. 113; Selk. P., p. 3324. Narrative of F. D. Huerter, Fort Douglas, 7 Apr. 1817.
361. E 8/6, p. 227. (F. D. Huerter).
- 362 C. Robertson's journal, IV, p. 469. E 8/5, p. 242: Evidence of J. Pritchard
- 363 E 8/5, p. 59. Deposition of Michael Hayden. *Ibid.*, p. 218: Deposition of A. Murray.
364. Selk. P., p. 3327: Narrative of F. D. Huerter. Fort Douglas, 7 Apr. 1817

365. E 8/6, p. 221: F. D. Huerter.
366. E 8/6, pp. 223-4: F. D. Huerter.
367. E 8/6, p. 221: F. D. Huerter.
368. *Ibid.*
369. *Ibid.*, p. 222.
370. Selk. P., pp. 8471-2: Roderick Mackenzie to George Mackenzie. Red River, 21 July 1816.
371. E 8/6, p. 223, 228: F. D. Huerter.
372. Selk. P., p. 2693: D. Mackenzie to Selkirk. Fort William, 3 Sept. 1816.
373. E 8/6, p. 224: Narrative of F. D. Huerter.
374. Selk. P., pp. 3330-1: *ibid.*
375. *Ibid.*, p. 2530: Narrative of P. Fidler.
376. *Ibid.*, pp. 8861-5: D. Cameron, 24 Feb. 1816.

Chapter Twelve: The Dislocation of the "Métis" Nation

1. B 60 a/15, p. 54, 1816.
2. E 8/6, p. 23: Narrative of F. D. Huerter.
3. B 60 a/15, p. 54, 1816.
4. Selk. P., pp. 2793-4: D'Orsonnens. Lac la Pluie, 8 Oct. 1816; *ibid.*, p. 11.460-5: Deposition of J. B. Lapointe; *ibid.*, p. 10.293 *et seq.*: Minutes of Proceedings in the Court of King's Bench for the District of Quebec, 1818, *et seq.*
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 2277-8: P. Fidler. Brandon Ho., 21 May 1816.
6. Ross, *The Red River Settlement*, p. 40.
7. Selk. P., p. 10.293: *loc. cit.*
8. E 8/6, pp. 228-9: Narrative of F. D. Huerter.
9. E 8/6, p. 239; *ibid.*
10. Selk. P., pp. 2280, 2337-8.
11. A 10/1, p. 183: Selkirk to Colville. Montreal, 6 Jan. 1816.
12. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp. 578-81.
13. Miles Macdonell Papers (P.A.C.), p. 190: M. Macdonell (?). Fort William, 11 Sept. 1816.
14. Selk. P., pp. 2890-1 (? to Mr. Garden. Fort William, 32 Oct. 1816).
15. B 60 a/15, p. 45v (8 June 1816).
16. B 105 e/1, p. 6v: D. McPherson. Rainy Lake Report, 1816-18.
17. Selk. P., pp. 9065-6: Fort William, 30 July 1816.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 2990: P. C. Pambrun to Selkirk. Lac du Cèdre rouge, 12 Dec. 1816; *ibid.*, pp. 8591-3: Archibald McLellan. Red River, 8 Oct. 1816.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 11.461-5: Deposition of J. B. Lapointe.
20. Cf. above p. 428.
21. Selk. P., pp. 1793-4: D'Orsonnens. Lac la Pluie, 8 Oct. 1816.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 3229: A. Macdonell to Selkirk. Fort Douglas, 6 Mar. 1817.
23. E 8/6, p. 229: Narrative of F. D. Huerter.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*, p. 233.
26. E 8/6, p. 234; Selk. P. pp. 3092-5: D'Orsonnens (Fort Douglas) to Selkirk (Fort William), 25 Jan. 1817.
27. Selk. P., p. 3238: M. Macdonell to Selkirk. Fort Douglas, 6 Mar. 1817; Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, pp. 588-9.
28. Selk. P., pp. 3092-5, D'Orsonnens.
29. *Ibid.*
30. *Ibid.*; *ibid.*, p. 3277: D. McPherson. Lac la Pluie, 15 Mar. 1817.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 12. 289: Narrative of F. D. Huerter.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 17.209: Journal of M. Macdonell (1816–17).
33. *Ibid.*, p. 12.289: F. D. Huerter.
34. E 8/6, pp. 234–5: F. D. Huerter.
35. E 8/6, pp. 237–9: F. D. Huerter.
36. E 8/6, p. 238: Narrative of F. D. Huerter.
37. E 8/6, p. 239; *ibid.*; Selk. P. p. 3341: *ibid.*
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 17.212–13: Journal of Macdonell, Mar. 1817.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 3135: M. Macdonell (to Selkirk ?), 18 Feb. 1817; *ibid.*, pp. 17.241–2: Journal of M. Macdonell, Apr. 1817.
40. E 8/6, p. 17.189: Journal of M. Macdonell, 1817.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 17.187: *ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*, p. 3449: D'Orsonnens to Selkirk. Fort Alexander, 23 May 1817.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 17.242: Journal of M. Macdonell, 1817.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 3135: M. Macdonell, 18 Feb. 1817.
45. *Ibid.*, pp. 17.241–2: Journal of M. Macdonell, 1817.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 17.287: Journal of M. Macdonell, June 1817.
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49. *Ibid.*, p. 17.252: *ibid.*
50. E 8/6, p. 17.249 *ibid.*
51. *Ibid.*, p. 3400: D'Orsonnens. Fort Douglas, 1 May 1817; *ibid.*, pp. 17.256–17. 275: Journal of M. Macdonell, May 1817.
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53. *Ibid.*, pp. 17.301–2: *ibid.*
54. B 22 a/21, p. 3670: Selkirk to the Commissioners, 28 June 1817. *Ibid.*, p. 4092.
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56. Selk. P., p. 17.306: Journal of M. Macdonell, June 1817.
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59. B 22 a/21, pp. 9–10, Aug. 1817.
60. *Ibid.*
61. B 22 a/21, pp. 8, 10v–11, July–Aug. 1817.
62. B 22 a/21, p. 7v, 31 July 1817.
63. B 22 a/21, p. 11, 24 Aug. 1817.
64. Selk. P., p. 4000: Selkirk (?) to Capt. Matthey, 27 Aug. 1817.
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66. Selk. P., p. 3122: Sir John Sherbrooke to Lord Bathurst. Quebec, 11 Nov. 1816.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 2946: Selkirk to D'Orsonnens, 2 Dec. 1816.
68. *Ibid.*, 1446: R. Semple to London. York Fy, 20 Sept. 1815.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 4115: Petition of the Red River settlers to the Prince of Wales.
70. B 60 e/2, p. 1 *et seq.*, J. Bird. Edmonton Report, Sept. 1816.
71. B 22 a/21, p. 10 (Aug. 1817).
72. Selk. P., p. 18.928: Journal de J. B. Lemoine, 1817–18.
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77. Selk. P., pp. 12.380–1 (Selkirk).

77. *Ibid.*, p. 1787: Selkirk to Sir Gordon Drummond.
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