

CHAPTER IX.

THE TREATIES AT FORTS CARLTON AND PITT.

THE treaties made at Forts Carlton and Pitt in the year 1876, were of a very important character.

The great region covered by them, abutting on the areas included in Treaties Numbers Three and Four, embracing an area of approximately 120,000 square miles, contains a vast extent of fertile territory and is the home of the Cree nation. The Crees had, very early after the annexation of the North-West Territories to Canada, desired a treaty of alliance with the Government. So far back as the year 1871, Mr. Simpson, the Indian Commissioner, addressing the Secretary of State in a despatch of date, the 3rd November, 1871, used the following language :

“I desire also to call the attention of His Excellency to the state of affairs in the Indian country on the Saskatchewan. The intelligence that Her Majesty is treating with the Chipewewa Indians has already reached the ears of the Cree and Blackfeet tribes. In the neighborhood of Fort Edmonton, on the Saskatchewan, there is a rapidly increasing population of miners and other white people, and it is the opinion of Mr. W. J. Christie, the officer in charge of the Saskatchewan District, that a treaty with the Indians of that country, or at least an assurance during the coming year that a treaty will shortly be made, is essential to the peace, if not the actual retention, of the country. I would refer His Excellency, on this subject, to the report of Lieut. Butler, and to the enclosed memoranda of Mr. W. J. Christie, the officer above alluded to.”