

moderate in their demands. Believing this to be the fact, I resolved to visit every camp and read them your message, and in order that your Honor may form a correct judgment of their disposition towards the Government, I will give you a synopsis of their speeches after the message was read. Mistah-wahsis, head Chief of the Carlton Indians, addressing the principal Chief of the Assiniboines and addressing me, said: "That is just it, that is all we wanted." The Assiniboines addressing me, said: "My heart is full of gratitude, foolish men have told us that the Great Chief would send his young men to our country until they outnumbered us, and that then he would laugh at us, but this letter assures us that the Great Chief will act justly towards us."

Beardy, or the Hairy Man, Chief of the Willow Indians, said: "If I had heard these words spoken by the Great Queen I could not have believed them with more implicit faith than I do now." The Sweet Grass was absent from camp when I reached the Plain Crees, but his son and the principal men of the tribe requested me to convey to the Great Chief, at Red River, their thanks for the presents received, and they expressed the greatest loyalty to the government. In a word, I found the Crees reasonable in their demands, and anxious to live in peace with the white men. I found the Big Bear, a Saulteaux, trying to take the lead in their council. He formerly lived at Jack Fish Lake, and for years has been regarded as a troublesome fellow. In his speech he said: "We want none of the Queen's presents; when we set a fox-trap we scatter pieces of meat all round, but when the fox gets into the trap we knock him on the head; we want no bait, let your Chiefs come like men and talk to us." These Saulteaux are the mischief-makers through all this western country, and some of them are shrewd men.

A few weeks since, a land speculator wished to take a claim at the crossing on Battle River and asked the consent of the Indians, one of my Saulteaux friends sprang to his feet, and pointing to the east, said: "Do you see that great white man (the Government) coming?" "No," said the speculator. "I do," said the Indian, "and I hear the tramp of the multitude behind him, and when he comes you can drop in behind him and take up all the land claims you want; but until then I caution you to put up no stakes in our country." It was very fortunate for me that Big Bear and his party were a very small minority in camp. The Crees said they would have driven them out of camp long ago, but were afraid of their medicines, as they are noted conjurers.

The topics generally discussed at their council and which will be brought before the Commissioner are as follows in their own language. "Tell the Great Chief that we are glad the traders are prohibited bringing spirits into our country; when we see it we want to drink it, and it destroys us; when we do not see it we do not think about it. Ask for us a strong law, prohibiting the free use of poison (strychnine). It has almost exterminated the animals of our country, and often makes us bad friends with our white neighbors. We further request, that a law be made, equally applicable to