

The Commissioners, in the discharge of their task, had to travel through the prairie district in going to their destination and returning to Winnipeg, a distance of over 1,800 miles. They first met the Indians in the vicinity of Fort Carlton, on the Saskatchewan, in the month of August, 1876, and eventually succeeded on the 23rd day of that month, in effecting a treaty with the Plain and Wood Crees, and on the 28th of the same month with the tribe of Willow Crees. The negotiations were difficult and protracted. The Hon. David Mills, then Minister of the Interior, in his Annual Report thus characterizes them:—"In view of the temper of the Indians of the Saskatchewan, during the past year, and of the extravagant demands which they were induced to prefer on certain points, it needed all the temper, tact, judgment and discretion, of which the Commissioners were possessed, to bring the negotiations to a satisfactory issue." The difficulties were encountered chiefly at Carlton. The main body of the Crees were honestly disposed to treat, and their head Chiefs, Misto-wasis and Ah-tuk-uh-koop, shewed sound judgment, and an earnest desire to come to an understanding.

They were embarrassed, however, by the action of the Willow Crees, who, under the guidance of one of their Chiefs, Beardy, interposed every obstacle to the progress of the treaty, and refused to attend the Council, unless it was held at the top of a hill some miles off, where the Chief pretended it had been revealed to him in a vision that the treaty was to be made. The Willow Crees were, moreover, under the influence of a wandering band of *Saulteaux*, the chief portion of whom resided within the limits of the other treaties, and who were disposed to be troublesome. Before the arrival of the Commissioners, the *Saulteaux* conceived the idea of forming a combination of the French Half-breeds, the Crees, and themselves, to prevent the crossing of the Saskatchewan by the Lieutenant-Governor, and his entrance into the Indian territories. They made the proposal first to the French Half-breeds, who declined