

CHAPTER V.

TREATY NUMBER THREE, OR THE NORTH-WEST ANGLE TREATY.

IN the year 1871 the Privy Council of Canada issued a joint commission to Messrs. W. M. Simpson, S. J. Dawson and W. J. Pether, authorizing them to treat with the Ojibbeway Indians for the surrender to the Crown of the lands they inhabited—covering the area from the watershed of Lake Superior to the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods, and from the American border to the height of land from which the streams flow towards the Hudson's Bay. This step had become necessary in order to make the route known as "the Dawson route," extending from Prince Arthur's Landing on Lake Superior to the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods, which was then being opened up, "secure for the passage of emigrants and of the people of the Dominion generally," and also to enable the Government to throw open for settlement any portion of the land which might be susceptible of improvement and profitable occupation. The Commissioners accepted the appointment, and in July, 1871, met the Indians at Fort Francis.

The tribes preferred claims for right of way through their country. The Commissioners reported "that they had admitted these to a limited extent and had made them presents in provisions and clothing and were also to pay them a small amount in money, it being fully and distinctly understood by the Indians that these presents and clothing were accepted by them as an equivalent for all past claims whatever." The Commissioners having explained to them fully the intentions of the Government as to obtaining a surrender of their territorial rights, and giving in return therefor reserves of land and