

If Riel was "neither wholly white nor wholly Métis," what was he? The evidence provided throughout the book leads the reader to conclude that he was predominantly white, predominantly French.

Much new information is presented which does not appear in G.F.G. Stanley's biography of Louis Riel. The hypothesis that Riel was a genuine religious figure, not just a madman on the loose is convincing. However, a novice should first read Stanley's biography of Louis Riel to fully appreciate Flanagan's study of a "millenarian leader" who tried "to evoke the future of a people menaced with destruction."

André Lalonde
Department of History
University of Regina

My Tribe The Crees, by Joseph F. Dion. Calgary: Glenbow Museum, 1979. 194 pp. \$7.95, cloth.

My People The Bloods, by Mike Mountain Horse. Calgary: Glenbow-Alberta Institute and Blood Tribal Council, 1979. 146 pp. \$7.95, cloth.

These volumes are collections of writings and papers left by two individuals who have led very significant lives. Both the authors were born in the year 1888 and they died only four years apart—in 1960 and 1964. The books are historical records based upon the personal experiences of the authors and the oral traditions in their respective tribes. As such they are not to be taken as formal histories of their people based upon conventional methods of documentation. Neither are they the written accounts of professional raconteurs. These books are collections of essays by two literate members of the Cree and Blood tribes, searching for the meaning of life by trying to understand the psychological, social, religious and economic impact on their homelands when they became part of the "frontier." The authors' approach is humanistic, their language is clear and their message is insightful. The books have been edited and introduced by Hugh A. Dempsey who has done a good job in handling this sensitive material.

Dion's book has sixteen chapters. A few deal with deep underlying cultural patterns like that of religious life while the others recollect significant events such as epidemics and forest fires that brought destruction and sorrow. Chief Poundmaker who influenced the destinies of a large number of people is also portrayed. Dion's own life experiences contribute material to many chapters and they provide a moving account of an individual growing up as a human being during times when the non-Indian society around him was most interested in classifying him and his people as "savages," "deplorable heathens," "hopeless primitives," "nature's innocent creatures" or at best con-

sidering them as an object of so-called "Liberal Mission." It takes a decent human being not to be bitter about the way he or his people were and are looked upon, and Dion does not show any bitterness.

Mike Mountain Horse's book has seventeen chapters and they deal with similar themes to those of Dion's book. But there is an important difference. While Dion worked among his people for most of his life, Mountain Horse lived away from them, working for the CPR and RCMP, and also serving with distinction in the Army in the First World War. Thus even though Dion and Mountain Horse deal with similar life situations, their perceptions, attitudes and interpretations differ. While Mountain Horse was trying for acceptance of his people by the larger society, Dion's main concern was to help the larger society understand his people. However, both have succeeded in providing links with the past and fear for the future.

It is remarkable to note that both writers have had kind words for missionaries, praise for the Mounties, appreciation for the service provided by the Hudson's Bay Company, but condemnation for federal bureaucrats. This in a larger context exemplifies the gentleness and wisdom of Indian people. These books should be read by all those who believe that the "newly arrived immigrants" have no superior moral right to the lands of those who had them by accident or design.

A.H. Sahir
Department of Geography
University of Regina

Trees, Prairies, and People, by Wilmon H. Droze. Denton: Texas Woman's University Press, 1977. 313 pp. \$9.50, cloth.

Trees, Prairies, and People is a book dealing with the development of tree culture by the pioneers in the U.S. as they moved westward across the prairies of Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas to settle a vast new land. The land, often described as the "Great Sahara," filled rapidly with settlers during the mid to late 1800s in spite of the harsh prevailing winds and dry conditions. Many settlers realizing the value of trees attempted to bring species from the east unadapted to conditions existing in the newly settled area.

Many prominent members of the territorial and state legislatures supported programs which would encourage tree planting throughout the plains. Julius Sterling Morton, Territorial Governor in the 1850s, encouraged the establishment of trees by declaring an annual tree-planting day. Prizes were awarded to districts planting the most trees. Today the annual tree day is known as "Arbour Day" and is celebrated throughout North America. In addition, state legislatures introduced laws prohibiting increased taxation on land on which trees had been