



A
Hatchet Mark
in Duplicate

A. C. GARRIOCH

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A HATCHET MARK
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By

REV. A. C. GARRIOCH

*Author of "The Far and Furry North" and "Broken
Furrows"*



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PREFACE

This book consists of two parts, viz. an *autobiography* and a *story*. For the former the claim is made that it is absolutely true; but, for the latter, it is only claimed that it is founded on fact; and wherever in the book a change is made from the autobiography to the story, intimation of the fact will be given by means of a heading placed there in distinctive type.

Though the author has had no accession of either courage or candour since writing "The Far and Furry North," he has followed the different rule in this book, of giving his principal characters their real names, a difference which, no doubt, the readers will appreciate as furnishing a better guarantee of good faith.

THE AUTHOR.

THE
PEACE RIVER
URGE

CHAPTER I

The Peace River Urge

No doubt I was familiar with that enticing name, Peace River, as far back as the year 1848, when I was still upon my mother's breasts, a statement warranted by the fact that in 1851 I can remember greedily drinking in stories about Peace River, told by my mother to two older brothers and myself, from which I confidently assume that I must have been one of the same audience, and doing the same thing, if unconsciously, three years earlier, while occupying the infantile position above referred to.

Thoroughly competent was my mother to tell such stories, as she was born at Fort Dunvegan and lived there for years, her father, Mr. Campbell, being at the time Hudson's Bay Company Officer in charge. Therefore, when the family later moved to the Red River Settlement she knew many things about life at Dunvegan, and, in general, of life in the northern wilds. And the stories told to the little audience of three people gathered about her knees were no fairy tales, but substantial ones about bears, beavers, berries and the like, and while all were entertaining enough to her juvenile audience, as may be supposed, those about bears were by far the most fascinating; and the thriller most indelibly stamped upon my memory is the story of a fight between a Beaver Indian and a grizzly, in which the latter was counted out and died, not, however, before he had drawn blood and left a permanent reminder of the combat on the face of his opponent. Greedily enough I drank in these stories at the time; yet I am not aware that they ever inspired in me the hope that I might some day visit the country. If they did, it must have been subconsciously in the year one, that period in our mortal existence when we may be played upon by the thing called "the subconscious mind." Speaking, however, from a more reliable consciousness of my Peace River urge, I shall now explicitly state how it was that I came to be a dweller out there.

In the year 1874 the Anglican Church, which sixteen years earlier had entered upon evangelistic work among the Indian tribes of the Mackenzie River basin under the supervision of the Bishop of Rupert's Land, in that year took an important step forward by forming a new diocese out of the northern part of the Diocese of Rupert's Land.

The new diocese was appropriately named Athabasca, as it had within its confines the Hudson's Bay Company district of that name, as well as the Athabasca Lake and the Athabasca River. And until such time as the new diocese itself should

be divided there could be no more suitable centre as its Bishop's headquarters than Fort Chipewyan, beautifully situated at the west end of the lake, whence radiate far-reaching water routes towards the four points of the compass—that going eastward to the end of the lake and beyond, that going westward up the Peace River, that going southward up the Athabasca and that carrying northward the waters of the three routes named down the Great Slave River, on to the Arctic Ocean.

A new diocese having been formed, there had now to be settled the question of providing it with a suitable bishop. Sometimes the placing of a bishop is an extremely difficult thing, because, though people don't have the choice of their earthly father, they do insist in having a voice—and sometimes a mighty voice—in the choice of their spiritual father. However, in the case of Athabasca there was no difficulty, as the appointment rested conjointly with Archbishop Machray, diocesan of Rupert's Land, and the Church Missionary Society, which up to that time financed the Indian mission work undertaken in Rupert's Land. As for the Anglicans in the new diocese, very few of them knew who was their bishop until he took possession of his See at least six months after his consecration. And well might they not object. First of all, they did not have to pay, and, in the second place, they were getting, not a prophet of their own country, but an Englishman—an Englishman whom they knew well and admired greatly.

As it was hardly thinkable in those days that a bishop should be anything but English or, strictly speaking, British, it is perhaps as well that the first bishops in this country had such a prejudice in their favour, for doubtless the episcopal see is sufficiently liable to disturbances without the handicap of a prejudice the other way. As regards the first bishop of Athabasca, Mr. William Bompas, probably those responsible for his appointment did not overlook such considerations as the foregoing; but, independent of them, found what they considered quite sufficient to justify their choice—the record of their man—his humility, piety, energy and versatile qualities. In brief, the following was his record: five years studying law with a noted firm of barristers in London, England; two years more with another firm of barristers; relinquished the study of law in 1858. It is said to be his father who is referred to by Charles Dickens in the "Pickwick Papers" as Sergeant Buzfuz. Although of a Baptist family the son of the sergeant-at-law entered the Anglican ministry and was ordained Deacon in 1859; in 1864 he was ordained priest by Bishop Machray, who was that year on a visit to England; in 1865 he left England to take up mission work in the north, arriving at Fort Simpson, Mackenzie River, on Christmas Day. There he remained the guest of Archdeacon Kirkby until Easter, when he went northward to Forts Norman and McPherson and put in the rest of the winter and the following

summer working among the Slavie and Tukuph Indians. The winter of 1866-67 he spent in the igloos of the Eskimo. In 1867-68 we find him back at Fort Simpson in charge of the mission there, and in the latter year we find him at Fort Vermilion, Peace River, for the first time. And so he went on as an itinerating missionary throughout the length and breadth of that great land until 1873, when he was asked to visit England in order that he might be made bishop of the newly formed diocese. And when he accepted that honour, knowing the man as I do, I can readily believe that he did so from as purely disinterested motives as is possible in mortal man, for of all men whom I have known none were freer of conceit or worldly pride than the Right Reverend Bishop Bompas.

He was a remarkable man, and all bishops need to be that. He was morally, spiritually, intellectually and physically a fit man. He was over six feet and well proportioned; but if in this and other respects he was well above the crowd his manner never betrayed the least consciousness of the fact. He was approachable and companionable to all. He lived on the same kind of food and wore clothes no better than theirs, and sometimes not as good. Of him it might fittingly have been said as of John the Baptist, "there was a man sent from God." His, too, was a "voice crying in the wilderness," and his the strenuous life, until his work was done, his life ended in a manner consistent with the message the voice had delivered.

I like to think that it was Bishop Bompas, or, if you will, "the voice of one crying in the wilderness," which induced me to go north just when I was about ready to depart for the south.

My eventful first meeting with Bishop Bompas took place in the month of June, 1874, in what was then the hamlet of Winnipeg. This meeting was brought about by a voice which came to me from the east side of Main Street. The owner of the voice was the Reverend Samuel Pritchard, then professor of English in St. John's College. He shouted instead of walking across to my side of the street, because in those days the loss of a rubber in the gumbo of Main Street was not an unknown occurrence. The Rev. S. Pritchard shouted, "If you want to go back to schoolteaching, now is your chance. Bishop Bompas, who is staying at Dutch George's Hotel, and is on his way back to the north, wishes to engage a schoolteacher for work in his diocese."

Two minutes later I was in the presence of the newly-consecrated bishop, and fifteen minutes later had given him my promise to fill the position offered in the "Far and Furry North." I was then twenty-six years of age, and, as already admitted, was on the lookout for a *job*, or what the young people prefer calling a *position*.

When I left the parental roof at Portage la Prairie six years before, I took charge of the St. John's parish school in the Red River Settlement; but when the Hudson's

Bay Company régime came to an end in 1870, so did the parochial school system which had been maintained by the Anglican Church since the year 1820. As changes were in order, I resolved on a thorough change for the benefit of my health, so I gave up my studies at St. John's College and returned to Portage la Prairie. There I engaged for the next three years in semi-agricultural and semi-mercantile transactions. These were very limited in extent, if unlimited as to liability, as all the capital I had to invest was the savings from my three years' teaching at St. John's at a salary of twenty pounds per annum.

At the end of the three years I had doubled my capital, bringing it up to three hundred dollars. That did not encourage me to persevere. Although I did astonish myself by going into a calculation as to what would happen if I did persevere and doubled my capital every three years until—well, until I would be as old as I now am. For, according to the calculation, assuming that it worked out as well in practice as it did in theory, I would now find myself the owner of a fortune of eighty million dollars. But well did I know of the pernicious character of the little *if* that entered into the proposition, also that work and worry would double up as well as capital, resulting, if I may so speak, in my being doubled up long before the allotted period had expired.

The result of my cogitations was that I decided to look for pastures new, and so it was that I bethought me of the domains of Uncle Sam, to which I decided to move, and return, for a time at least, to the work of schoolteaching, confident that I could teach my American cousins a few things, and equally sure that they could teach me many things, among them, for instance, how to save more than three hundred dollars in six years.

Behold me then, after only fifteen minutes' thinking, completely reversing this decision by consenting to go into the northern wilds of Canada. Was this a case of aimlessness or impulsiveness? I think not. Rather may it be compared to that of a man with his gun all ready loaded, who is turning round to find a safe and proper target, and who lets fly immediately he has found it. Being not unlike others of the great army of human beings, my aim was to help others while helping myself, and while revolving in my mind how to do this most effectively the people of the north loomed up in sight, diverting my attention from those of the south. Both, no doubt, could very well have done without me; but the former, perhaps not quite so well. Then there was the spirit of adventure, or was it the spirit of my mother's stories? Be that as it may, Bishop Bompas did not have to exercise his eloquence to any great extent to persuade me to accompany him to the north.

One little incident of the first stage of the journey I cannot resist mentioning, and

I do so without hesitation as it only pleasantly affects the memory of the chief actor, who has long since passed to the great beyond. The party of missionaries who trekked northward over the prairies in ox carts was in charge of Archdeacon Cowley, a fine old gentleman who besides being Archdeacon was Rupert's Land Secretary for the Church Missionary Society. Exercising a privilege to which he was entitled as Archdeacon, he wore gaiters, a circumstance which occasioned a temporary misunderstanding between him and Floss, a half-grown water-spaniel which I was taking to the North.

This enjoyable ox-cart stage of my journey ended at Green Lake. There the Hudson's Bay Company had a trading post and depot which was in charge of Mr. La Liberti, an elderly, quiet and civil French-Canadian, who obligingly hired two Crees to take me down the Beaver River to Isle à la Crosse in a birch-bark canoe. This was the district fort, and it was at the time in charge of Chief Factor William McMurray. From him and his excellent wife I received hospitality for two weeks; and, at the end of that time, Mr. Maurice, postmaster in charge at Buffalo Lake, arrived in a York boat to get his winter outfit. Mr. Maurice was a son-in-law of Mr. La Liberti and, like him, a French-Canadian; but, unlike him, he was very loquacious, and could express himself fluently, not only in his mother tongue, but, when occasion required, in English, Cree or Chipewyan as well. To his care Mr. McMurray intrusted me with instructions to see me safe at Long Portage, sometimes called Methy Portage, or, in the language of Mr. Maurice, Portage la Loche. There he was to hire two Indians to take me down the Clearwater and Athabasca rivers by canoe to Fort Chipewyan. "And there," said he, "doubtless my friend, Mr. McFarlane, will look after you."

The journey from Winnipeg to Fort Chipewyan occupied four months, and on my arrival I found it a foregone conclusion that I was to stay there for the winter, and I have never had occasion to regret having done so, for not only did Mr. Roderick McFarlane "look after me" in a reasonable and acceptable manner, but the residents in general gave me the impression that they regarded me as something in the nature of an acquisition, partly, it may be, because of their having heard—what I did not forget—that their bishop and mine had imported me specially to take charge of a seminary which it was in his mind to build some day, somewhere, in his diocese; and that, in the meantime, there was nothing else for it but for me to teach where and when and what, as best I could. To this end I made a careful study of the situation, and to insure an auspicious beginning made it a point to ingratiate myself with the church and the state, and to fraternize with the people, especially those who were parents and had children who might be available as pupils.

The church, if I may so speak, was represented by Rev. Arthur Shaw and his lovely wife, a young and newly-married English couple, who had been stationed here by Bishop Bompas on his way north. The state, to me, for most practical purposes, was represented by Mr. McFarlane, who was so good to me then and afterwards that when he died a few years ago in Winnipeg there were probably few outside of his wife and children who felt his removal more keenly than I.

Upon investigation I found that there were only six Protestant families in the fort who had children of school age. All these were present at the opening of the school. There were twelve of them—all boys—and their ages ranged from seven to fourteen.

According to usage, Mr. Shaw was my superior, as he was in holy orders and the incumbent, while I was a layman and only a temporary and accidental adjunct of the local mission establishment.

As there had been no certainty of my being a resident of the place until my actual appearance on the scene, Mr. McFarlane had, apparently, made all housing arrangements for the winter, leaving me to be put up or put up with later, in the event of my arrival. I found that already some rearranging had been necessary in order to accommodate the Shaws, one Peter Loutit, a carpenter, having obligingly vacated a new house to that end. The said new house was about eighteen by sixteen, and had "two rooms and a garret," and these divisions were made by nothing more impervious to sound than one thickness of inch lumber. When the Shaws made this house their abode, it became technically "the Mission," and I, as a missionary, naturally made for it on my arrival. Mr. and Mrs. Shaw, who came from Yorkshire, received me with Yorkshire hospitality, and assigned me to the garret as my share of "the mission." That invasion of their privacy was pardonable, but I am glad to say that it lasted only as long as it took me to build a little house for myself.

Fortunately for me, I had grown up with Portage la Prairie, where any settler who could not have built his own log house would have been called a *kipooch*, a useless fellow; so the cramped position existing at the mission gave me a splendid opportunity to prove to the natives of Athabasca that no such term of contempt could fittingly be applied to me. I must, however, admit that but for some assistance kindly provided by Mr. McFarlane, winter might have overtaken me before my house was finished.

The first mission building erected at Fort Chipewyan was a log house fifteen by twelve, daubed within and without with mud. It stood about fifteen rods west of the house occupied by Mr. Shaw, on a piece of land donated by Mr. McFarlane, acting for the Hudson's Bay Company. In this interesting little structure I passed a happy

winter baching it, and instilled into the minds of my twelve pupils a respectable knowledge of the three R's—Reading, Writing and Arithmetic, and that without overlooking the fourth R—Religion.

With the spring there arrived millions of geese and waxies, and then Floss and I gave the rabbits and ptarmigan a rest and turned our attention to the newer and bigger game which it may be said had come up to our door, for, standing at the door of my house, or stationed in a driftwood stand on the lake shore a few yards away, I brought down as many of these delicious birds as we needed.

A few weeks after the birds from the south, there arrived the brigade of boats from the north, and among the passengers was Bishop Bompas, who continued with the brigade right through to Methy Portage, and then, on the home lap, took me aboard as passenger to Fort Simpson, there to study under him during the following winter.

On the way down, the brigade touched at each of the forts which at that time were stationed on the route: viz. Fort Resolution, situated at the mouth of the Great Slave River; Hay River post, situated at the mouth of Hay River, and Fort Providence, situated on the right bank of the Mackenzie River, not many miles north of its outflow from the Great Slave Lake.

The crews and passengers were made up of six nationalities, white or red, and were so wisely arranged that those belonging to any of them could always converse in his mother tongue with their more immediate neighbours. Fortunately for me, there was on board an old college mate, Mr. Kenneth McDonald, at this time an officer in the Company's service. By him I was introduced to Dr. McKay, who was in charge of the brigade. This introduction was followed by an invitation to share with them their mess, their tent and their sternsheets.

Mr. McDonald was a lively young gentleman, and the doctor, though twice as old, was not averse to innocent fun, so that I found myself, in a way, obliged to try my hand at "a little nonsense now and then." I had my violin with me, and it turned out that we could all play on that instrument, so we entered into a lively competition, each endeavouring to show that he didn't have to play second fiddle.

One day while we were afloat, I manoeuvred for the doctor's vote by saying to him, after he had done his best with "The Days of Auld Lang Syne," "Doctor, that was just fine. I do like that old tune when one puts some soul into it as you do." Then, immediately after, Mr. McDonald took his turn, and played "The Devil Among the Taylors," putting into it as much energy as if he were in mortal combat with his Satanic Majesty, and when he was through and had laid the violin across his knees, and the Doctor smiling and rubbing his hands had said, "How very realistic!" I said

to myself, “*Toujours*, the Doctor is coming round to my side,” so I said, reaching out my hand for the violin, “Please pass me over that fiddle and see how I’ll electrify the fishes.”

Then, by way of an appeal to the Doctor’s Scottish predilections, I played “Annie Laurie,” trying to do so with as much pathos as if Miss Laurie were my own special admiration.

When I was through the Doctor said, “Well, I don’t know what effect that may have had on the Mackenzie River fishes; but it was fine, and took my thoughts back to Aberdeen.” I was aware that the Doctor was a graduate of Aberdeen University.

Mr. McDonald qualified his praise of my performance by saying, “You did pretty well, Garrioch, but, as in your playing generally, there were notes which you failed to sound with sufficient distinctness.”

“Listen to him, Doctor. Now give us two the benefit of your candid and unbiased opinion. Which would you say is the better fiddler?”

But the canny Scot was non-committal and he smilingly replied, “It would be *infra dignitatem* or in short I’d be *in fera dig* if I undertook to be a judge in such matters, and I can only say that, according to my amateur ideas, you both border on perfection.”

At the time of this voyage Doctor McKay had been seven years in the country, having been sent out in 1868 by the Hudson’s Bay Company to investigate the Indian diseases with a view of applying remedial measures; and, as it happened, he reached Fort Simpson and spent his first winter in the country in that particular year when Bishop Bompas—still only Mr. Bompas—in the course of his itinerancy was in charge of the mission. During that winter the Doctor occupied a room in the mission, an arrangement in which I would venture to say there was considerable reciprocity, as the missionary for three years had had no certain dwelling-place and only the previous winter nothing better than the igloos of the greasy Eskimo, while for companionship he had, time and again, to depend on those whose language he was only learning; now he could rest in a comfortable house where he was master, while he daily enjoyed the companionship of an educated gentleman who came fresh from the Old Land. And that gentleman was fortunate in having the opportunity to learn about the Indian diseases from one who above all others was competent to speak on the subject in a manner which would aid the Doctor in accomplishing the object for which he had been sent to the country.

I cannot say where it was that Mr. Bompas obtained a working knowledge of medicine and surgery; but as he was always qualifying toward the maximum of usefulness to the souls and bodies of his fellow men, I could well believe that he did

not allow the winter of 1868-69 to pass without getting some pointers in surgery from the man of Aberdeen. Be that as it may, a few years later he saved the life of David Vilnaue, who was one of the steersmen on this voyage of which I now write.

Vilnaue was working under a stage from which thousands of whitefish were suspended, ten in a bunch, by means of stout rods passed through their tails, when the stage collapsed, pinning him underneath, and badly fracturing one of his legs. Due, most likely, to the lack of proper treatment, gangrene set in, and Dr. McKay being far beyond reach, Bishop Bompas was sent for and the case put in his hands. Vilnaue was a Roman Catholic; but, of course, it would be the bishop's own religion and not that of Vilnaue which had to count in a case like this, and the bishop's religion was to save life temporally or spiritually whenever he saw a chance to do so.

What instruments the bishop had with which to perform the operation of amputation above the knee, I am unable to say, for, knowing him as I did, I could never bring myself to ask him any questions about the matter, instinctively feeling that he must have passed through an awful ordeal while performing the operation. I have, therefore, only the word of a Hudson's Bay clerk to go upon, and that individual laughingly—perhaps one should say profanely—described the operation to me as having been performed with a handsaw and a butcher knife. Be that as it may, the operation was performed *successfully*, and Vilnaue lived long enough afterwards to catch and hang and eat a great many more whitefish, and after having learned from painful experience that “a stitch in time saves nine,” *literally* as well as otherwise, he would doubtless have improved ideas as to the importance of sound timbers.

I have said that the Doctor, Mr. McDonald and I spent some of our time on the voyage from Fort Chipewyan to Fort Simpson in innocent fun in which my violin came in handy, and I would like to add that this was only at such times as we were sailing or floating smoothly over the water, or when there was no call to put forth a hand to help a body, for there were times when we did not feel at all funny. For instance, when with our heavily-loaded boats we were crossing a wide stretch of the Great Slave Lake, and a strong wind was causing such gigantic waves that to the *voyageurs* it looked as if any boat a considerable distance away was being swamped as it slid into the trough of the sea, and for long seconds showed nothing but a sail above water. One had only to look then at the anxious expression in the experienced steersman's face to know that this was no time for nonsense. Or again, when, later on the same day, the brigade was making for the one landing place which would afford a safe harbour for the night, and when still a mile from it we were shrouded in pitchy darkness. Then again it became every face to be serious if it had

a normal brain behind it. And unquestionably we were serious, until Admiral Bouvie of the Hudson's Bay fleet, "who was guide himself, on that occasion, led by an occult instinct or something of the sort," guided the others by shouts and a beacon light into the haven where they would be. And, after that, when the storm and the darkness were past, and once more—safely seated in the sternsheets of our boats—we quietly floated northward on the vast intake of the Mackenzie River, then might we again have fittingly engaged in harmless essays at wit and humour; but not so "when the day was far spent, and night was drawing nigh," for after we had prepared ourselves to face the darkness as a solid unit by fastening the boats together, we were dominated by a spirit of quietness as we partook of our evening meal, so that when the sun had sunk behind the western bank and was bathing the trees which lined it, leaving us in contrasting shades in the river below, there was a silence the meaning of which was well expressed when some one repeated the lines:

Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead thou me on.

So down the river *we* float on and on and on toward the ocean beyond.

On arriving at Fort Simpson we found the entire population of the place—about one hundred—lined up on the bank waiting for us to land, and when we had done so there followed a pretty general mix-up in greetings of all sorts. When I, a young man then, heard the smack of many pairs of lips coming in contact each with the other, I may be pardoned for confessing that, for the time being, I was painfully conscious of being a stranger.

When this affecting scene was over the Company's officers accompanied Mr. Wm. Hardisty, who was officer in charge, to the big house, standing to the right, while we missionaries followed Bishop Bompas to the mission establishment, which consisted of two fair-sized buildings exactly alike, standing in line sixty yards back from the river, so that this fort, like some others, had an arrangement of buildings which in the usage of the North was called "the square," and in this particular case it was formed by the two mission buildings on the west, the "big house" on the north, the river on the east, and the sale-shop and the provision store on the south.

As the visiting officers and missionaries had still far to go and much to do before the winter freeze-up, the stay at Fort Simpson was limited to the two days necessary for the transaction of business; and, in consequence, social amenities, so far as the mission was concerned, had to be attended to *sans ceremonie*.

It was in this connection that one of my missionary friends taught me that brandy

may sometimes come in very handy. It had come to be known somehow that I had imported two quarts of brandy along with my year's supply of more necessary things; and this missionary friend came to me and said, "I would esteem it a favour if you would lend me that brandy, so that I might extend hospitality to the Company's officers by inviting them over to our quarters to join us in a friendly glass. It will take up little time and will be a fitting acknowledgment of the many acts of hospitality which they extend to us."

I replied, "I feel the force of your arguments, and I think I may be able to postpone an attack of colic until you make good about this time next year."

"All right. I'll set out right now and invite them to be with us here at eight o'clock this evening, and I trust that with the spirit you have shown you may succeed in warding off the colic for all time *without the spirits*."

And so it came about that, at the hour just named, in a large room lit up with Belmont candles, there were gathered around a fifteen-foot table upon which stood two bottles of brandy and the requisite number of glasses, all the officers and all the missionaries except the bishop—why, I did not know nor ever sought to know—and so, while conversation went on, interspersed with an anecdote or two, the wholesome liquor was sipped and pipes were smoked. After a friendly hour thus spent the company rose and with "good-nights" and other pleasant wishes, departed to prepare for the general dispersion on the morrow. As for me, I stood there, gazing on the spectacle of emptiness with mingled feelings of pride and regret, and said to myself, "*Toujours*, this *is* a free country, and it's meself that was wise when I imported only two bottles of the stuff instead of four."

My stay at Fort Simpson as the guest of Bishop Bompas during the winter of 1875-76 was both pleasant and profitable. Under his tutorage I resumed the study of Greek and theology and learned some more of the Beaver Indian language. It is also possible that, at the same time, my deportment underwent some improvement, as the Bishop's palace, humble as it was, afforded me the privilege of associating with two English ladies, Mrs. Bompas, who was a kind and cultured lady, and her companion, Miss Wheelright, a very intellectual young lady of uncommon adaptability.

But, by way of adapting myself to the necessity of being brief, I hasten on to say that I was admitted to deacon's orders on Christmas Day—that the Bishop went north three months later, leaving me in charge until I had an opportunity of going south with the brigade—that during this interval I performed my first marriage by uniting in holy matrimony Miss Wheelright and a Hudson's Bay clerk, Mr. H. B. Round—that when I set out southwards with the brigade, I had the responsibility of

escorting Mrs. Bompas as far as Fort Chipewyan, and that, in the autumn, I proceeded thence up the Peace River to establish a mission at Fort Vermilion.

Looking back on my four-score years' experience, I feel constrained to say that so few of my plans have worked out as I expected that I have come to regard determinate planning as to where I shall be, what I shall do, or what I shall become, as a pretty sure way of laying up for myself unnecessary trouble and disappointment; and it would seem to me that owing to the kaleidoscopic changes which have been in order throughout the world during the past decade, men are bound to find it increasingly difficult to do definite and successful planning, especially if the plans extend any distance ahead.

However, when I established the Anglican mission at Fort Vermilion, giving it the name of Unjaga—a name which somehow did not stick—I had with the recuperative qualities of youth—I was then only twenty-nine years of age—so far recovered from the miscarriage of my previous plans that I could bear to think of them with complacency as:

“Hopes which were angels in their birth;
But finished young like things on earth.”

Once more, with a revival of self-confidence and optimism, I dared to plan for my lifetime at least. And such was the definiteness and sincerity of my intentions that I could visualize the results of my labours at the one place, Unjaga, in the course of the next forty years. And why not? Had I not taken up the work in obedience to the command of the Master of the vineyard? And shall it not be honour enough for any man, if by concentrating all his efforts upon one little corner of God's earth, he can succeed in making it more worthy of Him? But because of my writing thus let there be no clasping of the hands and turning up of the eyes, with such exclamations as, “Oh, how beautiful! What disinterestedness! What self-dedication!” On the other hand, do not let there be such exclamations as this: “What balderdash! What pharisaical humbug! What crazy egotism!” Instead of such extremes which would place a typical human like myself either undeservedly high or undeservedly low, just “think and believe and say” what follows to the end of the paragraph. The ordinary man has a soul whose imperfections he honestly bewails, “Oh, man, the heavenliness of whose aspirations indicates the heavenliness of thine origin, *go on*, still *go on*, and when thy soul—as it is sure to do—exposes the earthiness of its life-companion, the poor body, still be a man and *go on* until, D.V., thou shalt reach God's objective and thine own.”

In some such spirit I entered upon my labours at Fort Vermilion in the year

1876, and as I am writing this in the year 1927, last year would have been jubilee year for me at Vermilion had I worked on there according to my plans; but I stayed at Vermilion only seven years, at least forty-four years short of my objective as to time, and God only knows how short as to services rendered.

During my first year at Fort Vermilion I was the guest of the Hudson's Bay Company, represented at the time, at that post, by Mr. Donald Ross, one of the finest men I have ever known. He and I became great friends, and it was one of the sorrows of my life when he died at Vermilion about eighteen months after my arrival. I laid him to rest there about fifty yards from the fort on the edge of the Beaver Indian burying-ground, planning that later I would build a church beside it and have it enclosed within the God's acre.

While enjoying the advantage of having no establishment of my own to look after, I selected land and erected a dwelling-house thereon, two miles down-stream from the fort and on the same side of the river, the south side. In this work I was assisted by Thomas Macklin, a civilized Saulteaux and good specimen of the *genus homo*, who stood six feet in his moccasins. He was a Hudson's Bay Company servant obligingly made over to the mission for one year by my friend, Roderick McFarlane. In the mission house built with Macklin's help, I put in my fourth winter in the North, baching it with only Floss as a companion as at Fort Chipewyan. Being now thrown on my own resources for food, I had to put in half my time snaring rabbits, and it being one of the very lean years in the seven-year ebb and flow cycle of rabbit mortality, there were days when my "daily round" was not rewarded with so much as one hare, although one day I caught as many as six Arctic hare—another name for rabbit. My daily average was two rabbits, which would have been ample for myself and dog, but there were others to be thought of. A Beaver Indian, Toonih-ke by name, once a famous hunter, but now bed-ridden with scrofula, was camped thirty steps from my door with his mother, wife and little daughter, the four of them dependent for food on the little they could get from the Hudson's Bay Company and myself.

My own up-bringing demanded when I got back from my snares and fried a rabbit—if I had one to fry—that I should go shares with my neighbours, and well did I know that these principles which had been instilled into me from my childhood were strongly backed up by the communistic principles of the neighbours with whom I now had to do. But that rabbit did smell, oh, so tempting. Nevertheless and forasmuch as I had a conscience and some self-respect and philanthropy, and I contemplated teaching the gospel of charity right where I was in Unjaga for the next half-century, I felt that "I was in for it," and I divided the rabbit. And if I failed to do

so as disinterestedly as I should have done, preferring the promise, “open thy mouth wide and I will fill it” to the other, “cast thy bread upon the waters and thou shalt find it after many days,” perhaps I may be excused.

Poor Too-nih-ke! It was pathetic indeed to hear him speak of the better days he had known, when with a lavish hand he was wont to distribute the fruits of his prowess as a hunter to those whose chief claim upon him was that they had no one to provide for them, and now he was himself in a worse predicament, in that his only helpers could only help him by begging for him and themselves from a half-starving community.

At length the situation became so desperate that he resolved to kill his only horse. It was a young stallion and in good condition. It was killed on the feeding grounds and its meat brought in on a sleigh by one of the Company’s men. The first intimation of the important occurrence I received was one day when I returned from my snares and was getting ready to sit down to my fried rabbit, when the door opened and Too-nih-ke’s mother entered and, approaching, handed me a small chunk of fat boiled meat in a dish.

“*Ha-ta?* Moose,” I asked, and she replied, “*In-too-e klin-chok et-sun*. No, it is horse flesh.”

I was so delighted to find that she had not on this occasion entered to share my good things, but rather with intent to share hers with me, that I very truthfully said as I took the meat, “*Merci, o-ti-a sin-ih-ti-ke*. Thank you, I am very much pleased.”

But when the old lady had gone and I beheld on the piece of flesh the evidence of her culinary methods, with which I was aforesaid familiar, I regretted that she had not brought it in raw. As it was, I simply tasted it, and formed an unfavourable opinion—not of horseflesh generally, but certainly of this particular sample. Then I turned it over to Floss, who, after eating it greedily, gave the usual evidences of canine satisfaction in detail.

A FURLOUGH
AND QUEST
AFTER EQUIPMENT

CHAPTER II

A Furlough and Quest after Equipment

In the year 1871, six years before my arrival at Fort Vermilion, placer gold-mining was flourishing along the upper part of the Peace River, and about two thousand miners were camped at or in the vicinity of Fort St. John's.

When gold could no longer be filtered from the sand-bars in paying quantities, the miners dispersed, with the exception of two or three, among whom was Banjo Mike, an American, who bore the reputation of being an awful swearer. Then there was Nine-foot Davis, another American. Perhaps it was no great harm that Mr. Davis was uneducated, for thereby his kindness often got the better of his smartness. He was engaged in the fur trade during the entire period of my stay in the Peace River, and annually brought in an outfit of goods from British Columbia. Another live-wire relic of the St. John's mining camp was Dan Williams, a negro who was familiarly known in the country as Nigger Dan. This man had taken up a squatter's claim, over which there had arisen a dispute between himself and the representatives of the Hudson's Bay Company, the latter claiming that it encroached upon the reservation which was allowed in connection with the fort by the Dominion Government, and the latter emphatically declaring, whenever he got a chance, that he was not going to be imposed upon by any blasted monopoly. He expressed a similar resolve by posting up a notice on a tree, which, standing conspicuously by the road, he selected as marking the dividing line between his land and that of the Company. The notice read thus:

DAN WILLIAMS
A Loyal British Subject
Who objects to be trodden upon
By any man except
Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria.



The Story

The last of the St. John's miners whom I am going to mention is Mr. Edward Armson, an Englishman. With his beautiful wife, who was of Blackfoot extraction, he

came from the Saskatchewan to the Peace River via Lesser Slave Lake. My informants were an Iroquois named Bulldog and his Cree wife. According to the latter, they were passionately attached to one another, and physically and in other respects were a splendid couple. Mrs. Bulldog also said that before the dispersion of the miners Mrs. Armson met with an accident. One day, about July 1st, while felling a small dry tree for fuel, her hatchet slipped and landed on the second toe of her left foot, laying it open to the bone lengthwise and partly dividing the nail. With the application of simple but efficacious remedies the wound soon healed, leaving, however, a scar which extended to the nail in the form of a ridge along its centre.

In the autumn when Armson left St. John's in a dugout, along with his wife, he gave out that he would trap during the winter to the south of the Peace River and in spring return to the Saskatchewan, going out as he had come in, via Lesser Slave Lake and the Athabasca River. But after leaving St. John's they were never seen or heard from again, and for eighteen years their fate remained one of the mysteries of the forest.



In the meantime, try to understand what was my position among the Beaver Indians. I had been praying for well on to thirty years that God would be pleased to make "His ways known to all sorts and conditions of men, and His saving health unto all nations." Visualize me, then, standing among them and saying, "*Sa-o-ti-noo tsa-o-ti-na*, my Beaver Indian friends, I have prayed thus and thus for such as you for nearly thirty years, and now I have come to you to show you how to obtain this *saving health*." Had I gone on to say that I referred primarily to spiritual health, might they not have felt that my remarks were a travesty on their wretched physical condition? Indeed, I sometimes heard from some of them remarks which in fairness could be construed into a reply such as this: "After what we and our congeners have suffered from yours, don't talk to us about spiritual health until you have applied an antidote to that 'white peril' which is carrying us off like rabbits."

As a result of his visit to the Beavers in 1868 Bishop Bompas gave it as his opinion that no human power could save them from extinction, and when I arrived among them eight years later my observations very soon led me to the conclusion that he was right; but, mark you, the good Bishop only said that "no human power" could save them; and straightway I bethought me of what would happen if the Supreme "no-human-power" would be pleased to commandeer our resources—our

philanthropy, our statesmanship, our science. Might it not then be permitted us to redeem the dying remnant of this tribe as some fitting amends for what we had taken from them? Were we to apply for their benefit that knowledge which we so assiduously apply in our own behalf? Might it not be possible even now so to cleanse their blood from scrofula that when a Beaver infant was brought into the world it would have a reasonable prospect of living out all its days?

I felt in my bones that here was a mighty problem, in the solving of which money was an important factor, and as I did not have enough of it to be able to sign cheques for the one-thousandth of what was needed, I resolved that, with the Bishop's consent, I would have a go at the problem anyway, and collect enough to make a beginning, even if I did foresee a disagreeable notoriety.

I suppose I must have loved the Beaver Indians before I could have mustered hope enough to resolve as above, for we are told that "*love hopeth all things*"; but I do not go so far as to say positively that I *did love* them. The preliminary to that I always felt was a thorough wash for every one of them. However, taking them just as they were, I can honestly say that I *liked* them. Dirty they might be, and lazy, too, but I did not lose sight of the extenuating circumstances, and when one of them would come up to me, and, looking me straight in the eye, say, with child-like simplicity, "*Nwas-tych, I like you,*" when also I noticed that, sickly as they were, they lived up to a reputation acquired in better days, of being good fighters who would die game, I had to like them, and I did.

Even in those days the settling of Indians on reserves was considered advisable so as to save them from too intimate contact with the whites. Also the Industrial Indian Boarding School was coming into favour as an effective agency in the civilizing of the Indians.

There was, therefore, no reason to doubt the soundness of Bishop Bompas's plan to establish a boarding-school on the Peace River or some other part of his diocese. Owing, however, to the difficulty of transport, the cost of establishing and maintaining such an establishment at that time was bound to be very heavy indeed; but I doubt if my good Bishop, son of Sergeant Buzfuz, bothered much about making an estimate. He was a man of faith, and I presume that in his experience he had found that the wherewithal to carry out his plans was always provided like so much manna in the wilderness.

With a faith doubtless less unworldly than this, I felt that the coming of the manna was likely to be more timely if somebody went after it, and forasmuch as I was beginning to feel the strain of solitude, I asked the Bishop for a year's furlough, and also his sanction to collect funds for the proposed boarding-school. This he granted,

and also commissioned me to engage a schoolteacher and a farmer.

By this time I had relinquished the ambition to be principal of an Indian boarding-school; but I still hoped that when one was established it might be in the district where I was working, and felt that the Peace River was well adapted for the purpose, because it had the soil from which could be extracted nearly all the necessary food; and to teach the young natives how this could be done, looked to me like putting into their hands the "staff of life," of which none could be in greater need than they. I had a good precedent, and it is not to be wondered at that I was predisposed to work on these lines, since I had sat for twelve years under the preaching of Archdeacon Cochrane, who, of all our earliest missionaries in the Red River Settlement, was the most revered and successful, and whose policy in the evangelizing of the Indians, uniformly was to work the gospel and agricultural plows side by side.

To the best of my knowledge Bishop Bompas was in perfect accord with the late famous Archdeacon in this matter, and I was instructed to engage a farmer and also a schoolteacher, while away on furlough. As for the outlay for equipment which must necessarily be involved in the employment of two men for the positions named I received no definite instructions, and I was afraid to press him on that point or to submit for his inspection an estimate of the probable cost, lest he might be afraid and postpone the carrying out of the plan to a more convenient season; so I had to be satisfied with general instructions verbally given. However, I had this comforting reflection—even supposing I might find it necessary to draw rather heavily on such funds as the Bishop might have at his disposal, since I was going to collect funds for the school, the financial resources of the mission would not be likely to suffer at my hands.

The estimate which I should like to have submitted to the bishop would have called for an outlay of over five thousand dollars, but, in the absence of any explicit instructions from him regarding the matter, I determined to be on the safe side, so all that could be charged to mission account as outfit for either farm or school, in consequence of any action of mine, did not amount to over five hundred dollars, and I am glad to this day that my cautiousness got the better of my ambition.

During a part of the time that I was absent Bishop Bompas filled my place at Unjaga, which, so far as I know, is the nearest I ever got to becoming a bishop, unless when I filled *his* place for a time at Fort Simpson. I was very pleased to be able to leave behind me for his delectation a splendid garden just about fit to use at the time of my departure. I was also thankful to have been able to bark-roof the mission house before leaving, for in the previous autumn I had only got as far as

covering the roof-poles with a mixture of clay and chopped hay. That worked all right during winter; but when spring came and with it a heavy rain at midnight, the roof leaked in a hundred places, and soon an admonitory drop hit me on the head, causing me to rise quickly and look for a dryer spot. Finding one that looked promising, I drew my table over it and underneath the table made myself a shake-down; but long before morning light appeared the extending puddles were beginning to interfere with my comfort.

I made the journey as far as Fort Chipewyan in a scow which the Company was sending there in charge of two men, one of whom was a negro, and the other a French half-caste. The negro had been a year at Fort Dunvegan and his fame as Nigger Tom had spread far and wide. Tom was a giant of a man and an extraordinary character. He had left South Carolina shortly after the abolition of slavery in 1862, and since then had been travelling northward, mostly on foot, working his way, but taking no money, because money, according to his lopsided view, brought little satisfaction to its possessor. He seemed to love work for its own sake, for one day when the wind was as strong as the current, so that we could not go forward, he built the walls and roof of a negro cabin, just to show me, he said, what one was like. That he was not making very good time on his erratic journey will be seen by the fact that it had taken him five years to cover the distance between South Carolina and the Peace River. He said his northern objective was Alaska, and that when he left there he would travel homeward, keeping west of the Rockies as far as he could.

One day I said to him, "Have you a wife, Tom?"

"Oh, yes," said he. "I have a wife."

"What do you suppose will become of her while you are tramping over the world after this fashion?"

"Ha, ha, ha-a-a! She can look after herself better than I can."

"A case of separation, was it?"

"Well, no, not quite that. I just said to her, 'bein' I ain't a slave no mo', Mirandi, I goin' to enjoy ma liberty. I goin' to travel.'"

"And what did she say?"

"She say, 'Aw-a-right, Tom. Hab a good time when yo' can, an' I'll do the same, an' if yo' eva come back any mo' you jis' take a chance of what yo' fine.'"

"And I suppose you gave her a great hug and came away?"

"Yo' jis' said it! Hah ha-a-a!"

John Bushie was the name of the other man. He also was a big man, but not nearly as entertaining as the negro. In the matter of religion they were at opposite

poles, Bushie being a Roman Catholic, while Tom was a Methodist. And I may say that on this journey he was more of a chaplain to Bushie than I was, due to the fact that my mess was separate from theirs, as I found it wise to respect in this matter the custom of the Company's officials and my fellow missionaries.

Perhaps it did not necessarily follow that because we had two messes we should have two graces, but that is what did follow. When everything was ready, Tom and John sat cross-legged facing each other. Then the former heaved a great sigh and, rolling his eyes towards the heavens, he seemed to sense a presence there as he said in a loud voice, "Oh, Lord!" and then went on with his grace, which never took less than a minute in the delivery; and in the meantime, with eyes not quite closed, I noticed that the Frenchman, with his mouth wide open, was staring at his companion with an awesome, mystified expression which remained there until Tom had finished his grace. Perhaps it was drawing the colour line rather severely; but I always had another grace in silence after Tom was through. As Tom prayed three times daily and prayed aloud, I got to know a number of his favourite petitions—this one in particular:

"O Lord, thou knowest that I am but a poor coloured man who can neither read nor write; but I'm resolved that I'll do right, and say my prayers at morning, noon and night."

As showing that no person was likely to live long in the North without getting a chance to meet Bishop Bompas, I may say that this negro had met him. And it turned out that in a discussion about prayer the Bishop had told him that his prayers were likely to be just as effective if he said them in silence.

"And what did you say?" I asked.

"I said that I felt that my loud prayers were my best, and that my best were none too good for the Lord, and that sometimes it might help a fellow when he heard another fellow speaking to the Lord."

Until the last day of our journey Tom conducted himself in the exemplary manner which was to be expected of a converted person; but on that particular day the emissaries of the Arch Fiend would seem to have discovered the weak spot in his spiritual armour.

Late in the evening we had reached the Quatre Forche River, which encloses one side of a delta and connects at its north-west end with the Peace River and at its south-east end with the Athabasca Lake. On examination of the Quatre Forche we found that it had no current, showing that the Peace River and Athabasca Lake were at this time at the same level, and showing also that we were going to have a very hard time to reach Fort Chipewyan the next day. All the provision that we had for

the said next day was about a pound of dried pounded fish and flour with which Tom said he would make us “a sma’ mush in de mawnin’.”

After discussing the situation Tom proceeded to get out some fish hooks on the chance of getting a fish during the night. The hooks and string were badly entangled, and the mosquitoes were in swarms. Tom did the best he could, I doubt not, and he endured it for a time; but at length the “old man” had to have his fling, and he let himself go, and in language which will not bear repeating he denounced the mosquitoes and consigned them to that bad place from which—he expressed the opinion—they must have originated.

Next day we arrived at Fort Chipewyan, having left the scow at the south-east end of the Quatre Forche, and with a dugout which we secured there, crossed over to the fort.

I found the mission there evidently making progress. Beside the little shack which I had built in 1874, there stood a mission building which was much more pretentious in style and dimensions. The scholastic work commenced by me had been going on steadily ever since, and I could see that my old pupils were being well equipped morally and intellectually to discharge the duties of life.

Several boats left for Methy Portage two days after my arrival. Thanks to the friendship and influence of Mr. McFarlane, the arrangements made for my journey as far as Fort Garry were all that I could have desired. I was introduced to a Mr. Thomas Spence, a Hudson’s Bay officer who was going out on furlough. He was my senior by a good many years, and had lived in the North five times as long as I had. He extended to me the usual courtesies permitted by the Company to missionaries travelling by their boats. He proved an agreeable and interesting companion. He was Scottish and had known some Garriochs in the Old Country and pronounced my name as a tri-syllable—long, broad and guttural, thus, Ghar-ri-ohck.

While the fur-laden boats were being towed up the Athabasca River at the rate of four miles an hour, he often found a useful topic of conversation in some object on the bank or in the appearance of the banks themselves, or in the character of the country lying farther back as far as he knew it from observation and enquiry.

He became particularly eloquent as we approached the junction of the Athabasca and Clearwater rivers where the banks of tar-sand rise to a height of several hundred feet.

“Mr. Ghar-ri-ohck,” said he, “we Canadians have a grand heritage right here in this north country, don’t you think? I believe that the day draws near when the development of the natural resources of this country shall begin in earnest; and then the opinion now advanced only by the daring and optimistic few shall be

demonstrated as perfectly sound—the opinion that we have here a country so roomy, a soil so rich, a climate so salubrious, if somewhat stern, as to be capable of providing comfortable homes to a population of millions. You think so don't you? Eh? Eh?

“Then shall many a hill and many a valley, in response to the miner's pick and shovel, his drill and explosives, give up their secrets of fabulous wealth which they have so successfully concealed for ages. And the hills and valleys, the plains and forests which in these days we comb out for food so diligently and yet so unsuccessfully that at times they barely yield us the means of existence, shall in those days laugh and sing as they respond to the arts of husbandry and those of many other callings. When those days come, Mr. Ghar-ri-ohck, you won't have to fry a rabbit or a flap-jack. Will you? Eh? Eh?”

“A precious gold mine is about to be discovered, and the gold of that mine is good, for it will be found in the fields of golden grain that shall ripple and sway in summer and autumn breezes, and the swish of the grain as it sways this way and that shall whisper to the listening ear sweet assurance of comfort and plenty when sterner winds shall blow. Don't you think so? Eh? Eh?”

“I can foresee that before very long these great rivers will be spanned by wonderful bridges beneath which steamers will pass to and fro, freighted with the grain, fish, salt, oil, coal and other products of the country; and these signs of commercial prosperity will be largely due to the districts of which we hear very little to-day, as well as those beautiful places which have evoked our admiration—those ideal spots where the lay of the land with its disposition of hill and dale, prairie and bush, and a gurgling, sparkling stream meandering through it all, puts the thought into one's head of throwing all other prospects to the winds in order to take the chances of the squatter before it is too late. We have both felt that way, I know. Eh? Eh?”

“And doubtless many of the places to which we now apply the name of fort or depot or post or landing will have grown into towns or cities of considerable importance. And whereas now you poor missionaries are ready to go through fire and water, and are at your wits' end to obtain funds wherewith to build one Indian industrial school, the funds would be forthcoming wherewith to finance a half-dozen palatial . . .” There Mr. Spence came to a dead stop because the tracking line had caught on the branch of a tree lying out in the river, and a young Scotsman, Sandy by name, had gingerly walked out on the offending log and in co-operation with a man on land had swung the line clear of all obstructions; but, alas, with the swing he overbalanced and came down flop into the river, thereby interrupting Mr. Spence's eulogies of the Peace River, because every one except Sandy was giving way to

uncontrollable laughter.

A little later some one asked Sandy why he had not joined the others in the laugh.

“Augh,” he replied. “You don’t catch me laughing at any such dry jokes.”

“Now where was I when the accident occurred?” queried Mr. Spence.

“Palatial was the last word,” I answered, and, continuing, I said, “Your views, Mr. Spence, respecting the future of this country pretty well coincide with my own; but I could not help thinking that in your prognostications you did not voice the opinions of the Hudson’s Bay Company.”

“Well, you see, since the Transfer the climate has been warming up northwards in the van of civilization, and the Company’s agents not being unobservant of the fact, their opinions have changed in accordance. Nevertheless, they were just as sincere in their previous opinions as in those of the present. I suppose that’s reasonable. Eh? Eh?”

“Certainly, Mr. Spence. And it is clear to me that the representatives of the Hudson’s Bay Company at Fort Garry were justified in the adverse opinions they held with respect to the adaptability of this country for wheat growing purposes, forasmuch as the settlers beside them on the banks of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, after their experiences of June and August frosts, with a rare exception, came to the conclusion that the wheat line lay near whereabouts they were located, and so uncomfortably near that sometimes they had reason to think that they might be on the wrong side of it. Besides all this, I do not lose sight of the fact that although the band of adventurers who came out to the Hudson’s Bay in 1670 came out as fur-traders and not as grain growers, they nevertheless later aided those who were raising grain by providing them a market which was reasonably well up to their powers of production. In this respect I may say that three generations of Garriochs have benefited, beginning with that of my grandfather, Mr. William Garrioch, who came to the country in the service of the Company and during the last twenty years of his life was a settler at Middle Church. For myself, after having had ample opportunity of studying the Company’s policy, sometimes at very close quarters, as at present, I can say without hesitation that in its dealings both with the whites and the Indians, that policy has always been considerate, fair and paternal.”

“While listening to you, Mr. Garrioch, it has occurred to me that all the Hudson’s Bay Company need to do, to come into its own, is that which, no doubt, you have often seen its officials do in the North—put on a good fire in the chimney, get the pipe going nicely, tilt the *babiche bottom* chair back, stick the feet upon the table, and smoke and smile in peace. It has no need to worry. In due time it will be

admitted, on the authority of tongues and pens which function to the dictates of cool heads and warm hearts, that the Company ruled circumspectly, barring, perhaps, a few *misrepresentatives*. Eh? Eh?"

Arriving at Fort McMurray we stopped only long enough to climb the lofty bank and to admire Mr. Harry Moberly's splendid garden; then once more the crews bent their backs to the tracking line, this time in the ascent of the Clearwater River, which proved so shallow in places that occasionally both poles and tracking line had to be used.

Two days later we arrived at Methy Portage and camped at the north end. Next day we "went over the top," so to speak, by going over the contiguous rims of two of the largest basins in the world—those of the Saskatchewan and Mackenzie rivers. This portage is twelve miles long and transportation over it was by means of oxen and carts. We walked over and made better time than the oxen.

Having now crossed what the *voyageurs* sometimes referred to as "the hate-a-land" (height of land), we were to travel down-stream all the way to Lake Winnipeg; a fact over which expressions of satisfaction were to be heard on all hands as positions were taken up in the York boats which ply to and from the south end of Methy Portage. These boats were manned almost entirely by Crees from the Cumberland and Pas districts.

We had delightful going over the La Loche River and lake, over Lac Ile à la Crosse and over the first part of the English River; then we came to a number of bad rapids, at some of which the cargoes had to be carried over a portage, although at others neither passengers nor cargoes had to be landed. For an exhilarating experience put me in a boat which has to fly down a long rapid under the control of an expert steersman, or let me stand on terra firma and witness a similar performance with an additional slice of danger to those in the boat, for, then, as the poet says, "distance lends enchantment to the scene."

There was one steersman in particular whose performance it was a pleasure to watch, from a safe position on land. He was a Cree half-caste, tall, straight and supple, who, when about to negotiate one of these dangerous places, tied a bright red handkerchief folded into a band around his head, ostensibly to prevent his long hair from getting into his eyes, but, in reality, I believe, to make his appearance more picturesque, for when the boat went flying down-stream, the two long ends of the red handkerchief floated straight out behind. If he felt proud over his achievement as his boat glided into smooth waters I did not blame him, and in the sigh which I threw in his direction, envy and admiration struggled for the mastery.

I expect our unfortunate steersman, Simon, felt that way about it, too, for while

not nearly as striking in appearance as the other man, he was more striking in the matter of hitting stones, and in his last performance of this kind subjected us to a hair-raising experience when he struck a boulder in mid-stream, thereby causing a plank to be staved in and the boat to be held fast, and although it soon floated clear and the crew pulled furiously for the shore, just as the prow touched land the rest of the boat went down, submerging the valuable cargo of some thirty or forty packs of fur. Orders then flew thick and fast from others besides Mr. Spence, and among them this one, "Boy, look out for the pemmican!"

Fortunately, the accident occurred where there was a suitable place for spreading out the furs to dry, and the day also being favourable, this was done at once; but time could not be spared and when early the next day the boat had been repaired, the furs, poorly dried and rebaled, had to be replaced in the boats.

On the night following our arrival at Stanley Mission there was a dance, and when the voyage was resumed the next morning there was to be noticed a buxom Indian lass sitting near the prow of the boat. The uninformed might have supposed that one of the crew had picked up his wife in passing.

When we landed at the next portage Simon came to me trying to look sad and serious; but with an ill-suppressed grin which belied his sincerity. "That fella' Barnum," he said, "he's not a good fella'. He bring away that gal with not a thing. Not right, and I blamed sure because um steersman. What kun I do to-night? I speak to him jis now and he only laugh and say, '*A-yun-i-ha-i-yi-nio*, the praying man. You get him to splice us.'

"Then I goes to Julie and I tells her what Barnum he says, and she says, 'Yes, that's what Barnum he says last night, and that's why I came away this morning.'

"What you say, sir?"

In the North I had heard the name Jonah jocularly applied to a minister when anything went amiss with the boat in which he was taking passage, and it occurred to me that this was a case in which the proper thing for Jonah to do was to tackle the whale, so I said to Simon, "All right, I don't like it very much, but I'll marry them."

"That's good, sir. It will make it look much better."

Had I told Simon what I thought I might have told him, that Julie had evidently decided to let looks go by the board when she consented to mate with such an ugly scamp as Barnum; instead, however, I said, "Simon, you are right. This thing has to be attended to to-day. You arrange the time and place and leave the rest to me."

Accordingly, while he was running the rapid, I had Barnum and Julie, Mr. Spence and another witness assemble under the shade of a jack-pine, and there the ceremony was duly performed. I cannot remember whether the "bride looked

charming,” but I distinctly remember that there was not a single kiss and, vividly, that there was no fee.

Soon after this we were joined by Mr. Willoughby Clark of Winnipeg, who had been freighting supplies to Moose Lake in connection with the Indian treaty. Receiving from him the offer of a passage to Winnipeg, I accepted on finding out that by doing so I would reach Winnipeg a few days earlier.

In passing St. Peter’s I called on Archdeacon Cowley, who was looking hearty as ever, and he surprised and pleased me by asking about my dog, Floss.

I spent part of a day in Winnipeg, paying my respects to friends in the old haunts at St. John’s, Point Douglas and Fort Garry. At this last-named place I invested in a pair of shoes as I had noticed so many people glancing at my moccasined feet.

On the following day I was once more at the old home at Portage la Prairie, which at this time was still the home of nearly half of the family, viz. my father and mother, my three younger sisters, Jessie, Maria and Winnie, and my younger brother, Scott. The house was the one which had been occupied by the rest of us before we went off on our respective ways. It was known as Glen Cottage and was the second built by my father on this squatter’s claim in Portage la Prairie. The first was built in 1854 and Glen Cottage was built in 1866, when I, being then eighteen years of age, was sufficiently a man to take part in its construction. In this house I rested for a month, feeling that there was indeed no place like home. Then I resumed my journey to Montreal.

Characters introduced here which are common to both Story and Narrative

At this time a stage-coach line was in operation between Winnipeg and Grand Forks, connecting at the latter place with the Great Northern Railway. Seven others besides myself had booked passage on the stage, and hardly had the wheels commenced to revolve behind the tightening traces of four splendid horses when one of the male passengers looked at me and pleasantly remarked interrogatively, “Mr. Garrioch, a missionary lately from the great Peace River country?”

“Yes, sir,” I replied. “Your information, from whatever source derived, is quite correct.”

He replied, “I have the good fortune to be acquainted with your friends, the McDonalds of Point Douglas, who told me of your being the bearer of news from their brothers in the North, and the name on your suitcase told me the rest.

“Perhaps a few more introductions would not be amiss, and I may say that my name is Ernest Vining—that I am an American engaged in the real estate business, that the lady beside me is Mrs. Vining, who persists in retaining her Canadian citizenship, and that this seven-year-old young lady is our daughter.” The child thus referred to was a beautiful little girl, a brunette, with particularly lovely eyes. Indicating a gentleman sitting beside a lady, he introduced the two as Mr. and Mrs. C——, of St. Paul, and he added, “Should any of you gentlemen be stopping off at St. Paul, and want a clean and comfortable hotel, let me recommend the one owned by Mr. C——, in the management of which he is charmingly assisted.” Mrs. C—— bowed, laughed, and said, “Thank you.”

The remaining passengers then introduced themselves by name. They were Canadians, surveyors, and on the younger side of middle age. They had been surveying in the North-west and were returning to Eastern Canada.

At the first stopping-place Mr. Vining handed round some bread and cheese while the horses were being changed. The cheese had green streaks, and mites also were easily discernible. Mrs. C—— gave her portion careful inspection, then gave a polite shriek and said, “Mr. Vining, please, please, thank you all the same!” and handed it back. The others pronounced the article first-class; but owing to the mites I cannot say that I enjoyed it any more than I did Too-nih-ka’s horse.

After having been thus induced to give ourselves away—that is to say, to be introduced—we went on following Mr. Vining’s lead by showing a friendly interest in the general conversation which followed. And coming as I did from a country of which at that time little was known beyond its happy name, *Peace*, I soon had to answer many questions about its inhabitants, soil, climate and general characteristics, and when I had done so to the best of my ability there followed a discussion as to whether the coming of the whites to the Indians was really the blessing to the latter which some claimed it to be. In the course of this discussion one of the surveyors remarked that at any rate the whites had shown a fine sense of the fitness of things in that, while they were spoiling the Indians’ country, they sent them missionaries to tell them how they might obtain a better: “To say to them,” said the other surveyor, “we have both lost paradise, but we may both regain it.” And I added, “Yes, in that way we refine instead of destroying their faith in a happy hunting ground.”

When still some miles from Emerson, the international boundary line furnished a new topic of conversation, for, as we all knew from experience, the forty-ninth parallel was no imaginary line. I had crossed it myself in 1868, at which time, as I remembered, two American officials had met the brigade of Red River carts along with which I travelled, and had smilingly asked a number of questions before

permitting us to pass on to the land of the stars and stripes. On that occasion I learned a little about “*the customs*” and I learned a good deal more on this occasion as I listened to sane and friendly arguments for and against reciprocity.

MR. C—: “I look upon the policy of protection as fostered by the suspicion that your neighbour will do you up if you give him the chance, and that it therefore becomes necessary to study how to prevent it.”

ONE OF THE SURVEYORS: “Well, assuming that free trade is the better policy, and perhaps it is, how should the United States and Canada go about introducing it?”

MR. VINING: “I think many Americans have asked that question honestly. What I would like to see would be a proposal from the American Government to the Canadian Government, to give reciprocity a trial for one year, or even two, and were this done I feel confident that it would work out in the interests of both nations.”

CANADIAN NO. 2: “At any rate, it would be a famous experiment. And supposing it worked out all right, what a scrapping of tariff machinery would follow!”

MRS. C—: “Then just think of how much more truthful and honest the two peoples would become if they did not have to run the gauntlet of the customs, a pretty hard thing to do successfully these days with crinoline and padding gone out of fashion.”

MR. VINING: “My American husband tells me that many Canadians have asked the question honestly: ‘How is reciprocity to be brought about?’ My answer is this—by reciprocity between the two governments in acts of courtesy on all possible occasions *plus a square deal*. We are both proud of our international boundary because its sole protection is a friendship more invulnerable than a Chinese wall; but isn’t it about time that we got beyond nice speeches about the secret of our undefendedness. And I think if two great nations such as ours were to enter into rivalry with each other in the matter of giving rather than getting a square deal, reciprocity would very soon come; in fact, it could not be prevented. And I think it is up to the Americans to take the lead in bringing about so practical an achievement, for in our relationship to the motherland America is the older son, and naturally the younger son looks to the older for an example, and if the past be wisely remembered the example should be a good one, for both Canada and the motherland have ever shown a willingness to go at least half-way in their dealings with America. To mention just one instance—the concession made to America in the settlement of the dispute over the Oregon territory.”

MR. C—: “Well, Madam, I’ll admit that we Americans have been rather hard on the good old mother; but let me say this, that although there are Americans of a certain stripe who cordially hate her, we of the old stock can never forget from

whence we sprang. Why should we not wish only good to the Britishers since we are bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh? And if ever Great Britain has her night of peril, we'll be there to stand by her till the morning.”

MRS. VINING (with tears in her voice): “Thank you.”

The stage was timed to make connection with the train at Grand Forks, which it did; and our party went forward undivided and without delay. At St. Paul, however, the two surveyors went on, while the others, myself included, took the bus for Mr. C's hotel.

The Vinings' own place was rented, but they pressed me to be their guest at the hotel, and I accepted, partly because I had taken a liking to them, and partly because I wanted to learn about the Americans at home, and felt that I could do so to advantage under the friendly auspices of the Vinings. My wish seemed to have been anticipated, and I was introduced to some very nice people, and spent two pleasant evenings in American homes, which, I was assured, were typical of the rest. And after this insight into American home life, I must say that I thought more highly of the American people, which is not strange, since my previous knowledge of them was derived mainly from sources which, I have since thought, were not immune from prejudice.



Lily Vining, a Leading Character in the Story

Before the Vinings and I parted at St. Paul they took me into their confidence about Lily Vining, informing me that she was not their own child, but only adopted as such. And that she had been turned over to them by a free trader at Edmonton, according to whose account she was a piece of flotsam and jetsam from the Peace River. This information led me to look with fresh interest at the beautiful child; and when Mr. Vining told me at parting that his business would probably take him again before long to the north-west, when, unless I were too utterly inaccessible, he would look me up, I gave him a hearty and pressing invitation to return my visit, or at least give me a chance to renew our acquaintance: for even at that time I felt a mysterious prompting to learn all I could of the history of Lily Vining, in spite of the fact that I considered myself indifferent to a fault regarding the private affairs of everybody but myself, I now found myself anxious to find footprints of a little lamb—whose fleece, I felt sure, would always be as white as snow—leading all the way from the valley of

the Peace River to that of the Mississippi.



Not until I reached Montreal did I realize the magnitude of the work ahead, which I had either offered to undertake or had been asked to undertake in the interests of the mission. It was the voluntary or self-imposed part which bothered me most, and although I did not *look back*, I'll admit that I looked every other way. I looked for friends and I found them. First among them was the one person in Montreal with whom I was personally acquainted, viz. Mrs. Bompas, who, as stated in the previous chapter, was my hostess during the winter I spent at Fort Simpson. I had last met her in Holy Trinity Rectory, Winnipeg, on my arrival from the North. She was then the guest of Archdeacon and Mrs. Fortin. In Montreal I found her in the General Hospital, where she was taking up a course in nursing. At this time she was over fifty years of age and far from robust, and as I looked upon her frail body I felt pity, but when I reflected that "measured by her soul" she was a heroine, my pity gave place to admiration.

Of the Montreal Anglican clergy I can say that it was not very hard to love the lot of them; and that I could not help it in the case of such men as Bishop Bond, Canon Dumoulin, Archdeacon Evans and Archdeacon Lindsay.

I found friends among the laity as quickly as among the clergy. It came about in this manner. When making the trip over the prairies in ox carts, as already described, stopping at Fort Ellice for lunch, I met there Andrew Maxwell, a young architect from Montreal, also my sister, Flora, who was visiting there. This meeting between these two young people later culminated in marriage, and thereby I virtually secured a passport to the good graces of the large and influential family of Maxwells in Montreal.

On consulting Bishop Bond about a schoolteacher, he referred me to Professor Hicks, principal of the normal school; and calling upon the professor I found that there would be no trouble in executing that part of my commission. Professor Hicks particularly recommended a Mr. E. J. Lawrence, of whom he said, "He is a man, who, in any community of which he becomes a member, will make himself felt." This interview I at once followed up with a visit to Mr. Lawrence and his family, and after obtaining satisfactory references, I entered into an agreement with him, according to which in the following spring he and Mrs. Lawrence, who also was a schoolteacher, with their three young children, were to be given a passage to Fort Chipewyan,

where they were to receive instructions from Bishop Bompas as to their future movements.

In my quest after a farmer I was aided by Miss Bompas, a sister of the Bishop. She was an elderly spinster and so friendly and sensible that it was a pleasure to meet her. She lived at Lennoxville and had recommended a Mr. Martin of that district to the Bishop. On visiting Mr. Martin, with whom I stayed for two days, I found him a thoroughly competent man; but as he did not feel justified in accepting the position at the salary which I was authorized to offer, we did not enter into any arrangement.

In the matter of collecting funds for the proposed Industrial Indian Boarding School I met with but poor results, so poor that after canvassing four months I had collected less than six hundred dollars.

My lack of success I attribute first of all to an un compelling personality; secondly, to the fact of my not being a bishop, but only the humble deputy of a bishop, and he, as I too well knew, though overflowing with missionary zeal, lacking in zeal as a money-getter. These facts were ever present with me, and the recollection that in giving me his permission to collect he had not done so with the enthusiasm or decisiveness which go so far to inspire confidence and ensure success; and, lastly, it is only comparatively true that "the oftener you milk a cow the more milk you will get," and the Montreal missionary cow had evidently been milked pretty dry by Bishop McLean of Saskatchewan before I came along, for he was a man of compelling personality—a man physically and mentally of the size which cannot be looked down—a man in whose uncommon eloquence there seemed to be something of hypnotic influence, so that when a tight-wad loosened up to the extent of one hundred dollars, he was liable later on to ask himself why he had done it. Had Bishop McLean returned, no doubt the missionary cow would have submitted to another milking; but to poor me it refused to let down, squeezed I never so hard.

Before leaving Montreal I consulted several of the leading physicians respecting the scrofulous condition of the Beaver Indians, asking them if anything could be done to save the tribe from extinction. The consensus thus obtained might be expressed in the one word—hopeless. Therefore, when I went back to the Peace River, it was with the opinion confirmed, that my work there so far as the Beavers were concerned lay chiefly in the amelioration of their hard lot.

MONTREAL
TO
UNJAGA

CHAPTER III

Montreal to Unjaga

I returned to Portage la Prairie early in March and found awaiting me there a letter from my bishop, in answer to two which I had written—one on my arrival in Winnipeg from the North, and the other on my arrival in Montreal; for at that time the means of communication was so slow that it required from six months to a year for a letter and the answer thereto to pass between the North and Winnipeg or Eastern Canada, or *vice versa*.

In writing to the Bishop from Montreal I wrote optimistically about Mrs. Bompas, knowing that he had occasion to be and was sometimes anxious about her proneness to overtax her strength. I wrote him that she was doing splendidly and that she and I were having a good time; and in answer he wrote that he was having a “nice, quiet time at Unjaga.” He also instructed me to collaborate with Rev. Richard Young, incumbent at St. Andrew’s, who had succeeded Archdeacon Cowley as C.M.S. Secretary, with respect to the mission party and supplies which had to be forwarded to Athabasca.

On asking my brother George, who was two years my senior, if he knew of any one he could recommend as suited to start a mission farm on the Peace River, he surprised me by saying he would be willing to undertake that himself. And I accepted his offer, not because he was my brother, but because I knew him to be a good farmer, and otherwise a better man than I.

On coming to discuss the matter of transport with Rev. Mr. Young, I found that there would be fourteen in the mission party going north, viz. Mrs. Bompas, Miss Pritchard, a young lady going out as assistant and companion to Mrs. Bompas, Reverends Sims and Spendlove, two young men assigned to the Mackenzie River district, Mr. E. J. and Mrs. Lawrence and their children, Susie, Fred and Fennie, Mr. and Mrs. George Garrioch and their two-year-old daughter, Ella, William Fidler, a young man from Middle Church, hired to relieve me of some of the secular work at Unjaga, and myself. It was arranged that the entire party, with supplies, should travel by Red River cart and buckboards as far as Carlton on the North Saskatchewan, where, after crossing the river, those whose destinations were Fort Chipewyan or the Mackenzie River were to go on with their vehicles as far as Green Lake, and there, transferring to York boats, continue their journey still northward, while my brother and I were to turn westward, following the Saskatchewan River until we reached Edmonton, where we would dispose of our rolling stock and find other

means of going forward to our respective destinations.

In accordance with this arrangement, and for the purpose of ensuring a simple and correct statement of expenditure, I kept the two sections of the party distinct from the start, by not "having all things in common." We had two messes. Mrs. Young arranged all that was necessary about the one, and my brother and I all that was necessary about the other.

To provide transport for Mrs. Bompas and party and their supplies, a contract was entered into with Mr. J.S., a farmer of Headingly, who supplied the necessary carts and light waggons.

For the carrying of ourselves and effects my brother and I provided five carts, a buckboard and a buggy, and to draw these vehicles, five horses and two oxen. In addition, my brother took a cow and a male yearling colt, sired by King Tom, a general purpose English horse owned by Martin Burnell. The object in taking the colt along was the improvement of the Peace River breed of horses.

On May 13, 1879, we had a dismissal service in Christ Church, Winnipeg, when Archdeacon Cowley addressed a few words to us individually. Owing to the badness of the roads to Portage la Prairie, we sent up most of our freight by one of the three steamers plying on the Assiniboine. Mrs. Bompas also went as far as Portage by steamer. The entire brigade of carts and lighter vehicles which rolled out from Portage la Prairie on a fine morning—May 22, 1879—numbered about twenty-five. Seventeen of these belonged to the two sections of the mission contingent, and the rest to a freighter who travelled in the wake of our party, evidently by arrangement between Mr. J. S. and himself, in harmony, no doubt, with the proverb, "the more the merrier." When our carts got in line and moved forward they presented an interesting sight, and sometimes gave forth an interesting sound, the burden of which was something like this: we-e-e-e-e, que-e-e-e-e, ch-e-e-e-e. There was some doubt as to the consonant favoured, but no doubt at all about their being in accord on the vowel "e," which they pronounced not inelegantly to the listening ears of those who were interested in the good things whose weight was the cause of the squeal.

I was disgusted on beginning this journey to find that no longer might one go direct to Westbourne by following as of yore the time-honoured thoroughfare extending all the way to the Saskatchewan, and that because the Dominion Government had failed to do justice to the pre-transfer pioneers of Portage la Prairie when it ran its checker-board survey over the southern portion of this time-honoured trail. In consequence of this action of the Government of that day, the only way by which our party could reach Westbourne was by Totogan, where the Rat Creek

connects with Lake Manitoba. Arriving there we found that the creek passed through the homestead of a Mr. Shannon, who had securely fenced it in, and had moreover placed a bridge over it made of round logs which touched the water. We crossed the bridge at twenty-five cents a cart, and under the circumstances I think we were justified in crossing the bridge crossly.

After getting safely over this private toll-bridge, and recovering our normal tempers, nothing occurred to upset them again until two days later, when we ran against another private toll-bridge at Three Creeks, where we had to pay a Mr. McKinnon ten cents a cart to cross his bridge; and again on the 30th May when, to the tune of twenty-five cents a cart, we crossed the Little Saskatchewan in a boat made of four buffalo hides stitched together. The next trial of our tempers was of a more internal and insidious character. We had become aware that our freighters were in daily contact with ardent spirits; the fact being forced upon our notice through the breath of morn reaching us laden not only with the sweet scent of wild flowers or the cup which cheers but not inebriates, but charged likewise with the effluvia from that other cup which does the "two in one."

It was on a Sunday evening, two days after we had crossed the Little Saskatchewan, that the bibulous propensities of our freighters seemed to have reached a climax, and when Monday morning came, instead of being ready for an early start after their opportunity for a day of rest, we looked in vain for any movement from their camp, which on this occasion was about three hundred yards from ours. When my brother and I were ready to move on, I went over to investigate, and found them sleeping off the effects of their carousal. Waking up Mr. J. S., I mildly protested against such behaviour, and secured from that part of him which was awake a promise to get up and begin the day's journey with the least possible delay.

As I returned to camp I thought of Professor Hicks' recommendation of Mr. E. J. Lawrence as "a man who would make himself felt in any community of which he became a member," and I felt that here was a golden opportunity for trying out the soundness of the Professor's views, so I reported the condition of things in the freighters' camp to Mrs. Bompas, in the presence of Mr. Lawrence, and asked him to go over in a little while if preparations to strike camp were not going forward satisfactorily.

Mrs. Bompas was very angry with her freighter, but I hope she did not regard me as recreant to my duty when I then struck camp and went on slowly ahead with my brother, my idea being that when Messrs. J. S. and J. C. discovered that they had been left behind they would promptly get up and follow. It turned out that they

did strike camp that forenoon, and they overtook us two days later at Shoal Lake, where we had spent the night.

Mrs. Bompas never told me what had occurred after my brother and I had pulled out from the Sunday camp; but I learned from Mr. Lawrence that she had accompanied him to the freighters' camp. Though dissimilar in many ways, they evidently made a good working team. Nature had endowed Mr. Lawrence with an eye and general appearance which were suggestive of forcefulness, and his profession of schoolteaching had done the rest to qualify him for any such task as the one on hand, while Mrs. Bompas, as I have already said, was a person to be measured by her soul, and on this occasion would seem to have measured up to the moral stature of her escort. The visit, at any rate, resulted in the discovery and seizure of a little keg containing some whiskey. This, with her own hands, Mrs. Bompas emptied upon the bosom of mother earth—a libation which our old mother dear has too often been called upon to accept and endure in the interests of some of her naughty family. For myself, though no lover of whiskey, I would not care to be the officiating priest, or even to be present, when such a sacrifice was being made. However, it may be that the end justifies the means, especially when there is good cause to doubt the quality of the spirits. And, at any rate, I must admit that such action on this particular occasion worked out in the interests of temperance; for the remainder of the journey, so far as I know, we were teetotalers all.

On June 5th we reached Fort Ellice; on the 11th and 12th we travelled over the Touchwood Hills; on the 25th we arrived at the south branch of the Saskatchewan; and on the 26th came to Fort Carlton, on the north branch.

Crossing the river on a flat-boat propelled by oars was a slow business, as it was necessary after crossing one way to track the boat some distance up-stream so as to strike the proper landing on the opposite side. We gave Mrs. Bompas and party the precedence, and it took them two days to cross. When they had finished they stood on the farther shore and we took out our pocket handkerchiefs and waved a God-speed each to the other. Then we also proceeded to cross, beginning with the animals, which, like theirs, had to swim. To this end we used a large canoe and began with the oxen and cow. My brother and Fidler paddled and I sat in the stern facing backwards and leading one of the oxen by means of a rope passed round its horns, while my sister-in-law was to encourage the other ox and the cow to follow; this the ox refused to do; but the cow cheerfully followed her favourite into the water and swam like a beaver. When we had nearly reached the mid-stream, the ox turned over two or three times so that only its hoofs and nose showed above water. Fearing that in a mix-up with the animals we might have an upset, I let go of

the rope, whereupon the ox righted itself and kept on in the right direction; but owing to the delay we missed the proper landing and while we were helping the ox the cow swam on down-stream and found a landing for herself. We were afterwards informed that the proper way to lead an ox through deep water from a canoe is by the nose, halter fashion, in which case the nose is drawn *from* instead of *into* the water.

Our practice from Portage la Prairie to Peace River was to rest on Sunday and to have a morning and an evening service, and on other days, morning and evening prayers. So as June 29th, the day after we crossed at Carlton, was a Sunday, we held the morning service in the fort.

We left Carlton on June 30th, and arrived at Edmonton on July 25th. For over a week there travelled in our company a party of Crees who had about thirty horses and carts. A jolly, carefree lot they were, and as they had their own flour and bacon, and as ducks, prairie chickens, wild fruit and wild turnips were plentiful, their company was not unacceptable.

When the ducks and prairie chickens were not too numerous the Indians were liable to get a little way ahead of us, and this had happened before we reached Turtle River, so that when we arrived there they were busy crossing. This stream is about thirty yards in width, and at this time, owing to the recent heavy rain, was over four feet in depth in the centre and the current was swift. We found all the men and boys naked down to their shirts, and the former were carrying their goods over on their shoulders or heads according to the height of the man.

We improved upon their method by keeping on some of our clothing all the way down. But first of all we constructed a raised flooring on one of our carts, and into this cart harnessed Sam, a magnificent cart-horse, and then placing four hundred pounds—a half load—on the raised floor, we kept Sam moving until all our goods were over. Fidler held the horse while I held on behind to prevent the current from upsetting the cart, and when we came to the deepest part, my bodily measurement not being large, I was walking on tip-toe and the starch was being taken out of my collar. With a good deal of exercise of this kind, taken from choice or necessity, we were expert swimmers by the time we reached Edmonton.

From Carlton to Edmonton, we passed over only two narrow strips of poor soil. All the rest was very rich, judging both from appearance and the character of the vegetation. The scenery throughout was also pleasing, and at some of our stopping places was so beautiful that it hurt our feelings to leave. Possibly the regretful feeling was not always due to an aesthetic taste, but to some patch of strawberries which had appealed to another taste, for it was strawberry season, and we sometimes had

not a mere taste, but a substantial feed of wild strawberries and cream, that veritable angels' food in which we were able to indulge through the thrift of the lady of the party and her cow.

The foregoing remarks about wild strawberries may be taken as justifying the statement of the late Bishop McLean, who, when speaking of the fertility of the soil in the north-west, is reported to have said that often "when travelling over its fertile prairies the wheels of his buggy were dyed in the blood of the wild strawberry."

Sunday, July 27th, was our second day in Edmonton, and we attended service in the Anglican church of which Dr. Newton was incumbent, and if his congregation appreciated variety they should have been pleased that day. The Doctor preached, I read the service, the Methodist minister, Mr. Walton, chanted the Gloria Patri, and a Presbyterian, Mr. Linny, acted as precentor.

On August 2nd, eight days after our arrival at Edmonton, my brother and I went forward by separate routes. As planned at Portage la Prairie, he made use of the Hudson's Bay Company's means of transport, and with his wife and our goods, went via the Athabasca Landing to the north end of Lesser Slave Lake, while Fidler and I with our live stock followed the old Fort Assiniboine route which runs west of the other, and rejoined my brother at Lesser Slave Lake.

The protracted stay at Edmonton was due to difficulty in disposing of our carts, and to the necessity of giving our animals a chance to recuperate before putting them on to the remainder of the journey. Three of the horses we wished to sell; but the long haul from the Portage had taken so much out of them that they were not in marketable condition; so we left two of them in the care of the Hudson's Bay Company and took the third one along.

Our drove then comprised the following animals: the horse just referred to, the thoroughbred colt, Tom, and its mother, Sam and Nellie, two horses which I was taking to Unjaga, and the two oxen and the cow.

An American whom I had better call G. M., who was taking in a few cattle to Lesser Slave Lake, obligingly consented to my following him so that I should not need a guide; but when he found that I intended taking in an ox for the Hudson's Bay Company, he informed me that our arrangement was called off, as he was not going to help take in any ox for the Hudson's Bay Company. All things worked together for good. The Company were quite as obliging as Mr. G. M. and immediately provided me with a first-class guide in the person of Jean, an active, resourceful and intelligent young fellow of Blackfoot extraction.

Our first encampment was at Big Lake, where the Roman Catholics have a large and splendidly equipped mission. A number of orphans were kept here and many

children received an education. I was cordially received by the priest in charge, and shown the beautiful church and other parts of the establishment. I was also introduced to two other priests and informed that at times there were as many as eight priests in the establishment, and at all times a staff of eight sisters and as many lay brothers.

The characteristics of the animals composing our group was quite an interesting study. Nellie, who was my pet, was in the buffalo runner class and she carried me safely through the hundreds of muskegs which we had to cross before reaching Lesser Slave Lake. Tom showed his inexperience by taking the muskegs on the run. The other animals took their time, with the exception of the tired horse, who took some of ours as well. But it was Sam who showed himself a horse with character.

There is said to be a Dutch proverb to the effect that "the man who does one thing is always formidable." Sam acted as if he had heard of it and had adapted it to himself, for he would draw a cart for all that he was worth, but he drew the line at that and strenuously objected to be converted into either a saddle horse or a pack horse.

I bought Sam from a Mr. James Cook, and when I put the question to Mr. Cook, "Have you a cart horse, Mr. Cook, which you would sell me?" his reply was, "You bet! I have a horse called Sam, and although I have known many good cart horses in my time, never have I known one who was the beat of Sam. He has only one fault—he won't allow anybody or anything to get on his back."

At the time of my story it was astonishing how many horses there were who had "*only one fault*," which, as described by the owner in the prospect of a sale, was invariably a fault which leaned to the side of virtue. But Sam's one fault, as described by Mr. Cook, was allowed to stand out in all its ridiculous and beastly nakedness, and for that reason I was satisfied that Mr. Cook was an honest, considerate and truthful man, who, even in a horse deal, could be relied upon to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and not to withhold from a customer information which might be the saving of his neck.

This is how Mr. Cook indelibly impressed upon my mind Sam's value as a saddle horse. He said, "I was working in the hay field which was about two miles from home, with a young Sioux Indian, and upon my asking him to go back for something, he asked me if he might ride Sam. I told him as well as I could in English and with signs and the little Sioux that I knew, what was sure to happen if he tried, and advised him to walk. 'Oh,' he said, 'I have ridden *Shoon-ka-ton-ka o-ta*, many horses, and I can ride this one.' 'All right,' said I, 'go ahead; but don't blame me if you get your neck broken.' So he saddled Sam and mounted." Mr. Cook then

described what followed, doing so by word and gesture, sometimes mimicking the man and sometimes the horse, and, finally, when Sam had accomplished his purpose, described the sound made by the Indian as he struck the earth as something like "Whanh-h!" and pulling Sam round by a rope to which he had held fast, the man and the horse looked each other in the face, and the man said, "Ugh, *shoon-ka-ton-ka see-cha*. Oh, bad horse." While laughing at Mr. Cook's comical description, I had pretty nearly hurt myself. No sooner, however, did I get back sufficient breath than I said, "I'll take him," and the seventy dollars which I paid for him—the regular price for a good cart horse—I never regretted, for, as Mr. Cook said, "A better cart horse there never was." We started him with a load of half a ton, which was one or two hundred pounds heavier than the average horse load for such a journey, and he never needed help to get over a mud-hole, or in going up hill, and always he kept his nose against the tail-board of the cart ahead; and he arrived at Edmonton as fresh as the day he left Portage la Prairie.

We needed about two hundred pounds of provisions and other stuff to do us until we reached Lesser Slave Lake, and we packed one-half of this on one of the oxen, and the other half on Sam. Of course, he resented this at the start, and bucked with might and main; but Jean was an experienced packer, and he had a nice way with animals, and Sam gave in with a better grace than I had expected.

On August 5th Sam again valiantly and violently showed that he regarded any weight placed upon his back which was not connected with a cart as an incubus which was to be got rid of as fast as ever he could. That morning, when we were two miles on the road from a crossing of the Big Lake River, where we had camped the night before, he commenced to career around and buck until his packs lay on the earth, and then with the pack-saddle beneath his belly he started back on the run in the direction of Poplar Point, the place whence he had come and whither, undoubtedly, he intended to return. Turning my buffalo runner over to Jean, I sent him in hot pursuit of the renegade, whom he overtook at the forenamed crossing. In half an hour Sam was back and reloaded; and from this out he gave up any attempt to rid himself of his load by bucking; but he got rid of it several times by other means, as will be seen later on.

Having replaced Sam's packs, we moved on once more, and reached Pembina River at eleven-thirty a.m. This stream was sixty yards in width and deep enough to make the animals swim. It being a warm day, the oxen and the cow rushed to the water and commenced to drink, and as they drank waded into deeper water to cool themselves and drown the flies, while we looked on and laughed; but when they commenced to swim and we saw that our provisions as well as the flies were being

submerged, our amusement gave place to horror; and this occurrence, following so soon after Sam's behaviour, tried the patience of our guide. However, when he discovered that the pemmican was on our side of the stream, he laughed and said, "*Agh, kee-yam, na-ma nan-tow*. Oh, never mind, it does not matter," and getting astride of two large poles, and using a short pole for a paddle, he landed not far behind the oxen and, removing the packs from the loaded one, he spread things out to dry. Then, by good fortune, finding some dry logs on the shore, he quickly bound them together and returned for the rest of the outfit. When, therefore, we were refreshing ourselves on the farther shore, we had good cause to feel that there was sound philosophy in the words of our guide, "*Agh kee-yam, na-ma nan-tow*."

Thursday, August 7th, we reached the Athabasca River at eleven a.m. and, noticing two dugouts on the opposite bank, we concluded that there must be human beings not very far off; but when we shouted at the top of our voices without getting any response, Jean offered to swim over with the assistance of Nellie, she being always far ahead of the other animals whenever it came to a case of swimming. So while Fidler and I set about preparing lunch, Jean put himself in that condition as to clothes in which he had first given a private audience to his expectant friends, and, leading Nellie into the river, he had placed his right arm over her neck preparatory to striking out when there came a shout from the other side, and, looking across, we saw two men approaching one of the canoes, and Jean quickly got back to land and into his clothes. The men turned out to be Stone Indians, and without much pressing they accepted an invitation to lunch; and as I noticed the quantity of sugar which went into their tea, I thought that probably the heart of a Stony was no harder than any other human heart, and therefore would surely be reached by liberal potations of well-sweetened tea; and that this might be reflected in the reasonableness of the charge for the use of one canoe for one hour. Perhaps the older Indian, who was spokesman, figured it out that way too, when he charged me *ni-kooktwa-sik soo-ni-yas*, six shillings, saying that eight shillings was the regular price; but seeing that I was an *a-yum-e-ha-e-yi-nio*, clergyman (literally, praying man), he made it six. Even supposing there had been no favour, the higher figure would have been justified by the circumstances. Having no cash, I paid him in flour and tea at *the regular market prices*, according to which he received five pounds of flour and four ounces of tea.

On August 9th we came to our first muskeg north of the Athabasca, and from then we travelled until August 15th a distance of one hundred and fifty miles almost due north, through a succession of muskegs alternating with gravelly ridges, running east and west and parallel to one another as far as could be seen. The ridges had evidently been heavily timbered not many years before, and a few of them still were,

while others showed signs of self-reforestation; but for the most part there remained only stumps and other debris. But however devastated this part of the country might appear, it was by no means bereft of life, for we saw many frogs, bats, pine squirrels and also the universal whiskey-jack. We also saw two bears and frequently the tracks of bear or moose; but the form in which life in these parts seemed most to flourish was in swarms of sand-flies which were with us from morn till night, and added to the afflictions of our poor dumb travelling companions by getting into their eyes, ears and nostrils.

Fidler's special job was to look after the tired horse, and although he sometimes fell a little behind, he was always in sight at the spelling place, and one day when we had reached the summit of a ridge which was the highest elevation between the Athabasca River and Slave Lake, in answer to my daily question, "How is old Lewis getting along?" he answered, "Huh! the old beast is getting a lot better."

"Why do you think so?" I asked; and he replied, "Because as we were coming up this hill I was hanging on to his tail and he kicked me."

As before stated, Sam renounced the habit of bucking off his load. However, one day later on, he noticed two jack-pines standing conveniently near the trail about three feet apart, and just then, undoubtedly, something passed through his brain—likely an appeal to his horse sense—and in a moment he passed between those trees and left his load lying right there. When Jean was replacing the load and saying reproachful things to him for his obduracy, I should not wonder if something again passed through his horse brain—something like this—"I'm sorry, Jean; but really those trees were so splendidly situated that I could not resist the temptation."

August 17th was a Sunday, and although we were now only ten miles from the fort where my brother and I had arranged to meet, we rested in camp as usual, for it was a rainy day. Besides, to reach the fort, the lake had to be crossed, which, although only two hundred yards wide at this place, called for the use of some sort of boat. Lastly, our camp was surrounded by ideal pasturage, and coming as it did after the trying ordeal through which our poor nags had passed, I felt that a feast of good things was coming to them; so while we rested in our tent, keeping up a good fire in front of the open door, our horses munched and munched and munched at the succulent grasses until their ribs became less conspicuous and their bellies were their outstanding feature.

I had not travelled all this distance with our guide Jean without getting to esteem him as a finished product of the school of experience, and a master in the art of overcoming such difficulties as might confront any traveller when following some long, lone trail to a given objective in the northern wilds. And now, after having been

thus benefited by his services, and in view of the fact that we were so soon to part, I requested him to give us some more of his travelling experiences. He complied, and from the stories which he related I select the following as circumstantially relevant to the title of this book:



Jean's Story

Being the Second Instalment of the Story in this Book

Soon after the many miners who had gone to St. John's to wash gold from its sand-bars had left there, I went out to the Peace River as guide to a man who wanted to see the country, and as soon as I was through with him I went up the Peace River in a dugout hunting beaver. I was hoping that I might at the same time meet the Armsons, for Mrs. Armson was my cousin, and I learned that she and her husband were putting in the winter south of the Peace River, with the intention of returning to the Saskatchewan in the spring. I saw nothing of them, however, but one day a wonderful thing happened. I had just put ashore to boil the kettle when, looking up-stream, my attention was attracted by a red rag which, with the object over which it was raised, came floating along amid-stream. I waited a while and then getting into my canoe, I paddled up to it. It was a raft, not large enough to have carried a full-grown person, but large enough to have upon it a baby in its Indian cradle. Without being quite sure that the baby was alive, I placed it in my canoe and paddled back to shore. Once there I assured myself that it was still living. It was a girl, and so thin that its arms were no bigger than a man's finger. I took it to be about two months old. Quickly as I could I boiled a freshly shot duck and fed the bouillon to it a drop or two at a time. It was too far gone to cry; but I cried instead when I looked at its pinched little face, and thought of my own plump little Marie taking baby's own food from its mother's bosom. To my delight, after the *ki-ti-ma-kis*, pitiful little thing, had taken about two teaspoonfuls of the bouillon, it made a little sound, and twisted its little lips about as if it were asking for more, so I knew then that it was not sick, but simply starved. I made my dinner as quickly as possible on the duck, and, after feeding the baby a little more of the bouillon and putting the rest in the canoe, I embarked with the baby in its cradle, and pulled down-stream with all the strength I possessed, because I had seen two Indian families at noon the day before, and knew that belonging to one of them there was a nursing mother; for the baby's sake I wished to reach that mother before the Indians left the spot where I

had seen them. When about half-way I stopped to wipe the perspiration from my face; and before resuming my paddling I fed the baby once more, and was pleased to notice that it looked slightly more alive. When I rounded the last point I could have shouted for joy when I found that the Indians had not left. When I landed with my little passenger, everybody, including the dogs, was greatly excited. And when the two mothers saw and heard how starved the baby was, they both bared their breasts on the instant; but the *dry one did not insist*, and made up for it by saying while the other woman was at work: “*A-i, hai, hai, hai, ki-ti-ma-kis.*” But suddenly all this was stopped as the foster-mother laughed and said, “*Noo-nio, it sucks.*” Then the children likewise laughed, and we all laughed and felt ever so much better.

When the waif had had as much as was safe for a beginning, there were many guesses as to where it had come from; but the only thing to give us any idea of that was the colour of its little skin, which was that of a white man. The women examined it very carefully and felt sure that it would be a pretty woman some day. They found a curious mark on the second toe of the left foot, which extended the length of the toe and looked like a scar which might be *older than the baby*.

Before I went on down-stream next morning it was arranged between us that we would find out, if possible, through the officers of the Hudson’s Bay Company and the missionaries, where the child came from and how to pass it on to those to whom it might rightly belong.

To me (Jean went on to say) the mystery of the floating baby is now greater than ever, since I neither know whence it came, nor whither it went. Perhaps both it and its guardians fell victims to one of the epidemics which have so decimated that fine country of its Indian people. At any rate, nothing has been heard about them so far as I know, on this side of the Rockies, after they crossed over to the country of the Sikannies on the other side.

Now, sir, as we are so soon to part, and I cannot very well leave my own babies with their mother while I go on a long hunt after the floating baby; since you, sir, are a missionary, and you are going back to work among the Beaver Indians, would you be so kind as to make inquiries about that baby and also about the Armsons, and if you hear anything about them, besides what I have told you, please be so good as to let me know.

In reply, I said: “My friend, I think there is going to be a sequel to this most pathetic story which you have told so well; and if that sequel turns up, I think I shall have to write a book; and if I do *kah-chi-na* for sure, the name of *Jean* will be in it, and be writ large. For you deserve it after the way you have brought me safely over all those rivers and muskegs and gravelly ridges without the loss of a single hoof. But

I believe there is something far better than that coming to you, for what you did for ‘*one of the little ones.*’”

At noon the next day we arrived at the Lesser Slave Lake post where I rejoined my brother who, with his wife and family, had arrived only that morning.

A Mr. Young was the Hudson’s Bay Company officer in charge at this place; and he told me that if we wished to get our goods to the Peace River Landing—now Peace River City—with the least possible delay, and cared to use our own animals, he could supply the carts—that is, if we could repair them. Fortunately for us, we could; and by working hard for the next five days we restored carts enough to hold our goods, and packed up and started out on the ninety-mile cart-trail to the above-named point on the twenty-third day of August.

While at Lesser Slave Lake we met a civil engineer, Mr. Cambie, who was in charge of one of the survey parties at that time conducting operations with a view to the discovery of the most feasible route to the Pacific for the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

On our way to “The Landing” we passed mostly through a well-wooded country; but as we approached the Peace River we passed through some prairies admirably suited for settlement. We reached “The Landing” on August 30th, having made about thirteen miles a day—not bad, considering that about half the time we were going over a root on one side and into a rut on the other. We at once unloaded our carts, putting our goods *pro tem* into the Company’s depot.

The next day, August 31st, was a Sunday, and my congregation of about twenty assembled in the outer room of the small two-roomed log house of Mr. Harvey, the officer in charge. I may in those days have been a young man who dreamed dreams; but I certainly did not dream that in my own lifetime on this little flat where there were only three log houses belonging to the Hudson’s Bay Company, there would spring up a city where again I might preach the gospel—this time perhaps in answer to the question, “How came we here?”

On the actual occasion my congregation included two Company’s officers, Messrs. Harvey and Kennedy, Mr. Pruden, foreman of the ox-drivers, six Scotsmen, my brother and family, some half-castes and an Indian or two.

On Monday, September 1st, my brother and I crossed the Peace River, and went westward along the river, looking for a site suitable for the mission farm. We followed the Dunvegan cart trail four miles, which was as far as we had occasion to go. For there we came to a beautiful flat, with a gurgling, sparkling stream running through it. This stream ran at a right angle to the Peace River, and the banks of both were marked by a thin fringe of trees which, at the apex of the angle thus formed,

widened out to the dimensions of a regular grove, whose aspen leaves seemed to whisper to us the invitation—*build right here*. And agreeing that we were not likely to find a more suitable spot, we retraced our steps to The Landing, looking with much interest, as we went, on a large and splendidly wooded island, and at the attractive mouth of the Smoky River.

For the next two weeks my brother and I worked on together, putting up hay for his stock and making a raft with which I was to float my horses and goods down to Unjaga.

The raft was made at the head of the large island just referred to, from dry trees—dry from having had their jackets stripped off some years previously to furnish a covering for the roofs of the houses at The Landing. These trees averaged a foot in diameter at the large end, and we selected twelve of the largest for our raft, and cut them down to thirty-six feet in length.

We left The Landing on September 18th, and arrived at Battle River early in the morning of Sunday, the 21st. By arrangement with Mr. McKenzie, the officer in charge, it had been arranged that I was to land there and take what hay and potatoes I needed. Unfortunately, the one log house representing the Battle River trading post stood only a few rods above the mouth of Battle River, and to have landed at the house with a raft as heavy as ours was to incur the risk of being stranded at the mouth of the river in the thick sediment deposited there, whenever we pushed out to resume our journey. We, therefore, having been forewarned by Mr. McKenzie, landed on the right bank of the river.

We landed the horses and hobbled them before we went across in our dugout to get the hay and potatoes. The bank at this point was hundreds of feet high and very steep; but we had hardly reached the opposite shore when, looking back, we saw that our horses were scurrying up the hill like a couple of squirrels.

We found Petit Jean, son of Michael Lazotte of Fort Vermilion, temporarily in charge, and we lost no time in getting what we had come after, for I felt a presentiment of trouble in connection with our horses. As soon as we returned to our raft I sent Fidler after them. But when half an hour passed and he had not returned, I also ascended the hill, and through the well-wooded forest which I found up there, I followed the tracks of the horses for over a mile, shouting from time to time in the hope of hearing from Fidler. Failing to get any response, I decided to return to the raft, and with my gun and some provisions make a fresh start. On getting back to the raft I stayed a while and fired shots at intervals of a few minutes, and at the third shot heard a hello from somewhere in the south-west. After two shots more I noticed Petit Jean pointing up the hill; and he shouted across to me, "*Pa-noo-kwun*, he

comes in sight," and presently he came over the edge leading Nellie; but, alas, no Sam followed.

Poor Fidler with his one eye looked very woebegone as he told me that he did not believe (neither did I) that he ever would have found the river had it not been for the shots. He claimed that Sam was still hobbled; but that, nevertheless, he had failed to overtake him as he went racing southward through thick and thin.

We hastily had something to eat and, after fastening Nellie securely to a sapling and feeding her enough hay to keep her for twenty-four hours, I took my gun and food enough for a meal and we started in pursuit of Sam. By this time it was two-thirty in the afternoon.

As we started out I thought of my brother's wonderful talent for this sort of work, and comforted myself with the reflection that, being of the same stock, there might be something of the same talent latent in myself, and that with sufficient determination I might be able to demonstrate the fact on the present occasion.

Sam was evidently losing no time. Perhaps his horse brain enabled him to visualize Poplar Point, or, what is more likely, he was looking for grass. Occasionally I lost time on the harder ground, especially when his hoof prints got mixed up with those of moose; but I made up for it when going over softer places, even though the softer places were a muskeg.

About sunset I noticed that the fresh tracks of a moose and those made by Sam were keeping strangely close together. So I loaded my gun with ball and said to Fidler, "Let us proceed more cautiously." Soon after this I heard him whisper behind me, "Whist!" and coming up beside me he pointed to a bunch of undergrowth ahead and whispered, "A moose." Standing perfectly still and looking hard and long in the direction indicated, I made out in the dim light the moving ears of some large animal. Forgetting all about Sam, and also about it being Sunday, I raised the gun to my shoulder and drawing a bead on the spot where I supposed the moose's brain would be, was just starting to press on the trigger when I heard Fidler laugh and say, "It's Sam." The laugh was certainly on me for, without contradiction, a horse's ears are not stuck in the right place for playing moose.

Sam kept on moving his ears until I had placed my hand on his neck; and I hoped that it was his way of saying, "Pleased to see you." I at once unhobbled him and started leading him back on the run, but before we had made half the distance to the raft it became too dark to proceed any further. We then made ourselves a good fire and ate our lunch without having anything to drink, after which we gathered enough twigs and leaves to make a soft bed and, lying down pretty much as we were, we got under our one blanket and passed the night in comfort.

When we rose in the morning we found ourselves and the trees shrouded in a thick fog.

“Now,” said Fidler, “how are we going to find our way to the river?”

“Where is it?” I asked, and he pointed due south instead of north.

Fortunately, on this journey from Montreal to Unjaga, I had stopped off for a few hours at Chicago, and had there decided that a pocket compass would be a suitable souvenir of my visit; so I bought one about the size round of a fifty-cent piece. This I carried in my waistcoat pocket all the time I was in the North. Taking it out now, I placed it in my left hand while I led Sam with my right, and with Fidler coming on behind we struck out for the river. Sometimes I stopped to give my little magnetic needle a better chance, and on such occasions there reached me the contradictory opinion of the man behind, who shouted, “Oh, you will never get there! You are going straight away from the river.”

However, in less than an hour we struck the river one-half mile below the raft. And within the next half-hour we had reached the raft, put our horses aboard, pulled out into deep water, kindled a fire, prepared our breakfast and were enjoying it.

On this voyage I acquired valuable knowledge pertaining to the art of navigating a raft, the secret of which is to leave it alone to be carried whithersoever the current listeth, unless the wind interferes, in which case if the navigator is uncertain as to which is the right channel he may just as well leave the wind and the current to fight it out between themselves. Once we almost came to grief by insisting that our raft take what appeared to be a short cut on the right of a certain island, but, becoming suspicious when we had gone almost too far, we laid down our poles and, not long after, to our great relief, we found that the current was taking us very slowly, but nevertheless surely, toward the real channel to the left.

We had perfect weather on the entire voyage. Our usual practice was to push out our raft at five-thirty in the morning, and to float on without going ashore until seven in the evening, when we camped on shore for the night; but on the twenty-fifth the night was so enchanting that we went on without landing until the following evening.

As the distance from Smoky River to Fort Vermilion is two hundred and seventy-three miles, according to the river measurements of Mr. Wm. McDougall, D.L.S., and as it took us ten days to travel from the former point to the latter, it will be seen that our average per day was twenty-seven and three-tenths miles, but as we were only one hundred and four hours afloat during the ten days, our average per hour is thus shown to have been two and three-fourths miles, which would indicate approximately what the speed of the current is on this particular portion of the Peace

River at a low stage of water.

This journey was very restful indeed, with the exception of the misadventure at Battle River and a trifling incident in connection with a black bear which we sighted at the sunset hour of September 24th.

Our raft was at the time following the channel about sixty yards from the left bank of the river, when we sighted the creature apparently enjoying a constitutional on the long sand-bar which commenced from the foot of the bank and extended half-way to the course our raft was taking. Mr. Bruin was walking in the same direction that we were floating, and forthwith I entertained visions of bear's meat, to say nothing of bear's grease. Quietly entering our dugout with my gun and as quietly paddling to the sand-bar, I landed and ran softly after the bear, who seemed to be absorbed in meditation and utterly oblivious of my approach. But when I was about within gunshot he must have heard my footsteps for, after one rapid glance backwards, he darted with amazing speed towards the wooded bank hard by. Somewhat winded by my run, I took hasty and unsteady aim at the ungraceful target presented by the stern of the flying bear. But if that made any difference in his speed, it was only that of increasing it one hundred per cent., for he struck the bushes which covered the bank with the force of a projectile, and into the streak of waving bushes which he left behind I fired my remaining bullet. Seeing that the raft was now quite a distance down-stream, I decided not to risk unnecessary complications either by land or by water, so I let the bear go his way in peace, while I went on mine. And I felt that if any credit was coming to either of us over the affair, it was not coming to me, in that I had attacked the bear at the wrong end and could not be sure that the end justified the means.

We landed at Unjaga on Saturday, September 27th, and I was not surprised to find the Lawrences awaiting me at the mission house, as I knew that Bishop Bompas considered the Peace River district quite as suitable as any other in his diocese for the establishment of an Indian Industrial School; but in order that no one concerned in the matter might be unpleasantly compromised, I had been careful to inform the Lawrences before we parted at Fort Carlton that their appointment to any particular locality was entirely in the hands of the Bishop and that if he favoured Unjaga as a desirable place for the proposed school, I would gladly do my part to carry out his wishes, and until a suitable building could be put up for their accommodation, would cheerfully welcome them to a fair share of the space in mine.

As to the residents of Fort Vermilion, I believe they were all pleased to see me back, not even excepting the Roman Catholic priest, for he was a good type of man, and although circumstances made it impossible for us to work into each other's

hands, professionally, I can say for myself, and I believe for Père Letty also, that we liked and respected each other.

Of one particular dweller in Fort Vermilion I certainly can say with absolute certainty that the day of my return was the happiest in her life. I say this with reference to my dog, Floss, left by me in Mr. Moberly's care.

I was not thinking of her when, after taking tea with the Lawrences, I walked up to the fort; but apparently she was thinking of me. It was a night so intensely dark that no object was discernible beyond a distance of two or three feet. I therefore heard and felt my dog before I saw it. After jumping up to me with a sound that cannot be spelt, she circled round me several times, producing at the same time what were doubtless the most endearing terms contained in the canine vocabulary. I suppose that during every one of the three hundred and sixty-five days I had been absent the question, where is my master? had passed through her dog brain; and now that my presence answered the question, she was beside herself with joy. Truly the constancy of a dog's love is wonderful. It would seem to me that before God created a being in His own image, He first created one which would revere that image, so that when the troubles of the man were threatening to engulf him in fatal self-disparagement, the dog might stand beside him and, looking into his face, with unfathomable depths of affection in its eyes, say to him: "Take heart again. There lives not on earth a greater or better man than you."

JOURNEY
TO EDMONTON
FOR CATTLE

CHAPTER IV

Journey to Edmonton for Cattle

The Unjaga Mission house contained five rooms, three on the first floor and two in the half-storey above. The largest room below was used as kitchen, workshop and general purpose room, and the other two were given over to the Lawrences, except at meal-times, when we all lunched together in the larger of the two. The two rooms above were occupied, one by Fidler and the other by myself. And as to our goods, they were mostly stored away in trunks, packing-cases and sacks, and placed wherever they would be least in the way.

After these domestic arrangements had been settled, Mr. Lawrence and I planned a sort of dual system whereby we hoped to turn to good account the circumstances which had led to our being mission workers in the same locality. According to our arrangement, Mr. Lawrence was to be responsible for all scholastic work undertaken in connection with Unjaga Mission, while I, as missionary in charge, was to be responsible for all pastoral work outside of the school and, in a measure, within the school as well. To avoid confusion in the financing of our respective departments, it was agreed that we should each deal directly with the Bishop or Diocesan Secretary.

The next question to be settled was: Where were we to get the necessary food supply for carrying out our plans, and especially with regard to the boarding-school? The answer came readily to us both—we would have to raise cattle and till the soil. And the decision that we would have to do these things was very soon followed by another—the decision that one of us would have to go to Edmonton in the spring to procure the necessary live stock.

In dealing with this question, we asked each other: Would you like to go? We both answered in the negative, and Mr. Lawrence's negative was more emphatic than mine. He put it up to me in this way:

“You have the advantage of having been already over the trail, and the further advantage of being unmarried.” Mrs. Lawrence being present, I felt that I was in the minority, so it was settled that I was to go after the cattle, and we next arranged what was to be the scope of our endeavours until my return with the cattle in the following autumn.

In accordance with our plans, Mr. Lawrence first of all staked out additional land for the school. After that he plowed and harrowed the cultivated land on the first mission claim in readiness for seeding in spring. During the winter he collected

material for a building on the school claim which was to serve as school and dwelling-house combined. Mrs. Lawrence was schoolteacher during that first winter, and the only pupils available were Miss Susie and Master Fred. Fidler made an efficient factotum. And as for me, having been relieved of the farming by Mr. Lawrence, of the cooking by Mrs. Lawrence, and of the chores by Fidler, I was free for the discharge of my legitimate duties and was able to devote much time to the study of the Cree and Beaver Indian languages.

Our food was mainly barley and potatoes, and we daily had a little bread made from real flour. Occasionally, we had bacon, which was an acceptable substitute for butter, and in between times Mrs. Lawrence made a kind of sauce which was an acceptable substitute for bacon. The milk which entered largely into the composition of the sauce was obtained from a cow which Mr. Moberly had obligingly lent us for the winter.

That poor cow had just cause to feel aggrieved. We had no idea that she was in calf, and so milked her right up to the last day. And one bright spring morning after we had enjoyed our breakfast seasoned with the usual sauce, we looked through the window, and there lay the cow, and beside her a skinny little calf about one hour old.

My journey after the cattle commenced Monday, May 24, 1880. The ever-obliging Mr. Moberly lent me a man named Richard Henderson to assist me upstream in a canoe as far as Battle River, and, if necessary, as far as Peace River Crossing.

The little dugout in which we embarked at the Mission was so small that although there was hardly any wind, we had shipped some water by the time we reached the fort. So, on landing, Mr. Moberly and the boat-builder, John Murray, increased the displacement of our boat, raising the gunwales about four inches by nailing a thin plank on each side, a device not to be recommended to any but expert canoemen who are also good swimmers. The advice for all others is: Get a dugout large enough in one piece to start with.

Even with our gunwales raised we dared not take any other position in the boat than that of sitting flat. The effect of this upon me, combined with the rainy weather which prevailed nearly half the time, was to cause a tendon in my left groin to contract; and it remained contracted until I returned in the autumn.

On our second day out from Vermilion Henderson broke his paddle; and our plight might have been serious, as we had forgotten to take an axe. Fortunately, however, we had picked up a roughly-made paddle earlier in the day. The next day I broke my paddle; but managed to make an effective splice by means of my jackknife, a nail and a piece of string. Fortunately, Henderson was on the tracking

line for two-thirds of the time, so that in spite of the hard luck with our paddles we reached Battle River on Saturday, five and a half days from Vermilion, which, Mr. McKenzie told us, was “pretty good.”

Henderson was certainly a first-class *voyageur*. But I found him a grouchy companion, and on the few occasions when he was sociable he made me feel uncomfortable because he was so unnatural. The person who is “always the same,” whatever that may be, does not worry us getting ready for his next mood.

When a selection was made for the Soudan Expedition from the unsurpassable boatmen trained by experience in the service of the Hudson’s Bay Company, Henderson was one of the contingent; but that voyage was his last. On his way back, when crossing the Atlantic, he was taken bad with that “hell of a’ diseases,” the toothache, and he died.

On my arrival at Battle River I found that Mr. McKenzie could provide me with a guide and two horses to take me overland to Peace River Crossing. So Henderson and I were able to wish each other good-bye, which we did cordially, and, doubtless, with mutual unregretfulness.

The man supplied by Mr. McKenzie was a native-born French half-caste whom I shall call Antoine. Socially he was a decided improvement on Henderson. True, he was a pessimist; but, then, *he was always the same*, and when I found that out, and that he was happy in his pessimism, he became entertaining. Between us all we made up an outfit which was more tough-looking than spry. Antoine was over sixty, but he was the only one among us—taking man and beast—who was sound in limb. I limped badly and could not stand upright, and Antoine’s horse also limped, having had a shoulder displaced years before, while my horse was badly ring-boned and had a sore back.

It rained about every day on the trip; yet we travelled every day, knowing that we would come in starving at the finish if we allowed the weather to interfere with our progress.

On our first day out we took shelter at lunch beneath the wide-spreading branches of a lordly spruce. And then, with the rain still falling, we resumed our journey. In a little while we came to a nasty slough, and when my horse had reached the middle he quietly seated himself on his haunches, whereupon, considering my position untenable, and being in doubt as to what his next movement might be, I quickly slid off his back into the water and sent him along after his mate. Then Antoine came back and gave me a friendly hand to terra firma. On several other occasions I was indebted to him for the support of that same friendly hand. For instance, one day we came to a very long beaver dam which perhaps was first

utilized as a bridge by some pathfinder of an earlier century who was thus enabled to go direct and dry-shod to his objective. This path we—the more modern and, let us hope, equally modest pathfinders—also followed; but when we got nearly half-way we came to a six-foot gap, where some six feet below much water was passing. This gap Antoine spanned by throwing across it a few poles of fence rail size, thus forming a bridge which was about two feet in width. In crossing on this narrow structure the experienced cayuses showed their horse sense by taking care to keep their feet as near the centre as possible; I copied their example, but here again I was glad to hold on to Antoine's friendly hand.

For four days Antoine had been entertaining me with forebodings of what we were likely to find when we reached *Wa-pa-nus-koo-si-pi*, White Mud River. When we did get there, cold and wet, it was too late to do more than make camp for the night. But after we were warmed up externally with a good fire and internally with hot tea, and Antoine was enjoying his pipe, he declared that the crossing of the river was going to be very difficult and that he felt pretty sure we would lose at least one horse. However, when morning came we made a raft with which we took ourselves and our stuff over, and, afterwards, even more easily, made the horses swim over.

"Well, my friend," said I, "that finishes the bad places, does it not?"

"Not at all," he replied. "Just wait till we come to Bear Lake."

We reached Bear Lake at ten o'clock next morning, and waded across right away without any trouble. At the time nature was again treating us to a shower-bath, which it continued to do all day, with an occasional brief intermission, until six o'clock, at which hour we had reached the shelter of my brother's house, when it cleared. I then comforted the old man by telling him that he was so well up in his work that he was not to be stopped by a bear or a bear lake or any *a-yi-mi-si-win*, trouble, whatsoever. It was on June the ninth that we arrived at the Smoky River Mission, and I was delighted to find my brother and family well, and that for the short time he had been settled he had made a good beginning.

One thing which surprised me greatly was to find the slopes of the northern banks showing the rich tinge of springing grass interspersed with myriads of anemone, while trees and shrubs were covered with luxuriant foliage and the air was filled with the scent of flowers. And up there on the plateau, along the trail we had travelled, everything as yet looked cold and dead.

I found that my brother and Antoine were well acquainted, and was surprised to find that while my brother's range of expression in the Cree language was more limited than mine, he understood the language more thoroughly.

Although I rested for a whole week with my brother, there was no perceptible

improvement in my leg.

On the 15th I went by horse and saddle to Fort Dunvegan. I needed no guide other than the well used cart trail, which up to this time was the only one north of the Peace River, and it extended only from the Crossing to Fort Dunvegan, branching neither to the right nor left on the way. I put in ten hours and a half on this sixty-mile trail, having rested an hour and a half on the way.

I was welcomed at the fort by Mr. James McDougall, whose acquaintance I had formed at Fort Simpson in the autumn of 1875, and who had in the following spring called on me in my shack at Fort Chipewyan.

It sometimes happens that a person's merits are concealed by his extreme modesty; but it had not escaped the notice of the leaders of the Hudson's Bay Company that with all his modesty Mr. McDougall had a quietly ingratiating manner, an observant eye, and a sound judgment, so when the position was open for the appointment of an inspector, that honour was conferred on him, and this promotion had either been made or was about to be made when I met him on the occasion of this visit.

He had been for some years in charge of the Upper Peace River District, with Fort Dunvegan as headquarters, but, dating from his promotion to the inspectorship, Lesser Slave Lake became the district fort, and his successor at Dunvegan, Mr. H. B. Round, succeeded him only as officer in charge of the trading post at Dunvegan, including an outpost at Grand Prairie. It looked to me that the initial marriage ceremony performed by me at Fort Simpson must have been a success, as Mr. Round commissioned me to procure a good saddle horse at Edmonton for Mrs. Round's own special use.

After enjoying Mr. McDougall's hospitality for four days and arranging with him about my journey to Edmonton, I returned to my brother's place by means of a scow. The river was by this time at high-water stage, so that it took only twelve hours to float the sixty miles.

Among those on board were Thomas Kipling and his family, who three winters before had belonged to my little flock at Fort Vermilion. In this family I felt a particular interest because both Kipling and his wife gave me credit for having saved the life of one of the twin girls of the family, at that time one year old. Its entire back from the neck downwards had been badly scalded, and I was called in to do what I could medicinally and otherwise. This being a true story, I shall not say that all the true skin was gone from the little thing's back; but, I certainly never believed that the child's life could be saved by mere natural process and human agency, a fact which I solemnly impressed upon the minds of the parents while I set about applying such

remedies as were available. While they gave the patient a warm bath I prepared a piece of oiled silk by coating it over thinly with glycerine. This I fastened in place with narrow strips of cotton. Then I sat down and awaited results in fear; but gradually the little sufferer's crying subsided and it went off into a quiet sleep.

When I entered the place next morning the mother greeted me with a smile and said, "*na-wutch mi-yo muh-chi-hoo*," it is better. And Tom said to me, "That's your baby now." Said I, "Then don't pour any more hot water down its back, please." We returned thanks.

From June 19th to the 21st I remained with my brother and on the 22nd went on to the Crossing. On the 23rd Mr. McDougall arrived from Fort Dunvegan, in company with a gentleman whose name I cannot recall, and on the 26th we three left the Crossing on saddle for Lesser Slave Lake, where we arrived on the evening of the 27th. On July 1st we left the Lesser Slave Lake post in a York boat, and the wind being favourable, we sailed the entire length of the lake, seventy miles, in seven hours. From thence we went to Athabasca Landing, and the current being in our favour, we made the distance, ninety miles, by the forenoon of the 3rd. After resting for a few hours, we changed again to the saddle and continued on towards Edmonton, where we arrived on the evening of July 5th.

I at once called upon Mr. Malcolm Groat, recommended to me by my brother as a farmer with whom I would likely be able to do business advantageously. And I found both Mr. and Mrs. Groat so interesting and friendly that I made bold to ask if I might have the privilege of being their paying guest during my stay in Edmonton, which matter was arranged to my entire satisfaction.

The next morning I paid my respects to Mr. Hardisty, the officer in charge of the Edmonton district, and arranged with him to have the Hudson's Bay Company act as my bankers in connection with the business upon which I had come to Edmonton.

Inquiring after my recent travelling companion, Mr. McDougall, I was invited out to the veranda, where I found him in the company of Chief Commissioner Graham and other officers of the Company, including Mr. McKinlay, who was the officer in charge at Fort St. John's and the pet antipathy of Nigger Dan. In the group on the veranda there was also a Mr. Bain, of the legal firm of Bain and Blanchard, Winnipeg. He was travelling with the Chief Commissioner, and Mr. McKinlay took this opportunity of obtaining a legal opinion as to the most indictable of the negro's many offences upon which a conviction might be secured. Finding that the negro was soon to be tried before Col. Richardson at Fort Saskatchewan, I took a note of the date, resolving that I would be there.

I next looked up and tested the two horses which had been left behind to

recuperate. I found both in good flesh; but on trial the younger and more valuable one, which was a mare, showed unmistakable signs of having been over-strained; so, hoping that she might be fit for breeding purposes, I disposed of her at less than half price. The older horse I decided to take to Peace River, where, at the worst, he might be fed to starving Indians.

I next proceeded to purchase cattle. From Mr. Groat I bought eleven head. From a Mr. Harnois of Lac St. Anne, a Frenchman from the province of Quebec, I bought seven head. And I bought three more from other parties. In addition to the horse already mentioned, three others were to be taken into our drove: the one to be taken to Dunvegan for Mrs. Round, and two which one of the drivers was taking into Peace River for himself—twenty-five head in all.

I bought only one full-grown ox, for which I paid eighty dollars. For a cow with calf at foot I paid sixty dollars; for a two-year-old, thirty dollars; and for a yearling, twenty dollars.

Before completing my purchases I engaged two men with whose help the live stock were to be taken overland to Peace River. They were both native-born, French half-castes; both were in the prime of life and used to live stock and to the various methods of travelling in vogue in the country. With Lewis Sizeman I was well acquainted, as he was wont to pass from one trading post to another along the Peace River. He was a big and powerful man, and a pleasant companion. As he was taking two horses for himself, I paid him only two made beaver—about one dollar a day and board. The other man, Peter Ward, lived at Lac St. Anne. He was hired to act as guide and cattle driver as far as Lesser Slave Lake for fifty dollars and board.

All the arrangements were completed in about fifteen days, which was only half of the actual time of my stay at Edmonton; for I took the wise advice of the experienced, and did not start out on my return journey until low-water stage had fairly set in. I therefore had a fortnight at my disposal in which to study the physical features of the surrounding country and the ways and manners of the Edmontonians; and regarding this latter fortnight if I cannot follow my Bishop's example by saying, as he would have been sure to say, "Thank you, I had a nice quiet time," I'll say, instead: "I had an instructive and entertaining time."

First of all, I called on a Mr. McDougall, storekeeper, who with his brigade of carts had travelled part of the way with us the previous summer on our way out from Winnipeg.



Resuming the Story

On entering his store I was delighted to be accosted by Mr. Ernest Vining, whose guest I had been two years before when passing through the city of St. Paul. He was visiting Edmonton in connection with his real estate business, and had travelled from Winnipeg in light waggons, accompanied by Mrs. Vining and their daughter, Lily. They had camped beside an aspen grove on the sloping northern bank of the Saskatchewan on a spot which only seven years later I found covered with houses, which even then showed that Edmonton was quickly changing its status from a trading post to that of a town or city.

Having plenty of time on my hands, it did not need a pressing invitation to induce me to visit the Vining camp. In doing so I found Mrs. Vining the same as I had found her before—a woman natural and friendly in manner, and in whose friendliness there was the true ring of sincerity, and, with it all, the unmistakable signs that hers was a friendliness which it was wholesome for a man to enjoy. As for Lily, if she had changed, it was only for the better; for she had evidently turned the two years since I had seen her to good account by growing bigger and prettier.

One day when I was paying a casual visit to the Vining camp, I found Mrs. Vining exercised in mind over a splinter which Miss Lily had run into her foot, and I was paid the compliment of being asked to give the necessary treatment.

“Oh, mother,” said Lily, “don’t you know that it’s my left foot?”

“And what is the matter with the left foot?” I asked; and blushing the little maiden replied, “There is such a funny mark on one of my toes.”

While attending to the case in hand I noticed a birthmark on the second toe, bearing some resemblance to a scar which might result from a wound made with a hatchet or some such instrument. I felt some comment to be in order, and I said to the child, “That little mark there won’t spoil your chances of getting a beauty prize some day.” But I remembered what Jean, my guide of a year before, had told me, and before leaving Edmonton I had a long talk with Mr. Vining over the matter. And we agreed that we would each quietly make inquiries and report to each other any further discoveries which might be made.



There were three churches established in Edmonton at this time, viz. the Roman Catholic, the Anglican and the Methodist; and as far as I could see they were as studiously tolerant of each other's existence as they were in other parts of the world, and perhaps even less trustful of one another than they are to-day. Such being the case, it was not surprising that the Edmonton laity did not love and respect their ministers in harmony with what the said ministers enunciated from the pulpit, although what they did enunciate was known to a good many of them only from hearsay. And if I write this partly from hearsay, it is backed up with knowledge which came to me unsolicited during the thirty-one days of my stay in the place.

Naturally, my opportunities for observation extended more to the Anglican church than to the others; and the incumbent of the Anglican church at this time was Doctor Newton, whose congregation did not seem to measure him by his soul, but took him as he was physically—only four feet eleven inches in height, a height which renders a man easy to overlook, safe to defy, and liable to undue sensitiveness.

The Doctor was a man with a discerning eye for the beautiful in nature, and showed it in the character of the land he selected whereon to build his rectory. This place was two miles or so east of the Hudson's Bay trading post. There I found the Doctor living in what he called "The Hermitage." His man, Philip Whitford, was an ex-Portager well known to me. He kept the Doctor's horse and cows, and was a passable carpenter and all-round useful man.

The Doctor's house was of a size commensurate with himself, and its style harmonized with his calling, being decidedly ecclesiastical. On one of my visits I put in a night with the Doctor, when I shared with him the one bedroom of the house, which was not a large one, although it occupied the entire upper floor; but the most amazing thing was the complete covering of floor, walls and steep-pitched roof with buffalo robes, and good ones at that—buffalo underneath, buffalo to the right, buffalo to the left, and buffalo everywhere—and all this in the days when buffalo had pretty well vanished out of the country.

To the Doctor I said: "Well! This does look cosy."

To myself I said: "It's like going to sleep inside of a buffalo turned inside out."

"The Hermitage" stood on a grassy knoll which gently sloped southwards to a flat some seventy yards away. This flat was covered with large spruce trees which for some distance inwards were neatly trimmed. Then at the foot of the same verdant slope westwards there ran a brook of sparkling water which gurgled its way among stones of all sizes and passing through the wooded flat made its way to the near-by Saskatchewan. Surely the little Doctor might have been left in peace to the enjoyment of this sweet lone spot in the wilderness, which under his care was being

made to rejoice and blossom as the rose. But it was not to be; for one day another squatter or homesteader, bigger according to the flesh than the Doctor, came to the brook at the foot of the slope with his team and waggon, and interfered with its gurgling laughter by transferring some of the stones from the brook to his waggon box. In vain did the Doctor, standing on the knoll above, remind the intruder that he was trespassing upon his property. His protests were met with defiance. Cutting out some of the details, suffice it to say that when the Doctor shouted to the offender, "Go away," he came away instead. And in the struggle which followed, if it be worthy of the name of a struggle, the Doctor was pinned to the ground for a little while by the bigger man and spoken to disrespectfully. The outcome was a lawsuit, and when I went to Fort Saskatchewan to be present at the trial of the coloured man, Dan Williams, I listened to the trial of this case also; but to attempt to give particulars from memory would be neither fair nor edifying. I think Mr. Richardson tried to be impartial, although the litigants may not have thought so. The law was laid down to them, and both given to understand that they had exceeded their rights.

In listening to the trial of this case, and that of Dan Williams, so far as it had proceeded during my presence—for I left the courthouse as soon as I had heard the celebrated address to the jury by Banjo Mike—it occurred to me that the stipendiary magistrate, Mr. Richardson, felt handicapped and could not be expected to feel otherwise in discharging his judicial duties because of the unsettled or transitional character of affairs in the North-West at this particular period. For although the Dominion Government had now been ten years in power, it had not as yet commended itself to the good will of the inhabitants. The squatter's claim and that of the would-be homesteader were beginning to clash. And it began to be said, not only by the Metis but by others, that the one whose claim would hold good was he who had wealth at his command, or who was aided by the influence of a corporation either secular or spiritual. As for the Mounted Police, the opinions about them were conflicting; the ladies and some of the sterner sex liked their smart appearance; but the opinion of another section of the people was, I think, fairly well expressed by a Scotsman, who said to me: "These mounted policemen are not regular soldiers, but just half and half." It is, however, a pleasure to me to remark, that, after the second Metis uprising which occurred five years later, I never heard another disparaging word about their soldierly qualities—for, then, as everybody knows, they made for themselves a reputation of which they have no cause to be ashamed, and to which they have been adding ever since.

It was the irony of fate that Dan Williams, the same coloured man who had declared in writing on a tree on the Peace River his determination not to be trodden

under foot by any man excepting her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, should now on the occasion of which I write be brought to trial in the name of the august lady herself, charged with having aimed at and discharged a gun at the person of one James McKinlay.

Edmonton was without a lawyer in those days, but Banjo Mike happening along on business of his own, undertook to defend Dan Williams, because of "old acquaintance" not forgot, and also because they were one in antipathy to the Hudson's Bay Company's fur trade policy, which in those remote regions afforded little chance of success to the man who *without capital* undertook to oppose them.

The following were the salient points in Mr. McKinlay's charge against Dan Williams:

One day the plaintiff and the defendant were standing at the doors of their respective abodes when the latter said to the former, "I'll fix you," and entering his house came out with his rifle, which he held up to his shoulder and, aiming in his direction, discharged it evidently with intent to do him injury, for he heard the bullet whistle pass close to his ear.

Among the questions asked of Mr. McKinlay were the following:

"The distance between you and Dan Williams was not so great but that you could hear him distinctly?"

"Yes."

"And you know for a certainty that the words, 'I'll fix you,' were addressed to you?"

"Yes."

"Were you standing in front of the house or at the side of it?"

"In front of it."

"Did the bullet strike the house?"

"I cannot say."

Banjo Mike's address to the jury was in part as follows:

"First of all, gentlemen, you will please notice that the distance at which the shot was fired about which complaint has been made was so inconsiderable that the words of Dan could be distinctly heard; but even so were vague in significance. What would you mean if you said, 'My heart is fixed,' or 'My rifle is fixed?' And Mr. Williams might have been having trouble with his rifle. Who knows? But assuming, as the plaintiff has done, that the words, 'I'll fix you,' expressed the intention to do him harm, that which followed, as described by Mr. McKinlay, proves that his assumption was groundless. He says that the bullet whistled past close to his ear. Any one who knows anything about bullets will tell you that from the

sound made by a passing bullet it is impossible to tell whether it is a foot or a yard or ten or twenty yards away. And surely if the defendant had intended doing bodily harm, and the bullet from his rifle did pass close to the plaintiff's ear, the house at least would have been hit, as he, the plaintiff, admits that he was standing at the door in front of the house; yet, mark you, he does not admit knowing whether the house was hit; why so, gentlemen, I leave you to decide. But let me tell you this, that I know, as many other miners know, that Dan Williams at a distance of one hundred yards can take the eye out of a jack-rabbit at every pop. Gentlemen, had Dan Williams had the slightest intention of harming Mr. McKinlay, he would not have been here to-day to tell you the amusing little story whereby he gives you credit for some sense of humour without paying you much of a compliment for intelligence.”

THE RETURN
TO PEACE RIVER
WITH CATTLE

CHAPTER V

The Return to Peace River with Cattle

The summer of 1880 was a wet one in the Edmonton district, and I deferred the return journey to Peace River as long as I dared, waiting for drier weather to set in; but, at length, on August 17th, although there was no appreciable improvement, I set about gathering together the animals which were to be taken north under my supervision. Among these there was to have been a cow for a Roman Catholic priest of the Peace River, which was to be delivered to me from the Roman Catholic mission at Lac St. Anne. So I drove out from Edmonton to arrange about place, time and manner of delivery.

The priest in charge was kind but apologetic. He said, "Mr. Garrioch, I extremely regret that the cow is not to be sent after all. Without going into particulars, let me assure you that my hands are tied in this matter. But it is no fault of yours, and let me sincerely thank you for Père ——— for the obligation you undertook."

I replied, "Père ———, since coming to this north country I have noticed that your priests and our ministers sometimes show kindnesses to one another, and I'm only trying to encourage the good custom. And it would not please me if your Père ——— of Peace River thought I had not kept faith with him."

"Don't be afraid of that, Mr. Garrioch, for when he reads my letter he will know that you did your best to carry out his wishes."

Perhaps the good Père felt that the more perfect way does not consist in making fine speeches, so he took the trouble to find out that I had not yet had lunch—it was then two p.m.—and invited me to the refectory, where, in a short time, an appetizing meal was set on the table. The priest then took himself away, leaving me to be waited upon by a pleasant looking sister of about my own age. There she stood, a lady with a pleasing profile, and there I sat, hungering for conversation, and even though the steak was savoury, the pudding delicious, and the tea fragrant and refreshing, that social hunger remained unappeased, for her conversation was monosyllabic and mine not much better. Moreover, I was oppressed with a feeling that a gentleman under such circumstances might have been expected to do something more than eat and drink like—a what? Her silence may have been golden and *in order*; but all that I can vouch for mine is, that it was not brazen.

When this pent-up feast of soul was over, I stood up and said, "I thank you, sister, for a very enjoyable meal," and smiling and bowing I added, "Good-bye,

sister,” and she replied with the shadow of a smile, “Good-bye, sir.” And I like to think that she, of her charity, and I, of mine, did not consider it impossible that we might ever meet again.

It was a day or so after this visit to the Lac St. Anne mission that we assembled our stock and started north. The most magnificent animal in the drove was a brindle cow which I had purchased from Mr. Groat. She was of the Durham type, and had been raised on a ranch further south, where stabling in winter was not customary, so that until she came into Mr. Groat’s possession she could hardly have been called a domesticated animal. Had we been going in a southerly direction I have not the slightest doubt that she would have gone forward cheerfully; but, evidently it went against the grain to be driven in the opposite direction to that of her former feeding grounds, so when we had left Edmonton over two miles behind, she suddenly made a break from the drove and went at an astonishing speed in the direction of Mr. Groat’s.

I was mounted on the horse which I was taking in for Mr. H. B. Round, which proved on this occasion that it had the good points which a connoisseur would expect in an animal said to be a good saddle horse. After chasing her over a mile and heading her off not less than half a dozen times in that distance, she decided she was beaten, and once more turning her head northward she raced back to the drove and, passing through it, placed herself at its head, a position which she never resigned to any other animal excepting the horse upon which I was mounted, until Peace River was reached. In my whole lifetime I have never known a case of more instantaneous and complete reform. A cow is not regarded as a clever animal; but, according to her lights, she is wiser and more consistent than a human.

I had not anticipated any trouble with this animal; but with three others I had. Of the six spring calves in the drove, one was born only six days before starting, then there was the old horse which had wintered at Edmonton and, lastly, the ox bought of Mr. Groat, which was lame at the time of starting. My mind was eased about this last by Mr. Groat offering to take it back if it did not improve by the time we reached “the Indian Farm” where I could leave it at his risk.

Our first day from Edmonton was only about six miles, yet the young calf reached the camp with difficulty, having at the last to be pushed from behind. On the second day we went a little further—about nine miles—which brought us to the Indian farm. And again at the finish the young calf had to be pushed along. As the ox was getting worse instead of improving, I left it here with the person in charge. The horse I decided to take further, although it acted as if sick. The calf I thought seriously of leaving; but, happening to meet a man who knew about the peculiarities

of young calves on a long journey, I was laughed out of the inclination. "Don't you fear," said this individual, "long before you reach Peace River the little sneak will be the best traveller in the bunch."

Next day things looked brighter. The little white calf apparently got its second wind and kept at its mother's heels. And the sick horse was better.

On the 21st we reached Pembina River, which, be it remembered, was the stream where the summer before my brother's two oxen and cow had swum across without giving us the chance of removing the pack which one of the oxen had on its back. This time we were pleasantly surprised to find the river low enough to permit of our wading instead of swimming.

At noon I had dismounted on a small, grass-covered rising where we were to spell, when on looking back I noticed that "Fleabite," the mother of the small white calf, had slipped down into a hole where she seemed to be rather enjoying herself, as the hole was filled with water and was as near her size as if it were a bath made to order; here she was calmly munching at the grass within reach. I hastened to her side and tried to help her out; but to no purpose. While my cogitations troubled me, Sizerman came along, and he, saying never a word, went up to Fleabite and, placing one of his huge feet on each side of her rump, he seized her tail and, letting out a terrific yell which must have scared the denizens of the forest for many miles around, he applied his great strength to the caudal appendage in his hands, and Fleabite, forgetting everything excepting that she was in danger of suffering posterior damage, co-opted with a mighty plunge forward and cleared out of her "bawth." Nevertheless, ever after there was a jag in the upper part of her tail, causing that member to gravitate slightly towards the nigh side.

We spent Sunday the 22nd at Paddle River. Although it rained most of the day, we made ourselves comfortable by keeping on a roaring fire in front of our open tent.

As my companions were Roman Catholics, I made no attempt at a regular religious service, for I did not feel that it would do any of us much good to coerce or pretend an endorsement of each other's religious opinions. Instead, I sang for their benefit "the song of the blessed Virgin Mary," "My soul doth magnify the Lord . . ." I also sang the hymn, "Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom, Lead thou me on," being careful to inform them that it was written by their own Cardinal Newman.

With a little encouragement Peter Ward sang a canticle from the liturgy of his church.

In the course of the conversation and story-telling which followed, I felt something akin to envy of Peter Ward with his implicit faith in the absolute truth of

everything which his spiritual pastors had taught him; while I was far from being void of sympathy for Sizerman, whose orthodoxy was decidedly shaky.

Their respective tendencies were very noticeable when I told them the story of Samson and the foxes, which, it turned out, they had both heard before.

Ward spoke devoutly and said: "He must have been a wonderfully strong man."

"Yes," said Sizerman with a grin, "He could have lifted Fleabite out of the hole as if she were a little rabbit (*wa-poo-sis*)."

I replied, "That cow had about as much Samson as she could stand."

Evidently taking my remark for a compliment, he returned the compliment by asking me quite seriously how Samson caught the foxes. Then, of course, I had to tell my hearers about evolution and the survival of the fittest, etc. And perhaps I made a hit when I asked, "Where are our buffalo? They are *ka-kach na-ma-ta-koon* (almost gone), and where are our pigeons? They are *mi-too-ni na-ma-ta-koon* (entirely gone)." The logic, of course, was faulty, since the creatures named were about as fit to survive as those creatures who destroyed them. I added, however, no doubt Samson's foxes of three thousand years ago were poor, stupid things, not at all like the beautiful, clever kinds which we have in this country at this time.

"Still, I'll admit, Sizerman, that when you asked me how Samson caught the foxes you gave me a hard one. It's in the good book that he caught them, and I don't disbelieve things just because they are so wonderful. Your church, I know, does not teach you to disbelieve in miracles," and I looked from one to the other. And thus for a while I was relieved of that hard part in theology or any other subject—that which consists of answering questions. Ward and Sizerman entered into a little controversy on their own, the former contending that there were some priests who had worked miracles.

"*Mas-kooch* (perhaps)," said Sizerman, looking at me with a smile.

To prove the correctness of his contention, Peter Ward related the following incident, the truth of which he vouched for as he had been an eye-witness.

"One day at Lac St. Anne there was a bad storm. Père —— was in his house when a man rushed into it and told him that some people in a canoe were being driven away from shore by the violence of the wind and that they would certainly be drowned. Immediately the priest rushed down to the shore and, kneeling there, he held up his crucifix and began to pray, and no sooner was he so engaged than the wind went down and in the calm which followed the women in the canoe made their way safely to shore."

Sizerman looked at me and asked, "Do you believe it?" I answered, "Yes. I

believe Peter, and, of course, it's easier to believe the rest. And it always will be so. If we can believe each other, surely we should be able to believe in our Father." After we had had our lunch, I asked my companions to tell me what they knew about the babe which had been found on a raft floating down the Peace River.



Corroboration of the Story of the Floating Baby

Peter Ward then repeated the story which I had been told by Jean, my guide of the previous summer, from whom he also had heard the story. Sizerman was also very familiar with the story; and having been at Fort St. John's at the time of the mining there, he knew many of the miners well, and among them the English gentleman, Ed. Armson, and his beautiful half-caste Blackfoot wife.

"Do you think," I asked him, "that the baby picked up on the raft may have belonged to the Armsons?"

He replied, "*Tan-sa-too-ka*, how that may be I cannot say."

"Do you know that part of the river where the baby was found?"

"Yes. Many is the time both summer and winter that I have passed the place."

"And do you know anything of the country south of the river where the Armsons are supposed to have wintered?"

"Yes. I trapped there one whole winter."

"And during all that time did you never see anything which made you think you might be on the same ground where Mr. Armson had hunted?"

"Yes. Just before leaving I was making a short-cut from a beaver lodge to camp when I came upon a deadfall, and then to a blazed tree, both of which spoke to me of a white man."

"How so?" I asked.

He replied, "An Indian seldom puts into a deadfall more or larger sticks than are needed; but a white man is very apt to do so. Then when an Indian wants to point out the trail he usually does so by means of sticks placed slantwise in the ground or snow. A white man is more likely to blaze the trees."

"Look here," I said, "if you ever pass that way again, Sizerman, and if you spend six days looking for more signs of a white man, I will pay you two skins a day."

"How are you going to know if I put in the six days?"

I replied, "I am looking into your eyes, and I read there that even if you can't understand how Samson caught the foxes, you are too big a man to lie."

“*Mi-too-ni kwi-usk ki-pi-kis-kwan*, you have spoken truly. And Louis Sizerman is also too big to want any pay for trying to find the tracks of a little one lost in the woods. Pay! Leave that until the sweet *pa-ti-ma*, by-and-by.

“If the *is-kwa-chi-chich*”—pet diminutive for a girl baby—“taken off the raft was a child of the Armsons and it still lives, it is growing up somewhere into a beautiful woman, and shall it be said that because we did not try to help her and she could not help herself she was married to a Beaver Indian? Think of that, Monsieur, a beautiful young woman tied for life to a mass of decomposing human flesh,” and he screwed up his nose and sniffed as if realizing the fulfilment of the contingency—then he added, “Pardon me for saying this so near supper-time.”

However, before he started to cook supper, I got him to promise, which he did most cheerfully, that if he learned anything more about the floating baby he would let me know as quickly as possible.



During August 24th it rained almost incessantly, as it had been doing since the 22nd, and on the morning of the 25th the ground was covered with snow. On the evening of that day we camped at the Athabasca River, opposite the site of Fort Assiniboine.

Evidently there had been in times gone by much traffic between this point and Edmonton, traces of which were to be seen in the numerous corduroy bridges which we passed over on our way out. These were mostly made of large trees, and were in such a dangerous condition through decay that it seemed next to miraculous that we managed to get over them without breaking a limb.

When we came to the river we found what we expected—the water high and the current rushing, due to the heavy rainfall. We were pleased, however, to see two dugouts on the opposite shore, and soon after to notice two people come out of the bush and walk towards the canoes. They launched the smaller one and, getting into it, paddled over to our side. They turned out to be a Stone Indian about fifty-five years of age, and a lad of about fourteen who was a half-caste French and Stony. They said they had been starving for days and we gave them a hearty breakfast and some flour and milk to take to their friends.

While they were completing their replenishment under the care of Peter Ward, Sizerman and I took their canoe and paddled up-stream to select a suitable place from which we hoped a little later to make our animals strike out in their swim for the

opposite shore. To go far enough for our purpose we had first of all to cross a bayou, then round the tail of an island and, immediately after, by putting on our full strength, round a spruce tree which, lying slantwise in the river, caused the water to rush past with the force and speed of a mill-race. We succeeded, but we came within a hair-breadth of being capsized, and when I told Sizerman that it was due to his skill and strength that we were not drowned, he said in a solemn voice, "It was some one who is stronger than I."

When we returned to camp he told the others of our narrow escape, and solemnly charged the old man not to go as far up as the fallen tree; but either because he did not understand or did not believe in the danger, he went that far and the canoe capsized and both he and the boy were drowned. The old man never appeared on the surface at all; but the lad swam about forty yards towards us before he went under.

A few minutes later a man appeared on the opposite shore, and when Sizerman shouted the sad news to him of what had just occurred, he threw up his hands and cried aloud, "Oh, mon Dieu!" and then, walking back and forth, he repeatedly exclaimed, "*Ay-hy, ni-koo-sis, ni-koo-sis!* Oh, my son, my son!" Thus we were informed of how near and how dear was the relationship which existed between him and the lad who had just been drowned before our eyes.

When he came over to obtain particulars we could not say anything about crossing. And all the rest of that day we felt that it became us to be silent. But early the following morning we made bold to ask him for the use of a canoe, and he not only gave us the use of both, but gave us his personal assistance as well, thus enabling us to get all our stock over by noon.

I dreaded meeting the widow of the man and the mother of the lad who had been drowned; but when I did, though their eyes were red and swollen with weeping, there was never a word of reproach, as if they knew that it was not needed, in that the innocent cause of their misfortune could not fail to remember his connection therewith and to be on that account the more sorrowful for them.

Turning over to them the few dollars in cash which I had about me, and as much of our provisions as I dared part with, I made a poor attempt at helping them to take heart again, which was more than I myself could do just then. After all this was over, we once more resumed our journey; but for three days it was as if much of our cheerfulness had gone down with the two Indians beneath the murky, swirling waters of the Athabasca. The weather also helped to keep down our spirits, for in addition to the four days' rain before we reached the Athabasca, we got five more afterwards, making nine days consecutively, during all of which, excepting two, we

travelled. On the 31st, however, there was a delightful change. The sun rose in a clear sky and the day remained bright and warm throughout. To cheer us still more, three bears crossed our path in company, and, to our amusement, performed their favourite act—the disappearing one—but although we lustily applauded they failed to treat us to an extra number.

At three p.m., September 1st, we camped on the summit of a mountain from which we had our first really beautiful view since leaving the Athabasca. This consisted of a panorama of the country lying between us and the Lesser Slave Lake. Looking northward from this point a novice might have supposed that we could have reached the lake in two days more, whereas it took us eight days more to do so.

On the morning of the ninth we got as near the lake crossing as a submerged hay meadow would permit, and leaving Ward there with the stock, Sizerman and I went on to the fort by canoe to procure a York boat. Succeeding in this, we rowed the boat as far as the crossing and, making it secure there, went on to camp by means of the canoe.

It rained all night and next day as well, and there was sufficient wind to make the lake too rough for swimming our stock over. On the following day, however, it was bright and calm, so we made a start, and after wading knee-deep for a long distance in the cold water, we arrived at the crossing at twelve-thirty. Without loss of time we bundled our luggage and the spring calves into the boat and rowed them over. Then while I kept the calves in the boat, Sizerman and Ward paddled back for the rest of the stock. They took to the water readily, the more so, perhaps, because they were in it already; but when about half over, for some reason hard to explain—some say it was because of the sun in their eyes—they turned back, and when Sizerman, who was in the canoe, prevented them from going in that direction, they bunched together, trying to climb on to each other. For a time the situation looked extremely desperate. Just then I had an inspiration and, acting upon it, I seized the white calf by the forelegs and, making it lean against the side of the boat so that its head and shoulders would appear above the gunwales, I bellowed as a calf in trouble would do. Having by this device attracted their attention and appealed to their maternal instincts, the cows at once headed in our direction and very soon the last hoof of them was on firm ground.

After lunch I hired two Indian lads to assist me in getting the boat back to the fort, leaving Sizerman and Ward to come along with the stock.

About sundown Sizerman turned up alone and reported that soon after we had parted one of his horses had been so badly hurt by running against a stick that it was necessary to shoot it; and that, as this had occasioned a delay of several hours, they

had decided to leave the stock where they were till morning.

I would like very much to have been able to believe that Sizerman was not to be blamed for what had happened to his horse; but I knew that while he was kind and sympathetic with people, he had little consideration or feeling for lesser animals, and that the fear which he had instilled into the hearts of his horses was very liable to lead to a disaster such as the one which had occurred. Nevertheless, I could not forget the valuable services which he had rendered me on this same journey. So when he approached me next morning with the proposal that I should make over to him the two old mission horses—the one then in the drove and the one taken to Peace River in the previous summer—accepting in exchange his one remaining horse, I cheerfully consented. And after I had drawn up a memorandum to that effect to which he attached the signature, “Lewis his X mark Sizerman,” he was delighted, and with the enviable philosophy of the French half-caste he laughingly remarked: “I am better off than ever. I have two horses again and they are *na-wach mi-si-ki-ti-wuk*, larger than the others.” I was not able to look at it quite that way myself; but I was very glad to find that he could, for the feeling that it was I who was ahead on this horse deal, far from being pleasant, led me to resolve that as soon as I reached Unjaga I would turn over to Mr. Lawrence, for the benefit of Irene School, the horse obtained from Sizerman.

At the lake crossing and at several other places along the trail, we heard much about Banjo Mike, who had come in ahead of us with a few cattle. And evidently what made the most impression upon the minds of the natives was the astounding vocabulary of forcible words which he had at his command and which he poured out upon the heads of his unfortunate animals when they showed reluctance to take to the water.

We spent Sunday, September 12th, at this fort. I had a service in the forenoon; but finding that the French half-castes and the Indians attended the services of the Roman Catholic mission, I made no attempt at a second service.

We left Lesser Slave Lake on September 13th, and found the cart trail which we had used the previous summer all that we could wish for, now that we were using pack saddles instead of carts, and we arrived at the Peace River Landing on the 17th—our thirty-first day from Edmonton—showing that our daily average was eleven miles, the distance from Edmonton being approximately three hundred and fifty miles.

The next morning, in company with Sizerman, I called on a Cree who was camped a few rods west of the depot to ask him to assist us with his canoe in crossing our stock. He consented, the more readily, I believe, because he had made

my brother's acquaintance and liked him. And making a correct guess that as bacon and bannock had been our daily food since leaving Edmonton, we would appreciate a change, he told his squaw to treat us to some moose meat; and presently Sizerman and I had a generous helping of fat dried moose set before us on a clean flour sack on two clean plates. I ate all mine; but Sizerman, notwithstanding his bigness, left some of his; and as soon as we were alone I said to him:

"Sizerman, like yourself, I have seen a good deal of Indians, and I have been told that, according to their ideas, a person with good manners eats all the food set before him, and so far as I have fed them, I notice that they appear to live up to a rule of that kind."

"Not so," said he. "If you leave a little they are complimented for having in their generosity fed you more than you could eat."

"Then," said I, "I suppose I hurt his feelings."

"Not at all. He would know enough to look at it the other way."

Thought I: What a fine thing to be able to look at things the other way! It throws into the shade "seeing ourselves as others see us."

We had not the least trouble in getting our stock across the Peace River. They took to the water like so many ducks, and we had them all up to my brother's place early in the afternoon. And now having been safely led through forests and muskegs, and over deep waters which had nearly engulfed us, finding ourselves at the river which had so long been our goal, it was fitting that so important a stage in our journey should be marked by a day of rest, and, fortunately, the next day being Sunday, we had just such an opportunity.

It was a beautiful day, and about a half-dozen of us gathered in my brother's little log house to hold our morning service. Sizerman was one of the number; but the good old man who had been my guide from Battle River in the spring, and who was camped only a few rods away, did not attend because he was a strict Roman Catholic. On this and many like occasions I keenly felt the needlessness of this barrier to Christian communion and wished that it could be abolished. This old man and my brother and I were fellow-pilgrims who sincerely desired to help one another on the way, and if one of us happened to be unable to consult his preferences by worshipping with those of his own church, and the church of the others was convenient, why should he in the face of his convictions that the others were just as well-informed as himself and on the same footing as himself—why should he be compelled to go against his own kindly desires, his conscience, his judgment, by refusing to worship with them?

In the afternoon I walked down to the Landing and held another service there, at

which the attendance was a little larger.

The undertaking which now confronted me was the building of a raft large enough to float cattle and goods down to Unjaga. Up to this point Sizerman had never failed me; but just at this juncture he did. He came to me on the Monday and said, "Owing to all that rain which we had at Edmonton, I can't go any farther with you, as it will take me all the rest of the season to prepare for my winter hunting."

I answered, "When we entered into an agreement we both knew that we could not depend on the weather; but we believed that we could depend on one another, and now, just when I need a good man to help me with the raft, you want to leave me." But preach to him as I might, it was no use, so I laid down the law to him.

I said, "I don't want to be your judge. Rather would I be your priest. So I shall make you do penance. I still owe you fifty-three made beaver. I am going to keep that for you until you do what is right. Come down to Vermilion next summer at haying time and work for me twenty-six days at two made beaver a day, and after you have thus earned fifty-two made beaver and I have paid you, I shall return to you the fifty-three made beaver which will then be yours by right."

Sizerman smoked in silence for about two minutes and then replied, "Very well! Very well! Be it so."

After we had completed our horse deal he assured me that he would not forget his promise about the floating baby, and we then shook hands and parted good friends.

After such an achievement in diplomacy, the building of a raft somehow looked to be less difficult, particularly as my brother undertook to see to the stock until the raft was ready for them, and I had my sister-in-law to look after my personal wants. Besides all this, I could now undertake a man's work with axe or auger—the only tools needed in raft-making—for the strange contraction in my left groin which had partly disabled me all summer had now completely left me. However, before commencing the raft, I paid a visit to Dunvegan, riding the sturdy little horse which the mission had acquired by my trade with Sizerman, and leading the horse which I had brought in for Mr. H. B. Round. Besides, I did not forget the possible opportunities for official usefulness, and the chance of finding a man to take the place of Sizerman.

I enjoyed the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Round overnight, and was pleased with their evident satisfaction with the horse I had procured for them.

Early next day I called on Mr. Davis, the ex-miner and fur-trader, who was stationed on the south side of the river. I found him very interesting, and he had an assistant, a Welshman, one Valentine James, for whose services he had little further

need. And Mr. James being open to an offer, I succeeded in hiring him to join me at my brother's place within three days, there to assist me in the making of the raft, and afterwards to accompany me thereon to Unjaga.

On my return to my brother's place I first of all went into a calculation as to the size of raft needed; and my estimate was that it called for seven times the carrying capacity of the one used the previous summer, as the cargo would weigh twenty thousand pounds, made up as follows: nineteen head of cattle, one horse, one crate containing six hens, one ton of hay, twelve hundred pounds of other freight.^[A] I was pleased on visiting the island where I had made the previous raft to find that there were still a sufficient number of spruce trees left for the larger one now needed.

[A] There was also to have been a crate containing six small pigs; but the Company's employee who took charge of them on the way reported that "they had all busted."

This larger raft was seventy feet long by sixteen wide, and had a strong corral of sufficient size to admit of every animal being securely tied in its own place.

Although I had had no intimation of my bishop's plans, I cannot say that I was much surprised when he turned up in this part of his diocese about a week before my Noah's ark was ready to be set afloat. It was certainly fitting at this inceptive stage of operations connected with the mission farm and Indian boarding-school that he should make the acquaintance of the agents who were to be responsible for their management. And to me it was a distinct relief to have him make their acquaintance, and in person inform them of his objective and the methods he expected them to employ in order to reach it. As he booked a passage on the raft to Unjaga Mission, I had ample opportunity to learn what his expectations were with respect to the Irene School, and to assure myself that he was satisfied with the arrangement between Mr. Lawrence and myself that I should be connected with it only in an advisory capacity as Incumbent of the Mission.

Our raft was finished by noon of Saturday, October 9th; but we did not leave until Monday, as I wished the few people of the place to have another Sunday of the Bishop's instructive services and helpful companionship. Besides, I knew, although I had heard no bitter complaints, that my brother and his excellent wife had keenly felt the solitude of the previous winter, having been all the time thrown upon their own resources for companionship except when at rare intervals a passer-by had called;

so we lingered on as if we might thereby fortify them against the solitude of another such winter which was drawing nigh. "It is easy to be wise after the event," and it was easy now, to see that the mission farm and the boarding-school should have been located together.

But instead of turning this into a book of lamentation, let me turn attention to the launching of our floating zoo, a sight which all who could were there to see. It took place after the bishop had smilingly said his adieus to all, and my brother and his wife had bravely smiled and said "good-bye" to us. Then Valentine James and I first poled and afterwards rowed our ponderous raft until we had it floating amid-stream, and then I laid down my oar and heaved a great sigh, which meant, "Now for a nice, quiet time," because I remembered that the great missionary who was to be my companion for at least a whole week, and who was even then standing erect beside me, was wont to describe in those self-same words the splendid time which he had had in some place he had visited. And after all, surely a "nice quiet time" is preferable to a "rough time," or a "high old time," of which we mortals are so liable to have more than enough in the course of our earthly pilgrimage.

On this occasion there could be only one kind of time—a time good for soul and body. For we were having beautiful Indian summer weather, and we were passing through delectable scenery which changed at every turn as we were borne along on the bosom of that great river which is called Peace.

But in this sublunary state peace must remain a relative term, and we had not gone far when I was beset by that thorn in the flesh known as toothache, which I really think was aggravated by the verbosity of Valentine James, who in this respect was the very opposite of Henderson, who was my assistant when going up-stream in the spring.



Another Hint of the Floating Baby

On one theme, however, Valentine interested me greatly. He had had considerable mining experience west of the Rockies, and had also been in the mining camp at Fort St. John's, where he became acquainted with the Armsons. When the miners dispersed from St. John's, he went to the coast, and it was not until four years later that he had heard of the disappearance of the Armsons. Then, later still, he heard of a living baby having been found on a floating raft. On hearing this, he remembered that when he and another miner were prospecting on a branch of the

Finlay River they had seen a little white girl about three years of age with a family of Sikannies, who told them that it had been given to them by a Blackfoot man on the *Oon-cha-ga* (Beaver name for Peace River) on the other side of the Rocky Mountains, and they were to meet a trader from the coast the following spring who, after paying them for having raised the child, was going to adopt it as his own, because he and his wife had no children. He did not know the trader mentioned by those Indians, but the name given, if he remembered rightly, was Nelson.



After being afloat eight days and seven nights, we arrived at Unjaga Mission on the 18th of October, the journey to Edmonton having occupied four months and twenty-five days.

We landed for a few minutes at Fort Vermilion, and as may be supposed, created somewhat of a sensation among the Company's employees and the natives camped about the place. And although, before this, they esteemed the Bishop for his work's sake, doubtless they looked upon the live stock as affording pleasing evidence that there was a method in his plans which did not entirely exclude the meat which perisheth.

When a half-hour later we landed at Unjaga Mission the Lawrences and Fidler evinced great satisfaction; but it took Floss, with her bounding joy, to show what it meant to her to see me once more.

Owing to the lateness of the season, the Bishop made but a short stay, and as soon as he had left, Mr. Lawrence and I proceeded to complete arrangements for the sheltering of ourselves and our stock for the winter.

I turned the horse over to him which I got from Sizerman, and we then each chose an animal alternately until all were apportioned.

Before my return Mr. Lawrence had so far advanced in the construction of the building intended for the school that he was able to move his family into it. This set my own place free for receiving the Indians who came to visit me daily until cold weather came and they took their departure for their hunting grounds.

When I looked back on my summer's work I could not but feel that goodness and mercy had followed me every step of the way, and with the courage and hopefulness born of such a conviction, I addressed myself to the work of the winter, following out the plan of holding two Sunday services and a Wednesday service, visiting, daily study to improve myself in the Cree and Beaver Indian languages, and

for daily physical exercise wielding an axe or one end of a whip-saw in preparing the necessary material for the building of a church.

CHURCH BUILDING
AND
TRANSLATION WORK

CHAPTER VI

Church Building and Translation Work

When I had consigned the body of my friend, Mr. Donald Ross, to its last resting-place in the burying ground near Fort Vermilion, and had marked the spot with a cross on which I had carved his name and the words: "Christ is my hope," I regarded the site of the church then under contemplation as being by that act selected and consecrated, but with the passing of time and changing conditions, such as the location of Irene School alongside the mission two miles away, I felt that it might be a wise adaptation of my sentiments to the requirements of the mission to place the church nearer to it, so I moved the site within one hundred yards of the mission building. This change involved considerable extra hauling, as I had already collected some material on the first site, and had some more on an island one mile up-stream. Unfortunately, the two horses brought from Manitoba were not equal to this work during their first winter in the country, owing to the lateness of the season when we arrived. Indeed, the hay upon which they passed their first winter was simply withered swamp grass mowed by me at Wolf Lake when the autumn and winter were so blended together that I mowed the last two tons standing on the ice. The following incident will show what effect this kind of feed will have on horse flesh if none other is fed for the entire winter.

It has already been said that it was contrary to Sam's principles to allow anything on his back which he was capable of shaking off. But this withered grass diet so lowered his vitality that he would walk from the water-hole to the stable door with head hanging down, while Fidler, seated astride of him, was sure, as usual, to be fighting against the loneliness which oppressed him by singing the refrain of his favourite hymn:

And sinners plunged beneath the flood
Lose all their guilty sta-a-ains.

But when nature had divested herself of her wintry garments, and the Unjaga prairies were clad in vernal green upon which the flesh and spirits of equines doth flourish, then did Sam also divest himself of his winter garments, and there coursed through his veins the vim and courage which high-strung health alone can breed. One day when Fidler mounted him again, he did so for the last time, not that Sam killed him, but he nearly did, for as Fidler took his seat as usual, Sam made a fearful plunge, and Fidler did not light on his feet, as usual, but on his head, with the result that for three days his neck was too sore to admit of his singing his everlasting song:

“ . . . Lose all their guilty sta-a-ains.”

In the beginning of the eventful winter following the foregoing incident, I made a pair of bobsleighs, which were quite a curiosity to the natives, being the first of the kind seen north of the Saskatchewan River. And with our horses restored to their former health and spirits, teaming with this sleigh became a pastime rather than a drudgery.

Our stock came through this winter in splendid condition. Nevertheless, in the three establishments of the place, there were losses and crosses more than enough.

In one of them Mr. Moberly and I were conjointly the losers. Two pigs, weighing about forty pounds apiece, had been sent him from Dunvegan; and at his suggestion we entered into an agreement that I should keep the two over winter and own one of them in the spring. About two months later one of these pigs slipped head-first into the water-hole and was drowned, nothing but a small portion of its rump being in sight when we discovered it.

I called on Mr. Moberly the same evening and said: “Bad news, Mr. Moberly. Your pig is drowned.”

“My pig?” he exclaimed. “You mean one of the pigs, don’t you?”

When I gave him the particulars he laughed and said: “As the case looks to me, it was your pig that was drowned.”

“No,” said I, “your first remark stated the case correctly, it was ‘one of the pigs’ which was drowned; but, as it happens, it suits me very well to call it mine, as I have just bought sixty rabbits from Lewis Cardinal and a fat porker which was virtually strangled should go all right with the strangled rabbits.”

The concession did me no harm.

“All right,” said my generous neighbour, “you go on keeping the pig and when I get it I’ll deal with it as Solomon proposed dealing with the live baby.”

We had even worse luck with our hens, which, under Fidler’s care, came to an untimely end one after the other until only the rooster was left. The last hen, however, laid a few eggs before taking her departure. Mr. Lawrence proposed to try and save the flock from extinction by making the rooster incubate the eggs. But the rooster utterly refused to be tied down to a department of the chicken-raising business so different from his own, and in a few days he was returned to me, minus the eggs, traces of which were noticeable on his under parts. This lone bird then became a great pet, apparently falling back on Fidler and myself for lack of more suitable company. One day a Cree, who had a dog with him, paid me a visit, and before we could prevent it poor Chanticleer was in the dog’s mouth, bitten so badly that we had to kill it, which we did, sincerely lamenting that, as between the rooster and the

dog, we were unable to enforce nature's law of the survival of the fittest.

But I now come to the strangest event of that eventful winter which led up to a loss which I felt more keenly than any of the others.

Just before the first snow of winter fell, the inhabitants at the fort one dark night heard a horse come racing down the hill which lies a little south of the fort, and a minute later they saw this horse pass through the fort like a dark shadow flying in the direction of the mission. Two minutes later my studies there were interrupted by the sound of fast approaching hoof thuds. Hastily lighting a lantern, Fidler and I rushed to the stable, where Sam, standing before the door, greeted us with a loud neigh which plainly denoted both gladness and fear. The poor brute was standing on three legs and was covered with sweat streaked with foam. On examination I discovered that some Shylock of a timber wolf had taken his pound of flesh out of Sam's left thigh, and that the voracious beast had apparently performed the operation with one snap of his powerful jaws. While I was indulging in thoughts about timber wolves which I did not care to express, I heard Fidler say, "Ah, Sam, I guess I could ride you again." I allowed the remark to pass unnoticed only because it was spoken with the proper inflection with the speaker's mouth close to Sam's ear, while his right hand stroked Sam's neck.

To protect the Company's horses whose feeding grounds were in the neighbourhood of the place where Sam had been attacked, some poisoned baits were set out, and it was supposed that Floss must have picked up one of these. One night I was startled by hearing something fall against the front door, which opened into the general reception room and study where I was sitting, and on opening the door Floss fell forward in convulsions, and in spite of the little Fidler and I could do to help her she was dead in a few minutes.

As I placed my hand over the heart which had been so true to me for seven years only to find that it had ceased to beat, Fidler made the rather appropriate remark, "She is gone to where there are no wolves and poison," and I replied, "She is gone, sure enough."

Some of the events of this winter were not so tragic; and, of course, there were bound to be some of a pleasant character. Among these were a number of visits. First a visit from Chief Factor Roderick McFarlane, and a little later a visit from Inspecting Chief Factor McDougall, and, in the course of the winter, no less than three visits from Mr. McAulay, the officer in charge of the post at Little Red River.

Interspersed with these we had a series of desertions from the various establishments of the place, beginning with one from the fort, where one, J. McDonald, in the words of my informant, "Voluntarily retired from the service of the

Honourable Hudson's Bay Company with its entire approval.”

The next was from Irene School, where Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence, after a summer of strenuous toil, had settled down to the work of their calling in a building in which space and equipment, without contradiction, was not by any means in excess of the absolutely necessary.

This real beginning of the residential school was made with six pupils, viz. Susie and Fred, the two eldest Lawrence children, two sons of Mr. McAulay, aged thirteen and eleven, Frank Moberly, aged eleven, and James Heber, a Beaver Indian boy nine years of age, who camped near with his uncle, A-pi-pa, and for whose keep and education I assumed responsibility until the completion of the school-building would furnish necessary accommodation.

Under ideal conditions it might perhaps be possible to educate Indian children and those of educated Hudson's Bay gentlemen under a common roof. I now know that under ordinary conditions such a thing is impracticable. The Lawrences were prepared, as missionaries should be, to work hard on a plain diet; but the little McAulays were not missionaries, and did not feel themselves under obligation to live up to the approved level, particularly when they knew that they could run home to their parents in one day. So one morning shortly after Christmas they were missed about the place, and on an examination of the path leading toward their home, it was found that they had gone in that direction, and a few minutes after the discovery was made I placed Fidler at Mr. Lawrence's disposal and the two of them left in hot pursuit of the fugitives, whom they overtook early in the afternoon as they rested before a fire half-way to Little Red River. The four of them got back to the mission in the night, the boys so exhausted that perhaps they might have been content to stay for the remainder of the winter. But when Mr. McAulay heard of what had happened he came up and took the boys home.

Deserting seemed to be contagious, for not long after this, and after the pig and the sixty rabbits had been demolished, Fidler himself made a break for freedom. His reasons were never very clearly stated; but, doubtless, he felt that although he had served for only two of the three years called for in his contract, it was not in him to stay that other long and lonesome year, even if he went on singing, "Lose all their guilty sta-a-ains."

Perhaps, too, his visits to the Company's employees, with some of whom he had been acquainted in Manitoba, did not help reconcile him to the quiet of my bachelor's establishment. The menu also was unquestionably not of the sort which would appeal very strongly even to one with vegetarian proclivities, and certainly far less so to one whose tendencies were decidedly carnivorous.

At any rate there came a day which, so far as I know, my factotum intended to be his last at Unjaga; and on the morning following that day I went up to the fort to investigate, and there I learned that my young man had evidently acted in accordance with Horace Greely's oft-quoted advice, "Go west, young man; go west." Not being in a position to go west in pursuit, and being disposed to think that even under more favourable circumstances it would not be a wise course, I remained at home. And as the sequel proved, it was the wiser course, for, after an absence of two weeks, Fidler put in a woebegone appearance, showing by his reduced girth that he had fared on something less nourishing than milk, barley bread and small potatoes.

I had felt his departure keenly, knowing that it would be regarded by some as a reflection on the mission and on myself in particular; so his return was something in the nature of the prodigal's return, and I could almost have embraced him, everlasting song and all. But what I actually did was to speak to him appreciatively of the work he had done, to assure him that I would release him from his third year of service to the mission as soon as he completed his second in the approaching spring, and that I would then arrange with the Hudson's Bay Company for his return to Manitoba. For this concession I was rewarded with a hearty, "Thank you, sir," and during the remainder of his stay he seemed bent on making up for the time lost on his western excursion.

Two York boats were built at Fort Vermilion during the winter, and Fidler took passage on one of these when they were sent down to Fort Chipewyan in the month of May. I was then gardening and I dug a grave for Floss and the rooster in the plot of ground which I had reserved for flowers. There I laid my dog to rest with her head pillowed on the rooster, and while I filled in the earth and smoothed it over I soothed my feelings with the words which Floss had often heard me sing, playing the accompaniment on the violin:

". . . I'll never, never find
A better friend than old dog Tray."

The news from my brother during the winter was discouraging. He wrote that he was in a bad state of health, and believed that he ought to seek medical advice as quickly as possible. He was therefore leaving for Manitoba in the spring; but as his wife would not be able to leave at that time, he had arranged with the Hudson's Bay Company for her passage to Fort Vermilion, and he would see her aboard before he left. This plan was carried out and his wife arrived safely at the mission the day before Fidler left. Under the circumstances she became the guest of the Lawrences and in the course of a week or so, with the loving assistance of Mrs. Moberly and

Mrs. Lawrence, was safely delivered of a healthy little daughter.

She was anxious about her husband, and being naturally a healthy and energetic person, started on her journey to rejoin him before it was perfectly safe to do so. At any rate, on her way out she contracted a cold from the effect of which she never recovered. The following summer I received a letter from my brother conveying the sad news of her death. She died at Glen Cottage, Portage la Prairie, the parental home of my brother and myself.

Sizerman kept his word about giving me a month's work at haying time; but I utilized his great strength by getting him to work on a little house I was having built on a squatter's claim two miles west of the fort, where I intended to have a man keep my cattle so that while they would still help me to be independent of the chase, they would be less likely to interfere with my other work.

Being left without a man during the summer of 1881, the time devoted to daily study had to be short, so in order that I might continue to improve myself in a knowledge of the Cree and Beaver, I did most of my thinking in those languages, and never in my whole lifetime did I put in such a time of hard thinking in the effort to clothe my thoughts with permissible words.

In the meantime I wrote to Mr. McFarlane to send me a man for at least the autumn and winter, and he complied, as usual, perhaps because on this, as on other occasions, I was careful not to ask for anything unreasonable. He sent me a sturdy young Scotsman by the name of Angus, who was all the better for lacking the musical tastes of Fidler, and for having been brought up, according to his own account, largely on a vegetarian diet in which barley bread had first place.

The Unjaga barley was converted into meal by means of a steel hand-mill, borrowed from the Company, which was neither more nor less than a large coffee-mill, to which was attached a heavy iron balance-wheel four feet in diameter with a long wooden handle fastened to the rim. This the operator—call him miller if you like—grasped with both hands and turned the wheel as many times to the minute as he soon learned from experience his breath and muscles would allow, always sure that he would be warm pretty soon, but the mill—never. Of this meal the finished product was that which passed through a wire hand-sieve after a vigorous shaking. And, mostly because it was barley meal, and in some measure because it was indifferently ground and bolted, it lacked seriously in adhesive qualities.

When I turned the baking department over to Angus, telling him what the trouble was, he said, "I'll make it stick. That's the kind of bread we use in Scotland." And he did make it stick. But, oh, it was hard; and only that we had lots of milk to soften it the natural grinding process might have been more trying than the mechanical one.

With Angus' assistance I succeeded in placing on the chosen site all the hewn timber needed for the church; but we decided not to convert more than a log or two into sawn lumber, as we neither of us knew how to put a whip-saw in working order, so that such lumber as we did saw was almost spoiled.

Just then it mattered little, as the snow had gone, and the Indians were daily arriving with their winter hunts, so that in attending to them and in directing and assisting Angus with his out-door and sometimes in-door work, my time was so fully taken up that work on the church had to be postponed to the autumn.

The summer of 1882 was a good one. We had all the milk and butter we needed. Hay in abundance was procured near by, and in our small field and garden we raised more barley, potatoes and vegetables than we actually needed. On one-third acre of land we raised two hundred and thirty bushels of potatoes, and other things yielded in proportion.

As soon as the river was clear of ice A-pi-pa got into his dugout and went off on his usual spring beaver hunt; and it then became necessary for me to turn James Heber over to the school for good.

When we were about through gathering in our abundant harvest Bishop Bompas arrived from Fort Chipewyan, bringing with him one Rev. John Gough Brick, an ex-Methodist minister, who came out to engage in missionary and colonizing work on the Peace River under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society. He was a man with a wonderful command of language, or what some of the people out there, who lacked in good taste, were wont to speak of as "the gift of the gab." And being also plenteously endowed with sentiment, wit and humour, he surpassed any man at that time in the country as a conversationalist and orator. With this last acquisition to our mission staff the Bishop proceeded westward to Dunvegan, where Mr. Thomas Bunn, a first cousin of mine, by great exertion had made a substantial beginning in the establishment of a mission, having enclosed two acres of land and put up within the enclosure a building which in size and character was superior to mine at Unjaga, being suitable as a mission hall and an abode for the incumbent, who, at the time, was like myself, unmarried.

Mr. Brick took charge at Dunvegan, and in the spring Mr. Bunn moved to the diocese of Rupert's Land. The changes made at the same time at Unjaga savoured more of a forward movement. Mr. Lawrence found himself provided with a valuable assistant in the person of a Mr. Melrose from Ontario, while my helper, Angus, was exchanged for another sturdy Scotsman whose name was John McLean, who was able to do anything that Angus could do, even to making the barley meal stick, and a few other things which were not among Angus' accomplishments. As regards

mechanics, John, I suppose, stood about half-way between Angus and a regular mechanic. But of all men I have ever known he was the most deliberate. When making or doing something, in the hope of saving time, I sometimes told him that I did not care what it was like so long as it was done, to which his invariable answer was, "If it is worth doing at all it is worth doing well," and he would go on silently rebuking my impatience by doing it well. Fortunately, this good habit of thoroughness extended to his reading and thinking, so that he was quite an interesting companion.

The first work in store for my new man was sawing with the whip-saw, and as I had to be the other man of the team, it was with some concern that I asked him if he had ever had any practice at this kind of work, and his answer that he had had years of experience at it in the Company's service was quite a relief. It was a further relief to learn that he did not mind being top sawyer, and to find, upon trial, that he could accommodate himself to every jerk and swing and bow and courtesy in which his partner might care to indulge. From McLean I learned how to set a whip-saw true to a hair's breadth, an art which adds wonderfully to the ease with which a saw may be operated, and to the quality and quantity of the lumber turned out.

As the summer advanced we laid the whip-saw aside, as John's time was all taken up in the dairy, garden and hay field, while mine was occupied in giving him some assistance, in attending to my pastoral duties and in compiling an English-Cree-Beaver vocabulary.

When the Indians arrived in the autumn their first rendezvous was on the banks of the Paddle River, some five miles north of Fort Vermilion, at a point where the pack trail to Hay River crosses the Paddle River.

Finding that they would be there for a week or longer, I went out to them on foot, carrying two blankets, medicines, and my manual of devotion and a small supply of hand-made cards in the syllabic.

There was at the place one building—a vacant little shack. This I occupied chiefly as an eating and sleeping place. From there I went in and out among the tents, attending to their sick, distributing my hand-made cards where they would be most useful, and telling over again the simple gospel story—a story which it should be easy to believe originated from the same source as the beautiful creation. And as I looked around upon the beautiful scenery by which this historic camping ground of the Beaver Indians was surrounded, the conviction was borne in upon me that the gospel and nature are in perfect harmony.

There was one hill in particular which appealed to me as an ideal spot upon which to erect a church from which this truth might fittingly be declared. Standing there I could lift up mine eyes to the hills. In one direction I saw the Buffalo

Mountains, in another the Cariboo Mountains. From this vantage-point I observed that the level of the bank opposite the one on which I stood was about fifteen feet lower, also that a fringe of spruce and balsam clearly marked the course of the river, showing that it here described almost a complete circle, enclosing a level prairie some acres in extent upon which could be seen the Indians peacefully abiding in their tents. And once at least I had an irresistible desire to know the lay of the land in the missing segment of the circle; so I strolled down the slope, crossed the little stream on stepping stones, ascended the low bank, walked across the camping ground, ascended the gentle slope of a ridge on its nearer side, and descended its gentle slope on its farther side, and then, just when I supposed that the prairie had come to an end, on nearer approach an opening was suddenly disclosed between two aspen groves, through which I passed on to other prairies as lovely as the first; and then when I believed I had left the Paddle River far behind, I once more saw it rippling and heard it laughing at my feet.

When the Indians were striking camp to go on to the fort, one of them offered me a horse to ride. He also provided me with a shaganappi whip, which, being more than a mere formality, had a knot at the end. That knot came very nearly being my undoing. As the animal was so covered with its load, I had to reach back when applying the lash, and evidently I went a little too far, for the whip got caught under the horse's tail, no doubt the more securely because of the knot, and when I pulled the horse changed from a walk to a run. With every jump up went its heels, and the harder I pulled the harder it ran and the higher went its heels, until, in readiness to grasp mother earth with both hands, I let go of the whip, and on the instant the whip dropped instead of me and the horse came to a standstill. Need it be added that after recovering the whip I took every precaution to avoid a repeat performance.

About two weeks later, I was walking to the fort one afternoon and when half-way I met a Beaver Indian girl about fourteen years of age who was travelling down toward the mission on her hands and knees; the lower part of her body being evidently semi-paralyzed. I asked her in astonishment why she had thus come so far from home. She replied, "I have no home, and the Indians I was living with not being able to carry me, they have left me behind. As my grandfather told me that you were going to help the poor Indians, I came down to see if you could keep me."

Her grandfather was an Indian of the Chipewyan tribe, who had died the previous year after having reached the century mark at least. He and I had been good friends and he was always ready to help me in the hay field or garden when I could get no younger assistant. And now, as I looked upon this grandchild of his—this pitiful creature squatting at my feet and looking up to my face watching for the

word which would be her passport to a haven of rest—cold, faithless, materialistic indeed must I have been had I failed to see there an illustration or reminder of what is going on unceasingly in the spiritual realm—a great multitude on bended knee moving toward the mercy seat that they may obtain mercy and find grace to help in the time of need.

I said to her: “I cannot send you back. Pass on, and see your brother; and on my return I shall speak with you.”

The result was that a few days later I had built her a lodge twenty steps from the back door of the mission house, and during the winter I supplied her with food and fuel. She steadily became more helpless, and died in the spring, her body being the first laid to rest in the cemetery of St. Saviour’s Church, Unjaga.

While attending thus to my part of the work, the Lawrences were devoting as much time and attention to theirs, and meeting with even greater difficulties. Little James Heber was a very sick boy and did not long outlive his sister. Their only other Indian pupil was a Slavie boy of fourteen who came from the Mackenzie River. Ned was an intelligent lad with a pleasing disposition, but he had not been at school more than six months when he also began to show signs of failing health, and it became as serious a question regarding him as of many another Indian student being educated under similar conditions—which is it better to do, to persevere in his education at the risk of his life, or to permit of his return to the meat diet and out-door life of his own people?

While the Lawrences were seeking the right answer to this hard question, they were confronted with another trouble, which in a large measure was to be attributed to the same cause, the utterly inadequate space in which they were obliged to carry on their educational work. For besides Mr. Melrose the Lawrences were assisted by a Mr. and Mrs. Peter Sinclair, who had a family of three little girls. And the one log house, which was none too large for the Lawrences alone, had to shelter, as well, every one who in any capacity was connected with the school, viz. the five Lawrences, the five Sinclairs, Mr. Melrose and the two Indian boys, making, in all, that unfortunate number, thirteen.

At the end of one month the Lawrences and Sinclairs began to live less happily together. No explanation is necessary. They were human beings, not angels.

Sinclair was an employee of the Hudson’s Bay Company, working for Mr. Lawrence on an arrangement such as was commonly entered into between the Mission and the Company, whereby an employee of the latter by consent was transferred to the Mission service for a specified time, without such service in any way affecting his contract with the Company.

It was Sinclair's intention on the termination of his connection with the Company to make a home for himself and family in the vicinity of Fort Vermilion, and it seemed as if circumstances were propitious when there was held out to him an opportunity of obtaining some education for his little daughters, while he was arranging the preliminaries for retirement from the Company's service to a piece of land in the Peace River which was to become his home. Realizing now that with *thirteen* under one small roof circumstances were not propitious, he came to me, stating that Mrs. Lawrence and his wife could not pull together, and that, in consequence, his wife was determined to pull out. Furthermore, he said that if I could shelter himself, his wife and his children in the mission house, his wife would, in return for board and lodging, do my housekeeping, in which case he could go on boarding and working at the school as before. Telling him that this was a matter in which Mr. Lawrence had to be consulted, I went over to see Mr. Lawrence. There I found that for lack of any better solution of the existing difficulty, a grudging consent had been given to the compromise of which Sinclair had spoken to me. My position was, in any case, an awkward one, but this much was clear, it was a case in which the right course happened to be that of the least resistance; so I took it, not, however, without assuring the parties to the agreement or disagreement that I was only tentatively falling in with the compromise arrangement, which might at any day be called off, whenever they could devise one more to their liking and more in the interests of the school.

When the Sinclairs moved over to my place the two mission premises then became numerically equal. For besides John McLean I had a second man who had been with me some weeks before the foregoing residential readjustment occurred. This man was John Murray, whom I have casually mentioned as a boat-builder. He had served the Hudson's Bay Company a good many years in that capacity, building his last two York boats at Fort Vermilion in the winter of 1879-80. I had found him then an intelligent, friendly and honourable man, and his example and influence had been helpful and encouraging to me in my dealings with the other employees of the Company.

After his one winter at Fort Vermilion he went down to Fort Chipewyan, where he assisted in the building of the first Company's steamer placed on the waters north of Long Portage.

I suppose the liking I had for the man was reciprocal. At any rate, when the steamer had been safely launched at Fort Chipewyan in the spring of 1883, he cheerfully consented to come up to Unjaga to assist me with the church until it also had been successfully completed. He was a splendid mechanic, and I really believe

was as anxious as myself to make the edifice we were working on a credit to the cause, the designer and the workmen. In my two Johns, both middle-aged Scotsmen, I had agreeable companions, for they were alike well informed. They knew enough, and were too honest and sensible to pretend to what they did not know, so that I got a chance once in a while to supply what was wanting, with comfort and confidence.

At this time Bishop Bompas had been ten years a Bishop, and concurrently the Bishop of Athabasca, as the diocese was first constituted; but now, at his suggestion, the Church Missionary Society consented to a division of the diocese. And when the division was made he particularly requested—and the request was granted—that he should still remain in charge of the northern portion. This portion took on the new name of the Mackenzie River Diocese, and included the Great Slave and Great Bear lakes and the surrounding territory as far north as human beings are to be found.

It was characteristic of the man thus to make choice of the diocese he knew would entail the harder work and the more numerous privations, and to leave to another the pleasanter southern diocese where even then the worker might cheer himself with the prospect of being soon in the midst of the comforts and advantages of civilization.

This portion of the old diocese retained the name of Athabasca, fittingly so, as the lake and river which gave the old its name still lay within the area of the new.

In the year 1884 Rev. Richard Young was made bishop and placed in charge of the newly constituted Diocese of Athabasca. He was a Cambridge man and an Englishman. For a number of years he had been rector of St. Andrew's, Manitoba, and latterly had held the position of local secretary to the Church Missionary Society. It was while acting in that capacity that I became acquainted with him, and he appealed to me then and ever since as a man of a sociable disposition and good business methods, with a keen sense of humour, so that when I received a letter from him informing me that he was my bishop, I was able to write back truthfully that it was the best news I had heard for a long time.

By the same letter which announced his appointment as Bishop of Athabasca, he sent congratulations in the prospect that my church building efforts were soon to be crowned with success; and in the matter of translations he proposed that in addition to my own programme I should translate the gospel of St. Mark and also portions of the Book of Common Prayer into Beaver Indian, and that if I needed to employ an interpreter, I could draw upon him for such assistance up to a certain figure.

As it happened, there was available at the time an Indian by the name of Missiskiyasio who was a master of the Cree and Beaver Indian languages. This man

I at once hired to give me three hours' help five days in the week until my translations were finished.

As soon as Sinclair had put in the term required at the school he commenced working for himself on a claim which he had taken beside mine west of the fort, and to lighten my own cares and at the same time give him a start, I turned over my cattle to him on shares. Unfortunately, his wife's health failed soon after, and in the hope that after visiting with her friends in Manitoba for a year she might be well enough to return, he sent her out in the spring of 1884. The following winter he put in alone on the ranch; but long before spring came he had all the ranching that he could stand, and with the opening of navigation he left the country and rejoined his wife. As soon as he left I sold my cattle to the Hudson's Bay Company.

By that time I had finished my translations and was within two months of completing the church. John Murray was, at that time, and during the previous six months, my only assistant, John McLean having left the summer before when the walls of the church were up, but the roof not yet on. But for John McLean the roof might have been on, in which case, however, the walls would not have suited me quite so well. It happened thus:

One day in early spring the three of us spent the forenoon in burning the old grass on the mission land, and at noon Murray and I returned to the house to prepare lunch, leaving McLean at the pile of church logs with my instructions to remain there and watch the fire until we informed him that lunch was ready. But instead of waiting for our signal, he joined us in a few minutes, reporting everything perfectly safe. Taking his word for it, we sat down and partook of our daily bread in leisurely fashion. When we had risen to our feet I glanced through the window and saw the pile of church logs ablaze.

In about one-half hour that blaze was completely extinguished; but we and the logs presented a sorry sight. Then I turned to the culpable John and addressed him thus:

“John, this would not have happened had you carried out my instructions.”

His reply was characteristic of the man and his nationality—it was canny. He said, “It is unnecessary, sir, to say any more. In what has happened I am already sufficiently punished.”

Because of what had happened it became necessary to change the style of building from dovetail to frame, for many of the logs were so badly charred in places that they were unfit to be used full length, whereas by cutting them up into the shorter lengths needed for fitting purposes the loss sustained became negligible.

Later, when only Murray and I were working at the church, we had a second

fire which might have done greater damage than the first had we not discovered it in time. To season our sawn lumber I had made a kiln which was heated by means of a box stove. The kiln was about thirty steps from the church, and the same distance from the river. About the time the lumber was dry enough to use, it was also dry enough to get on fire, and one day smoke was seen issuing from different parts of the sod roof and it was only by heroic measures and lively leg work between the kiln and the river that we succeeded in extinguishing the fire before any serious damage was done.

If the word style may be mentioned in connection with this little edifice, I would say that as a matter of convenience it favoured the Grecian style rather than the Gothic. As to material used the building in its entirety was of spruce, from the shingles on the roof to the sills beneath the flooring. And the walls on the outside were whitewashed, and the windows were painted white.

At the south end of the roof at its apex a belfry was erected, which was provided with a bell, and a Grecian cross surmounted all. Two other Grecian crosses were used, one at the north end of the church roof and the other at the north end of the chancel roof.

In regard to the interior of the church, the prevailing colour was also white, the ceiling being white with blue trimmings; but the chancel rail, the pulpits, the pews and the wainscoting to the height of the pews were coloured with mahogany stain and varnished.

I made the pulpits, the communion table and the chancel rail, while John was making the pews. In the making of the pulpits my taste and skill, such as they were, were exercised to the limit. With my jackknife I carved a somewhat elaborate figure on the front panel of each of the pulpits, painting the engraved work white, thus causing it to show to advantage against the dark background of the mahogany stain. When the Crees looked at this amateur work of art they usually expressed their opinion in the word *miyonakoosio*, and the Beavers in the words *oochu meotati*, and the English in the word of the same meaning, beautiful. And although the style and design may not have been appropriate from an ecclesiastical standpoint, forasmuch as the church was intended for the common people, including myself, I was rather proud of my performance.

When this five-year undertaking of mine was nearing accomplishment, and the day for the opening service was in sight, I found that I was going to be a few pounds short of white lead, and as it would be months before I could import any more, the discovery was disconcerting. In my trouble I went to the Roman Catholic priest, one Père Lettie, a tall man with a flowing beard and military bearing, who was immensely

popular.

“Père Lettie,” said I, “just when I am putting the finishing touches to my church I find that I am about six pounds short of white lead. Can you help me out?”

“Sure,” said he. “I lend you dat; and if not enough, come again.”

When a few weeks later the opening service was held, why should such a man not have been free to accept an invitation to join in the service; and, why was I not free to send him an invitation? There is something wrong somewhere. And the people want to know where it is, and why?

I spoke on the occasion from the words: “And the house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnifical,” 1 Chron. 22:5. And I pointed out:

1. That in all our doings on earth our objective *must be* “the house that is to be builded.”

2. That it *must be* for the Lord.

3. That it *must be* as magnifical as possible.

MY JOURNEY
TO
ENGLAND

CHAPTER VII

My Journey to England

After disposing of my live stock, the shanty and stables where they had latterly been kept remained vacant for a time, and then one Mr. William Smith, who was retiring at Fort Vermilion from the Company's service, asked me if I would allow him to occupy the shanty till he put up a place for himself. As I had abandoned all hopes of ever carrying out the food-raising plans with which this ranch had been connected, I consented, knowing pretty certainly at the time that I was thereby bidding farewell to one of my erstwhile cherished possessions. And probably Mr. Smith knew it as well as I did; for although not well educated, he successfully applied such knowledge as he possessed in divesting life's pathway of all unnecessary labour and hardship; and in this manner he was greatly favoured by his appearance and manner. Full six feet in height, he held himself erect, but never aloof. He wore his dark locks long enough to reach down to where a flowing beard fairly began, and the face thus framed was a picture of easy-going, good-natured humanity; nor did his words belie his appearance. He plainly assumed that his neighbours and himself were mutually interested in each other's welfare, and when his own could be advanced by an accommodation he had such a gentlemanly way of presenting the fact that he became well-nigh irresistible. Hence, though only a substituting postmaster, his fellow employees always spoke to or of him as *Mister* Smith.

Everything considered, I found it easy to reconcile myself to the loss of my squatter's claim in favour of Mister Smith. He and his wife were staunch Anglicans and they had two grown-up sons and a daughter just verging into womanhood. So, looking back to-day over the more than four decades which have transpired since Mister Smith borrowed or took possession of my ranch, I feel more satisfaction in regarding myself as a sort of pioneer colonizer than a pioneer rancher. I have been credibly informed that Mr. Smith died on the ranch at a good old age, leaving one of his sons to step into his place as he had stepped into mine.

I left Fort Vermilion on July 1st, 1885, taking passage on a scow which was in charge of Mr. James Spencer, a Hudson's Bay clerk, who by this method of conveyance was taking down to Fort Chipewyan what was called the second shipment of fur. Attached to the scow was a raft freighted with the following live stock, viz. two horses, two oxen, two cows and two calves. A crew of five accompanied us as far as Red River, being sent for the purpose of lowering the scow down the Chute.

The residents of Fort Vermilion and others were interested in our outfit, and notwithstanding that it was raining, they lined up on the edge of the bank, according to the custom of the North, for an interchange of hand-shakes. Among them was Père Lettie, and as our hands met he laughingly said: "You see, Mr. Garrioch, nature is shedding tears over your departure." And believing that he honestly wanted me to take his remark for a compliment, I smiled my thanks.

We reached the Chute at two p.m. on the 2nd, and after dinner John Murray, Louloux Lazotte and I started overland with the cattle, leaving the others to get the scow over the falls.

It was a fearfully hot day, and as we made our way through a pathless forest we were accompanied by a host of bull-flies, mosquitoes and sand-flies; and never before nor since have I known these pests so simultaneously, swarmingly and voraciously attack both man and beast. But their bloodthirstiness served one good purpose, it made the animals use their legs as well as their tails, so that we reached our destination a few minutes before sunset. And no sooner did the tormented animals get sight of a good smudge which was going up at the fort on the east side of the river than they plunged into the limpid waters before them and swam over. Hardly, however, had their heads appeared over the limestone banks of the river when two or three cattle approached them from the direction of the smudge, headed by a two-year-old bull; and forthwith this bull and the larger ox in our contingent had their horns interlocked in strenuous conflict. The bull having the advantage of being as nature made him, and also that of being on his own dunghill, soon began to force his big opponent backwards, until his hindquarters went over the edge of the ten-foot limestone bank and he dropped down on his rump into the water below, the bull, in his impetuosity, coming very near going down head-first after him. If there be such a thing as a bovine sense of humour, that bull must have entered into the spirit of it as he stood there looking down upon his defeated opponent and heard the hearty laughter with which we human spectators greeted his triumphant achievement.

The scow remained at this point only long enough for the interchange of ordinary civilities, and the refreshing of ourselves with tea, after which a few more packages of fur were taken on board, and the voyage continued—passengers and crew, all told, then consisting of only Mr. Spencer, John Murray and myself. We floated night and day, sometimes accelerating our speed with the oars and sometimes with the sail. Travelling thus, we reached the Quatre Forche River in the early morning of the 6th, and were pleased to find that the current of the short river, which is as liable to be in one direction as another, was on this occasion in our favour. It was weak, however, and we could not help much with the oars owing to heavy rain which

continued into the night. We therefore landed at dark and camped for the first time since leaving Fort Vermilion.

The clouds had cleared away by morning, and the wind being favourable we reached the locality known as Quatre Forche by one p.m. There we met Suse McKridi, a postmaster, from whom we received the news of the capture of Louis Riel, and the collapse of the Metis uprising in the Saskatchewan. The news ended considerable anxiety as we had received our latest news previous to this early in April.

Owing to the roughness of the lake, we had to remain at Quatre Forche for twenty-four hours, so that we did not reach Fort Chipewyan until four p.m. on the following day. There I had to remain for fifteen days, awaiting a chance to go forward by the steamer, which was then at the Long Portage, and upon its return would have to go north to Fort Smith before making another trip southward.

These fifteen days I put in visiting my old friends among the Company's people, including the Fletts, Wylies, Loutits and Macklins—the parents of the children I had taught for a winter ten years previously. I also gave some slight assistance to the two missionaries there, Rev. W. D. Reeve, the missionary in charge, and Rev. D. Kirby, who was conducting the school. The latter I replaced during the few days that intervened between his departure for the North and mine for the South.

Among the passengers on board the steamer *Graham* on its return from Fort Smith was Rev. John Garton, a fellow-missionary from Fort Rea, who was on his way to Winnipeg, where he and the lady of his choice, who was coming out from England, were to meet and be married. With a view to economy as well as companionship, we arranged to travel together and pool our expenses as far as Portage la Prairie.

We embarked on the steamer at 8.27 a.m. on July 23rd and reached Fort McMurray at ten p.m. next day, thus making the distance, one hundred and eighty-four and a half miles, in thirty-eight hours, a trifle less than five miles an hour.

Going down-stream over the same water in the autumn of 1874, two Chipewyans and I in a birch-bark canoe covered the same distance in thirty-six hours, deducting, of course, the time spent in camp, so that our average was a trifle over instead of under five miles an hour. And, of course, on arrival at Chipewyan, the propellers could talk; but on arrival at Fort McMurray they could not.

The distance by the Clear Water River to Long Portage is only about half the distance we had already come, yet owing to the shallowness of this stream it took us six days to reach the Long Portage. There were times when the only way of making progress was by means of the capstan. In 1874 we covered this part of the route

with our birch-bark canoe in two days. We spent a Sunday on the Clear Water, during which the *Graham* remained stationary and Mr. Garton and I held services with the passengers and crew.

Thursday, July 30th: We arrived at the north end of Long Portage, where hospitality was extended to us by Mr. Woods, in charge of the Company's depot at this point.

July 31st: We walked the twelve miles over the portage, and before Mr. Garton and I retired to our tent for the night we had a pleasant chat with Mr. and Mrs. Cowie.

August 1st: From this point to Ile à la Crosse we travelled by York boat, and the current was in our favour. Leaving Long Portage at six a.m. we crossed La Loche Lake and camped on La Loche River.

August 2nd: Being Sunday, the crew did not strike camp till ten o'clock. Camp was next made at the south end of the longer of the two Horse Portages.

Monday, 3rd: Sailed across Buffalo Lake and camped at the entrance to Deep River. Owing to an abundance of good fish the Chipewyans seemed to live in a semi-settled condition on the shores of Buffalo Lake, and at one point I noticed a group of seven or eight houses.

Tuesday, 4th: We sailed and pulled through Deep River to-day, and camped not far short of Ile à la Crosse. Deep River is, in many places, very wide, and from end to end is very deep, hence its name. Its shores are stony and its banks gradually slope upwards to a considerable height.

Wednesday, August 5th: We reached Ile à la Crosse at eight-thirty a.m. and spent the day there, enjoying the hospitality of the Company as extended to us by Mr. Fortescue. At eight p.m. we had a religious service, at which the attendance was good, and included six Company officials.

Thursday, 6th: We hired two men to take us by birch-bark canoe to Green Lake, and set out on this stage of our journey at ten a.m. By means of sail and paddle we travelled over several reaches of the southern end of the lake and early in the afternoon entered the mouth of the Beaver River.

The Beaver River is by no means the least important of Canadian rivers, for it receives the waters of over a dozen lakes, some of which are well supplied with fish, and it passes through a country in which are many thousands of acres of the finest of land for agricultural purposes. Here we have a country in which the pioneer who has learned wisdom from the experiences of others can make himself a more permanently comfortable home, by occupying enough clear or easily cleared land for purposes of cultivation, while reserving timber land enough to supply a homestead

with lumber and fuel for all time. And as to the muskegs and rocks which may not be very far away from some of the homesteads, they shall afford rich fields for the exercise of imagination, as they have done for centuries past, with the certainty that now, at last, their development and exploitation is to be watched with ever-increasing wonder and satisfaction.

We made this stage of our journey in five days, arriving at the north end of Green Lake at eight p.m. on the tenth of August. Our daily average was about twenty miles; but on our last day we travelled sixteen hours and reckoned that we made forty miles. At some of the rapids Mr. Garton and I were on the tracking line while our two men, with pole and paddle, guided the canoe among the boulders.

Travelling down this river eleven years before, I had paddled stroke for stroke with the crew, and going up-stream on this occasion I followed the same rule, and in doing so simply followed the bent of my inclinations, being very skeptical indeed as to whether any dignity worth preserving was liable to suffer from such a course. If, however, to the squinting eyes of some humans I let myself down a peg by paddling, perhaps by another squint I may be raised to the ordinary level. I was the sportsman of the party, and apparently met with fair success, as my diary shows that on one occasion the party had roast snipe for dinner, and on another day I shot six ducks and a mink.

We found a Mr. McIntyre in charge of the depot at the south end of Green Lake, with whom we stayed four days, awaiting the arrival of freighters from the south, who in returning would afford us an opportunity of proceeding on our journey. Weary of waiting, we at length hired an Indian to pack part of our stuff and started out on foot. Mr. McIntyre accompanied us four miles; and while we were having a cup of tea together by way of a parting "cup of kindness," freighters arrived, so we returned to the depot to make other arrangements.

Among the freighters was a young man, William Chaffee, son of the farm instructor at Assisippi. William had a light team of horses and light waggon; and he cheerfully entered into a tentative arrangement with us to take us on our way at least as far as his father's place. William was too much of a Jehu to be praiseworthy; nevertheless, I have to confess for myself with shame, that when he gave his horses the lash and put them on the half race, shortly after they had rested just two hours at the depot, Mr. Garton and I looked at each other and laughed heartily as we compared this new speed with that at which we had gone over the same ground only a few hours before.

We arrived at Assisippi next day and dined at the Anglican Mission, which was in charge of Rev. John Hines, in whose company and that of other missionaries I

travelled over the prairies in ox carts in 1874, with the Venerable Archdeacon Cowley in charge of the party. Mr. Hines was evidently making good, and he and the farm instructor and Mr. John McKay, a Presbyterian missionary, had succeeded between them in preventing the Crees of the surrounding district from taking part in the Metis uprising.

We spent the night at Mr. Chaffee's place and found him quite willing to enlarge on his son's agreement by allowing him to take us to Qu'Appelle for the sum of one hundred dollars, covering the distance from Green Lake to the last-named place, at that time the nearest point at which connection could be made with the Canadian Pacific Railway then being extended westward.

It was late in the afternoon when we left Mr. Chaffee's, so that by the time we had travelled as far as Rev. John McKay's it was time to camp; so it may be that it was not purely as a matter of civility that we called on our fellow-missionary. However that may be, Mr. and Mrs. McKay, and, for that matter, the whole family, seemed delighted to see us; and if we had entertained any thoughts of going farther that night they would have been quickly dispelled by the cordial invitation of Mr. and Mrs. McKay to stay right where we were, and make ourselves at home, an invitation which we noted was heartily seconded by the younger members of the family, whose looks said more clearly than words, "Oh, do! We would like it so much." And so we stayed; and enjoyed as pleasant an evening as we had known in years.

Hours passed quickly as we compared our varied missionary experiences. And when the hour for retiring had come, and this venerable but child-like believer gathered us around the family altar, it touched our hearts to hear him refer to us in the following words: "We thank Thee, Heavenly Father, for the visitors Thou hast brought to us to-night, and for the pleasure and encouragement of their companionship. Prosper Thou the work of their hands upon them, and may theirs be the joy of knowing that by delivering Thy message of love in the places where they laboured they were instrumental in bringing souls out of darkness into light, and from serving idols to serve Thee, the only true God. Vouchsafe to be present with them during the remainder of their journey, and there in the midst of Christian fellowship may they enjoy a season of rest and refreshing to both body and soul."

On the evening of the next day, August 18th, we began to see marks of the recent conflict between the Canadian forces and the Metis. The first was at the ferry over the North Saskatchewan opposite where Fort Carlton had stood. There we found camped on the north bank several Metis who were once more loyally serving the Hudson's Bay Company by freighting its goods to the north. And, evidently

considering it something to their credit, they showed us bullet marks on their carts; and one of them went further by proudly showing us where a bullet had passed through his body. Passing to the other side, we uncovered for a little while at the graves of the three Mounted Police who had fallen at the Duck Lake fight.

At the Batoche Crossing of the South Saskatchewan our Jehu stopped and gave his cayuses a chance to get their wind while he made use of his, going into the details of the decisive struggle which had taken place here between the Canadian troops under the command of General Middleton, and the Metis under the able leadership of Gabriel Dumont.

We were shown a house which had been torn and gutted by shells from a mile away. Another house which we examined had been riddled by bullets, and as we travelled farther we passed the blackened remnants of about a half-dozen others which had been burned to the ground. We saw a few Metis on the road, and perhaps the sympathy which induced us to get into conversation with them was not entirely free from the element of curiosity. To a party of women the question was put: "Where were you when the fighting was going on?" And a well set-up, queenly looking woman answered for the others as she pointed down to the valley, "Right there." And when she was asked, "Did you lose much?" she answered in English, "They did not leave me eighteen inches of shaganappi."

Early on the twentieth we passed a spot which should be of some historic interest. As the cayuses trotted along our charioteer, Chaffee Junior, waved his arm to the right and said, "That is Red Lake, the place where Gabriel Dumont fooled the Mounted Police." Then he proceeded to tell us the story, which, to say the least, is quite as strange as fiction: they had chased him all the way from Batoche, and when he reached here night was coming on, so he made for the lake and in the gathering gloom the police saw him ride right in until his horse, snorting as it swam, carried him safely to an island where he landed and was lost to view. The Police watched that island overnight, but when morning came they made the discovery that their supposed prisoner had taken to the water again, this time on the farther side of the island, and so had made his escape. Three cheers for Dumont, say I. And don't forget the horse.

In the forenoon of August 22nd we arrived at Qu'Appelle, not on the half race, as we had left Green Lake, but at a walk; for the cayuses, having dropped some shoes, had gone lame, and were wearing moccasins like ourselves.

Within the next few hours we had made the acquaintance of the banker of the town who, thanks to our relations with the Hudson's Bay Company, gave us credit for being as honest as we professed to be and advanced us what money we needed

to settle with our driver and purchase tickets for Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg.

I arrived at Portage la Prairie September 22nd, and spent the next thirty-six days at my old home and in visiting from there Winnipeg, Middle Church, St. Andrew's, Mapleton and St. Peter's; sometimes on a Sunday occupying a pulpit or addressing a Sunday School. And wherever I went, particularly in Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg, I noticed, sometimes with pain, that many things associated with the Hudson's Bay Company régime, which had terminated fifteen years before, were being crowded out by the things of the new, and that, in the process of transition, many of my old friends were not making hay while the sun was shining, or reaping the fields which were ripe for the harvest, and, I suppose, until there comes a general regeneration of the world, it will always happen that in every process of development, the greater the stride of civilization, the greater will be the opportunity for improvement, and, on the other hand, the greater liability to hardship and loss. It was now five years since the railroad had reached Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie, and I saw that with that harbinger of civilization there had come something in the nature of a revolution, not of the kind whose effects I beheld at Carlton and Duck Lake and Batoche, but, nevertheless, one which taught the same lesson, to wit, that if civilization is to be a real blessing to the human race, bringing the greater good to the greater number, not only making the strong stronger, but doing as much for the weak who need it more, then it must be that kind of civilization which will help men and women to come under the sway of the Spirit who giveth life, enabling them to build the house of character, not on the sands of time, but upon the Rock of Ages.

In regard to the old home circle which at one time, before the marrying-off process had set in, comprised twelve members, to wit: father, mother, two brothers, seven sisters and myself, although it had now been reduced to just half that number, the changing conditions were in no way to blame for that, rather I should say the married-off had good cause for thankfulness for having had a greater variety from which to make the selection of a life-partner, while the unmarried were equally free to go and enjoy (speaking for myself) the same privilege. And if W. S. Garrioch, and Jessie, Maria and Winnie, who yet remained in the family nest, did bother their heads at all about a nesting-place of their own, it was evident to me that, meanwhile, they were having a much finer time than I had had when in my younger days I had lived in the same nest, Glen Cottage, under the old régime. And as for my father, who had now reached the allotted span, and who when both he and I were younger had literally and metaphorically taught me how to shoot, he was still following the precepts and example which he had set me. On Sunday he was sure to be at church, and, again, in due season, he might be found in his dugout, duck-shooting in the

marshes of Lake Manitoba. From what I saw and from what I have read in his journal of that period respecting his success on those hunting expeditions, I am convinced that he was still a keener sportsman than I, and just as competent as when we hunted together in earlier years, to bring down the bird which I had missed. Then as to mother, she, too, had not lived so long under the old order of things without getting to know its limitations, so she welcomed the new, chiefly, I believe, because it held out the prospect of new and enlarged openings for usefulness to us, her children.



The History of Lily to Date

Among those whom I visited in Winnipeg before resuming my journey to England were Mr. and Mrs. Vining, who for a time were residing there with their daughter, Lily, who was now thirteen years of age. One day, in the absence of that young lady, we went fully into the evidence collected up to date respecting her identity, and the result of our collaboration was the unescapable conclusion that she and the floating baby picked up by Jean on the great Oonchaga were one and the same.

Here now follows, in condensed form, the information or data upon which we arrived at the foregoing conclusion:

On the evidence of Mr. and Mrs. Bulldog, Jean and Sizerman there were among the miners at Fort St. John in 1871 an Englishman of the name of Edward Armson and his Blackfoot wife.

According to Mrs. Bulldog, Mrs. Armson had accidentally inflicted a wound on the second toe of her left foot with a hatchet, undoubtedly thereby marking herself for life.

According to the evidence of the same four, which was not lacking in corroboration by others, Mr. and Mrs. Armson had left St. John's late in the autumn of the same year for a place not far distant, which, as they described it, could be approximately located.

In the following spring, 1872, one of the four witnesses—Jean, the Blackfoot guide—picked up an infant from a raft floating on the Peace River in the vicinity of where the Armsons were supposed to have wintered.

Jean took the infant and placed it in the willing hands of a nursing mother of the Beaver Indian tribe, with whom he left it; but before going on his way the discovery

was made that it had a birthmark on the second toe of its left foot, which bore some resemblance to a wound such as might be made with a hatchet.

In 1879, when Jean told me the above story, he had never heard any more about the foster-mother, except that her husband had gone west of the Rockies to visit the Sikannies, taking his family with him; and as many Sikannies had died of an epidemic about that time, and he could learn nothing about this family of Beaver Indians, he feared that its members had been among the victims.

In the autumn of 1880 I made the acquaintance of Valentine James, who knew the Armsons, and who in 1875 had seen a half-white girl about three years of age whose foster mother—a Beaver or Sikannie—claimed to have got it from a Blackfoot man who found it floating on the *Oon-cha-ga* (Peace River), and that in the following spring she was going to turn it over to a trader whose name, he thought, was Nelson, who wanted it because his wife was childless.

In 1882 I had many opportunities of conversing with Mr. Elmore, a fur-trader from British Columbia, who traded as far down the Peace River as Fort Vermilion, and he corroborated Valentine James' statements, and also said that he knew Nelson well, and that he did take charge of the little half-white Indian girl on account of his wife being childless, and that Nelson's headquarters were Victoria, B.C.

Corroboration and further information was obtained from Nine-foot Davis, who was intimately acquainted with the Nelsons. He said that Mrs. Nelson was in poor health while she was in Victoria, and that Nelson, thinking that the climate farther from the coast might suit his wife better, had moved to Calgary; but that she continued to fail and died there. He then returned alone to Victoria, having left the little girl, to whom he and his wife had given the name of Lily, with a married couple who were friends of theirs and, who also being childless, had been very glad to adopt her.

Sizerman first reports to me the finding of a tree by Bulldog, with letters carved upon it, near to where Mr. Armson might have been expected to camp for the winter. And afterwards, Sizerman looks for the tree and finds it, and copies the inscription, which is found to be—*Edward Armson, 1872*.

It has to be remembered that the evidence supplied by Mr. and Mrs. Vining corroborates some of the foregoing statements, particularly in regard to Miss Lily having been obtained from a free trader at Edmonton who spoke of her to the Vinings as a piece of flotsam and jetsam from the Peace River, and also in the matter of the birthmark on her toe.

At the conference in Winnipeg with Mr. and Mrs. Vining the evidence of Mr. Davis was more fully corroborated in the following particulars:

Nelson was the name of the fur-trader or free trader from whom Lily was obtained.

Mrs. Vining said, "Mr. and Mrs. Nelson became great friends of ours." And then, with tears in her eyes, she added, "Shortly before Mrs. Nelson passed away she put Lily's hand into mine and said with a smile, 'May God bless you both.'"

Furthermore, Mr. and Mrs. Vining informed me that they had spent the previous autumn in Calgary, and that while there they had arranged matters so that Jean and a married sister of the lost Mrs. Armson were separately given a good opportunity of seeing Lily without having been told anything of her antecedents, and that when asked, as if casually, whether she resembled any one whom they knew, each had answered that she was like Mrs. Armson. "In fact," said Mr. Vining, laughing, "the Blackfoot woman called her *Ni-too-ta-mis*, my little relative, and asked for a kiss, and she got it, too, and so sure was I that this woman was Lily's aunt, that I handed her an American eagle, not with the mercenary thought of extinguishing her title; but just, as it were, to show her that I appreciated being in the family circle."

Before I again parted with the Vinings we were quite agreed that the chain of evidence we had secured proved conclusively that the floating baby whose life had been saved by Jean with a few drops of duck bouillon was the identical person now known as Lily Vining. And we planned how we might add a link more at the baby end of the chain, so that we might not be tempted to use presumptive evidence by saying that Mrs. Armson might, could, would, should and must have become a mother; and that when still unaware of the forthcoming honour had accidentally inflicted a wound on her toe, and in doing so had stamped a facsimile on the corresponding toe of her yet unborn offspring; that is to say, on the toe of Miss Lily Vining.



Resuming my journey to England, I left Winnipeg by C.P.R. train on Monday, September 28th, and journeyed eastward to Port Arthur over a stretch of country, mostly so poor as to render it easily believable that it would change little in a thousand years. Arriving at Port Arthur, thirty minutes were allowed to transfer to one of the C.P.R. boats running between this point and Owen Sound. The lake was rough, and the fresh-caught Lake Superior whitefish in which I had freely indulged on the train did not agree with me, and I was humiliated in the usual way. We had a bad night; but in the morning the storm gradually subsided.

We reached Sault Ste. Marie at noon next day, and while passing through the canal admired the beautiful scenery. The town was small but strikingly neat, and also conveyed the impression of progressiveness, rather more so on the American side than the Canadian.

The voyage over Lake Huron was as pleasant as that over Lake Superior had been disagreeable. We arrived at Owen Sound at eight a.m., September 30th. This town looked to be about third-class in size, but growing fast. After an hour's delay here we transferred to the railroad again, and, three hours later, twelve noon, arrived at Toronto. Here I spent thirty-two hours, most of which I turned to good account viewing the fine streets, well-kept grounds, stately public buildings and handsome private residences. Then, at eight a.m., October 1st, I proceeded to Montreal, where I arrived at eight a.m., October 2nd. I spent less than seven hours in this city, all too short a time for renewing acquaintance with the friends I had made here during the winter of 1878-79. Leaving Montreal at three p.m., I reached Quebec at ten p.m., and putting in a night there I rose early and saw as much of the city as I could before breakfast, and at ten p.m., October 3rd, I went on board the *Parisian*, of the Cunard line, which a few minutes later left her moorings and started on the voyage to Liverpool.

The voyage to Liverpool occupied nine days less one hour. On three different days I got the reckoning of the distance travelled, which was, respectively, three hundred and forty-two, two hundred and forty-two, and two hundred and thirty-two miles. The average speed, however, for the entire voyage worked out to ten miles an hour, which was double that of the Hudson's Bay Company steamer *Graham*, as described in an earlier stage of my journey, going from Fort Chipewyan up the Athabasca River to Fort McMurray; but less than double the speed made by two Chipewyans and me in a birch-bark canoe, going down the same river in 1874.

Of the hundreds of passengers on board the *Parisian*, I never afterwards heard or saw anything, excepting two. One of these was Professor Turner, whom I afterwards met on the streets of London, and with whom I exchanged a nod and a smile as we went on our respective ways; and the other was a young Englishman, an architect, who with another young Englishman shared a stateroom with me on the voyage.

For at least a quarter of a century I had indulged the hope of being able some day to visit England, and at last I was in England—England, which, to the early Red River settlers, next to heaven itself—was the source of everything good, and the name, England, was to them comprehensive enough to embrace the Scots, and, in fact, was less exclusive than Great Britain, which would seem to imply the exclusion

of the Irish, albeit that might suit some of them well enough.

Upon landing in England I did not, like Julius Caesar, grasp it with both hands. That, perhaps, I may presume to explain by paraphrasing the words of Cowper, thus, "Twice a Caesar could not grasp thee now."

I spent thirty-six hours in Liverpool, putting up at the Canadian Hotel, 17 Duke Street. During this short time, with the assistance of a Mr. Blackwood, I was enabled to see how certain things are done in England. I saw grain which possibly had left Port Arthur about the time that I did being transferred by machinery direct from the hold of the vessel to the various bins of an elevator. I saw at the wharves pieces of squared timber which were larger and longer than any I had ever seen before, one of them being a sufficient load for a pair of the largest horses I had ever seen—about three times the size of our ordinary American cayuses—and the log being hoisted beneath the axles of two pairs of wheels, which were at least ten feet in diameter. The huge Clydesdales harnessed tandem fashion, slanted their pillar-like legs backwards, pressed home with weight and strength their broad shoulders against their collars, and with stately tread moved away with their burden. And that same, said I, might be taken as a pretty good figure of the manner in which England reaches her objective.

Referring to my own humble landing in England, I presumed to refer to the landing of Julius Caesar, and now, referring to my arrival in London, I may say that I was reminded of the Queen of Sheba's words when, upon beholding the greatness of Solomon, she said, "The half was not told me." And when I got my chance, as she got hers, to see things for myself, I dare say I was no less prompt than she to place the credit where it was due, not forgetting the reigning sovereign in England at the time—the good Queen Victoria—any more than the Queen of Sheba overlooked her royal and much-loving host. And if her majesty of Sheba who lived one thousand years before Christ rightly attributed the greatness of Solomon and the happiness of his people to the God they worshipped, and was filled with wonder at the house exceeding magnificent which had been erected for the promotion of his worship, surely when I visited England three thousand years after the Queen of Sheba visited the land of Canaan I might well have been prepared to connect the greatness of this greater country with its worship, the more so because of the fuller light enjoyed by the nation in the teaching of the Christian Church. And when I looked around in London for evidences of faith in the Supreme and Eternal, with whom three thousand years are only as three days, I found such evidences in many fine structures erected to the Glory of God, chief among them St. Paul's Cathedral, and even more impressive by association with the past, Westminster Abbey, with its

lofty spires pointing upwards as if in silent appeal to the people to set their affections on things above and not on things of the earth.

Knowing before I arrived in England that the headquarters of the Church Missionary Society were on Salisbury Square, I made for that point and took up temporary quarters in a hotel a few doors from the C.M.S. house.

Bishop Young and his family were at this time residing at Tunbridge Wells, as the Bishop was putting in a year at deputation work for the society. On my second day in London I met the Bishop there by appointment; and after discussing my translations, we called at the headquarters of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and of the Society for the promotion of Christian Knowledge, and the secretary of each agreed, subject to approval by directors, to do its share in the printing of my translations.

After these important matters had been settled, I next provided myself with a map of London, which was six or seven feet square, and spent two days in studying it and in looking up boarding places. The telephone was not yet invented, and I wished to be conveniently situated to the printing establishments where my work was to be done. I found such a place on Percy Street and, securing a room there, forthwith moved into it with my few belongings.

Although my manuscripts were distinctly written and not very bulky, owing to their being written in a language unknown to the compositors, and part of them in the syllabic character, which was but a little better known, it was necessary to re-correct some of the proof-sheets a third or even a fourth time before they were quite correct.

Just when I was getting a touch of that strange loneliness which a man may feel in the midst of a crowd of strangers, I learned from Mr. Dickson of the C.M.S. that another missionary from North-West America—Archdeacon Vincent of Albany, Moosonee Diocese—was, like myself, spending a winter in England in connection with translation work.

It did not take the Archdeacon and me long to find each other, after which we stayed together as much as our engagements would allow. To this end he at once moved over to my boarding place, which he decided was more comfortable than his, and there he secured two rooms alongside of mine on the second flat. I regard it as one of the many gracious and undeserved acts of Providence which have cheered me in my earthly pilgrimage that Archdeacon Vincent and I were in England during the same winter. Being fellow-countrymen, fellow-missionaries and in England for a similar purpose, being also temperamentally suited to each other, it was just like a fatherly indulgence to arrange for our being able to see and enjoy England together.

When sometimes an appointment in the country caused our parting for a day or so, we found compensation for this in describing our respective experiences, setting forth especially the further discoveries we had made of the habits and customs of the English people as seen at close quarters in their own country.

Our usual custom of an evening was to work in our rooms till eight-thirty, then to go out for a short stroll as far as some favourite restaurant and have a cup of cocoa and a biscuit. Before retiring, the Archdeacon always had scripture reading and prayer in his sitting-room. Now, as it happened, it was during the winter we were in England that Jack the Ripper was slaying women by night on the streets of London, and the stamp of infamy which might thus be accidentally inflicted upon an innocent person made the executions of this monster all the more horrifying. The Archdeacon, being a big man with a correspondingly big heart, was moved to pity by what he read and heard and saw, and never did I know him in his nightly prayer fail to say to Him “who came to seek and to save that which was lost,” “Have pity upon those poor creatures who are trying to make a living from the streets of this city in a way which can only lead to death.”

LONDON,
DUNVEGAN
AND BETWEEN

CHAPTER VIII

London, Dunvegan and Between

After being some time in London I felt that I was not seeing enough of the sun, due sometimes to the fog, and at other times and places to the crowding together of its brick buildings surmounted by their chimneys and chimney-pots, which, as seen through the smoky atmosphere from my window of a morning reminded me of the spruce tree-tops of the North, of which I had seen enough for a while.

Then I was longing for a real sunset view—one in which the sun disappears between earth and sky and not behind a forest of chimney-pots; so one afternoon I decided that I would walk right out into the country as I had done in other cities. But I discovered that that kind of thing did not work out very well in London. However, after walking at my best for over an hour, I found myself on rising ground, from which presently I looked sunward over a gently declining heath or common, and although the view beyond was still obstructed with brick houses, brick chimneys and chimney-pots, a friendly gap permitted of my seeing the sun sink to rest where the earth and the heavens seemed to meet, and, as if to reward me fully for my effort, there was an after-glow, when the western sky was clothed in a radiancy of colour, which was enough to make any man who has seen a land called Peace River think of it; and also of “the Better Land.”

Then, as I walked back, I noticed a church ahead with its door open, and as its bell was ringing, and because the sight and the sound harmonized well with what I had just seen, and also because I wished to know how many of London’s millions would avail themselves of this opportunity of worship, I entered the open door. Presently a clergyman in his surplice entered from a door to the right, and knelt at the praying desk; then a lady from a door to the left entered; and about the same time the sexton entered from the porch, and we four comprised the congregation.

I was told that in many London churches and in churches throughout England, there are daily such congregations, sometimes larger, sometimes even smaller, who go through the prescribed morning and evening prayer, and, in some churches, both.

It might seem that such services are a formality or even a forlorn hope; but if we, who cannot, or do not, participate in such services only knew of the great results which must accrue from worship of this kind rendered in sincerity and in truth, we would think of those who thus inconspicuously honour their Creator and Saviour, as among the greatest benefactors of mankind.

On the whole my futile attempt to reach the country in an evening walk from the

centre of London did not go unrewarded. I “had a nice, quiet time,” and although I did not see the country, I succeeded in getting a country appetite, which enabled me to enjoy thoroughly a good cup of tea and one of those delicious tea-cakes which they make in England.

I had been used to hear old country people refer to England as home; but up to this time it did not feel much like home to me. At Christmas time, however, Bishop and Mrs. Young invited me to spend Christmas with them at Tunbridge Wells, thus affording me a better opportunity to know what English home-life really is.

My only companion on my journey to Tunbridge Wells was an old gentleman, whom I might have left undisturbed to the perusal of his newspaper had I not noticed in my study of the passing scenery, planted here and there over the fields, a great number of cone-shaped objects consisting of poles about twelve feet long placed together in such a manner that they reminded me of the Indian tepees of the land whence I had come. And to my enquiry as to the meaning of these, I was informed by my companion that they were “op poles.” Kent, I later learned, was famous for the growing and curing of hops, one of the important ingredients in the manufacture of beer.

Among the remarkable sights which are to be seen at Tunbridge Wells is a thatch-roofed dwelling-house of considerable dimensions, the walls of which are of wood, stone and mortar. And the age of this house as proven by authentic history is one thousand years. Think of it! And at the same time think of a barn hard by which looked about as ancient as the dwelling house, wherein was a man threshing out grain with a flail, which, by the way, was in keeping with the fact that, at the inception of this domestic establishment, my illustrious namesake, Alfred the Great, was thrashing the Danes.

Another place besides Tunbridge Wells where on several occasions I spent an enjoyable week-end was Hertingfordbury. There again I moved in the pleasant atmosphere of English home-life in which I easily sensed a spirit of friendliness which bade me more effectively than words could have done not to consider myself a stranger.

My host and hostess at Hertingfordbury were Rev. F. and Mrs. Burnside, and although he had the onerous duties to attend to which fall to the lot of a conscientious English Vicar, and, in addition, the editing of the “Church Year Book,” an annual task of very considerable magnitude, yet he and Mrs. Burnside, who was as clever as she was kind, contrived to give me such a good time that, when the chance of accepting clerical work in England came my way, I felt tempted to entertain the thought for at least a few hours. Glad am I, however, that I kept to my resolve of returning to work

among the Beavers, for although not bound by contract to do so, when I think of the good health that I was enjoying, of my experience in the work, of my freedom from family ties and my solemn intention when leaving Peace River, to return, I felt as if I were under contract to the Bishop of my soul to do so, which was only to be expected, since I had never yet abandoned the fond hope that my life's work lay in the Peace River.

When I arrived in England I naturally expected to hear good English spoken, and was not disappointed. But there were some puzzling exceptions to the rule. For instance, when I reached a certain part of London, the bus drivers were shouting: "The Hangel! The Hangel!" (Angel) and "Mauble Auch!" (Marble Arch). And when I was in Hertingfordbury Mr. Burnside introduced me to one of his country parishioners, who was asked to tell me something in the English which was used in his home, and I was utterly unable to understand him.

While in London I made it a matter of courtesy and convenience to call at the offices of the Hudson's Bay Company, and one of the first persons I saw there was a Mr. Tobin, a nephew of Governor Colwill, who was clerking under Mr. Donald Ross at Fort Vermilion when I was a guest there in 1876.

Doubtless it bodes no ill to this world that when two or more people meet who were aforesaid for months or even years constrained by circumstances to be frequently in each other's company—temperamental and other differences notwithstanding—such meeting is not like that of ships which pass at sea, in that *this* calls for a pause, a greeting and oftentimes a celebration. So when Mr. Tobin and I met, although temperamentally different, he a Roman Catholic and I an Anglican, we could not, thank God, divest ourselves of remembrance of the many occasions when we had partaken of our meat from a common board, and helped to brighten life a little for each other. Nothing would do but we must take the first opportunity to meet at a comfortable restaurant to partake of a meal together once more, and while doing so to chat of the many persons and things in whom we had felt a common interest in Athabasca, and had a common interest in still.

Only a few days later the two commissioned officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, Messrs. James McDougall and R. McFarlane, arrived in London, and as the hotel at which they put up was only a few steps from the Church Missionary House where my duties often took me, I called on them the day after their arrival; and there again the pleasure of meeting was evidently mutual. It appealed to me as a fitting way of enhancing that pleasure when Mr. McFarlane invited me to become his guest, and as such to join him and Mr. McDougall at dinner in their hotel.

I had not been long in London when I decided that a no mean way of seeing the

world would be to visit London's celebrated theatres occasionally, so on several occasions I took in a performance at the Lyceum Theatre, and about as often a performance at the Drury Lane Theatre, nor did I deprive myself of the chance of seeing what was going on at St. James Music Hall, and what I saw and heard at these various places looked to me as legitimate forms of amusement, as much so, in fact, as others more readily accepted by the sedate as conducive to human happiness, all going to make up a variety of means whereby many men of many minds may each, according to his taste and the occasion, seek relaxation of mind and body.

The advice had been given me in the "North," in Manitoba, and in London itself to "be sure and visit Madame Tussaud's Wax-works." I took the advice; and if I did not that night have a nightmare, it was likely due to my study of the Sleeping Beauty.

In the hope of discovering the secret whereby connoisseurs delight their souls in the study of beautiful paintings, I often visited the National Gallery; but while I greatly admired the beautiful display, and got a form of entertainment to which the most fastidious could not object, I did not find that my ability to appraise merit underwent any appreciable improvement.

Among places which I found more entertaining than either of the former were the British Museum and the Zoological Gardens. And, after all, as we well know, there is lots of food for thought in mummies and monkeys as well as in a painted picture or a sleeping beauty.

Taking one thing with another, I found it just as necessary in the city of London as in the Peace River country to arrange a proper schedule so that in the daily round there might be found a time and place for attending to the more serious things of life. London was well provided with facilities for this. For instance, there was the daily three o'clock choral service in St. Paul's Cathedral. This service, rendered by one of the finest boys' choirs in the world, was most inspiring, and I attended it whenever my other engagements would permit.

Then, once a week, there was the missionary prayer-meeting in the Church Missionary House, when a large room was filled with worshippers from every walk in life, who came there to learn from the secretaries of the Society how the Master's work was progressing in other lands, and then were led in prayer in which reference was made to the information given, and special prayer offered up in behalf of missionaries known to be in particularly trying positions, and who had asked for the support of their prayers.

The sacred edifice in which I worshipped most frequently was St. Paul's Cathedral, and that was due to the character of the daily service already mentioned;

but, of a Sunday, I allowed myself a very wide range in the selection of a place of worship, never failing, however, to attend once a Sunday at a Church of England service. Carrying out this rule, I twice attended a service in Westminster Abbey. And if anything was needed to enhance the solemnity of the service, it was supplied by the thought that I was worshipping on the same spot and in practically the same sacred edifice in which Christians had worshipped for thirteen centuries. By way of doing things thoroughly, I visited the crypt of the Abbey on a week day; but I did not stay long down there, as the atmosphere was rather suggestive.

At the time of my visit to London the non-conformist ministers, who were numbered among the great pulpit orators of the day, were Mr. Spurgeon of the Tabernacle, Dr. Clark of the Temple Church, Mr. Jackson of Whitefield Chapel, and a Mr. Newman, a Congregationalist. When I had heard each of these once, I felt it well worth my while to return and hear each again once more. And from my visits to these and other places of worship, not excluding the head barracks of the Salvation Army, I became more firmly convinced than ever that among Christians of the Universal Church, meaning thereby all who make Christ their one hope of salvation, and are honestly and earnestly striving to lead virtuous and godly lives, there is a bond of union which if recognized by the said Christians themselves, as God would no doubt have them recognize it, would soon be the means of bringing the whole world in penitence to the foot of the cross.

During the latter part of my stay in England the days seemed to slide by very quickly, due, no doubt, to my having made the acquaintance of some very nice people, among whom was a young lady, Miss Crabbe, who was keeping house for her brother in London. Shortly after the Archdeacon was introduced to Miss Crabbe, he proceeded to anticipate, saying to me, "I knew from the start this would happen to you before you left London."

Most of the repeat visits made to public places, as already described, were made by me in company with Miss Crabbe, for our acquaintance had begun in the opening days of the year. And as we enjoyed ourselves on these and other visits, our friendship steadily grew, eventuating in our engagement in the opening days of March and our marriage on the last day of the same month, in St. James Church, Piccadilly.

Among friends of the bride who were present at the wedding were her father, Mr. Richard Crabbe of Portsmouth, a sister, Miss C. Crabbe, and a life-long friend, Miss Emily Leman, who still lives in London. There were also present my friends from Canada, Mr. Roderick McFarlane and Archdeacon Vincent.

In the short tour which followed our wedding, we first visited the Isle of Wight, putting up first at Ryde and then at Ventnor. As we were fortunate enough to get

perfect spring weather, we were able to climb the hills and “view the landscape o’er,” or to look into some of the cosy little nooks with which this sweet little isle abounds.

After two days spent thus, we crossed back to Portsmouth and put in the weekend with Mrs. Garrioch’s parents.

Mr. Crabbe had been in the Crimean War, and at this time held office in the war department at Portsmouth, so that I was privileged in getting a good view of the warlike devices by which England was prepared to defend her rights and her honour at home or abroad.

On leaving Portsmouth, we turned back towards London, going via Brighton, where we had to transfer for Tunbridge Wells. And it was while waiting there that the lady in charge of the ladies’ waiting-room taught me that democracy in England was somewhat stricter than in Canada. In my innocence I never dreamed that the words, “Ladies’ Waiting Room,” were intended to imply that a lady’s escort, if he happened to be *he*, would have to be left on the outside; therefore, in order that I might the better discharge my newly-assumed obligations, I entered that door with Mrs. Garrioch, and sat down, whereupon a solemn, middle-aged lady dressed in black approached me and said: “Sir, this waiting-room is not for gentlemen.” This remark I took to be a lady-like equivalent for “You get out!” And I got out—reduced.

Before completing this tour we were for a few days the guests of Bishop Young and his estimable wife; and besides being both made to feel perfectly at home, I was glad to have Mrs. Garrioch get a description of life in Canada from a sister Englishwoman who knew all about it.

On our return to London we occupied my former quarters on Percy Street. We found Archdeacon Vincent still there, but with plans completed for an early return to Canada. We would like to have booked a passage on the same boat; but there was still my English-Beaver-Cree Vocabulary of three thousand four hundred words to be attended to. This had been left to the last because of the limited number of copies ever likely to be needed. And, acting on the suggestion of the S.P.C.K. Secretary, I had the fifty copies agreed upon cyclostyled by one of the Society’s clerks who wrote a beautiful hand, and in this way a quite unnecessary expense was avoided.

The vocabulary consisted of one hundred and thirty-seven sheets, eleven by eight and a half inches, and was bound in paper cover. The following is a sample of the title page:

A
VOCABULARY

of the
BEAVER INDIAN LANGUAGE
consisting of

PART I—BEAVER-ENGLISH
PART II—ENGLISH-BEAVER-CREE

By the Rev. A. C. Garrioch
Missionary of the
Church Missionary Society

Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge
London, Northumberland Avenue

Cyclostyled by
E. S. Brewster

Printed by
Mrs. A. C. Garrioch

Mrs. Garrioch and I left London on Good Friday, April 23, 1886, and next day left Liverpool for New York on board a vessel of the White Star Line. We selected this route, being willing to go a little out of our way to see for ourselves the wonderful city of New York. The boat was a much smaller one than the *Parisian*, on which I had gone over, and consequently ploughed the deep on a less even keel; but the captain comforted his passengers by assuring them that many vessels which rocked less than the one we were on were not nearly as safe. In the interests of his employer, or, for that matter, of his passengers, no self-respecting captain would be likely to say much less.

Perhaps our ship was all right, and it may not be an unusual thing for a ship to take a rest in mid-ocean, at any rate ours did, and one morning while we were still in our berths, we suddenly became aware that the engines had ceased to work, and that whereas before we were being rocked endways on the cradle of the deep, we were now being rocked sideways—in other words, we were rolling in the trough of the sea.

Hastily donning my clothes, I went on deck and asked an explanation of the first officer I met, who in a voice as deliberate as it is possible to conceive said, "There is nothing the matter, except that some trifling adjustment is being made below." Whatever the trifling adjustment may have been, it was over two hours before the boat was again headed for New York.

With the exception of Mrs. Garrioch and myself all the other first-class passengers seemed to be Americans. And they were as nice and friendly to us as we could have desired; but among themselves friendliness seemed too easily to open the

way to intimacy, and, speaking for myself, I would say that democracy as applied in the ladies' waiting-room at Brighton is safer for the people than the style of administering it favoured by our American fellow-passengers on this voyage.

It took us ten days to make the voyage; and by the time the second Sunday came round, at the religious service which was held, I felt that no text in the whole Bible could be better suited to the occasion than Deut. 6:5, "And thou shalt *love* the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."

The eventful day of the voyage was Saturday, April 29th, for it was on that day that the stoppage of the machinery occurred, and at various intervals later in the day we saw two porpoises, two icebergs and two ships.

We landed in New York at nine a.m. May 5th, and put in the entire day sight-seeing. As may be supposed, we had heard a great deal on board the vessel anent the wonders of New York. One elderly gentleman who was wont to take Mrs. Garrioch under his protective wing, and who had been in the civil war and was addressed as General, said, speaking of the Brooklyn Bridge: "As you stand in the centre of the great span and look below, it is like looking into eternity." We did exactly as he said; but the only effect it had was to start us speculating as to "the General's" conception of eternity. As to the bridge itself, looking at it and not from it, it certainly impressed us as the greatest triumph of engineering skill to be seen in New York; and certainly far ahead of the elevated railroad about which we had also heard a great deal.

In the evening we thought to give ourselves a treat by taking in a play at the Star Theatre; but we were sorely disappointed and came away with a poor opinion of the American drama.

Next morning, with the aid of the hotel bus driver, I think we gave the New Yorkers nearly as good a show as they had given us the night before. The train left at nine a.m. for Montreal; but we were a trifle late in leaving the hotel. The fact was noted as we took our places in the one-horse bus. "Never mind," said the driver with a happy smile, "*I guess* I can make it." And forthwith he started, putting his horse on the half-race. As we approached, the conductor and one or two others waved to the driver, who thereupon went faster than ever, and evidently every one about was highly pleased when, according to the driver's guess, "we made it."

We arrived in Montreal at ten-thirty p.m. and put up for the night at a hotel. For the next day and a half we were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. John Maxwell. As far as time would allow, I called on a few of the friends I had made in this city during the winter of 1878-79.

Through the influence of Sir Donald A. Smith, whom I called on at the Hudson's

Bay offices, there was extended to us the half-fare privilege over the eastern section of the C.P.R., which, according to its regulations at the time, we were entitled to on the western section only.

Going direct and all-rail, we arrived in Winnipeg on our fourth day, May 13th. We put up at the New Douglas Hotel for four days, and the weather being ideal, we enjoyed ourselves among friends and in making arrangements for our journey northwards.

On the 17th we went on to Portage la Prairie and stayed at my old home for one week, during which period its members and some other friends became well acquainted with my wife, and once more we could enjoy hearing each other called by our Christian names.

We resumed our journey towards Dunvegan on Tuesday, May 25th, and it was a relief to be able to go a good part of the way by C.P.R. train instead of by ox and horse train as on my two previous journeys northward. Unfortunately, however, for lack of fuller knowledge, we took the train on one of the days when Pullman and passenger coaches were dropped off at Moose Jaw; and rather than spend twenty-four hours there, we stopped only long enough to finish our sleep in the Pullman, and then continued our journey on a sort of mixed train on which passengers were allowed the use of the caboose. There we found a large family of foreigners ahead of us, whose manner seemed to imply that they were curious to know what the circumstances might be to which they owed the honour of our company.

We travelled over many miles of road on this journey where nothing came between the moving train and the natural sod but the rails and the ties securely spiked together. And at times when in the judgment of the engineer extra caution was necessary, the speed was so reduced that the more active of the male passengers would step out and gather a bouquet of wild flowers for a lady friend; and two young boys armed with catapults had great fun shooting at prairie chickens. Travelling in this polite and sportive fashion, it is not to be wondered at that it took us three days and three nights to travel between Portage la Prairie and Calgary.

It had been arranged by Bishop Young that Rev. George Holmes, a young missionary from England who had been a year in Canada, should travel along with us into the Peace River, joining us for that purpose at Portage la Prairie. He did not do so, however, and we did not know what had become of him until we arrived at Calgary, where we were pleased to find him awaiting us.

We took up our quarters at Calgary in a quiet boarding-house, where we waited nine days, first for the arrival of our luggage and outfit, and, secondly, until a Mr. Greenwood, who was hired for our benefit by the Hudson's Bay Company, could

get his wagons and carts in good enough shape to take us and our goods as far as Athabasca Landing.

We left Calgary on June 7th and camped a half-mile out of town, so that Mr. Greenwood and his assistant might have a little celebration with their friends. During the next four days, despite many bad places, and rain during the last two, we managed a daily average of sixteen miles.

Next day I turned my diary over to Mrs. Garrioch, and she attended to it for the rest of the journey. The following is part of the first entry, which briefly describes this stage of our journey right up to the Athabasca Landing. I give her view-point so as to enable the reader to see the country through English eyes.

“June 12th: The weather continues bad, so that we are not making much progress. There are also many swamps and little rivers. In one of these little streams a cart upset; but, fortunately, with little damage to the contents.

“The country is sometimes very pretty, being covered with flowers, among which the wild roses especially remind me of dear old England.

“Ducks, prairie chickens and rabbits were numerous in some places, and enough were shot to give variety to our bill of fare.

“We also saw some prairie wolves, and when they camped near where we did, they seemed to be bent on keeping poor, weary travellers from sleeping by howling at their worst.

“Between Edmonton and the Landing we had much finer weather, although at times it was unpleasantly hot. Due to the heat and the sandy or swampy nature of the country toward the Landing, the flies were in swarms, and when the poor horses were drawing their heavy loads over the sand hills and through soft places, the men had to urge them with voice and lash in a somewhat unmerciful manner. The scenery on this part of the route was not pretty. There was, in fact, little to be seen except the charred remains of large pine trees, showing that we were passing over ground which not so very many years before had been heavily wooded.

“When at length we reached the edge of the valley of the Athabasca River, we looked down on a strip of forest which had evidently escaped when that on the higher land had been burned. We also saw the river and two log houses standing beside it. These comprised the Company’s depot, and Mr. Greenwood, after unloading our goods there, drove back to the top of the hill and camped; but Mr. Holmes and Mr. Garrioch decided that it would be more convenient to be nearer our goods and the river, so we pitched our tent under the shelter of some beautiful pines standing across the road about forty yards from the depot, and Mr. Holmes pitched his tent about twenty yards further on.

“After the last mosquito had been smoked out and we had snuggled down for the night, we heard the sigh of wind in the tree-tops and the rumble of thunder in the distance, but we were tired and were soon fast asleep. What seemed to us a long time afterward we heard Mr. Holmes shouting at our tent door, and bidding us flee for safety to the depot. Mr. Garrioch replied that he thought we would be as safe in our tent as anywhere else; and as Mr. Holmes rushed on we could hear one tree after another crashing to the ground. The storm subsided as suddenly as it had begun, and we were soon asleep again. At sunrise next morning, when we looked out, the first object to attract our attention was a huge tree which lay across the path only seven feet from our tent. And as we looked into each other’s eyes, Mr. Garrioch remarked, ‘Only seven feet more this way and where would you and I have been?’ and in a hushed voice I answered, ‘Where?’”

I admit that in the foregoing Mr. Holmes and I are correctly reported; but in my expression of confidence of safety in the tent I don’t suppose I was one whit more candid than Mr. Holmes, who next morning told us that he had gone to the depot partly to see that nothing happened to our goods.

“Sunday, 27th: The boats arrived from Lesser Slave Lake, and the crews kept us awake most of the night with their tom-tom and singing, which, by the way, is not very musical; but they seem to enjoy it.

“Monday, 28th: By five p.m. the boats were loaded, and we started up the Athabasca River on the next stage of our journey. The river was high, the current strong, and the boats being heavily-loaded very poor progress was made, so that it took fourteen days to reach Lesser Slave Lake, a trip which usually occupies not more than eight days.

“The men had a hard time pulling against the current; and as for us passengers, seated as best we could on top of the cargo, we did not find this method of travelling any improvement on the caboose or the heavy wagon. To make matters worse, the weather continued more rainy than ever, and there were days when, after striking camp and travelling a mile or so, the boats would have to be put back to shore and tied up till next day.

“Although the cargo was protected against rain by a tarpaulin, many packages got wet, and on bright days we opened some of ours and dried the contents.

“We were six days on the Athabasca; and then we came to the Lesser Slave Lake River, through which the Lesser Slave Lake empties into the Athabasca. Although this river is only forty miles long, which is ten miles less than the part of the Athabasca over which we had come, yet it took us just as long to travel. And the travelling on this much smaller stream was not even as pleasant as on the other, for

the banks, which were steep, high and heavily wooded, presented very little variety, and when the sun beat down upon us on the water below we were nearly scorched.

“Friday, July 9th: When we reached the lake we found as much fresh air as there was good for us, and the crews had to pull hard against a northerly breeze to reach a near-by island where we camped for the night.

“Sunday, 11th: When within a few miles of the Hudson’s Bay post we came to a camp of French half-castes, where some of the crew had friends. So a landing was made for breakfast. It was then ten a.m., and we had travelled all night. We were therefore well prepared to do full justice to the delicious fried smoked whitefish which was set before us.

“I should say we *were* and we *did*: and if I remember rightly a gentleman said something over his third helping about plenary indulgence. After paying our respects to a Mr. Anderson who was in charge at the Company’s post, we went on three miles further and camped at the end of the lake.

“Thursday, July 15th: We made another start; this time overland in ox carts. This ninety-mile road to the Peace River passes mostly through a forest, and when one cart wheel was going down into a rut, the other was usually climbing over a pine root, so that incessantly the ox between the shafts, or any person in the cart was knocked from one side to the other. Rather a good way for ‘reducing,’ perhaps, and it would seem to have had that effect upon the oxen, although, no doubt, the plague of flies had much to do with that.

“An ox and a cart only half-loaded were turned over to us so that we might ride, and Mr. Holmes and Mr. Garrioch, taking it in turn, always walked beside the ox so as to steer it clear of the worst places.

“One day, in crossing a stream on a raft, one of the carts slipped into the water and some of our things got badly soaked, including a keg of sugar. Fortunately, it was a nice, bright day, so we opened the wet cases and spread their contents in the sun. As to the sugar, which we found changed to syrup, we reboiled it and got it back to sugar, which, however, was not nearly as white as before.

“Wednesday, July 22nd: The Peace River came in sight a few minutes before sunset. And for a little while Mr. Garrioch and I stood on the edge of the valley of the Little Heart River, eight hundred feet above the water of the Peace River, which shone in the distance westward; and as we looked afar in that direction and saw the thickly wooded islands now left in the shade, while the high banks with all their curves and hills and flats a little longer remained in the golden light, I agreed with Mr. Garrioch that it was a peaceful and beautiful scene. But I confess that all was not serene until we escaped from the stings of a thousand mosquitoes, and stood beside

a smudge at the Company's depot beside the river, in that spot which is to-day known as Peace River City.

"There we found Bishop Young, who had come in via Fort Chipewyan and Fort Vermilion."

As the greater portion of our supplies had not come up, and we had no means of going forward to Fort Dunvegan, we were obliged to remain at the Landing until August the first, and during that period of nine days the Bishop paid a visit to Lesser Slave Lake; and Mrs. Garrioch and I gathered all the raspberries that we needed within a few yards of the depot, and converted them, and a goodly portion of our taffy-like sugar, into a supply of preserves for winter use.

With the Bishop's return, and the arrival of a man from Dunvegan with two or three carts, we were able to resume our journey; and we were accompanied by the Bishop and Mr. Holmes as far as the Mission establishment at Old Wife's Lake, of which the Rev. John Gough Brick was in charge.

To insure our reaching that point in good time next day, we crossed to the north side of the river by means of a dugout on the evening of August the first, and then went on a mile or so further to Mr. Alexander McKenzie's place, where we remained for the night as his guests. This old gentleman had lived so long in the country and in the Company's service that he had accommodated himself to it as the potatoes were said to have done; anent which the joke was current that the long tubers known as *Ladies' Fingers* had got to be called Hudson's Bay Fingers because it had been found by experience that potatoes of any other shape grown for a few seasons in the country would, without fail, accommodate themselves to the approved pattern—that of the Hudson's Bay Finger—owing to the country being so completely dominated by the Company.

Mr. Alexander McKenzie was certainly rooted and grounded in the country. Born in it of mixed parentage, he had been sent to Scotland for his education, and, returning as apprenticed clerk, had served the Company long and faithfully until he reached the goal of a clerk's ambition, which is to be made a commissioned officer. Soon after, he married the widowed daughter of Laprett, the old French half-caste who was my guide overland from Battle River to the Peace River Crossing in the spring of 1880.

Leaving Mr. McKenzie's beautiful location early next morning, we reached a still more picturesque one within the next twenty minutes; but "its beauty did not make me glad," for this was where my brother had established a mission farm only seven years before, which only two years later had to be abandoned—another of those hopes "which are angels in their birth, but finished young like things on earth."

Seest thou that little log house standing there in the aspen grove which fringes a laughing stream? Well may the aspen leaves whisper and the little stream laugh, for that tiny cottage built by my brother, in which he lived with his pretty and pleasant wife and little daughter while he worked the farm in the interests of our Anglican Missions, that cottage was now occupied by Laprett, my erstwhile guide, father-in-law of Mr. Alexander McKenzie, and a staunch Roman Catholic and a father or grandfather of many more; while just over the river Père Huisson, my erstwhile fellow-missionary-opponent, if you will, was even then locating a Roman Catholic Mission. This Père had been heard to say when at Fort Vermilion that he did not believe in giving “noting for noting”; and it certainly looked as though, in this case, he was going to get something for “noting.” We in our innocence had provided a nucleus, and well might he thank *le bon Dieu* for the chance to enter into our labours.

But “charity thinketh no evil,” and unless I forget, why should I? So wishing them all success, I must hasten on.

Crossing the laughing river, we wended our way in a slanting ascent of the undulating slope by which the Dunvegan cart trail reaches the upper edge of the Peace River valley. The day was perfect. A pleasant breeze kept the mosquitoes down. To the right and left saskatoons and strawberries were to be found in abundance, and from time to time the animals were stopped and allowed to munch the buffalo grass while we feasted on berries; so that although we did stop for an hour at noon it was more for the purpose of boiling the kettle, and giving the oxen a chance to chew their cuds; we had little need of exercising our jaws any more for hours to come. It was therefore quite in order that the Bishop, who was a prudent and practical man with a keen sense of humour, should exercise his episcopal authority by telling us that we were to regard ourselves as under a ban not to partake of any more saskatoons or strawberries until we reached Mr. Brick’s place, for, said he, “Let me tell you in confidence, that Mr. Brick has a splendid garden, is a first-class cook and loves to feed the hungry, and it would be a shame to disappoint him.”

Being thus forewarned, we arrived forearmed at Old Wife’s Lake about an hour before sunset. And as we drew near to the house Mr. Holmes sniffed the air and said, “Baked duck, I declare.”

At a little distance from the house we were met by Mr. Brick, who gave us all a most hearty welcome. He had timed our arrival to a nicety, and he had evidently laid himself out to do honour to the occasion. He was dressed in a black clerical suit which was in creditable condition considering that he had been baching it for three years. His hat, however, which was of straw, bore traces of age and hard usage. The

crown was rent half-way round, and through the rent there appeared a tuft of his hair. In less than fifteen minutes after our arrival he had us all seated at a table beneath a covered stage outdoors. And there he fed us on the choice products of the land. The wild ducks which he had procured from Old Wife's Lake were done to a turn, and went well with the green peas and mealy white potatoes out of his garden. Then there were the light cream-made buns and fresh butter which reminded Mrs. Garrioch even more forcibly than did the wild roses on the way from Calgary, of "dear old England." And, lastly, when it came to the strawberries with cream and sugar, we informed the Bishop that we were now enjoying the fruits of his seasonable interdiction.

Time and space prevent me from telling of Mr. Brick's talents as an entertainer, and his gift of being always ready with an appropriate anecdote—usually a laughable one—which he never spoiled in the telling.

Next morning we regretfully bade farewell to Bishop Young and Mr. Holmes and our hospitable and entertaining host, and continued our journey to Fort Dunvegan where we arrived about four p.m., August 3rd, one hundred and three days after our departure from London.

FIVE YEARS
AT
DUNVEGAN

CHAPTER IX

Five Years at Dunvegan

On my way out from England I received a letter in Winnipeg from Mr. Vining, who wrote from Victoria, B.C., informing me that he and Mrs. Vining had decided to make their home there, at least until Lily's education was finished; and that they both regretted that this move would keep us apart for a time. They were glad, however, to assure me of their faith as to the outcome of our mutual endeavours to discover what had happened to the parents of their adopted daughter—their water Lily.

In answer to this letter I wrote as follows, a few days after my arrival at Dunvegan:—

FORT DUNVEGAN,
PEACE RIVER, CANADA,
August 6th, 1886.

MR. AND MRS. VINING,
Victoria, B.C.

My dear Friends:

I found your letter of May 1st awaiting me at Winnipeg when I arrived there on May 13th. The letter itself was welcome, but not the information that for years to come we were likely to be separated by the Rocky Mountains.

You will be glad to know that I have had additional information which may lead to the unearthing of the item of vital statistics needed to complete the record of your water-lily's uncommon career. Bulldog, the Iroquois who discovered the tree by the river on which Armson's name was carved, now reports to me the discovery of a badly rotted dugout lying in a gulch near the same spot. And two days later I had a visit from Sizerman, who, besides corroborating the foregoing statement of Bulldog, reported the results of another winter hunt by him in what was believed to have been the last haunts of the Armsons. He had discovered a few more deadfalls and blazed trees, and what he regards as likely to lead to further discovery, a number of tossing-poles used in rabbit-snaring; and he noticed that the snares had not been removed, but had rotted off, showing conclusively, in his opinion, that things had not gone well with the party who set them. Following the line of snares he had reached a point on the river two miles up-stream from where Bulldog had discovered the dugout. The simple-minded fellow wound up by saying:

“I believe *Kih-chi Munitoo* wants me to find the Armson's camp, and that, if I keep on, *peeyis kakwai nikamiskan*, at last I shall find something.”

I know that you also, my good friends, have that feeling, just as well as he and I, only that at the present stage of our investigations there seems little left for us to do except to encourage him to keep on.

I hope that Lily continues to give promise of growing up to be a woman beautiful in soul and body.

Love to you all,

Yours most sincerely,

ALFRED C. GARRIOCH.

P.S.—In future I shall possibly write less in the first person singular. I am married now. A. C. G.

Returning to the biographical part of this book, I may say that Fort Dunvegan was established in the year 1800 by a Mr. McLeod, who named it as above after the ancestral castle in the Isle of Skye, which was his native place.

Twenty-five years after its establishment it was abandoned for one year. But in 1826, five years after the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay and North-West Companies, it was reopened by my grandfather, Colin Campbell, who the year previously had been promoted to the position of Chief Factor.

Mr. Campbell was only one of many others who, by means of the nuptial tie, strengthened the bond of union by which two fiercely competing companies had been made one. He married into the family of the McGillivray who was in charge of the Nor-westers' headquarters at Fort William in 1816, when Lord Selkirk with his De Meurons made him and his fellow officers prisoners.

To Mr. and Mrs. Campbell many children were born, and my mother, who was one of twin sisters, was among those whose birthplace was Fort Dunvegan, so that when I arrived there in the course of a strange unfolding of events which one might call accidental because he did not know any better, I wondered then, as I have many times wondered since, why it should have all worked out just that way, particularly when an old Beaver Indian woman, who as a young girl had worked for my grandmother, under the name of Dolly, would say to me, "Many is the time that I carried your mother on my back." And though I must say that the appearance and condition of Dolly as she spoke conveyed to my mind the impression that when she performed the particular nursing act mentioned, my mother's position would hardly be what one might call enviable, yet, forasmuch as she had carried my mother, I found myself confronted with the question: how comes it that I find myself amongst a people where I am reminded by incidents like the foregoing of Him who was to "gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom"? And I could think of no better answer than this: after all, man should regard life as consisting very much of opportunities to make some fitting return for benefits received.

At the time that I went with Mrs. Garrioch to take charge of the Dunvegan Mission, the Beaver Indian population of the district was probably about one-eighth of what it was in Mr. Campbell's time, and the fur trade there had in consequence so dwindled that Dunvegan had ceased to be the headquarters of the Upper Peace

River; that honour having been just recently transferred to Lesser Slave Lake; therefore when I was transferred by the new bishop from Vermilion to Dunvegan, I had no reason to feel that I had been promoted. Nevertheless, I have to say, and say it with pleasure, that in this and in all dealings that Bishop Young and I had together we were in perfect accord; and of all the missionaries I had to deal with in that north country, there was none more satisfactory, he being invariably considerate and reasonable.

The Anglican Mission at Dunvegan had been practically closed indefinitely for over a year before I was placed in charge; and that this should have been exactly a half-century after my grandfather re-established the trading post of Dunvegan, would suggest something like an instance of history repeating itself methodically.

In anticipation of a reopening of the mission, about a half acre of the garden had been planted to wheat, potatoes and turnips; and on our arrival the two latter were fit to use. So far so good; so also with regard to the one building on the place, the mission house already mentioned as having been built by Mr. Thomas Bunn. It was roomy and well built; but to the young wife coming fresh from England, and to her husband as well, the conditions within and around it were very far removed from the cosy nest which two people in their circumstances would very naturally have desired. It was surrounded by weeds which grew up against the walls to the height of the window sills. And before hearing from Mr. H. B. Round, officer in charge of the fort, and of the mission also to the extent of holding the key, we looked in through the windows, and for our pains got more of a revelation than an inspiration. A single object—no, seven objects, riveted our attention. These were a small box-stove and six lengths of rusty pipes, and all else in sight, such as mud, chaff and feathers, called for the free use of shovel, broom, scrub-brush and elbow grease before the bride and bridegroom might enter in and dwell there. Obviously, the days of our dwelling in a tent were not over, and as it was raining, we lost no time in erecting that wandering abode to serve us a few days longer, while the more permanent one was undergoing a more than ceremonial purification.

It was obvious to us both that for a few days at any rate we would have to be chin deep in temporalities; and as the Indians did not begin to come in for their winter supplies till a few days later, we had few interruptions while putting our house in order. At first we had to put up with trunks and packing-cases for seats and tables, and at night with a shake-down on the floor. Fortunately, along with that portion of our goods which we had contrived to have pushed forward with ourselves right up to our objective, there was a set of carpenter's tools; and being favoured by Mr. Round with a loan of seasoned lumber, I first of all made a substantial

carpenter's bench, and then a bedstead, two tables and two chairs. By the time all this was done the nights were getting cool enough to call for a fire, and so I had to give my attention to the box-stove and pipes. Fortunately, among the latter there was an elbow, and, by means of it—time and labour being precious—I ran the last length of pipe through the wall, and so got our stove to work as a heater; but the days being still warm, Mrs. Garrioch continued to do the cooking outside, until one day she came very near having a serious accident; and, as it was, got her dress on fire and was slightly burned. Resolved not any longer to put up with that particular risk of being left a widower, I immediately contrived a method whereby our stove might not only answer as a heater, but a cook-stove as well, sufficient, at any rate, for our limited requirements. The real difficulty was in the matter of baking. I was the third missionary to use this same box-stove. The first, Mr. Bunn, I was told, made Scotch bannocks which could easily be baked on top of the stove. The second, Mr. Brick, made Red River bannocks and, opening the door of the stove, baked them there. When it came to my turn, having the advantage of an assistant, I went one better. Mrs. Garrioch put a small loaf into a round tin which was placed on top of the stove on a low wire stand, and over all an iron pot was inverted, and at the end of forty-five minutes, with a real hot fire, a perfect little loaf was turned out.

Before we had completed these arrangements toward comfort ere the siege of winter had begun, the Beaver Indians had arrived. Better had they contrived to remain two months longer in the bush; for in coming to the fort just then one-fifth of them came to their death. It is hardly believable, nevertheless it is true, that within a few weeks of their arrival at the fort, that percentage of them had died of measles and whooping-cough. And among the victims were a number of adults, and those by no means the weakest among them. One tent which contained an apparently healthy father and mother and a number of children was completely emptied. Rachel did not there long weep for her children.

And who was to blame for all this? Well, I suppose we may as well own up and say—the white man, or, if it will sound any better, civilization. “Coming events throw their shadows ahead,” and this one threw shadows ahead which had a rash and coughed and killed.

When these scourges were working their way northward, leaving devastation in their wake, whose place was it to haste to the rescue, and, if practicable, prevent such misery, or, if too late for that, at least do the best possible by way of amelioration. Obviously, the Dominion Government, which had the right and the means of securing the co-operation of subsidiary agencies such as the Hudson's Bay Company and the missionaries.

If one examines dispassionately the treatment of the Indians by the Canadian Government, it must be admitted that a sincere desire has been shown to carry out a policy which would be in the best interests of the Indians, and just criticism can be levelled not so much at methods employed, as at tardiness in bringing them into use. In the case of the Beaver Indians, for instance, it was very much like the case of shutting the door after the horse was stolen. And if it be pleaded in extenuation that it could not foresee what hour the thief would come, it might at any rate have more promptly sent relief to those who in consequence of what had happened were left without any visible means of support.

As to the Hudson's Bay Company, with its annual problem of transportation, it did not attempt to place the officers in charge of the trading posts in a position to deal successfully with such an emergency as confronted Mr. H. B. Round at Fort Dunvegan in 1886. So when that competent official distributed relief, on the theory that the year's returns in furs would not amount to much if the Indians were not kept alive and in health, he had also to bear in mind that it was easy to follow his charitable inclination to the point of so reducing his trading outfit that when the Indians who might escape the fatal effects of the epidemic came in with their furs in spring, it might be found that he had so crippled his resources as to be unable to compete successfully with the opposition just over the river, which was represented by Nine-foot Davis.

As to the ability of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Missions to give relief, the advantage lay very much with the latter. It was long established and they had a religious influence over some of the Indians, whereas, work in ours dated back only eight years, and had been carried on with such serious interruptions that when we arrived there was not so much as one Indian who had been received by baptism into our branch of the Church. But, of course, the claim that we had to consider was that of the suffering Beavers upon our common humanity. Unfortunately, the one-half of our year's outfit was at one or other of the depots between the Athabasca and Peace River, and would have to remain there till the following summer, so that in our disbursements by way of relief it was necessary for us to temper our charity with discretion, as it would have been easy enough for us to have starved ourselves without saving a Beaver. The thing to study was how to handle our little substance so that without injury to ourselves we would be doing what we could to save the Beavers. And considering how little we had to divide, we did a lot of dividing. Most of the wheat and turnips went to the Indians, and as many of the potatoes as we could possibly spare. But even then, with so much misery in sight that we could not reach, there was ever present with us the feeling that we had no business to be

comfortable.

When those of the Indians who were fit to do so had left for their hunting grounds, we laid out our plans so that we might with more effectiveness minister to the temporal and spiritual needs of the helpless ones who were left behind, and the more we planned and worked the more we hoped that our work was to be permanent.

During that winter I personally cut and hauled our fuel, logs for a stable eighteen by fifteen, and fence rails to enclose a two-acre pasture, and birch wood enough for a wagon. All this hauling was done with a little mare which, along with a yearling colt, I bought from a Beaver Indian.

I very much regret not having kept a diary during the years we were at Dunvegan, except for a few weeks some months after our first child was born. Perhaps by giving some extracts from this diary the reader will get a better idea of how we carried on from day to day than from what I have so far endeavoured to describe.

“Sunday, February 12, 1887: Congregation in morning, nine; in evening, six.

“I went to visit a sick man and found that he had died during the night. A boy and girl, aged respectively five and three, are thereby left orphans.

“Monday, February 28th: Heavy snow-storm during night, which badly blocked the roads. I succeeded, however, in hauling two loads of dry poles from on top of the hill. Indians begging for food as usual.

“Tuesday, March 1st, 1887: Commenced wheat threshing with a flail. Threshed fifty sheaves.

“Wednesday, March 2nd: Finished wheat threshing. Saved the straw, replacing it into sheaves for thatch for the stable. Having but one pound of bacon left, and not knowing where our next meat was to come from, Mrs. Garrioch and I made some snares; and I succeeded in catching eight snow-birds, which made us a delicious meal. I was visited by several Indians who said that they intend to join our Mission.

“Thursday, March 3rd: Four Indians visited me shortly after breakfast, one of whom was a middle-aged man dying of consumption, another was an aged woman—a piteous object in her rags and filth; the third was a Beaver girl badly disfigured with scrofula, and the fourth, who was the only Cree among them, was a man enjoying excellent health. Hauled three loads of firewood.

“Friday, March 4th: Snow-storm at night, causing our stove to smoke, so that we got very little sleep.

“Saturday, March 5th: The storm continued, the smoke likewise, so that I had to put in most of the forenoon mudding the pipes, which are old and of different sizes.

A moose was killed, causing the Beavers to rejoice. Our share, handed in as a present (Indian fashion, of course) was one pound. That cost us a made beaver—fifty cents.

“Sunday, March 6th: Congregation in morning, six; in evening, five. Subjects of discourses ‘Missionary Commandment,’ and ‘Jacob’s Flight.’ In the course of the day I was visited by ten or twelve Indians, with all of whom I had prayer.

“Monday, March 7th: Some of the Indians leaving for their spring hunts. Hauled some cordwood.

“Tuesday, March 9th: Slight thaw. Visited by eleven Indians.

“Thursday, March 10th: Hauling cordwood. An Indian opened his potato cellar and there followed a lively circulation of free potatoes, and we and ours in consequence had a brief respite. Visited by four Beavers, one of whom promised to join us and bring a young child for baptism.

“Friday, March 11th: The Indians know that Mrs. Garrioch and I are living on just bread and potatoes, and that we have not much of either: that we are without butter or grease, or milk or sugar. Still there are daily applications for food, which are worded something like this: ‘*Nat-sut-li san-ih-chut, ink-ai ya-che-si on-ka-ti-zon.*’ ‘Give me a little even if only two potatoes.’

“We had six Indian visitors to-day and we had to do something for two of them, viz. the little boy whose father died quite recently, and a mother who had a dying child.

“Saturday, March 12th: The baby incessantly crying from hunger, so I arranged with an Indian that he start with a hand-sleigh the day after to-morrow for Old Wife’s Lake to fetch thence two gallons of frozen milk, in consideration for which he is to receive on return an order on the Hudson’s Bay Company for ten made beaver—five dollars—sixty-two and a half cents a quart.

“Sunday, March 13th: The usual two services in English, with prayers and instruction with the Beavers.

“Monday, March 14th: Indian refuses to go after milk, assigning as his reason—too much snow.

“After finishing hauling of cordwood drove over the river with Mrs. Garrioch and the baby to visit the American fur-trader, Mr. Davis. While the old gentleman does not profess to be a Christian, he has always acted as one in his dealings with us.

“Tuesday, March 15th: We went up to island to hew birch for wagon. A chinook caused a considerable thaw and blue flies were in evidence.

“Wednesday, March 16th: Some snow, and stove smoked, so that several times doors had to be thrown open. An Indian killed two moose and the Indians who

could do so struck out for the camp of the lucky hunter. We again got an Indian present of one pound, for which, as before, we paid one made beaver.

“Thursday, 17th, to Saturday, 19th: Chinook and rapid thaw. Finished cutting birch and commenced hauling. Owing to slush had first to open the way with empty sleigh, and even at that the little mare sometimes stuck fast with the empty sleigh.

“Sunday, March 20th: Violent thaw continues. Day taken up as usual in holding the two regular services, and in visiting the sick Indians, and in receiving and giving religious instruction to a number of others.

“Monday, March 21st: The Indian boy who has been twice referred to, died. Hauled some more birch.

“Tuesday, March 22nd: Our mare foaled. Had twins, and both died. A little later I visited the tents, where I found that the foals had been pretty fairly divided up, and to my enquiries as to how they tasted the invariable answer was, ‘*Oo-chu*, good.’

“Wednesday, March 23rd: An Indian woman came in from Grand Prairie, forty miles distant, and reported that the Indians there were starving so badly that they had killed and eaten fifteen of their horses.

“Friday, March 25th: Most of the Indians preparing to leave the place for a time. Made an unsuccessful attempt to get some more snow-birds.

“Sunday, March 27th: We were visited in the course of the day by nearly every Indian remaining in the place.

“Thursday, March 31st: To-day being the anniversary of our wedding, we treated ourselves to a sleigh-ride, taking Mrs. Kennedy and her four children with us. We first visited Mr. Davis, and afterwards drove half-way up the northern slope of the valley. Then, returning here, we had a tea together, which, all things considered, was a sort of domestic triumph, and at nine o’clock I drove our visitors home.

“Friday, April 1st: A bad snow-storm which caused our stove to smoke horribly; but after about the twelfth visit to my smoke-preventing apparatus on the outside, I must have discovered the proper adjustment, for the house has been free of smoke for the past twenty minutes. Among our things which did not get through last autumn was a bale of charity goods sent out from England. We were in consequence even less able to help the Indians with clothing than with food. However, by means of a hand sewing machine and some of our own things, Mrs. Garrioch helps a little, and to-day presented one of the many ragged urchins with a dress.”

With reference to Mrs. Kennedy, mentioned in the diary, I may say that she was the wife of Mr. George Kennedy, the Company’s officer in charge at Fort St. John, and that she was putting in the winter at Dunvegan in consequence of her children

having been too ill of the epidemic over-running the country to admit of her accompanying her husband to his post in the previous autumn. She was an excellent woman, and Mrs. Garrioch and I esteemed her friendship very highly.

It was due to the accident already mentioned that we were without sugar all winter, and due to an even worse accident or miscarriage that we were also without milk.

When passing through Edmonton I bought a cow of Mr. Malcolm Groat, which was to have been forwarded to me before winter. Instead, I received word from Lesser Slave Lake that the party by whom the cow had been sent arrived there with cattle and reported that my cow had died on the way. But a little later reports reached me from disinterested sources leading me to believe that my cow was alive and flourishing at Sturgeon Lake, a French half-caste settlement further west. When I came to study out the slow and costly process by which I could prove the identity of the cow at Sturgeon Lake, I decided to leave the matter alone, comforting myself with the reflection that if my cow was not dead she ought to be, and that some day, perhaps before long, in the interests of justice, she would peacefully pass away. And in the meantime, I ordered another cow from Mr. Groat, which in the course of time arrived safely at Dunvegan, as shall be shown later on.

By way of improving our opportunities for better work, and regarding the feeding of the hungry as an important means to that end, I planted a large garden in the spring. All went well with this garden until about the end of June, and then there came a frost just when the potatoes were ready to bloom, and cut them right down to the ground. The hardier stuff, however, such as turnips and cabbage, was uninjured.

Having lost the most important crop in the garden, it became all the more necessary to take good care of what was left, and in my determination to do so I got into trouble with the Indians.

Their favourite camping place was right back of our garden, between it and the foot of the hill. And the women, who were the hewers of wood and drawers of water, in order to reach the river by a short cut, passed right through the centre of our pasture and garden, in doing so using three gates, consisting of bars to be drawn out and replaced at each time of using. My efforts at impressing upon them by gentle persuasion the importance of replacing the bars met with little success; and one night when I stayed out at the hay camp, Mrs. Garrioch was awakened by the sound of a cow bell, and had to get up and drive some cattle out of the garden. When I got back next evening and appraised the damages, I'll confess that I did not emulate the spirit of the saints of old who "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods." I determined

to be more emphatic with the women. So that very evening after three or four had passed through the premises on their way for water, I met them as they were about to come up the bank and informed them that in future they were to use the bank which was less than thirty yards lower down. Unfortunately, while speaking, I had a hammer in my hand, as I was making some repairs to the gate at the top of the bank. Who were most to blame for what followed, the husbands or the wives, I am not able to say; but evidently I was reported by the wives as having stopped them from using the garden path for carrying water, and that while doing so had held a hammer in my hands, wherewith, if necessary, to enforce my commands.

After the interview with the women I went on to the stable to attend to the mare and colt, and when I returned to the house found three Beavers, armed with their guns, awaiting me, who excitedly accused me of having threatened their wives with a hammer. And when I stated in no unmeasured terms that such a charge was false, the leader or spokesman, a man named Castor, took off his coat to fight me. He was a wild looking subject with his three-inch hair standing up like bristles. Realizing, then, how much depended not only on what was said, but on the tone of voice in which it was said, I dropped my voice to the ordinary conversational tone and thus addressed my audience:

“I came to Oon-che-ga hoping to help the Beaver Indians, and I planted and have been trying to save this garden as much for the good of your widows and orphans as for myself and family; but if you think that I have not done the Beaver Indians any good and am not likely to do any better by staying, and that I had better leave, just say so. We come from a good land where we fared much better than we have done here. Let the Beavers tell us if they do not want us, and we shall soon return whence we came.” Immediately there was a change, and they only muttered something about that hammer and went away without apologizing; and I let them go without shaking hands, lest they might think we were scared. Were we? Guess!

It was about two months after this experience, and after I had put up sufficient hay for winter use, and harvested our garden stuff, that Mrs. Garrioch and I made a trip in a Red River cart as far as the Peace River Crossing in order that we might keep an appointment with the Bishop to meet him and his family there on the arrival of the latter from England.

It was rather a cool day, and the little mare was in poor condition, so that darkness overtook us long before we reached Old Wife’s Lake. When we did get there we found Mr. Brick’s son, Allie, alone, as Mr. Brick was by this time beginning a new mission which he named Shaftesbury. This new venture was further east on a flat along the river. We slept in the house, and gladly accepted the warmest spot on

which to spread our shake-down. Hardly had we got under cover and extinguished the light when we became aware that the room was literally alive with mice, and every little while one would show off by running over our bedclothes. Knowing that there were cats in the room, we could not understand how it was that we heard nothing from them; but when we looked around with the first streak of dawn we saw that they were seated on the table looking down at the mice, apparently with perfect indifference. The country was over-run with mice that year and Allie said their cats had got sick of them.

We hurried on to the Crossing next day although it was raining. By the time we got there it was snowing; and as there was no one in sight at the depot, we pitched our tent in the bush on our side of the river. There we remained that night and the following day and night, during which time there was no appreciable improvement in the weather. So it was with no little pleasure that we noticed on the following day that there was some one at the depot; and a shout and a wave of the hand soon brought a man over in a dugout; and a few minutes later we were enjoying a much needed warm before a blazing fire in the log house of Mr. Albert Tait, the clerk in charge.

Two days later the carts from Lesser Slave Lake arrived, and with them the Bishop and his family.

Owing to the lateness of the season we did not have more than twenty-four hours together, but we made the most of them; and, no doubt, the ladies squeezed much happiness into those few hours, saying more about "dear old England" and things in general, than it would have been possible for a mere man to understand, even supposing he had, by any chance, been taken into their confidence.

Our goods had arrived at the depot, and as they were to be forwarded at once to Dunvegan, we lost no time in starting back so as to be there to receive them.

Among all the good things which we received, nothing made us more truly thankful than a cook-stove and thirty-five lengths of stove pipe, and an outfit of cooking utensils. Other acceptable things were the bale of charity goods from England, our supply of sugar, and one hundred pounds of canned meats.

This last item we owed to the generosity of a good lady in England who had offered to assist me with a contribution. That offer often recurred to me during the epidemic of the previous autumn, and the winter of dire need which followed. So Mrs. Garrioch and I planned how we might obtain the wherewithal to have a soup kitchen the following winter, and the garden which I was supposed to have protected with a hammer was one of the main factors in the carrying out of the scheme: another was the promised contribution; and the lady, true to her promise, promptly

forwarded me a cheque, which I invested at Fort Garry in the canned meats just mentioned.

As may be supposed, we said nothing about the scheme until all the Indians who were able to do so had left for the winter. Then I visited the tents which remained and invited the owners to come to the mission next morning with pans and spoons to get a breakfast of soup.

Next morning at the ringing of a hand-bell every Beaver Indian in the place, some fifteen or twenty, made a bee line for the Mission, and when all had been seated in a circle in the reception hall, a boiler of soup was placed in the centre, from which there was ladled into their pans and kettles a liberal supply of soup, steaming hot. The ingredients of this soup were cabbage, rice, flour and canned meat. It was a substantial soup, and I dare say the recipients felt that there was a consistency in the religious service as well, which immediately followed the soup.

In the spring of 1888 my time was largely taken up in teaching the Indians until they had left for their summer camping grounds, and in seeding the garden. Then, in June, Mrs. Garrioch and I went down to Fort Vermilion to attend a convention of the missionaries of the diocese to be held there under Bishop Young.

We floated down on a raft, on which Mr. Holmes also took passage from the Peace River Crossing.

There were five clergymen and five laymen at this convention, which was conducted in a simple, devout and friendly manner, and after telling each other of our various experiences, I think we came closer to the Master, and that our faith, our courage and our sympathy were strengthened.

It was to me a matter of unfeigned sorrow that, owing to the absence of the Beaver Indians at the time of this convention, I did not have the chance of hearing my old friends say once more, "*Ni-la oo-shoo-di*, give me your hand." But I made up for that by shaking hands with everybody else, of whom there were not many in the settlement that I did not know.

In returning up-stream Mr. Holmes and I made use of two canoes or dugouts, each of which was, for the most part, drawn forward by one man on a tow-line, although poles and paddles frequently had to be the means of propulsion. In my canoe, which was the larger, there were five persons, viz. Mrs. Garrioch and Frank, the baby, now eighteen months old, Mary Sinclair, oldest daughter of Peter Sinclair, now ten years old, Mooniyas, my assistant in the management of the canoe, and myself.

A few miles west of the fort we stayed for tea at the farm of Mr. Henry Lawrence, brother of the schoolteacher; and there we had a splendid example of

how a resourceful pioneer may build himself and family a comfortable home with no other tools beside an axe and hammer, and who, by a like ingenuity in the use of a few other simple appliances, may obtain from the soil a supply of food both palatable and substantial. And the nice meal which was served us by the Lawrences, except for the tea and sugar, was a strictly domestic production.

An incident occurred on this journey which afforded every one of our party, except myself, much merriment. I was standing up in the canoe paddling when my pole slipped off an unseen boulder and I disappeared head over heels into the water: and Mooniyas, who was not overburdened with sense, hardly waited until I had scrambled back into the canoe before he started to lead the others in peals of laughter. The immersion did little harm other than causing my watch to stop, a weakness with which it seemed to be troubled ever after.

Our provisions ran short the day before we reached the Crossing, and at noon next day when we arrived there we found the depot locked; and an Indian who was around informed us that Mr. Tait was somewhere on the Slave Lake road, making repairs, and had the key with him. While Mr. Holmes and the Indian went on saddle in quest of Mr. Tait, Mrs. Garrioch and I searched for something wherewith to feed the baby, who had had nothing since morning. Fortunately, the saskatoons were beginning to ripen, and the Indian woman managed to find some with which to quiet him until Mr. Tait arrived with the key and we could get something more suitable.

At this point we parted from Mr. Holmes, he returning to his charge at Lesser Slave Lake, and we to ours at Dunvegan.

One of the first things that we set about on our return was to build an addition to the Mission house so that it would afford us a larger degree of privacy than we had so far been able to enjoy. To this end I put up a lean-to the full width of the house, partitioning off one-third of the north-east part so that we would have not only a summer kitchen but a small store-room as well.

While putting on the roof, which was of spruce shingles of my own manufacture, I was assisted by two Americans who had been prospecting on the Smoky River. Religiously they were typical of the Americans who visited the country in those days. And as we rested in the hall after the noon-day meal, their attention was arrested by a number of large, coloured pictures which adorned the wall. These pictures were found helpful in imparting scriptural knowledge to the Indians, who regarded them with as much reverence as if they had been drawn from life. Not so the Americans, who, on coming to a picture of the temptation of the Saviour, in which Satan is depicted with horns, laughed outright. And one of them put the question to me:

“How was it discovered that the devil looked like that?”

As far as my recollection goes my answer was something on this wise: "Of course, in matters of this kind, we have to draw considerably on the imagination; and when doing so it is surely in the best interests of humanity that we should not paint his Satanic majesty as either harmless or attractive."

In the following spring I finished the wagon, and painted it black, as it was the only sort of paint to be had; and when I hitched up my black team, and started for Lesser Slave Lake with Mrs. Garrioch and the family Mr. Anderson remarked that it looked as if we were starting for a funeral.

The officer at this time in charge of the Lesser Slave Lake district was Mr. Ewan McDonald, and as Mrs. McDonald was my first cousin, and a clever and lovable woman, her companionship meant much to Mrs. Garrioch, who had not seen a white woman since the previous summer when we visited Vermilion. To us both the visit was indeed a most enjoyable one. And when we started homeward our waggon was loaded with the year's outfit, while behind it was tied a cow, successor to the one which had died, or at any rate had been dead to us during the two years just passed. This cow was a treasure in more ways than one. She was as good as a bulldog, and if any Indian inadvertently strayed into the pasture when she was there it took him a very little while to get over the fence.

But I do not think we now needed the cow's help very much to make the Beavers think of us and ours with becoming respect; and if our bulldog cow did chase them out of the yard they always knew of the legitimate entrance by which we were easy of access. And after all these years when our thoughts revert to those days, it is a great satisfaction to us to reflect that in their troubles they thought of that entrance and used it, and that we on our part tried to lighten their burdens when they did.

In this connection I may say that the trio who shortly after our arrival came to the mission one night with their guns, making dire threats, often came afterwards in a very different spirit. As for the ringleader, who had at that time taken a young wife, and perhaps wanted to convince her of his devotion by fighting for her, he was now broken down in health, and on our return from Lesser Slave Lake we found that this same wife had deserted him, because being fatally ill of tuberculosis he could no longer provide for her.

It was on a beautiful summer day that he came to us, and a few yards from the door of the mission house made himself a shade by stretching a blanket overhead, and underneath he made his bed. Lying there he directed his gaze westward to the summit of a hill eight hundred feet above the river level, where he could see his father-in-law's tent in which lived the woman who had cast him aside in the time of

his extremity. It was one of the most pathetic sights that I have ever witnessed, and, taken in connection with incidents already recorded, furnishes occasion for the remark: What strange things do happen! "Truth is indeed stranger than fiction."

I had by this time, with Mrs. Garrioch's assistance, succeeded in getting the mission establishment so comfortably equipped that for years to come there would have been little necessity for changes or improvements of any consequence. And then, the thought came to me—God knows whence it came—it was a thought which, however, appealed to one's common sense—that if I stayed on much longer I would soon have Dunvegan all to myself.

I was now about to begin my seventeenth year in the Indian Mission field, and our fifth at Dunvegan; and considering the rapid decimation of the Beavers by disease, and the prospective abandonment of Dunvegan as a trading post in consequence, the wisdom of remaining longer was, to say the least, questionable. Yet had we been guided by our inclinations only we might have stayed on to say *Ni-la-oo-shoo-di* to the last departing Beaver; but we had to be guided by our judgment and circumstances as well. And our family was increasing, and Mrs. Garrioch being under the necessity of doing her household work unaided, was beginning to suffer from an impairment of health. I therefore sent in my resignation to Bishop Young, stating my reasons for wishing to go, and asking that I might be free to leave in the autumn of 1891.

My previous bishop had said something about "looking back" when I spoke to him about a holiday; but the only looking back of which I am conscious is that which I indulged in after tendering my resignation; and to this day, thinking reminiscently of my mission to the Beavers, the following lines truthfully express my feelings:

"What peaceful hours I once enjoyed.
How sweet their memory still."

For although we could easily have recalled seasons of loneliness, failure and disappointment, we did not try to; but, instead, we recalled the seasons when peace and restfulness and gladness possessed our hearts.

As to the dying race of Beaver Indians, with whom we had known the fellowship of suffering, the thoughts about them which we liked to retain might be called a survival of the fittest. For instance, Castor in his last days on earth, coming to rest at the spot where he had been taught of the Friend who sticketh closer than a brother, and singing with us of "the Sweet By-and-by." And Mary Ann, the reputed bad girl of the place, whose white skin and prettiness told only too plainly that her father, at least, was no Beaver Indian, who, when paying the penalty of careless living in the

loss of health and good looks, as those of her sort so very soon do, would come to me and, sitting on the floor at my feet, look up in my face with an expression akin to that of a little child who has been naughty and say, "I know that I am bad, and I am sorry for it; but I believe you when you say that Jesu *Nagha Tgha ma Chua*, the Son of our Father, can love me still, and I say, '*Merci, merci, sin-ih-te-ka*, thank you, thank you, I am pleased.'"

Mrs. Garrioch also had her pleasant memories to carry home. For instance, among those whom she had particularly befriended was a widow, Mrs. Sancho, who was minus a nose, unless it might be said that she had the nose of a beaver.

Mrs. Sancho had a little boy whose filthy rags did not half cover him, so Mrs. Garrioch made him a complete suit, and when he was clad therein his appearance was improved by at least two hundred per cent. Yet when his mother saw what had been done she expressed no appreciation. Later, one cold night, she had in her sleep backed up into the fire, and was badly burned. Mrs. Garrioch had to attend to a great sore until she was well. Over that, too, there was little expression of gratitude. But when the day of parting came it was as if her pent-up feelings had to find vent, and she spoke with fervour of what had been done for her, and, kissing Mrs. Garrioch with tears in her eyes, expressed in pathetic language her sense of the loss she was about to sustain.

We left Dunvegan in our wagon, and when we paused at the upper edge of the valley and took a farewell look at the scene of our labours, the thoughts which were in the ascendancy were sacred and pleasant ones. And had I been asked then, and were I asked now: "Supposing you had to live life over again, would you care again to devote a like portion of it to Indian Mission work?" my answer would be "Yes," for there is not on earth a grander work or a safer field of adventure; and with the experience I have had perhaps the next time I might do a little better.

THE
NINETEEN-YEAR
SECRET UNEARTHED

CHAPTER X

The Nineteen-Year Secret Unearthed

About the time that Mrs. Garrioch and I had made ourselves comfortable at Dunvegan, Mr. Vining wrote me that inasmuch as Lily had finished her schooling, he had moved from the coast, and that he and Mrs. Vining had made themselves what they hoped would be a permanent home in the city of Calgary; and that, furthermore, he had become a naturalized Canadian citizen.

He wrote: "We think Lily has been growing more lovely and lovable ever since we had her; and now that she has passed from girlhood into womanhood, Mrs. Vining and I have decided that it was due her that she should know those salient features in her history of which you and ourselves are about the best authorities living. And we have had no reason to regret having given her the information, for she has been just as prudent and reticent as ourselves; and although at times she does think pensively over the matter, she is, on the whole, cheered with a strange premonition that the particulars relating to her birth will not much longer be unknown.

"With the widening of our circle of friends, as was to be expected, curiosity in the history of Lily sometimes leads to questions which very nearly overstep the bounds of politeness; and for her sake we have found it necessary to practise a ruse or two by way of encouraging the impression that there is nothing in her history which could make concealment desirable. For instance, there being a sort of craze among young people for birthday parties, it became necessary for us to manufacture or invent one for Lily's benefit. And this is how we went about it. First, we were guided by the presumptive evidence in possession as to her parentage; secondly, we accepted Jean's guess as to her being about two months old when he picked her off the raft about the end of May; and, thirdly, figuring from another starting point, July 1st, about the time Mrs. Armson cut her toe, found that these calculations respectively would show her birthday to have been about the 31st of March, 1872, so we let it go at that."

In answering this letter I expressed pleasure that we were no longer separated by the Rocky Mountains, and congratulated him on having shown his American astuteness in becoming a Canadian, assuring him that I would like to think of his coming over as the harbinger of a good time coming when as of yore the good old flag would float on both sides of the forty-ninth parallel. On the continued improvement of Lily I heartily congratulated both him and Mrs. Vining, feeling that while something was no doubt due to heredity, much more was due to their wise and

kind treatment of her which could not have been excelled by her natural parents. In regard to the invented birthday, I wrote that they would seem to have made a logical guess, and that they had certainly hit something, viz. the day when Mrs. Garrioch and I were married. Referring to the cheering premonitions of which Lily was conscious, I attributed them to ministering spirits or guardian angels in whose presence on earth I was a firm believer.

The rest of my letter was taken up with an account of the most recent of my interviews with Sizerman; and was in substance as is now briefly described:

When he called on me at Dunvegan, we were soon seated side by side eagerly discussing the subject uppermost in our minds; and the pregnant expression, "*Namas-kwa*—not yet," with which he opened the discussion, told me clearly that not yet had the missing link been discovered; and my rejoinder, "*Tan-si maka?*—how is it then?" led to the following conversation.

He said, "Although I have not yet found what we are looking for, I feel sure that we are getting closer to it; and that I must have passed more than once within a short distance of where the Armsons spent the winter."

"Why so certain?"

"Because I have found another string of deadfalls going almost in an opposite direction from the other, and one end of each of the strings of deadfalls and one end of the string of rabbit snares are not very far apart, while the other ends are very far apart. And somewhere between these ends which approach a centre I believe is to be found the spot where the Armsons had their tent or little log house; and something tells me that we shall find it, and that when we do the strange thing will be made clear."

"But don't you think, Sizerman, that the Armsons may have left the place and come to an untimely end after they had done so?"

"No, I'm sure that did not happen. I examined the deadfalls very particularly, and found out that something had gone wrong with the man who set them, for in more than one deadfall a marten had been caught and never removed."

"After so many years it must have been difficult to find out all this."

"It would be for one who can read only books; but not for one who was born in the bush and has learned to read the trees and the bark, and the leaves and the grass. When underneath a large, well-drained spruce tree I find a deadfall and with my fingers I rake away the leaves and the cones which have been gathering there for over fifteen years, and I find nearly all the bones that a marten has, it is easy for me to read what has happened there."

I replied, "You don't have to tell me about how you can read the bush. I found

that out the summer you helped me bring the cattle from Edmonton. And what you have just said seems to fit in with the story of the finding of the baby; and as to the place, as to the purpose of the little flag, and the explanation of the smallness of the raft.”

As may be supposed after the Vinings had adopted Lily, and sufficient data had been secured to constitute a promising clue to her identity, they lost no time in writing to England on the chance of obtaining some illuminating information from that quarter. This resulted in the following particulars being sent them by a firm of lawyers.

Mr. Armson was married in England in 1866; and the fruit of this union was a son born in 1867. Two years later Mrs. Armson died, and shortly after, Mr. Armson, after intrusting his little son to the care of an elderly sister of his deceased wife, took his departure for Canada. A few months later he wrote to this lady from Montreal. And early in 1871 she got a second letter from him which was written from Saskatchewan, in which he informed her that he was married again; and that it was his intention to go to the Peace River in the spring to engage in placer gold-mining, and that he was taking his wife with him.

Nothing later had ever been heard from him, and on enquiries made through the Hudson's Bay Company and the Church Missionary Society, the information supplied was very much the same as that with which Mr. Vining had shown himself familiar when writing to England for information.

Little did the Vinings suppose that in the omission of the names of two parties referred to in this letter from England, by the writer thereof, their protégé was to be brought within a hair's breadth of causing another tragedy in the Armson family.

After the Vinings became well-known citizens of Calgary, where they were esteemed members of the Anglican Church, and in favour with the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, it was not remarkable that I no longer heard only *from* them, but also *of* them, for we had a young missionary in the Athabasca Diocese who had been for a little time in Calgary, also a clerk, Mr. Jones, who had been transferred from there to the Peace River District. And it was pleasing to notice that these young gentlemen had been attracted to them, like myself, by a friendliness which was natural, and which, the better known, was the more readily trusted as spontaneous and genuine. The young missionary was also of the opinion that it was not only because of the good standing of the Vining family in the community; but was even more so because of the loyalty and affection between parents and daughter, that their home had come to be regarded as a delightful place for an informal or impromptu fireside party.

Mr. Jones, the clerk, was even more eulogistic. And on a certain occasion, after describing a happy evening which he and some other young people had enjoyed at the home of the Vinings, he exclaimed, "What a grand thing it is when a host and hostess can make their guests happy and at ease without conveying the impression that they are putting themselves out or straining themselves to do so."

"Perhaps," I remarked, "the interesting younger member of the family, in her regard for you, was relieving them of the strain."

"No such luck. Miss Lily Vining lavishes her smiles pretty generally on both ladies and gentlemen; but not so far as I can see has any gentleman been distinguished or made conspicuously enviable by more than a fair share of her favours; and if there be any such a man, I am certainly not he."

"Well, Mr. Jones, don't you be too sure about that. You know that the wisest man, who had a great deal of practical experience, admitted that there were four things that were too wonderful for him, one of which was the way of a man with a maid. And in these days by far the greater puzzle is the way of a maid with a man.

"But speaking seriously, your news and your good opinion of the Vinings give me great pleasure, for I have known them as friends for such a long time that I could not be otherwise than interested in their welfare. And were their daughter to prefer remaining in her present home for years to come, such a course would not be detrimental to the happiness of herself and her parents, although it might be trying to impatient suitors."

"I should rather think so," said Mr. Jones, "and I can hardly think of a young lady as lively and lovely as Miss Vining remaining much longer a spinster. And yet I feel sure that any man seeking her hand in marriage, who was lacking in a proper conception of the responsibilities of life, would seek her hand in vain."

"I am glad, Mr. Jones, to hear you speak in that strain, because you belong to a younger generation than my own. And when we old fellows, who, like the generation before us, at least try to take a serious view of life and yet have made such a miserable failure of it, and we look to yours only to find that it doesn't even seem to try, no wonder if sometimes we grow pessimistic and say, 'Their mottoes would appear to be, hurrah for a good time! A short life and a merry one! Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die!'

"But then, just when we are about on the brink of despair, some one, as you have just done, drops a remark about some lively young person who has a serious conception of the responsibilities of life, and it sets us wondering whether, after all, we may not have got you all wrong; and we feel still more hopeful that it may be so when some supposed-to-be flapper starts to emulate the life of Ruth the Moabitess,

or some young fellow whose life so far might be described by the word *sport*, when the call comes takes his life in his hand, and saves the lives of others. Then when we remember that goodness does not seek the glare of publicity; and that perchance the behaviour which is most prone to flaunt itself in conspicuous places is more thoughtless than bad, we feel certain of this, at any rate, that they are not to be encouraged who, because of kaleidoscopic changes which baffle their understanding, declare that the world is going to the dogs and that right quickly.”

Nay, rather let us believe that even now there is in progress a grand spiritual movement in the opposite direction, inasmuch as there are millions of sincere believers who are under the constraining power of Divine love and who will never rest until the will of God is accomplished and the kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ.

A year before I left Dunvegan Mr. Vining wrote me on behalf of himself and Mrs. Vining that they would be happy to have Mrs. Garrioch and me for their guests in the course of our journey to Manitoba, for just as long as we might care to stay. And when I wrote begging off on account of the children, and stating that Mr. Jones had posted us about a suitable stopping-place, there came another letter three months later, apologizing for not having mentioned the children in the first instance, and assuring us that they had had them in mind and had given the invitation with all the more pleasure on their account.

Along with this letter came ten dollars with the request that I would hand it to Sizerman as a present to show his appreciation of what he had done to find out what had happened to the Armsons.

When Sizerman next visited me and I turned the money over to him, at the same time delivering the message which had accompanied it, the great big fellow showed as much delight as if he were just a child. And he said, “Of course I don’t want pay for helping a motherless little one; but when it is given like this, that is different.” And when he said so, no doubt he meant it and considered that he was speaking the truth; and I dare say he was not much further from it than we are when we say similar things.

On this occasion, to my enquiry as to whether he had made any discoveries, Sizerman answered, “Not very much. And yet I am quite sure that I have come a little nearer to what we want to know, and the *Kih-chi-mooh-koo-man*, American, will soon feel that his present was like a prayer.”

He continued, “One thing which before puzzled me I now understand; and that is why the canoe was not used instead of a little raft. I dug out that canoe and found that when it was placed there it had a long split at the bottom which had been

patched up with tin and other things. A canoe like that, after the frost of winter, would require careful overhauling before it could be safely used, especially by a baby. Another thing I have discovered; and that is a path which very likely would have been used by the Armsons. It is one of those which we find all over this country, which was made by buffalo and other animals hundreds of years ago in passing from their feeding grounds to their drinking places. This one, from which I am expecting much, passes over a beaver dam and was used by the man who set the deadfalls I speak of. Under the deep snow it is not easy to follow such a path. But next spring I shall take my time and follow it carefully, as it points toward the same centre where the lines of deadfalls and rabbit snares should converge. And when I find that centre I'll know the secret which has been buried for so many years."

When the winter had passed and the spring was far advanced I found myself speculating anxiously as to what my friend Sizerman may have found at the focus of the converging lines. And at length, according to the saying that "everything comes to the man who waits," he came. And when the usual greetings and polite enquiries were going on we were evidently both making an effort to appear cool, without, however, succeeding very well in deceiving each other. Then for the space of thirty seconds we silently looked at each other, both, I doubt not, unconsciously engaged in a little mind reading, or big mind reading, if you prefer it that way. And then Sizerman broke the silence with the remark:

"I certainly did find something this time!"

"*Ka-kwai*, what?" I asked.

Then, in answer to that question, asked solemnly in little more than a whisper, he gave me the particulars of his astounding discovery.

"As I told you," he began, "I waited until all the snow was gone, and then I started to work on that animal path, and succeeded in tracing it all the way from the beaver dam to the little river, and was pleased to find that it touched the little river just about where the three hunting paths mentioned might be expected to meet. It took me over one day to find out that much. Then I put in another day working backwards from the river, and about fifty or sixty steps on each side of the path, and on all that ground I do not think there was one tree I did not examine, and as the day wore on I began to find encouraging signs. I found birch trees which had been tapped, others which had been stripped of their bark, and small spruce trees which evidently had been felled only for the sake of the brush for bedding purposes. Then, a little later on, I came to where a number of spruce and aspen trees had been cut down and the lower portions cut into uniform lengths and removed, evidently for the

purpose of building a tent or a house. It was then getting late, so I had to put off further search till next morning.

“That night I hardly slept at all, because I was so anxious to see the tent or house which had been built with the small logs which had been carried away; and to find out what it was that had gone wrong there.

“Before sunrise I had taken up the search again, and very near to where I had quit the evening before, at the foot of a rather steep hill which ran westward from the little river, was a group of large trees, and on going up to them I found that there had been propped up against them at one time a meat stage, of which the decaying remains were scattered on the ground. But I did not look long at these, for a few yards farther, at the foot of the hill, I saw what a good many years before had, no doubt, been a human dwelling place. One of the large trees had fallen on it years before and crushed it in, and owing to that and the moose and red willow bushes growing about, I had to scrape about it some time before I could tell what it had been like.

“I did not scrape around for nothing, for I found an ice chisel and a miner’s shovel. Of course, they were badly rusted, and when I started to try the shovel the handle broke off near the iron. So I took it to camp and sharpened and rehandled it. Then I returned and started to dig out the remains of the cabin. I found that it was a dugout. Some one had dug fourteen feet deep into the side of the hill, and twelve feet wide. The front wall had been constructed of logs standing on end, in the centre of which had been a door, with a window on each side, probably made of cotton. Within were six large posts or pillars, three on either side, arranged so that there was one in each corner and one midway. Three large logs running parallel with the front wall and placed on top of these posts acted as beams to support the roof, which consisted of poles averaging about six inches in diameter, and on which was placed a thick covering of earth. In the right-hand corner of the far end there was a chimney which was still sound most of the way up. Altogether it must have been a comfortable place to live in until things went wrong, and that must have been about the time the snow was gone and trapping over.

“From what I found under the roof of that crushed cabin, we can now say that we know things about which we were only guessing before. There was a baby born to the Armsons. I know that now from having found some baby moss and a baby’s rattle, such as mothers commonly hang on the bow of an Indian baby cradle. We can now say for certain that Mr. and Mrs. Armson never left that hunting ground either dead or alive, because I found their bones in the ruins of their cabin; and it was touching enough to make me cry. When the tree fell, one end of the farther beam

retained its position so that a small portion of that part of the roof was not crushed in, and underneath that portion was the bed, and on the bed or beside it lay the bones of Mr. and Mrs. Armson, those of the former, no doubt, as he had died—on the bed—and those of the latter—just as clearly—in the position in which she had thrown herself down upon her knees beside the bed, where, with her head touching his head, and her hands folded over his bosom, she had fallen asleep and died. And without touching anything I knew what had happened, for I had already unearthed a badly shattered gun, and now I noticed that a part of Mr. Armson's left hand was missing.

“The story, then, as I read it, is this: Mr. Armson, assisted by his wife, put up a comfortable wintering place in the autumn, and then put in a very successful winter at trapping, as I could see from the mouldering pelts of many marten, beaver and some foxes. Then when the snow was nearly gone, about the end of March, a baby arrived, and, not long after, perhaps a month or a little more, there was the gun accident by which he had lost part of his hand which resulted in infection, and consequent upon this trouble there was starvation, proof of which was the condition of the baby picked off the raft, and the manner of the mother's death. She, knowing full well that the only help which could save her husband was beyond her reach, and forced by her great love for him, and his helplessness, to be near him as much as possible—all the rabbit-snaring which she could do at that season was of little use—when his death took place she, knowing that her own was not far distant, except for the baby's sake, I expect, was glad. The crying of that baby for lack of nurse, which had helped to break her heart, was growing pitifully weak. But she would be strong like the mother of Moses, and like Hagar she could not bear to see her baby die. So with great labour she dragged a few short logs to the little river and made them into a raft, and upon it, after a parting kiss, she placed her little daughter and committed it to the keeping of *Kih-chi Munitoo*, God, pushing the raft out into the current. Then she staggered back to her husband's body, and threw herself on her knees beside it in the position in which I found her. For most likely she had had no real sleep for many nights; but now a strange feeling of peace would come over her as she fell asleep and woke no more. And it could not have been long afterwards that one of the great trees fell upon the cabin and put it in such a condition that it properly protected the bodies which rested there, so that the glutton (wolverine) did not get a chance to put in any of his dirty work.”

Sizerman then handed me a small parcel done up in birch-bark, saying, as he did so, “I found this suspended from the beam over the bed by means of a small trap chain. May I ask that it be now opened, and opened by you.”

Receiving the parcel from his hands, and holding it carefully in both mine, I invited him to walk up to the table; and, standing there one on each side of it, I placed the parcel between us and commenced to undo the rabbit snaring-wire with which it was secured. There were three wrappings of birch-bark, the first of which was badly mouldered, the second slightly so, but the third was perfectly sound. So also were the contents, which consisted of two books, one of which was a small Bible, and the other a small memorandum book. I handed the former to Sizerman, telling him that it was *Kichi musinahikan*, the great book. The other I proceeded to examine, and found it to be, as was to be expected, in the nature of a diary, and, remembering the guess which had been made as to Lily's birthday, I looked up March 31st and there I found the following entry:

“Born this day, a girl, perfectly formed and with vocal organs in fine working condition. It would seem that when Mrs. Armson's glancing hatchet hit her toe at the mining camp at St. John's she inflicted a hatchet mark in duplicate; for on the corresponding toe of her little daughter's foot there is a perfect replica of the scar on hers.”

In a word or two the gun accident was later mentioned, and undoubtedly Sizerman explained accurately the meaning of the things which he saw.

The last entry was as follows:

“May 15, 1872: I am dying—effects of accident. My first wife died in England, leaving a son, now five. Write to legal firm Blake and Barstow, London, England. Wife and babe weak from starvation. The Lord will provide.

“The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“Our sun is sinking fast,
Our day is almost o'er;
O Sun of Righteousness, do Thou
Shine on us evermore.”

When I had read these entries to Sizerman he remarked, “That's the kind of man he was.” And I said, “Yes, he was a credit to his God and his country.”

I asked him then, “How did you leave the bodies?”; and he replied, “I did not disturb a bone, but built a little house over them with logs, and before putting a mound over the logs I planted a cross and said the Lord's Prayer, and although they were not Catholics I offered up a prayer for the repose of their souls. Was I right?”

I answered, “Yes. You did it in faith, hope and charity, and when one does that he is not likely to go far wrong.”

Four months later we were the guests of the Vinings, and I turned over the birch-bark parcel to Mr. Vining, and the effects of its contents upon the members of the

family were somewhat peculiar; for while the discovery of the missing link was a matter of satisfaction, how could the daughter, who was most interested in its discovery, be otherwise than stricken with sorrow when, upon finding out who her parents were, she at the same time learned of the awful tragedy connected with their untimely end? and who that loved the girl and shared in her news could have the heart to abstain from sharing in her grief as well?

It may be that the longing and affection which leads to and follows the adoption of a child cannot be either as tender or binding as when the tie is one of natural parenthood. And yet it is conceivable that when a loving couple have sought by adoption to make up to themselves for the lack of offspring for which they have longed in vain, they will be prepared to transfer to the substitute which becomes theirs by civil contract all that pent-up love which they had held in reserve for a child of their very own. And probably the love of the Vinings was equal in tenderness and depth to that of the parents who had brought her into the world. Certainly no natural or any other sort of parents could have done more than the Vinings did for her at this trying time when it looked as if a combination of circumstances had conspired together to wreck her happiness.

Fortunately for his protégé, Mr. Vining regarded the ethics of true religion and of sound business as alike in harmony with the practice of the golden rule; so when he read Mr. Armson's dying request: "Write to the legal firm, Blake and Barstow, London, England," he considered it his duty to do so, and promptly wired the simple facts, stating also that the daughter left by Mr. Armson had been adopted by him and that she was about to be married, and asking him to cable the name and address of the son of Mr. Armson mentioned in his letter.

To her credit be it said that Lily Vining shed many tears over the story of her parents' tragic death; and, equally to the credit of Mrs. Vining, her tears were mingled with those of her adopted daughter. But neither were of the morbid sort who aggravate their misery by needlessly allowing the mind to dwell upon it; and very soon the latter dried her tears and had Lily drying hers also; and after that I came in useful, for, having been so long connected with the tracing of Lily's history, I had had time to draw conclusions about its wonderful unfolding, the result of which was that our sympathies for the sorrow-stricken child were somewhat in the nature of congratulations, as we encouraged her to regard herself as "the child of parents passed into the skies," for surely that must have been the ultimate goal of her father who, when setting out for the far North, did not forget the chart to the skies—the Holy Bible. And surely she might well entertain a like hope regarding her mother, who had died in the attitude of prayer. And considering the manner of their

departure, and what had since transpired connected therewith, we might well apply to their case the words of the psalmist, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

Perhaps it might appear from the foregoing that when we arrived at the home of the Vinings, the opening of the birch-bark parcel was followed by a bomb-like upheaval, which would be followed by a season of discomfort. It was nothing of the kind; for after a little while the rain of tears had passed and the atmosphere of the home was as sunny as ever.

Then it was that we had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with some of the young people whose praises had been sung to us while we were yet in the Peace River. We met many of them, first at a church entertainment and, later, ten or twelve of them as fellow guests of our host and hostess. Three of the young gentlemen were evidently intimate friends of the Vinings, and good friends with each other. They were, by name, Herbert Melvin, Gerald Clive and James Morse. Mr. Melvin was Lily's fiancé; Mr. Clive, it was easy to see, was a highly-privileged friend; and Mr. Morse declared that he was a good third, and added, "You never can tell what might happen," to which the prospective groom, in his innocence, replied, as he touched Lily's engagement ring, "Too late, gentlemen; the die is cast."

As I looked on these three splendid specimens of manhood, and knew from information that either of the two who were standing aside in favour of Mr. Melvin were equally well fitted to stand in the same relation to Lily that he did, I wondered what the spiritual or material advantage might be which had led to his being given the preference.

In a friendly chat with Mr. Vining, later on, this was made clear to me. "Mr. Morse," said he, "is not in a position to marry, and, moreover, shows no signs of having any such intention. With regard to Mr. Clive it is quite different. Mrs. Vining and I consider him just as much attached to Lily as Mr. Melvin, and, to tell the truth, until recently it looked as though she liked him the better of the two, and although the present situation may seem to indicate that such was not the case, I think that the real explanation of his not appearing on the scene at this time in the role of successful suitor is the set opinions which he has on the question of matrimony. He holds that he is in no better position to marry than Morse is, and that no right-minded man should ask a girl to wait for him indefinitely until he has sufficient means, taking, in the meantime, all the contingent risks of failure."

"But I understand, Mr. Vining, that this man has a fairly good income."

"He has a salary of one hundred dollars a month."

"Well, that does not seem bad to begin with. That is not far from double what I

am getting; and I have dared to take unto myself a wife, and, moreover, we have children.”

“So I see, and, moreover, that somehow you have managed to feed and clothe them all right.”

“Yes, but let me tell you, my good friend, that, all the same, I heartily endorse the opinion of Mr. Clive. And while it is true that ‘the Lord feedeth the young ravens when they cry,’ why should they have to cry, if by exercising proper forethought the old ravens could have saved them from the necessity of doing so?”

“Did the name Lily suggest to you the figures of the lilies and the ravens?”

“No. And the figure is hardly apt, is it, as ravens are not given credit for thinking?”

“Neither are two people badly gone in love,” added Mr. Vining.

“Well, if I am any judge, there are no signs discernible of mental aberration in either of the contracting parties in the forthcoming wedding.”

“You are right. They are a well-balanced and a well-matched couple. But I would like to tell you in confidence, Mr. Garrioch, that my wife has a strong premonition of impending trouble in connection with this wedding.”

“Premonitions doubtless serve a useful purpose, for even if they are no more than a vague warning of impending trouble, there is at that a chance given to plant the feet firmly on the rock so that when the shock does come one will be able to stand up against it.

“However, if there is to be any misadventure in this matter, I feel sure, somehow, that it will be through no fault of the contracting parties, and still more certain that it will not be due to any lack of wise parental love on the part of you and Mrs. Vining. While I say this confidently, I have to admit that I know little about Herbert Melvin, and that I judge him from his appearance and manner and your statement ‘that he is a very fine young man.’”

“I made that statement on the strength of over a year’s acquaintance, which about covers the period of his stay in Calgary, during which period he has made himself a fine reputation in the city and elsewhere. Furthermore, an English clergyman, who preached in our church a few months ago, told me that he knew Mr. Melvin well while he was in England, and that the maiden aunt who had brought him up had bequeathed to him her estate, which was of considerable value.”

“On the strength of this fuller information I must say that I admire the good sense of Lily more than ever. For supposing all things else to have been equal in respect to two or more of her admirers—with her own affection for them somewhat on the even beam—the superior financial position of Mr. Melvin might well have been

expected to turn the scale in his favour, making him in Lily's eyes the logical choice—a husband with enough in sight not only to keep himself and his wife; but those desirable others who, in a well-regulated family, are liable, just as logically, to follow.”

That Lily should have been reticent about her antecedents was naturally to have been expected; but there was no reason why Mr. Melvin should have been equally so about his: nevertheless he was, and it was partly out of consideration for this peculiarity of his and the more excusable reticence of his intended bride, that it was planned to make the wedding a very quiet one. To this end, weeks after the engagement had taken place, and the date of the wedding had been fixed, there were perhaps not ten in the city who could mention the facts with certainty.

Finally, however, after our arrival, and the dispatch of the cablegram, it was decided not to delay any longer, but at once to send out the invitations to a small circle of special friends. Then, quick on the heels of this decision, there came the cablegram from Messrs. Blake and Barstow, the startling part of which was the information supplied in answer to Mr. Vining's question respecting the name of the son born to Mr. Edward Armson in England by his first wife.

The answer was: *Herbert Melvin*. The further information was given that the terms of the will by which he inherited his aunt's property called for the change of his surname from Armson to Melvin.

All this was, of course, extremely sad and disappointing; but, when you come to think of it, was it not a “blessed slip between the cup and the lip,” as it saved our young friends from an awful tragedy. And please don't let it be overlooked that this deliverance came about through the prompt application of the golden rule by a sound business man, coupled with a premonition vouchsafed to a godly woman.

On receipt of the cablegram Mr. and Mrs. Vining were for a time closeted together in the study, and when they came forth Mr. Vining sought a private interview with Mr. Melvin, whom he greatly startled with the information that he and Lily bore the same relationship to one another which existed between Abraham and Sarah, in that while they had different mothers they had a common father. And as he outlined the account of that father's death, Mr. Melvin was greatly moved.

Mrs. Vining did not need to add anything to the cablegram to enable Lily to understand the situation; but she tried her best to soften the blow, and mingled her tears with those of her adopted daughter.

It was not to be expected that when stern necessity demanded that Herbert and Lily should exchange that particular brand of love which belongs to lovers, for that which exists between brothers and sisters, that they should find it in their power to

do so all in a flash.

Let us be reasonable and sympathetic and give the poor dears a little more time—say, twelve months—during which period they may go forth and comfort themselves with the dear friends who still remain.

They did so. And a year later the welcome news came to us that Gerald Clive and Lily Vining were married; also that Herbert Melvin had returned to Calgary, bringing with him a beautiful English wife.

In justice to my friends, the Vinings, and the sweet Lily of the Peace River, I must tell before bringing this story to an end, that one of the last things I did before wishing them good-bye was to assist in the selection of a splendid hunting outfit which was to be forwarded to Sizerman as a present, in token of gratitude for what he had done in seeking and finding those who were lost.

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TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Misspelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

[The end of *A Hatchet Mark in Duplicate* by Alfred Campbell Garrioch]