

name, unless it be a pile of tin cans and a few stakes that had been left behind by the one-time campers. At this point we had to leave the telegraph line again, because we were getting too far south instead of heading in a northeasterly direction. Turning north we left the open prairie and struck a section of country that was thickly wooded and full of swamps and sloughs again.

On the morning of leaving camp at the telegraph line, an accident occurred which could easily have cost Henry's life. We were all busy loading the wagon by carrying the camping outfit to Henry for stowing it away. John and I had just pulled down the tent and were gathering in the stakes and guy ropes, when a shot boomed from the direction of the wagon. We ran down and found Henry dazed and powder burnt beside the gun on the wagon seat. The full charge of shot had missed his head only by an inch or two. The gun, a double-barrelled and hammerless one, had been laid across the wagon seat by John, its owner. He had forgotten that it was still loaded, and with this kind of guns also, cocked, ready for shooting. John, too, was very pale and agreed with us all that he must beware of such carelessness in the future. The gun must have gone off by the jarring of the seat, caused by Henry, loading the wagon. To this day I still thank Divine Providence for averting the danger, whenever I think of the mishap.

On that afternoon we crossed the Wolverine Creek, where a few miles farther north the future Monastery had been located by Father Alfred, the Prior, and the other members. We were now about 100 miles distant from Rosthern, the way the crow flies, and a good 25 to 50 miles more by way of the trail we came on. And after all, we still were many miles from our claims and the end of our journey. We descended the high banks of the creek, crossed over and pitched our tent on top of the other bank behind a poplar grove. The creek was the first flowing water we had encountered since we had left the Saskatchewan. If I remember right Rev. Father Alfred and a lay brother came to our camp, and mother, Anna and the guide, spoke to them regarding our homesteads in Tp. 37, Range 19. I believe that, then, already the Rev. Father Prior advised mother to locate in this neighborhood, as he thought that we would have great difficulty in finding our claims, as we would have to travel over one of the worst kinds of trails in the Colony. However, mother thought that she would try, inasmuch, as she and Henry had paid the settlement society a goodly sum for reserving the homesteads.

CHAPTER 10. HUNDRED MILES FROM NOWHERE

We took up the trail again, still pushing ahead in an easterly direction. It was now in the last days of May, and nature was adorning herself with the richest of green. Countless flowers were blooming over the prairies, and, each day, we discovered new kinds. We did not see much wild animal life. Aside of gophers and ground squirrels I saw only a red fox and a badger on our trip. We went all day, and Henry at times, became quite puzzled, how to dodge the sloughs and swamps. When night came, we pitched our tent and dug a hole as usual beside a slough, from which we took our supply of water. As a rule this water was fit to drink, especially when it was boiled and made into tea or coffee. A few times, however, the holes had been made beside sloughs that contained a large amount of alkali and, then the water that filtered into the hole was quite bitter.

On the following morning it was decided not to go any further with the wagon and load, because travelling had gotten bad and was getting worse with every mile. Further progress was deemed possible by going on horseback, though we lacked saddles. Accordingly Anna and the guide set out after breakfast to investigate what was ahead as we could not be very much further than ten miles from the land now, judging by our rough plans that we carried along and consulted very frequently en route. After some hours they were back at the camp again and Anna, very much excited, stated that a great prairie and bush fire was sweeping westward with the wind and only a few miles off. Henry, mother and I had not seen it yet, because a heavy timber wood to the east hid it from our sight. However, they had hardly spoken, when great clouds of black smoke rolled up from the east. They soon darkened the camp, and the air had an ugly biting smell of burning grass, willows and timber.

In giving an account of their ride, Anna said, that they had proceeded some few miles, forded a small creek, rounded a grove of timber, and gone up a knoll, from where they could get a first glimpse of the fire, though they had seen the smoke some time before. The burning line of fire was then perhaps only a mile wide, but as they gazed, the fire leaped and ate more to the north and south and west. They realized, then, that it would be rather risky to penetrate over and beyond the fire. The black prairie and the charred remains of the trees would not be good to look upon, and, to find the homesteads, still more difficult. Besides, we, whom they had left behind in the camp, were in need of warning against the oncoming danger, as the small creek, they had crossed, could no more hold and arrest the fire, than a drop of water. Mother had to give up there and then. The plan to reach our erstwhile homesteads had to be cast aside in the face of an overwhelming and new foe: a foe that has subsequently, and almost every year, robbed many of the pioneers of their worldly possessions and their hard earned homes.—We broke camp in double quick time, harnessed and hitched up the horses, and turned back.

To-day, as I look back on these many years and let all these events pass in review before my mind, while sitting in a warm and comfortable home, it seems that the wild and virgin prairie had conspired with the elements of fire, water, and weather, and sworn never to be conquered by the white man, by placing each and every obstacle in his way. And, furthermore, to think, how easy and without any great effort the great bulk of the settlers came here, only a year and a half later, over the newly constructed railroad, thereby reaping the harvest that was sown by the pioneers! For, as we all know, a railroad is never built, though it be long projected, before the prospects are so good that construction has become a paying proposition for the reason that the pioneers are there already and have given proof of the fertility of the soil. Today, if one of these first pioneers happens to speak of those hard times to a late comer, to one of these "take-it-easy" settlers, he will most likely find an unsympathetic and doubting listener.

To be continued.

FOOLISH THINGS

A man who wanted to know what he looked like when asleep stood before a mirror with his eyes closed.

A man hearing that a raven would live 200 years bought one to prove it.

A foolish fellow wishing to sell his house took a brick from the wall to show as a sample.

Fifteen Years Ago

From No. 35 of St. Peters Bote

Martin Roth writes from Engelfeld Parish, Vossen P. O., on the 18th of September that he is well pleased with the land selected for him by the "Catholic Settlement Society." Since he came he finds his hopes more than realized. The first settlers had to contend with many hardships. The nearest store to the north-west of the Colony was 115 miles away at Rosthern, and to the south-east the nearest was at Yorkton, a distance of 150 miles. Many farmers lost their horses on account of the hard trips they had to make before being acclimatized. Fortunately for the settlers, there was plenty of fire-wood and no want of game. Potatoes weigh from one to two pounds. The pasturage for the cattle is rich and abundant.

A large fire in Winnipeg recently destroyed the Ashdown and the Bullman blocks entirely. — Land-seekers from Illinois bought 18,000 acres irrigation lands in Southern Alberta, near Lethbridge.

A despatch of 20,000 words was cabled from Vancouver to London, England, in twelve hours. It was sent to the Daily Telegraph and reached there without any mistakes.

ADDENDA:

Father Meinrad returned to Leopold on the 15th of October from Minnesota where he spent a short vacation. Father Chrysostom, who had been taking his place, returned to Muenster on the 18th.

On the 19th of the month plasterers began to plaster St. Peter's Monastery. — When the first engine (No. 123) came puffing across the Wolverine on the new C.N.R., the monastery's dog "King" barked "to beat the band." Having grown up on the machineless prairie, he evidently took it for some new-fangled monster.

Home Market For Potatoes.

Farmers who have potatoes or other farm produce to sell and farmers who from drought or other causes are forced to purchase farm produce, may get together through the exchange department opened for their convenience by the Co-operative Organizations Branch of the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture. At the request of co-operative associations and individual farmers this exchange service was started a couple of years ago by W.W. Thomson, director of Co-operative Organizations for the province, and has proved of very great value both to producers and consumers.

It frequently occurs that there is a surplus of farm produce in one part of the province and a scarcity in some other section, yet through lack of sufficient information, farmers with a good surplus to dispose of have to accept a much lower price than the farmers in another part of the province have to pay.

This year there is a good crop of potatoes of excellent quality in some parts of the province, with a pronounced scarcity in the south-western part of Saskatchewan, and potatoes are being exported out of Saskatchewan and shipped across to the United States, while potatoes from Manitoba are being shipped into the province.

"Farmers who have potatoes to sell should ship them through their co-operative association to some of the co-operative associations in the drought area of the province which are buying potatoes," said Mr. Thomson in discussing the situation. "There is a good demand for all the potatoes that are for sale in the province."

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