

three volunteers who had come from Prince Albert. Two hours march and the advance guard was fired upon; whereupon the teamsters fell to the rear and the fighting men advanced. Forth came some rebels, one having a white blanket, and Crozier went forward to parley. It was a planned ambush, and during the delay the rebels partially surrounded the force. While the men were talking an Indian tried to take away the interpreter's rifle, but he prevented the theft by shooting the man with his revolver. Almost immediately firing began on both sides. The volunteers on the right were exposed to a deadly cross-fire, and eleven killed. On the left three Policemen were killed and many wounded. So hopeless was the case that the sleighs were brought forward to carry away the wounded, whom the retiring force then protected with a steady fire. Retreat prevented a massacre, for the Half-Breeds admit that this was the only fight at which their whole force was present. After this the Police evacuated useless Fort Carlton, and went to the straggling town of Prince Albert where were women and children needing defence.

Of these movements little was definitely known in the South; but imagination pictured the gathering of woefully black clouds. Then, like the thunder-crash, came the news of the Frog Lake massacre. That day the sergeant shouted at gun drill as if he would threaten with his voice the brutal Indians far away in the North.

When seventeen days of April were gone at last the men could say, "To-morrow we march." What packing of kits there was, and in the process what debating between desire to carry as little as possible and fear of leaving anything needful behind. What a night of talk; leave-taking that was solemn enough, and boasting that intended to be merry.

When the cavalcade set forth next day the dust rose as imposingly as if for a royal procession. The horses champed their bits, and the curb-rings jingled; their hoofs made music for eager hearts as they clinked on the stones. The rattle and clank of the gun-wheels as the six mighty horses hauled it along, sounded assurance for the doubtful. Behind came the four-horse waggons, loaded with tents and kit-bags, and what might be vaguely termed "something to eat."

Out from the Fort marched the force, along the level bench-land, then down through the "Slough," wherein the river in high water has its extra channel; how the gun rumbled over the round boulders! There was a street next, broad enough for a bull-train to turn in, lined by squat houses, built of cotton-wood logs, and roofed with earth. This was the "Old Town," once rich and populous and greatly important. But there was a new town near the Fort, and few were so poor as to be compelled to do the old town reverence.

Down the broad street swept the cavalcade, a mixed multitude, for many were coming as far as the river to see their fellows off. Some of the "old timers" of the force looked up to the slight eminence where the old fort stood. Lowly enough the deserted buildings were, but what good times they had had there. The very logs in the walls were dear to them; they had helped to haul them from the river bottom. The romance of the past clung to the place; would they see it again? Or,--what a queer feeling the suggestion of death brings!

Splashing and stumbling the foremost riders crossed the ford. The gun-horses cautiously planted their great hoofs among the rolling pebbles and big boulders that they could not see for the rushing water. The gun rocked from side to side, and swirling eddies curled among the wheel-spokes. At last the dripping horses climbed the farther bank, and the men that were to stay raised the cheer of farewell. "Good-bye, boys; bring us back some scaps."

II. AN ARMED CAMP.

A hundred and six miles in three days of actual marching, yet the horses were restive and eager when they entered the town, and they whirled the gun about as if it were a toy. Mightily impressed were the militiamen, and some of them saluted the whole line of horsemen as if such cavaliers must be all officers.

Calgary plain had never seen such bustle and confusion, not even when the hordes of railway builders were there. Ordinarily there might be beyond the houses a few clusters of Indian tepees, dingy with dirt beneath, and brown with smoke towards the top; for these lodges were shaped like a cone, the apex of which is all chimney. But now there were

villages of tents, clean and new looking; and the Indians who had been visitors in the neighbourhood had shown their wisdom by silently stealing away. That is they ordered their squaws to break camp; and quickly enough this was done, for many obediences had made them expert. The tent-poles were tied to a pony's back by their slender ends, and thus trailed along. The apex of the "A"-shaped *travois* was lashed to a pony's saddle, and into the pocket between the cross-bars were tumbled tent-cloth and puppies, clothing and the baby; to the saddle were fastened the frying-pans also, then the mother bestrode the pony, and vigorously "quirked" him into motion. The man, who had been a spectator of the preparations, took his place at the head of the procession, carrying only a rifle in the hollow of his arm, having of course the gayest outfit, and riding the best horse. Thus the women were assured of protection from imaginary dangers. So much did they, as a class, believe in the divinity of the male, that, for lack of a larger warrior, they would plant a stark naked six year old boy on a young pony, and set him in the forefront of their procession.

Thus safely guided and guarded the Indian families had migrated to the Reserve, and over the ashes of their camp-fires the militiamen had swung their kettles. There were streets and avenues lined by the new white tents, that were to be soiled enough ere long; and parading up and down went the new, clean soldiers who were to return bronzed and rugged from the North country.

They had many things to learn, and merrily they set themselves at the new tasks. The mounted men who had come with the Big Gun regarded them with the superior air of regulars. They revelled in the stories told about the sentinels,--how one man approaching a camp late at night was startled by a voice out of the darkness crying to him, "Halt! Say Montreal or you can't come farther"; how another who did not know the pass-word entered into conversation with the sentry who had halted him, and then abruptly saying, "But what is the pass-word anyway?" was answered innocently enough, "Calgary." It was said that even the officers took advantage of the guileless sentry; as for example, one who had been away when the word was given, and coming home late did not wish the sergeant of the guard to be called out to identify him and pass him through the lines. When halted he deliberately gave the wrong countersign. "Sure, that's not the word I got," said the sentry. "It isn't, eh?" he replied. "No," persisted the sentry, "it was Madrid."

The militiamen did better work during the daytime, however. Daily drill made them grow soldier-like, and at rifle-practice they learned to make the neighborhood of the target, far and near, dangerous ground. They were also learning the mysteries of camp-cooking, what was of more importance; someone has said, you know, that "an army marches on its stomach."

The cause of their remaining in the city of tents operated also to keep the Big Gun in the courtyard of the Fort where it had been drawn when the cortege arrived. The Gun may have maintained a silence that was just a little sullen, but that was not noticed amid the clack and bustle which was going on. Teams with jingling trace-chains drew up loaded wagons to the storehouse door, and there boxes of canned beef and barrels of hard-tack biscuits that had rumbled along by rail from Winnipeg, were unloaded. In a safe enclosure there was a growing pyramid of oat-sacks, and men began to recall the time not long past, when a sack of oats and a ten dollar bill were interchangeable. Horsemen with jingling spurs rode hither and thither; the red coats of the Mounted Police flashed in all quarters. Infantry men in black, strangers in "store clothes," and citizens of the town, well-dressed or in nondescript attire, jostled one another.

No one could help observing in the Fort yard, a black pony whose four legs seemed endowed with perpetual motion. He managed almost to be in two places at once,--his tail was generally sailing where he had been a moment before. The rider of this pony was the organizer of the transport. And as the hours went by the string of wagons ready for service became longer, and the corrals that were full before became crammed with restless horses. Curious outfits came in, ready to render service at the rate of "eight dollars a day and grub." New wagons drawn by sleek, handsome horses imported from the East, with harness of oak tanned leather; ancient wagons, fit for service though, with sorry-looking ponies, caged in harness of rope and shaganappi. These