

ours; the canopy which seems arrayed and kindred only with the smiling, sleeping earth; in a word, the harmony which greets our finer sense, even as strains of music or the perfume of grateful flowers.

The descent into the valley was made through a wooded ravine, whose great length seems hardly at all to cut off the sharp incline. Getting down at last, we camped in a glen at the foot—a nook so furnished forth with all that makes a camp, that it would almost seem to say "Stop here." Climbing the immense bluff to the right, I there saw, in all its novel beauty, the fair valley of the Qu'Appelle.

I am somewhat at a loss to utter all the thoughts that moved me as I, to all seeming, the only creature there, stood mute amid the grand repose, the hush of this vast temple of the Plains. It has a character so entirely its own, so stained with the ages, so shut in, so weird and still, so filled with the great calm of untroubled nature, so instinct with the past, that thought of the future seems all alien—an invasion. It might be an Indian's dream of the "Happy hunting grounds." It was his happy "Hunting ground;" soon it would be so no more. The broad arch seemed to brood in strange sympathy above the sleeping hills; there was a voice in their repose; the heart ached fronting the buried time; and in the scope that met the eye—the wider scope filling the mind moved in unrest—one felt but as a child.

Only glimpses can be had of the river, a coy and modest little stream, which seems, with its green fringe, to shrink away to the other side, misliking strange approach.

One finds a rare pleasure watching the serrated bluffs which bound in the valley, and the wonderfully beautiful colours, bred from the changing season, which made their bare or half-clothed sides hold as vivid a charm as ever lit a rainbow or found birth in a prism. There are no edges or sharp lines; the attrition of the seasons has rounded each knob, knoll, or spur, so that although there is every conceivable variety of shape, there is but one form. The ground colour is mainly a soft buff or brown. I could liken its peculiar sheen or hue only to the horns of the deer or caribou in the velvet. The grass seems a furze or gorse. The short vegetation—touched by the frost, lit with the sunshine, foiled and relieved by the

prevailing dun or brown—melts into a cloth or carpet before which the lover of nature may stand or lie, and gaze unclayed for hours. This valley and these bluffs may be strongly commended as a study to him seeking (most often in galleries made by men) the mysteries of colour—a branch of art attained to by so few.

The road leading at the foot of the bluffs, and taking us past many a natural lawn whose grade and perfect slope would drive a landscape gardener wild, brought us at last to the foot of the lake; and the next morning, a bright and glorious one, was fit to drape the sleeping waters held in so closely by the massive hills. It was a rare delight; nor, as I watched the snowy gulls and buoyant wild fowl riding the unruffled tide, did I chide the tardy pace that held us in such an atmosphere and in such a scene. The road, however, is but a scant one, clasping the foot of the hill, and overhanging in many places the lake, into which the carts continually manifested a frightful propensity to hurl themselves. One, indeed, made this frantic plunge, carrying its ox along with it; the wretched animal performing such a series of double summersaults, and ground and lofty tumbling, as not a little astonished his compeers, and it is to be supposed himself also.

The land at times makes out into the lake in wooded points, and anything large enough for a garden finds a house and rude fence upon it; but the soil is poor and sandy, as well as continually stressed by drought. This did not so much matter when the old buffalo roads, which lead over the rugged hill-sides and down the ravine in every quarter, were filled with their forms; when their shaggy fronts glassed themselves in the clear water, or frowned down from the rim of the overlooking hills, as they defiled in countless numbers strong-limbed against the sky. But the sky line is unbroken now, and ever will be by their forms again. The elk no more tosses his branching antlers, capping the rounded heights; and the cabri or antelope shuns this habitat of man, who, the while hunter, now remains alone with his strong arms, and his fish—*dernier ressort* to the true hunter, ambitious only of his accustomed lordly spoil. The finest white-fish are found here in abundance, both summer and winter. An old *habitan* tells me the first and last lakes supply the largest fish. Singularly