

WHAT MATTERS IT?

What matters it to me what far strange sky
Should form a vault where I to rest am placed,
Or what hot waste should spread my bones to dry?
And what care I?

What matters it to me! Did I not lie
In the same spot where I have laid to sleep,
In silence deep, the forms for which I sigh,
Thither my bones would creep, my phanion fly,
So much care I.

What matters it to me if no sad eye
Should answer tear to sigh above my tomb—
No loved one come to weep me where I lie?
And what care I?

What matters it to me! The agony
Of soul to think that she whom I love best
Should never rest her head where cold I lie,
Would haunt me even in eternity,
So much care I.

Fredericton, N.B.

BARRY STRATON.

THE
Cities and Towns of Canada

ILLUSTRATED.

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XV.

BROCKVILLE, Ont.—(Continued.)

W. FITZSIMMONS, ESQ., M.P.—HON. W. J. CHRISTIE—A NOR'-WESTER'S LIFE—SOME CHARMING SITES—BUSINESS NOTES—CURIOSITIES—BROCKVILLE'S FUTURE.

WILLIAM FITZSIMMONS, ESQ., M.P.

is a son of the late Robert Fitzsimmons, of County Leitrim, Ireland. After fifteen years' service with the 9th Light Dragoons, including the Peninsula War, the father of the subject of the present sketch came to Canada in 1823, and settled at Perth, removing to Brockville in 1851, where he died, ten years after, aged ninety-five. William had settled in Brockville in 1841, carrying on the business of builder and contractor. He speedily took a front rank in public affairs, being elected President of the first Municipal Government, then termed the Board of Police. He has been connected with and taken an active part in the public matters of Brockville ever since, being for fifteen years a member of the Town Council, eight years as Mayor, for which office he was elected six times by acclamation. He sat for Brockville in the Ontario Legislature eight years and was elected to the House of Commons by the Town and Township at the last general election. He has been for many years connected with the School Board and is a Director of the Canada Central Railway. In politics, Mr. Fitzsimmons is a Liberal Conservative; a believer in judicious protection to native interests and an upholder of British connection. His manner is that of the true gentleman; his disposition is kindly and generous to a fault. I question if there is a more popular man in the United Counties.

HON. W. J. CHRISTIE.

At the present time there is probably no one living who has a better knowledge of the extent, geography and resources of the great North-West territory than the Hon. W. J. Christie, one of Brockville's most respected citizens. Mr. Christie's father entered the Hudson Bay Company's service in 1809 and rose rapidly, being a Chief Factor in 1821, when the Hudson Bay and Nor'-West Companies amalgamated. He was subsequently in charge of York Factory, Moose and Fort Garry, and for many years Governor of the Assiniboine District, now Manitoba. He retired in 1849 and died in his native country, Scotland, aged eighty-nine, leaving a reputation and name honoured to this day throughout the Nor'-West.

His son, whose eventful life I purpose to briefly sketch, was born at Fort Albany, East Hudson Bay, January 1st, 1824. He was sent to Aberdeen, Scotland, to be educated, and returned to this continent with Sir Geo. Simpson, in 1841, almost immediately entering the service at Lake Superior; in 1843 he went to the Northern District and was one year at Rocky Mountain House trading with Blackfoot Indians. He was next stationed at York Factory where he stayed five years, being thence promoted to Fort Churchill, H. B., where he remained four years and was transferred to the Swan River District, Fort Perry; after six years he was promoted to the charge of the Saskatchewan District which he retained fourteen years, when in 1872, upon the re-organization of the Hudson Bay Company's business, he was made Inspecting Chief Factor and Supervisor of the country from Fort Garry to the Arctic Regions, comprising Swan River, the Saskatchewan, English River, Athabaska and the McKenzie River Districts. On returning from his tour of inspection Mr. Christie resigned and settled at Brockville in 1873, after thirty one years' active service.

During the Riel insurrection Mr. Christie was in charge of the Saskatchewan District, and his tact, management and great popularity with the half-breeds and natives undoubtedly saved the Hudson Bay Company from immense loss. It would have been easy for the disaffected to have cut off the northern posts which at the outbreak of the disturbances were almost entirely without supplies, but Mr. Christie managed to avoid a blockade and early got out one thousand

bags of pemmican for distribution among the outlying stations.

In the spring of 1874, the Dominion Government being about to make a treaty with the Plain District Crees, Mr. Christie was appointed one of the Commissioners for that purpose, and when a Council was appointed to aid the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and the North-West he was requested to form one of that body. Throughout the administrations of Governors Simpson, Dallas and McTavish he was their right-hand man and in various ways rendered conspicuous service. His name is mentioned in very flattering terms in Captain Palliser's report of the expedition of 1858-9, and the same may be said of all Parliamentary papers referring to the North-West.

SOME JOURNEYINGS.

A brief account of some of Mr. Christie's journeyings may prove interesting to those only accustomed to Palace cars. In 1861, having with difficulty obtained leave of absence for six months for the purpose of visiting Scotland, Mr. Christie set out from York Factory on the 19th September in the Hudson Bay Company's sailing vessel *Prince of Wales*, 550 tons, Capt. D. J. Hurd. The Bay was crossed in three days and the Straights cleared in a week. It took only ten days to run from Resolution to the Lizard, and but for a thick fog in the English Channel, which detained the vessel several days, the passage from York Factory to the East India Docks, London, would have been made in twenty days. This achievement will be interesting to the advocates of the scheme for shipping the grain of the West to Europe via Hudson's Bay. The route is undoubtedly short, but the early close of navigation is a formidable obstacle. However, to resume, on the 4th January, 1862, Mr. Christie embarked on a Cunard steamer for New York, thence took train for Lacrosse, thence by four-horse coach to St. Paul, from whence the journey to George Town, Red River, occupied eight days. Here dog-trains were ready to make the run to Pembina, where a horse cariole was brought into requisition for the 70 miles to Fort Garry. He was thus enabled to report on the 20th February—the very day on which his leave expired. After a week's rest he started for Fort Edmonton, 1,000 miles distant, and accomplished the trip in twenty-eight days. Staying here a month he left for Carleton, 600 miles down the Saskatchewan River, and returned to Fort Garry, 500 miles, on horseback. Remaining a few days he started with Messrs. Dallas, McTavish and Graham for Norway House, north end of Lake Winnipeg, to hold the North-West Fur Council, after which, having been appointed to take charge of an expedition of two North canoes to convey Governor Dallas on a tour of inspection, he set out, 28th June, via Cumberland House, Isle Lacrosse, to Portage LaLoche, 1,600 miles, accomplished in sixteen days. Portage LaLoche is nine miles long. One of the canoes was carried across and the other sent back to Montreal. Continuing their journey Messrs. Dallas and Christie went down Clear Water and Athabaska Rivers to Chippewyan, thence up Peace River to Dunvagan, seventeen days' paddling against the stream. Returning to Heart River a clerk, men and twenty pack-horses assisted them across the portage to Lesser Slave Lake, three days' journey, where the party exchanged the canoe for a boat manned by eight men and were rowed via Lesser Slave River and Athabaska River to Assiniboine, where thirty pack-horses were ready to transport the expedition across the eighty miles to Fort Edmonton. After a week at the Fort, they set out with a light boat and eight men for Carleton House, six days' journey. Here Governor Dallas started for Fort Garry across the Plains, and Mr. Christie returned to Edmonton to winter, having been travelling in all sorts of ways from September, 1861, to October, 1862, during which period he must have covered over fourteen thousand miles.

Another time he made a tour of inspection from Fort Garry to Fort Simpson, about 2,000 miles, which was accomplished with the aid of horses, boats and canoes, in forty-one days. The return journey was made in winter, leaving Fort Simpson Dec. 5th, with a cariole, two dog trains, a clerk, interpreter and two men. It occupied fifty-four days. Not a mishap occurred either way.

A FUR TRADER'S CHRISTMAS DINNER.

In Mr. Christie's journal I find the following rather dismal entry under the heading "Christmas Day in Camp, Athabaska River, 1872:—Bitter cold. Short commons; dinner, small allowance of poor black dried cariboo; no pudding, no desert or anything of that sort. Tea without sugar; no bread; supper the same. Smoked our pipes; talked of absent friends, and what their Christmas dinner might be. Hard is the life of the fur trader at times."

With all his hardships, however, Mr. Christie left the service with a rare stock of robust health, and he is to-day as hearty a specimen of humanity as you will meet in a day's journey. Though "Edgar Place" is one of the most delightfully-situated mansions in Brockville, he assured me that he often thinks longingly of the great Nor'-West, particularly the Saskatchewan Valley. He says we have no idea of the vastness and varied attractions of our boundless territory to the West, to which the Province of Manitoba is as a speck on a sheet of note-paper. He predicts for the Saskatchewan District a brilliant future.

"RIVERSIDE."

Brockville boasts many handsome residences, indeed, the main road on the eastern side of the town is lined for half a mile with mansions, all occupying magnificent sites on the river bank, and each having peculiar points of beauty which woo the admiration of the passer-by. "Riverside," the residence of Mr. T. Gilmour, is among the finest of these.

"PINE WOOD"—RESIDENCE OF ORMOND JONES, ESQ.

This is one of the old homesteads—large and solidly built, standing in its own grounds and overlooking a great portion of the town. The mansion is well laid out; the rooms are large and lofty, and finished in black walnut. Being too extensive for the present owner, he is desirous of finding a purchaser. Particulars may be obtained by addressing Mr. W. H. Jones, Barrister, &c., Brockville. The site is a fine one, and must annually improve in value.

"RIVER'S CLIFF."

This is the name given a very picturesque water-side estate, belonging to J. W. B. Rivers, Esq. It comprises some thirty-six acres, situated at the west-end of the town, and is generally conceded to be one of the prettiest locations in the vicinity of Brockville. The views either up or down the river are charming, the broad expanse of the noble St. Lawrence being pleasantly varied by numerous islands, the first group of the Thousand (more or less) which have made this part of the great river famous the world over. The estate is a natural park, possessing the best characteristics of Thousand Island scenery. It is high, beautifully shaded, being in the midst of a pine grove, yet catching every breeze that sweeps the river; the facilities for bathing and boating are first class, while, though seemingly miles away from the busy haunts of men, it is within a few minutes' walk from the centre of the town.

The three cottages shown in the engraving were early secured by summer sojourners, and it is probable that others will be erected. Mr. Rivers has a number of very fine building lots to dispose of, and is prepared to offer extremely reasonable terms to desirable parties. I should mention that a carriage drive has been made through the estate, and that there is a good landing, with a commodious boat-house. No doubt the time will come when a palatial summer hotel, rivaling the Thousand Island House, will be built. It would "pay," as thousands of Canadians from the back towns and villages, to say nothing of people from East and West, annually go to the hotels on the American shore, simply because Canada does not boast one real good summer house on the banks of the St. Lawrence. I expect to see some wide-awake Brockville men make a move in this direction ere long. Land in the west end of Brockville must eventually become very valuable, as all the good river-side sites in the east are taken up.

MOLSONS BANK.

This building, situated on Court House Square, has been the home of various bank agencies. The Molsons Bank branch was established in Brockville, Jan., 1873, under the management of J. W. B. Rivers, Esq., who still retains charge.

T. GILMOUR & CO.

This is one of the oldest Grocery, Grain and Provision firms in Central Canada, and its progress has been uninterrupted. The premises, two hundred feet deep, situated on Main Street West, are very extensive, and include large store-houses for various kinds of grain. The business is both wholesale and retail, and extends over a considerable area. Messrs. Gilmour import their teas, &c., direct, and are large exporters of grain and other staples. This house is quite a Brockville "institution."

THE ST. LAWRENCE HALL.

This is the popular hotel of the town, and its popularity is of the kind that grows. The proprietor, Mr. Amos Robinson, is a veteran hotel-keeper, having been in the business nearly twenty-five years. He is untiring in his efforts to please his patrons, and the steadily-increasing flow of guests prove that he is successful. The bookkeeper, Mr. George Newsome, is a great favourite with the travelling public. A more genial, attentive and obliging gentleman it would be hard to find. The house has some forty comfortable rooms, and has recently been improved in several respects. The dining-room is cheerful, and a skilled cook presides in the kitchen. A free bus attends all boats and trains.

Talking of travelling reminds me that Brockville boasts a trunk-maker, who is acknowledged to be "hard to beat." He manufactures a trunk which is said to bother "baggage-smashers" badly, while the lock is so wonderfully made that a novice has to carry a sheet of instructions as to the way to open it. His name is Beacock and he keeps an assortment of valises, gun-cases, bags, &c. The store is on Main street west. When Barnum's show passed this way Mr. Beacock received orders to supply every performer (except the elephant) with a new trunk.

PHOTOGRAPHIC.

I have to thank Mr. J. B. Murray and A. C. McIntyre & Co. for photographic favors. Whatever they could do to assist me they cheerfully did. Both turn out excellent work; Mr. McIntyre devoting himself more especially to views among the Thousand Islands—of which he has a splendid variety—and Mr. Murray turning his attention to portraiture, in which study he is constantly making improvements.

TRINITY CHURCH.

Anglican—is rather curiously situated on the brow of a hill at the west end of the town. It is a stone building, and at present lacks a steeple. The minister is the Rev. Mr. Crawford.

NATURAL CURIOSITIES.

In the vicinity of Brockville are one or two natural curiosities, which are duly pointed out to the visitor. Among these may be mentioned a natural well high up in the granite rocks at Hill Crest, to the west of the town. Another object of interest is known as the "Devil's Footprints," which appears on a flat rock by the shore near River's Cliff. The theory is that the Old Gentleman stepped across the St. Lawrence at this point. As there are no signs of his return it is a pleasant fiction with certain good folks that he never came back, but others, judging by what they see and hear, hint that he probably slipped into Canada again either by the Victoria Bridge or at Niagara. At the east end of the town, by the river side, there is a curious cave underneath a market garden. I could not get into the cave, neither did anyone seem to know much about it. I would suggest that the gardener sink a shaft and use the big hole as a root cellar, and for the cultivation of mushrooms.

INDIAN ROCK PAINTING.

On a cliff at the east end of the town a curious painting in brown ochre is to be seen, though some Vandals have done their best to efface the interesting object. It is supposed to be a memorial mark, denoting that a war party to the number represented by the perpendicular lines were slain in the vicinity, the mound and cross representing a grave. The St. Regis Indians say, "Some time ago the Caughnawagas were going west on the war path and made the painting on their way up. They were all killed. The marks denote the number of the party."

THE JOHNSTOWN STOCKS.

The above does not refer to a financial speculator, but to the apparatus for punishing offenders, which in the olden time stood at the place designated. It appears that when the Brockville folks succeeded in wresting the title of County Town from the effete Johnstown settlement, a party went down to bring away the stocks. A stout resistance was met with, and the invaders were forced to go home without the stocks, which, after being for many years favorite playthings of the boys, finally fell to pieces.

BROCKVILLE'S FUTURE.

Brockville has not been a place of rapid growth, but its progress, if somewhat slow, has been steady, and it has weathered the storm of commercial depression in a manner which many other towns may well envy. Probably the future will in no marked degree differ from the past in the matter of development. At present there is nothing observable likely to cause a sudden rise. Great things are expected by some in the event of a bridge being thrown over the St. Lawrence at this point to connect the Canadian Pacific R.R. with the United States railway system. But this is a very remote contingency. If the new tariff works as its promoters expect, no doubt Brockville will get its full share of manufacturing industries. True it lacks water-power, but its central situation, transportation facilities, and the fact that it already possesses a variety of factories, allied with the consideration that it is not far from a rich and varied section of mineral producing country, must always weigh in its favor. As regards agricultural resources, the locality has for many years been famed for its butter, and the probabilities are that this profitable industry will be largely developed in the near future. The land, as a rule, is better adapted for dairying than for any other branch of farming. A certain increase of population will be always due to the attractiveness of Brockville and vicinity as a place of residence for persons in easy circumstances. The locality is healthy and beautiful, there is first-class society, and Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa and the cities of the States are easily reached. Of course Brockville is not an earthly paradise or perfect town. In my earlier writings I have not refrained from pointing out defects to be remedied—but, take it all in all, it is, as our American Cousins would say, "a real nice place," and I shall always look back to my sojourn within its borders with feelings of unalloyed pleasure.

ARTISTIC.

Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt is going to manifest her genius in yet another form; after sculpture, painting, poetry, ballooning, the extra-gifted actress will now appear as art-critic in the columns of a new Parisian daily paper, announced to appear shortly.

The Queen has purchased a book of studies by the late E. M. Ward, R.A., for the two pictures "The Installation of Napoleon III. to the Order of the Garter," and "The Royal Family visiting the Tomb of Napoleon I.," both painted for and now in the possession of Her Majesty. The book contains portraits of many interesting personages connected both with the French and English Courts at that period.

The latest fashionable pastime is paper sculpture. The requisites for indulging in this art are a pair of sharp-pointed scissors and pieces of thin Bristol board. The flowers are cut out singly, and then gathered into a bouquet, and, after being mounted on a piece of black velvet, they are covered by a concave glass, and we have a thing of beauty and a joy for ever. These flowers most desirable for beginners are pink, trailing arbutus, roses, fuchsias, daisies, and blue bells.