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EXPERIENCES OF THE GREAT NORTH-WEST.*

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"GREAT Lone Land" as applied to the Nor'-West is a misnomer, in that it conveys the idea of an empire of nothingness through whose amazing vastness the bewildered traveller might wander with the loneliness of a deserted Siberian miner. The Nor'-West may lack the hum of busy cities, the refining influences of a thousand triumphs of art; may be in blissful ignorance of the wonders of science: the musket and tomahawk may be better known than the pen and the printing-press; in short it may be a great "Undeveloped Land," but it is far from being a great "Lone Land." For no one can associate solitary sameness with the rejuvenating greenery of never-ending prairies; rocks streaked with mineral veins whose ruby crystals bespeak a Canadian Eldorado; waters teeming with sportive fish; woods with foliage of Brazilian richness; while in many places the whole air is resonant with whistling plovers, cackling prairie hens, cooing pigeons, quacking ducks, yelping foxes, growling bears, howling wolves, screaming hawks, and whimpering cranes.

Like everything else in the world, this region leaves different impressions on different

minds. To one, its winter has a frigid coldness, with scanty fuel to give it warmth; its summer a torrid heat, and no shady groves to screen from the parching sun. He speaks of an Arctic December whose piercing frosts the warmest rays of June cannot overtake; of prairies—vast "muskegy" stretches with not even a spring to slake the traveller's thirst—whose monotony is relieved only by impudent gophers, and where black-fly bulldogs torment by day and mosquitoes by the million at night. He declares there is no society but that of ignorant half-breeds, scalping Sioux, filthy Crees, wild Saskatchewan traders, jealous Selkirk settlers, and Hudson Bay Company monopolists. He fears an isolation from the trade of the world, a glutted home-market, and the consequent commercial stagnation. He tells of a soil whose very fertility in some places makes it congenial to every noisome weed, while in others the glittering sand gives little nourishment to the sickly languishing grass that forms its thin covering. He laments the absence of thriving manufactories, wayside inns, schools, churches, and other concomitants of successful settlement. He dilates on a climate forbidding forever the pleasing orchard and its luscious fruits, and on a land where promising fields of waving

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