

hurried through with the harvesting and threshing, in order to betake themselves to the hunting grounds and fishing lakes. For the first time in years this people, almost to a man, left the precincts of home for the bush country and plains.

Our two day-schools had to close, and none were left to attend the Sabbath services. We made arrangements with some twenty families to visit and camp with them on their hunting grounds, thirty and forty miles south-east of the mission in the region of Buffalo Lake, which is close to the elbow on Red Deer, where that river bends towards the south and east to join the South Saskatchewan.

On Thursday, November 27th, with buck-board and camping outfit, alone we start for the lake. Over plain and then wooded hills the ponies tramped briskly on, for the hours of daylight are short and precious. There is no snow, the weather is bracing and enjoyable. Within five miles of the north end of the lake we reach and pass the camp of some Calgary ranchmen, looking over this rich farm and ranch country for locations. Descending the hill country and traversing the plain on the south, we catch a glimpse of and welcome in the distance the light of five or six Indian lodges on Spotted Creek, between Spotted Lake and Buffalo Lake. This creek enters and runs through these lakes, and under, the name of Tail Creek, into Red Deer. Three hours after dark we arrive at the camp, quietly dispose of the horses for the night, take supper with one of the traders, and then, accompanied by him, we cross the stream and enter one of the lodges. Quickly the news passes around that the $\Delta \nabla \Delta \nabla \Delta \nabla \Delta$ has come. After weeks of separation we are all glad, indeed, to meet again. In ten minutes every one in camp has come in to welcome us and hear the news. It is the Indians' own camp, and he knows well how to welcome a friend. For half an hour we chat about the health and the hunt, and then hold a prayer-meeting. The singing and prayers are hearty, enjoyable and profitable.

At the close, $\text{P} \nabla \sigma \sim$ (Little Old Man), a supporter of day-school and church, taking the hand of the young apprentice-trader, thus addressed us:—"Tell him we have heard of his indecent language to some of our women. We dislike that kind of talk, and hope we will never hear the like again; he is a white man, and ought to know better." It was the keenest rebuke in the kindest spirit.

It may be interesting to mention how the Indians subsist now, in the absence of snow on which to track fur-bearing animals. At sunrise the hunter, with his gun in hand, skirts the woods where he finds prairie chickens, as they are won't to do in the early morning, betaking themselves to the tree-tops in full view of the hunter, who soon returns to camp with half a

dozen fat wild fowl. During the day, with a net lowered beneath the ice, he secures fresh suckers and pike. Next day, visiting his traps, he carries home a dozen muskrats, furnishing twenty-four pounds of good meat, and \$1.20 in fur. In the meantime his wife and boys, perchance, have been snaring and shooting rabbits, and manufacturing rabbit robes for the market. An occasional bear or deer is seen and brought into camp with rejoicing.

Friday morning we visit the tents and find the children washing and combing. This toilet exercise is the result of our day-school training, maintained throughout the year. For an hour we review with the children, reading lessons, mental arithmetic, conversational English, and sing over the school songs. We have made a portable black-board, that does duty in this and many other cases outside the school-room.

In the afternoon, in company with George $\text{P} \nabla \sigma \sim$, a class pupil, as guide, we start north-eastward to round the lake, in search of Chief Sampson's camp—comprising five families, supposed to be located at least twenty miles away on the eastern shore. Following the indistinct trail until nightfall, we are forced to spell, and await the rising of the moon. George is confident that, by the help of $\text{O} \nabla \sigma \sim \text{A} \nabla \sigma$, we will reach the camp before midnight; but alas! the sky darkens, showing the moon but dimly through the threatening clouds. With forced contentment, we pitch our tent and camp for the night, reasoning thus:—Chief Sampson & Co. may have moved on down the eastern side of the lake many miles off, in which case it will be impossible to reach his camp, hold service, and return to-morrow evening (Saturday), in order to conduct two services at Spotted Creek, according to arrangement. While we dress our pheasants for supper and breakfast, chat and take notes of new names and modes of expression in Cree, we become fully convinced that, to retrace our steps in the morning will be a safe and conscientious way to dispose of ourselves. Moving leisurely backwards in the morning, over a series of hills that alternate with innumerable bluish-tinted lakes, we beguile the way with changing views and conversation on game haunts, methods of hunting and trapping, and prairie life in general. George is an adept in the use of syllabics, so with our note-book and pencil in his hand, he jots down whatever we find new or expressive in the Indian tongue.

Sabbath morning some thirty Crees assembled for service in the only Indian house on the creek. All join heartily in the devotional exercises. As we discourse on the importunity of blind Bartimæus, the results of his solicitations, and the lesson to be drawn from the incident, there is many an audible response to the truths declared. The prayer-meeting in connection with this service is a profitable session.