

imports is of a reproductive description, and not only increases in value by the manipulations of manufactures and others, but is the basis of solid and enduring structures, which are everywhere regarded as constituting legitimate items in the catalogue of a country's wealth. Particularly is this true when the constructions become a source of income; and when it is remembered that the excess of importations in question is attributable in a great degree to the construction and extension of railways and canals, and other public and profitable undertakings, which enhance the value of property, and lay the foundation of increased public and private revenue, it will no longer be regarded as indicating decadence, but the reverse. If the bulk of our importations consisted of articles essential for immediate consumption for the support of human life, as in the case of a famine-stricken nation, or if our exports should fail to meet such expenditure, the case would be very different and would soon ultimate in national bankruptcy; but when, as is the case in Canada, our importations can be, and are, made the capital to be used in profitable investments, or substantial and enduring improvements, there is nothing alarming in the excess of a few millions in the imports, even though continued for years.

These figures and very judicious remarks are from the report of the Minister of Customs. We make no apology to our readers for devoting so much of our space to abstracts of these apparently dry subjects, because they essentially belong to the history of the country and should be known, at least in a condensed form, by every citizen of Canada.

INLAND REVENUE.

The reports of the various Departments of the Government have been prepared and published with commendable dispatch, and it is to be hoped that the example set will be faithfully followed hereafter. From the report of the Minister of Inland Revenue, we gather that the total Revenue accrued during the fiscal year just closed was \$6,589,848 as against \$5,431,255 for the previous year, and \$5,619,012 for the year 71-72, being an increase of 21 1/2 per cent. as compared with the former, and of 21 1/2 per cent. as compared with the average of the three previous years.

This increase is said to be chiefly due to three causes:—1st.—To the additional rate of Excise duty imposed on Spirits and Tobacco by the Act of last Session, which was in operation during two and a half months of the fiscal year. 2nd.—To the withdrawal of excisable goods from bond during the first half of April—presumably in anticipation of an advance upon the then existing tariff, and 3rd.—To a natural increase in the quantities of excisable goods consumed by a population growing in numbers and in wealth. To the first of these causes may be attributed about \$104,000 of the increase. The extent to which the second and third causes operated may be approximately estimated from a comparison of the quantities of the several articles consumed during a series of years. The results of estimates so made, as will presently be shown, justifies the conclusion that from all sources the Revenue of the fiscal year 1873-4 was enhanced to the extent of \$526,611, by duties collected on goods that will be consumed during the current year and on which the duties that would have been collected, had their entry for consumption been postponed until they were required under the normal conditions of trade, would have amounted to \$680,046, by which amount the Revenue of the year now current, may be said to have been anticipated.

The revenue collected from Public Works in 1873-4, was \$672,119, as against \$636,797 in the previous year, being an increase of \$35,322 or 5 1/2 per cent. Of this increase the greater portion, \$31,500, accrued upon the canals, the revenue from which amounted to \$491,143, as compared with \$459,993 for 1872-73. From

the given figures it appears that while the tolls from the Welland Canal increased during the fiscal year nearly 17 per cent over the previous year the tolls collected on the St. Lawrence Canals remained nearly stationary, and that the aggregate collections on the Ottawa, Rideau and Chambly Canals have very materially declined. This is due to the depression in the sawn lumber trade between the United States, by way of Lake Champlain, and the Ottawa Valley.

We have written so often and so fully on the subject of Amnesty that we need not turn to it again. We shall only say that while we leave to our Ottawa correspondent the sole responsibility of his rather lively letter, we quite agree with him that the passage of the Government resolutions is a pleasing riddance. In the sense that it is a settlement of the North-West difficulty it is deserving of commendation, and Mr. MACKENZIE merits the public thanks for it. The measure is not broad, but possibly it is the best that could be made under the circumstances. Let us hope that we have heard the last of this wretched, overdone affair, out of which both political parties have made such creditable capital in the last five years. We trust further that the moral effect of the Federal victory will be such as to prevent the introduction of the same issue into the approaching elections of this Province. Last Friday's vote proves, in addition, that the Government strength is overwhelming enough to ensure a rapid, decisive and easy session.

The ice-bridge is the subject of acrimonious controversy, in Quebec. Several times, this winter, it was formed on nights of severe cold, and as often broken up by the ferry boats. From a distance, this would appear to be a boon, but in Quebec it is not so regarded, at least not by every part of the community. It is held that there is an act of Parliament making it unlawful to cut away the ice-bridge. The Quebec and Lévis ferry does this, however, without asking leave or being reprimanded therefor. Between a city of 75,000 inhabitants and a town of 10,000, it charges fifteen cents for crossing a distance of three quarters of a mile, and two dollars a ton for goods, or at the rate of five hundred per cent more than any ferry in the world. If the ice-bridge were allowed to form, thousands could cross with their produce without paying a cent. But there is the offset that if the ice-bridge is allowed to be solidly anchored, it will retard spring navigation, unless mechanical or chemical means are employed to blow it up.

SIX MONTHS IN THE WILDS OF THE NORTH-WEST.

BY OUR SPECIAL ARTIST AND CORRESPONDENT.

IV.

DUCKS.—MOSQUITOS AGAIN.—CABRI.—DIARRHEA.—OUR ARTILLERY.—BLACK MAIL.

The country about us teemed with ducks, prairie chickens and prairie plovers, the latter resembling the *pleuvier de guyère* of Lower Canada. One duck is generally considered a full meal for a hungry man at a civilized table, but out on the prairie, I have thought nothing of eating three and four at a stretch. I was not ashamed of my voracity, but rather prided in it, after the Indian fashion. I must own, however, that I had some qualms of conscience at killing so many of the inoffensive things. They lay moulting and helpless in the marshes, and along the grassy margin of the rivers. The men would go down with big sticks, knock them over the head, catch them by the leg in their feeble attempts to fly away, and bring back a dozen of them in the course of half an hour. It was a butcher's. There was no romance in it. Unfortunately, one cannot afford to be sentimental on the plains, when he is worn with constant riding, and half starved on government rations. We, therefore, made no scruple to devour as many ducks as we could kill.

In the environs of Mouse Valley, I made a closer study of the mosquito. I took the trouble

to measure some of the larger specimens. Length half an inch, not counting the snout. Hind legs about one inch. Fore legs about two-thirds of an inch. Snout about one-fifth of an inch. Color, light drab. These big fellows are not as wicked as the small black variety which is more active and stings more painfully. This was a famous hunting ground formerly, but now it is pretty well depleted. Buffaloes, especially, must have been abundant ten or twelve years ago. Their trails are deep and numerous, and their bleached bones are found at every step. The interpreters informed us that we would soon be among the cabris, a species of mountain goat, so fleet that no horse can follow it. The buffalo robe with the fur turned inside is an effectual bar against cold, but the skin of the cabri for sled voyages, or for bivouacking when journeying on horseback, is still preferable. It is made into sacks with hair interiorly, and the outside lined with canvass. You get into this, draw a hood of the same material over your head, and you may be dragged by days through the coldest regions, or sleep at night quite securely with the mercury down in the forties.

Souris, or Mouse Valley impressed us all very favorably. It seems admirably adapted for cultivation, and in years when the frost is not too severe, ought to grow wheat easily. It stands some 1500 feet above the level of the sea. The soil is black loam with sandy bottom and white oak is plentiful along the banks of the river. The men had a good rest there and felt very jolly. The camp resounded with songs. Blacksmiths, saddlers, wheelwrights, were all busy, repairing and making ready for the march. The usual run of men are pretty much like animals. Feed them well, keep their stomachs full, and they will work cheerfully.

We struck our tents early in the morning, and halted at eleven for dinner, being overpowered by the heat. Our beasts suffered much. The men began to complain of diarrhea, due to the excessive quantity of water which they drank—not the quality, certainly, because we had had running streams of late. Another cause was the fresh meat served out to the men once a week. We also suffered a great deal from blistered and cracked lips due to the dry state of the atmosphere, and the high head winds constantly sweeping over us. Glycerine we found no preventive. The best treatment was the immediate application of caustic.

On the 22 July, we crossed South Antler Creek, where it joins North Antler to fall into the Souris. Then we crossed the second ford of the Souris, 46 miles from the first, having travelled 22 1/2 miles by the odometer. We had a very hard time here. There was a bridge at the first ford, but none at this; the banks were quite steep, and the waggons of C Troop having got entangled with the bull-carts, the one retarded the other. The consequence was that several waggon-boxes were smashed. Our two pieces of artillery were the most difficult of all to manage, weighing 4,400 pounds. Not being a soldier, I never saw the use of these two-nine pounders. They were always in the way, retarded our march, took up the time of several men and the service of several good horses. They were not fired off even once at an enemy, and, in fact, had hostilities been encountered, would have been of less use than the rifles which the gunners should have carried. But, I suppose, they looked military, and had therefore to be dragged on along with us, as much for show as for any thing else.

After leaving Souris, we found the ground getting poorer and poorer, the grass all destroyed by heat and want of rain, and the ravages of grasshoppers. The bleached skulls and bones of buffalo got more common as we proceeded. The Boundary Commission had a post of five men in the neighborhood. While employed in making hay, on the opposite side of the line, some Sioux came to them and levied black mail in the way of crackers, pork and other eatables. We had to put on double pickets to guard our horses against these cowardly marauders.

V

BUTTE MARQUEE.—ICE WATER.—PEMMICAN.—ROCHE PERCEE.

On the following day, we camped on the near side of Rivière des Lacs. On the opposite side is the historic Butte Marquée, a sketch of which appeared in the tenth volume of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, p. 177. Some sixty or seventy years ago, the Crees were at war with the Mandans, a tribe frequenting the hunting grounds of the Missouri. A party of each was on the war-path about this part of the country. One morning before sunrise, when the mist was not yet off the ground, a Cree left the camp to examine the surrounding country from the highest point of land in the vicinity. This was Butte Marquée, as it was afterwards called by the French Half-Breeds, or in English, Murdered Scout Hill. There he perceived a Manlar, in a sitting posture, also anxiously looking about for enemies, his back turned to the Cree. The latter took a large round stone weighing about fifteen pounds, crawled silently up to his enemy and killed him. To memorialize the place, with his tomahawk he dug out the form of a man lying on his back, his legs spread out and arms stretched back of his head. The figure measures about twelve feet in length. The approach is also marked out for some sixty feet by dug-out foot marks. Such is the story as related to me by old hunters on these grounds.

After leaving Souris River, we passed through a rather barren country, and suffered a great deal from the heat. Our skin felt as if on fire from

the combined effect of hot winds, dust and mosquito bites. We were also frequently short of good water. At one place, we dug a well in a *coulée* or "run," and put a barrel in it to prevent the sides from tumbling. The water was ice-cold and sweet. We got a sufficient quantity for three hundred horses and all the men. Had we acted otherwise we should not have had water before night. By such little acts of attention on the part of Colonel French, much hardship was spared the Force.

In our camp, on the 24th, we had pemmican for the first time, and found it very good. It is made by roughly pounding dried meat placed in a bag of raw buffalo skin with the hair outside. Boiling tallow is next poured in. It then hardens and will keep for years. It is much improved by mixing cherries in it, and using marrow instead of tallow. Dried meat, the jerked meat of South America, is prepared by cutting three slices of the flesh along the grain, and drying them in the sun, on willow or dog wood scaffolding. This also will keep very well. Both pemmican and dried meat are very wholesome. Indians and half-breeds will live on either for days and weeks, and prefer it to any of our prepared meats. The marrow is prepared by breaking the bones and boiling them. The marrow floats and is poured into bladders. On cooling, it hardens to the consistency of butter, and protected from the action of the air in bladders, it keeps very well. It is used instead of butter in the kitchens and on the tables of the half-breeds throughout the North-West. Pounded meat is dry meat pounded till the fiber is all separated. It looks for all the world like short tow. Eaten with marrow I found it delicious. In Roche Percée Valley is a third branch of Souris, which goes by the name of Rivière Courte, a sketch of which appeared in the tenth volume of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, p. 200. We camped a few yards from it, and found good feed, wood and water. I saw a large flock of vultures on reaching the Valley, being drawn thither by the carcasses of buffalo which strewed the environs. On the roadside, we stumbled over a buffalo skull to which the hair still adhered.

It was here decided that A Troop, under command of Col. Jarvis, should pass by Fort Ellice and push on to Fort Edmonton. He was to take along all extra baggage and stores to Ellice. We were to go only as far as Bow River.

On the 25 July, we reached Roche Percée, a sketch of which appeared in the tenth volume of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, p. 197. This singular rock is of white sandstone of wind formation, running up like a crest from the bottom of the Souris Valley. At its base, it measures about 35 feet in height and the base about 140 feet. Some parts are softer than others and from the combined influence of wind and rain, fissures and holes have been worn through it. The largest hole is clearly shown in the sketch. On different parts of the rock are cut the names of people who have passed by, and many Indian hieroglyphics which, of course, remain a mystery to us.

(To be continued in our next.)

HUMOUROUS.

"Raising the Wind" is now denominated more classically, "exciting the financial Eolus."

"DONE it on my own hook," is now rendered "executed the responsibility on my own personal curve."

ONE of the safest places during a thunderstorm is a railroad train in motion, because it is furnished with a conductor.

THE Gentleman so often spoken of in novels, who riveted people with his gaze, has now obtained employment at a boiler manufactory.

A HEN-PECKED husband writes:—"Before marriage I fancied married life would be all sunshine; but afterwards I found out that it was all moonshine."

"PLEASE take a half of this apple," said a pretty damsel to a witty swain the other evening.—"No, I thank you; I would prefer a better half!"—Amelia blushed, and referred him to "papa."

A MARYLAND man whose wife dropped dead a few days ago, had the funeral put off one day longer to get the balance of his corn husked. He said it wouldn't make any difference to her, as she was always good-natured.

A MAN out West who married a widow has invented a device to cure her of "eternally" praising her former husband. Whenever she begins to decant on his noble qualities, this ingenious No. 2 merely says: "Poor dear man! How I wish he had not died!"

"Has that gal got fits?" asked an old farmer who had paused to see a young lady go through with her calisthenic exercises in the garden.—"No," replied the servant girl, "that's jummy nastics."—"So," said the farmer, in a pitying tone, "poor thing, how long's she had 'em?"

"STEP IN, step in," said a cheap clothier to a countryman—"the cheapest goods in the market!"—"Have you any fine shirts!"—"A splendid assortment, sir."—"Are they clean?"—"Of course, sir—clean to be sure."—"Then," said the countryman, gravely, "you had better put one on."

ON arriving at Calais on her way to make the grand tour, an English lady was surprised and somewhat indignant at being termed, for the first time in her life, "a foreigner."—"You mistake, madam," said she to the libeller, with some pique; "it is you who are foreigners. We are English."

A GOOD deacon making an official visit to a dying neighbor, who was a very churlish and universally unpopular man, put the usual question: "Are you willing to go, my friend?"—"Oh, yes," said the sick man. "I am."—"Well," said the simple-minded deacon, "I ain g'ad you are, for all the neighbors are willing."

How much is your stick candy?" inquired a boy of a candy dealer on Tuesday. "Six sticks for five cents."—"Six sticks for five cents, eh? Now, lemme see. Six sticks for five cents, five for four cents, four for three cents, three for two cents, two for one cent, and one for nothin'. I'll take one." And he walked out, leaving the candy man, in a state of bewilderment.