

of long, narrow sandy ridges, bordered on each side by marsh. These ridges, a singular feature in that part of the route, were generally only a hundred yards wide, and extended five or ten miles, almost invariably in a north and south direction.

At Sand Hill, the next river, we found the country, though still sandy, very hilly and very bare of vegetation of all kinds. This gradually merged into a level prairie again, with abundant vegetation. The next river, and the largest, was Red Lake River. This was crossed with a great deal of difficulty, on account of the rapidity of the current and the narrow width of the sand bar which formed the ford. However, by putting extra weight on the cart, to prevent it being swept off the bar, and both holding the horses' heads against the current, we finally got over. But here a change awaited us. After passing through the wide strip of oak, ash, and tamarack, that fills the wide bottoms of the river, and getting a view of the open country, as far as the eye could reach nothing could be seen but a scorched and blackened mass. The fire left by some careless hunter had spread and burned everything. This was a serious thing to us, as we knew that the fire had extended till stopped by the next river. However, after holding a council we determined to push on that day, in hopes of getting grass before night. Night came, and no grass, and at ten o'clock the horses began to show signs of giving out, so we camped where the fire had spared a few rushes.

Next day, at noon, we arrived at Will Rice River, (so named from the abundant growth of tall grasses,) and this had stopped the fire.— Crossing this river, we travelled through a country with more timber than the last, and the surface of the prairie covered with boulders for many miles. At the next river—Buffalo River—the country became again very hilly, the hills inclosing innumerable beautiful little fresh water lakes, bordered as usual with oak. This continued to Detroit Lake, where the country became very rocky and densely wooded with oak, ash, beech, maple, poplar, and for the first time, we saw pine and spruce. At this lake we met a party of Ojibway Indians, with whom we exchanged courtesies, they giving us some fish, and receiving in return tea, sugar and tobacco. After remaining with us till ten o'clock, carrying on a rather unsatisfactory conversation by signs and illustrations in the sand, eating all that we could give them and stealing our tin cups and hatchets, they finally went off to their lodge. They were here catching fish for their winter's provisions with gill nets, and seemed to be taking them very rapidly. This lake, like all the lakes in this region, abounds in many kinds of fish, among which are whitefish, pickerel, perch, pike, and a little fish called goldeyes.

Leaving this lake, the trail passes through many miles of dense woods, consisting chiefly of oak and other hard woods. In these woods, and

southward, is found the Ginseng (*Arabis quinquefolia*.) Crossing Otter Tail River, Rush Lake and some small streams, we finally arrived at civilization again, in the shape of a collection of a dozen of houses, named in Minnesota as Otter Tail City, and inhabited by travellers who purchase the furs of the Chippeways. After taking dinner here at a two-roomed hotel, for which we paid two dollars, we left the city, and crossed Leaf Mountain, the height of land at the apex of the two great water sheds of the Red and Mississippi valleys. Here, as on the rest of the route, the prevailing timber was pine and spruce, with occasional tamarack swamps. The trail here followed down the course of Leaf River till it empties into the Crow Wing River. Here the trail ended, and crossing the river in a scow, we had now a bridged road forty-five miles to the little town of Crow Wing, where we arrived on the second of November, completing a trip of something over four hundred miles in fifteen days. At this place we left our horses, and took stage, 150 miles, to the city of St. Paul, and from thence by Mississippi boat and rail-road to Canada.

I may mention here that in St. Paul I noticed several barrels of Ginseng root which had been collected by Indians and others, and was intended for export from New York or elsewhere to China. This American Ginseng is the *Arabis quinquefolia*, a different species, it is believed from the Chinese one, but nevertheless highly esteemed in that country. It is said to be used there as a medicine in cases of debility, but its medicinal properties are not so highly esteemed in this country. Its uses in China must be very extensive, as independent of the Ginseng obtained in China, and the enormous quantities exported from America, imports are registered at Shanghai of the enormous quantity of 55,000 cattiees from the 11th Nov. 1856 to 31st June 1859. This root is found in abundance in the western part of Minnesota, principally in the woods and on oak ridges, and there are persons who make large sums by collecting it and selling it at St. Paul for one dollar per lb.; by sending it to New-York, they get a much larger price. Now, as this root is so valuable, and as the climate and soil in some parts of Canada resemble that of Minnesota, I wish merely to mention the possibility of cultivating it in Canada. Hitherto the market has been supplied by indigenous growth, and the consequent disappearance of the plant in many parts of Canada and the States, suggests the propriety of adopting measures by which its production may be increased by artificial means.

A list of plants collected at Fort Garry and along the route, with their localities, and critical remarks on the more interesting and obscure species, will be published in the Botanical Society's Transactions.