

the sun's bright coming. On the south shore of a circular lake, scarcely half a mile in diameter, through whose pellucid waters the shining sand could be seen twenty feet below the surface, an Indian encampment was pitched. Wearied with late hour feasting and dancing of the night before, following the annuity payments of the previous day, all slept heavily.

And while the Supreme Controller of our destinies was busy that morning slowly rolling back the last folds of the curtain of night so that His world might be filled with light and beauty and gladness, the people slumbered still. And as they slept on under the spell of these gracious manifestations

of a Father's beneficence did any thought of sudden grief or sorrow or gloom or disaster mingle with their dreams? "The life that now is and that which is to come together hang in such nice equipoise that a breath disturbs the balance."

In a new white tent, pitched in close proximity to that of her parents, Blue Fawn slept, while her little six-years-old sister, White Swan, nestled at her side. Just as the rim of the sun peeped over the horizon, bringing in a new glad day, Silver Trail stealthily approached the tent. Laying the flap softly back, he entered. Throwing back the blanket which lightly covered Blue Fawn's breast, he aimed a revolver

at her heart and fired. As the crimson life stream gushed from her lacerated bosom and stained the green prairie grass beneath her, she shuddered once, twice—then all was still. Blue Fawn slept her last long sleep.

The gun's discharge broke the stillness of the early morning, and awakened a hundred Indian curs whose yelpings filled the air. Through scores of tent flaps frightened faces peered. At this moment Silver Trail emerged, and ran a few rods away. Then turning his face toward the encampment he pointed the revolver at his own heart, pulled the trigger, threw up his hands and fell a corpse. He was with Blue Fawn now. "In death they were not divided."

A Crofter Schoolmaster

A Contrast With Educational Conditions of Today

(By ERIC DUNCAN)

Part II

[Note: The first part of this interesting record appeared some months ago in the University featuring issue. This second part was held over because of precedence given to other contributions in the Authors' Convention numbers.]

Every foot of the 20 x 40 school-room was utilized. At the upper end, on one side of the fireplace, was a small square platform for the master's big desk and chair. That desk held all sorts of school supplies and stationery, from quart bottles of ink (from which the scholars' holders were filled at a half-penny each) to pens and pencils and rattan canes. A four-foot passage extended from the fireplace down the whole length of the building on one side. This was for the classes. The rest of the room was filled with long cross desks and forms (individual desks were undreamed of) and even the passage had forms lengthwise along the wall, where the little ones, too small for writing, sat behind the backs of the classes, and rubbed the rollers from the bottoms of the wall-maps with their heads, to the master's disgust, for all the roller-mounted letter sheets and maps were his own property. One huge uncoloured map of Africa showed most of the continent "unexplored," and the Mountains of the Moon as a dark continuous range from the Gulf of Guinea to Cape Guardafui. About two years before he went away, the parish furnished a blackboard and a new set of maps.

The three foremost desks were occupied by the girls, and the boys filled the rest, which, in spite of the master's

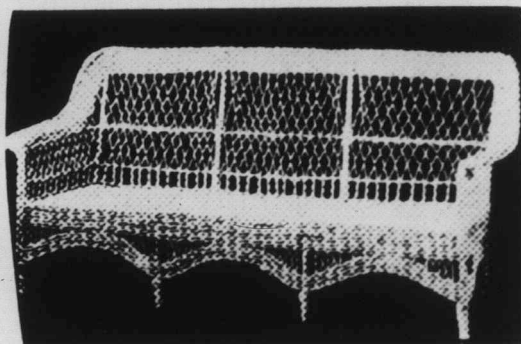
threatenings, were soon initialled, notched, blotched with ink, and wrenched loose from their fastenings. The old carpenter who made and clamped them to the floor, was one day a most resentful visitor to the school. "Only the three front desks show my handiwork," he said.

It can be imagined that with an average attendance of seventy, there was not much spare room and I remember writing with my copy book spread out on another boy's back as he stooped over the desk writing his own. The master used to say that parents at home should be responsible for teaching as far as words of one syllable, and children should not be allowed to learn the alphabet at school. As it was, older scholars were often called on to teach these, and it will be readily understood that with such a crowd only those who were anxious to get on did so. At that time, too, school-years were limited by the ability of the child for manual labour. My own stopped at thirteen.

The master discarded the time-honoured tawse, but he kept a stock

of rattan canes, which, when the ends split, as they soon did, smarted on the culprit's hands just as badly as the old corrector. He was not above a little fun in this line. One soft-headed boy had a habit of snatching back his hand as the cane came down, so the master would feint several times, and then say, "Go back to your seat and try to behave yourself." Sometimes he would cane a whole class if all failed in some exercise, usually spelling. Learning whole columns of spelling was our only home-work, and a much-coveted prize for this was a picture card on Saturdays, such as children nowadays get by the dozen at Sunday schools.

There were no school boards in those days, and the master had a ceaseless fight with the heritors to get necessary repairs for the school. I remember a small proprietor coming in one day when school was in session, to remonstrate with him on his unreasonable demands. "You," said he, "have a far better house than I have. Look at your slates, while I have only thatch." He



E. J. Wakefield

REED AND WILLOW
FURNITURE

*Special Designs Made
to Order*

Phone Fairmont 4959 Vancouver, B. C. 561 BROADWAY WEST

"I saw your advertisement in the B. C. Monthly."