

five p.m., and started to the station to make arrangements to get our baggage checked for Winnipeg; but how great was our disappointment to find the station locked up, and not a soul around to give any information! The station was nearly all surrounded by water, the track being only a few inches above the surface. At first we could discover no sign of human habitation, but at last discovered two houses about half a mile distant, but did not feel like wading out to them. We were not kept long waiting, however, before the station agent arrived in a waggon and consoled us with the information that it was uncertain when we could get on to Winnipeg, but we might rest for the present as no train would leave until near noon on Sunday. Had it been another day I would have staid over night along with my companion, as the conductor of the train we came in told us we might occupy the cars over night. But at sundown I started on the track to Emerson, two and a half miles distant, and as the Emerson station is a half mile from the hotel we were to stop in, I got acquainted with

#### MANITOBA MUD,

which seems to be very friendly with your boots, as it rises up and comes along without any coaxing. I have travelled on more sticky roads near Ottawa, where the mud would like to keep your boots and let you go ahead yourself; but if you are determined to go, the greater part of the mud would prefer waiting where it was. Here, on the contrary, you trudge along until the load of mud gets too heavy; then you scrape it off with a stick and go ahead, the only difficulty being the weight of mud, and not its adhesion to the rest of the road. At

#### EMERSON

we found four hotels overcrowded, and were told that the best that could be done for us was a "shake down" on the floor. After a good supper we wanted to go to bed, having had little sleep since leaving Montreal. Contrary to expectation, I was furnished with a regular bed, the excuse being that one of their regular lodgers had gone away for the night; but there might have been other reasons, as our landlord had made the discovery that I had something to do with the WITNESS. Many of the transient inhabitants of Emerson slept that and the following night on the floor, without any extra bed-clothes, and not a few camped out in stables or wherever they could get a little hay to sleep on. On Sunday morning the Ottawa party arrived, and I met some of the members of the Robinson party from Montreal. These had left Montreal on Monday morning, thirty-six hours before, and reached St. Vincent fifteen hours after me. They complained badly of their treatment and delays along the road, for although they had been detained several hours at various stations, yet they could never learn how long they were going to stop, so they had to stick to the train, and could not go and look for refreshments. The conductors, when asked for information about the length of time they were likely to remain, either could not or would not give any information further than that the train might start at any moment. This treatment of the passengers was bad enough, but the

#### CRUELTY TO THE HORSES

was many times worse, as they were kept in the cars (contrary to law, I believe) from Port Huron

to St. Vincent, near 1,200 miles, without ever getting off for feed or water. Their owners tried to feed and water them as best they could, and had often to travel a considerable distance along with the horses, at no little risk from crashing, to accomplish this result. Two or three of the horses gave out by the way and were left to recuperate, a man being always left to take care of them. When the cars reached St. Vincent on Sunday morning the owners of horses were anxious to get them off the cars, as they had been close prisoners since Wednesday at noon; but through some red-tapeism some of the bonding papers had not been forwarded, and although it was no fault of the horse-owners, the poor horses were kept in the crowded cars until after four o'clock Sunday afternoon. Some of these horses I did not see, as they were sent on to Winnipeg, but about six o'clock twenty-five of them reached Emerson and were at once taken across the ice on the Red River as they were destined for Pembina Mountains. This mode of crossing the river is not altogether unknown in the Ottawa region. The river is about 250 feet wide and has been rising pretty rapidly of late, so that the centre ice is above water for over 100 feet wide, while on each side there is a space of 50 or 60 feet under water, which, near the shore, is 3½ feet deep, but slants upward towards the centre ice. The poor horses, some of which showed signs of recent hard work in the shanties, looked rather dejected after their long ride, and were averse to going into the water, but one of the men would mount the tallest horse and lead one or two others into the water, while the rest were driven after. When they got on to the centre ice, some of the horses ran away down the river on the ice, but were caught and brought back, and again had to go through the water to the west side, having got wet about half-way up their sides. The reason for hurrying them across on Sunday evening was the dangerous condition of the ice, and I have been told to-day that the ice attached to the western shore has since broke up. The poor nags had to stand all night on the opposite shore without the least shelter, although a cold north-west wind was blowing, and I can see them standing there still as I am writing this letter. They are being fed with prairie hay, but no oats can be gotten for them here at present.

EMERSON, April 2, 1879.

#### HOW EMIGRANTS ARE TREATED—CROSSING THE RED RIVER—SOME DISCLOSURES THAT NEED THE ATTENTION OF THE GOVERNMENT.

SIR,—As most people are aware, the first impressions made on the mind of a traveller on reaching a new country are difficult of removal; consequently, it should be the object of any government who wishes to attract and retain immigrants from other lands to make all possible provision for their comfort on arrival. I will in this letter give a short account of my first three days' experience in the great North-West. The first day at Emerson being Sunday I visited the three city churches, and heard three sermons. The first was in the Episcopal church at 11 a.m., where there were just a dozen hearers. At three p.m., about thirty-five people assembled at the Presbyterian church. There would probably have been more hearers at this church were it not that the church