

After a hard day's work there's nothing so refreshing as a cup of good hot Blue Ribbon Tea

OLD-TIME BUFFALO HUNT

Described by the Campaigner in Great West Magazine.

A Chase in the Old Hudson Bay Company's Days—Tenderfoot See the Buffalo.

[The Campaigner, in the Great West Magazine, Winnipeg.]

While yet the flag of the Hudson's Bay Company floated over the bastions of Fort Garry, and when Manitoba as a province was unknown, two aspiring Nimrods left the capital city of Upper Canada, fired with the Anglo-Saxon desire to kill something, the bigger the better. At that time the Dawson route and its traditionally "magnificent water stretches," and anything but magnificent accommodation for the traveling public, was the only route by which the Great Lone Land could be reached through Canadian territory, and the first stage of their journey was accomplished by rail and steamer from Toronto to Fort Williams. Thence the travelers had to make their way, in fact, "paddle their own canoe," or carry it over lake, river and portage to Fort Garry. Thanks to the kindness and hospitality of Mr. Mol, the general officer of the H. B. Co. at Fort Williams, they were speedily equipped for the journey. A good birch bark canoe and two trusty voyageurs, whose dusky skins covered white hearts, was the first step in preparation, and the next trip that was only preliminary to their objective. This was truly a country of magnificent distances.

It would be superfluous to describe their daily journey—forgive the tautology—of the picturesque scenery through which they passed—the monotonous beauty of wood fringed crystalline lakes, and of numberless lichen-tinted rocky islets, some barren of verdure, and others wooded to the water's edge, duplicated on the mirror-like surface of the water, until the bewildered eye was puzzled to discern where reality ended and counterfeit began. Nor will it profit to tell of the blessings bestowed upon their veteran advisers, as trip after trip demonstrated the painfully apparent fact that their impedimenta was still too large by half, and that their burdens seemed to increase in weight every time they were handled. Struggling under a comparatively light load of bedding, food, clothing, ammunition, firearms and cooking utensils, while swarms of the hungriest description of mosquitoes sought undefended portions of their bodies, the black flies persistently intruded into tenderest spots, and noiseless but vicious "bull dogs" (gad flies) hovered patiently over selected situations until chance gave the opportunity of an unexpecting bite, though personally interesting at the time, is now neither pleasant to remember nor to read about. So we will skip the seventeen days of hardships, more or less impatiently endured, and present our travelers to the reader, though personally interesting at the time, is now neither pleasant to remember nor to read about. So we will skip the seventeen days of hardships, more or less impatiently endured, and present our travelers to the reader, though personally interesting at the time, is now neither pleasant to remember nor to read about.

But no time was to be lost. The fall hunt had to be made, and the hunters were to be ready to start on the 15th. After two days' rest, the travelers again profited by the advice of a friendly H. B. Co.'s official and placed themselves under the guidance of Mr. Jas. Mack, at whose hospitable mansion on the River Assiniboine they were welcomed as guests. Equipped with a backboard and two driving ponies, a cart to carry their luggage, two feet ponies for buffalo runners, and a guide, who was to act as cook and camp keeper, they set their faces southward, over the Missouri trail, to overtake the native hunting party assembled for the great fall hunt of the buffalo in the land of the Dakota. It must be remembered that the international boundary line between the United States and Canada was not in those days such an obvious fact as in the present time, when all such forgetfulness is accompanied by some official custom house myrmidon. The great plains were then apparently "no man's land," and the hunters followed the buffalo wherever he was to be

found. There was no nationality on the plains, and no one to say you nay, save a few bands of wandering Sioux, who were more friendly to the "Shagoo-dasheh" than to the "Esatonga," such being their method of describing British and Yankees. Ten days more of monotonous travel over the sun-browned grassy prairie brought our travelers to the rendezvous of the hunters on the banks of the Souris River, at what was then known as the "first crossing." The elevated plain near the river was covered with a motley collection of tilted carts, grimy canvas tents, smoke-browned leathern tepees, and wickiups of twisted branches of box-elder or willow. As far as the eye could see beyond the encampment, the prairie was alive with ponies picketed, ponies hobbled, and ponies loose; and mingled with this neighing, whinnying, kicking cavalcade, were hundreds of patient oxen busily employed in stuffing their hides with the short and sundried, but nourishing herbage. Through this kaleidoscopic scene of animal life occasionally galloped, with important haste, half nude boys mounted, bare-backed, and in most cases bare-breasted, on ponies as wild looking as themselves, perhaps in search of some particular pony or ox, but more likely careering capriciously at their own sweet will. Then there was the usual accompaniment of dogs—and then more dogs—and when you thought that was all, there were more dogs still!

It was evening when they "struck" the camp, the sole occupation of which seemed to be the pursuit of pleasure. From every side came the sounds of jest and laughter, and when night fell each camp fire was a center of mirth, song and general jollity. Eating, drinking, smoking, gambling and sleeping were the main features of the night's entertainment, but the proportion of the latter to the former was small indeed. Nobody seemed to want rest so long as the fiddle and the gambling drum was to be heard, and those who did not sleep effectually drove it out of the question for those who did. The gambling was of two descriptions—with playing cards, and with short pieces of stick, or "odd and evens," as played by school boys of all nations. Large bets were often wagered on the result of these games, and many a hunter's outfit was gambled away and he was compelled to return to the camp before the hunt got down to business.

Before departure next day an election was held to provide officers for the coming hunt, a chief and ten counsellors being selected from among the hunters and most experienced hunters in the camp. They nominated two captains and a number of "soldiers" to act as camp police, their duty being to secure enforcement of the laws, and to guard the camp. The code regulating the hunt was that which had been in use in such camps for years, and being promulgated, and the assembling, promising strict obedience and adherence to the code, each family group proceeded to pack up their scanty belongings and otherwise prepare for the expected move on the morrow. The laws were few and explicit. First, there was to be no hunting on Sunday. Second, no member of the hunt party was to leave the main body, or to diverge from it, unless by direct permission from the chief. Third, no person was to run buffalo before the general order was given. Fourth, obedience was to be given to all orders by the chief or counsellors. There was to be no punishment by flogging, or in case of petty larceny the culprit was to be taken by a captain to the middle of the camp and his or her name called thrice, the epithet "thief" being added. Other offenses were punished by fine, or by cutting up the bride, saddle or coat of the offender.

Early next morning a stentorian voice shouting "lever, lever" (French was par excellence the language of the camp), roused the weary travelers after a broken night's rest, breakfast was eaten in the grey dawn, and permission having been sought from and given by the chief, our sportsmen accompanied a scouting party of experienced hunters sent forth to look for the advancing herds of buffalo, which had been reported as coming southward from the Qu'Appelle into the Souris plains east of the Coteau du Missouri. Mounted for the first time upon the spirited and wiry little animals they had brought from the banks of the Assiniboine, the Nimrods realized that there is riding, and riding, and that a seat which was admirable for tiptoeing along a fashionable roadway, or suited for a not undistinguished member of a drag hunt club (where the fences are low), is not equal to encounter the grand and lofty performances of a bucking broncho. Fortunately for them, there were numberless ponies to choose from, and many of their owners anxious to trade—for a "consideration"—and their fiery and untameable steeds were speedily exchanged for others more suitable to the needs and circumstances of the hunt. They were advised to keep behind them their dearly loved (and best) express rifles, and to trust solely to the large bore revolvers they had fortunately brought, as being less likely to endanger themselves (and others); to substitute close-fitting caps for their broad-brimmed sombreros, and to discard coat and waistcoat, donning instead the buckskin hunting shirts they had brought with them, and to use, then, taking of their spurs (Oh! degraded knights) and arming themselves with double-lashed whips (or cutters) to propel their quadrupeds; they were pronounced fit for the enterprise upon which they were embarked, but which they had imagined themselves on leaving home—in fact, they neither bore nor wore much of the elaborate little money, which they had expended preparing for their expedition. "Experiencia docet" (or does it), and most sportsmen may assure themselves that to all "indispensables" for a hunting trip in the country they are to hunt in will in most respects be able to supply that which is best and most for the rest may be done without. By the advice of experienced friends at Fort William and Fort Garry they had left much of their baggage behind, and yet had still a burden of useless luggage.

Following the course of Cut Bank Creek our sportsmen and their guide, a saturnine, laconic half-breed named Joe, rode northward for some miles, leaving frequently cautioned to congregate the creek while Joe rode scrub reconnoitre. Returning from one of these trips, he laconically ejaculated "The buffalo!" which so excited our Nimrods that they drew their pistols in order to be in immediate readiness for their prey. But Joe, with a wooden grin at their excitement, beckoned them to follow him cautiously to an adjacent knoll, whence he had espied the quarry. Sure enough, on their arrival, they saw three black dots in the prairie some miles away, which Joe said were "buffalo," but to their untrusting senses might as well have been boulders. Leaving them to watch, Joe rode back to the chief for permission to "make a run," which he did, as no herds were likely to be disturbed thereby, and the camp was in need of meat. About a dozen well mounted men were detached to "round up" the quarry, as to bring them as near as possible, and to avoid all chance of their escape from the next morning's hunt. Meanwhile our impatient sportsmen kept vigilant watch and were at length rewarded by seeing the antelope apparently in their direction, having apparently in their sight, or wind of the encircling hunters. Being mounted on a lumbering gallop, and when they came within a few hundred yards, the two hunters started to head them off. Presently the buffalo appeared to scent the new danger, and he turned and turning directly northward passed between the converging lines of hunters at about 300 yards distance. Our party of three singled out a bull that chased at full speed the line of the bison, tall in the air, at a gallop that few could believe the clumsy animal capable of, and which taxed the speed of the ponies to the utmost to gain upon. But after half an hour's run the bull's exertions upon him, his heaving flanks and foam-flecked nostrils showing his distress. "Gardez-vous!" shouted Joe, as the bull turned off at a tangent and rushed at the hunters. For a moment the bull appeared to intend pursuit, but eventually resumed his northward course, while the discomfited horseman rode back to recover his pistol, and having dismounted in order to do so, tried vainly to regain his saddle, while his pony was galloping wildly round him in a circle at rein's length. Meanwhile the luckier Nimrod, on one side of the bull, and Joe on the other, had finally ridden him to a standstill, and were about to take advantage of an opportunity to seize upon the noble beast he had so longed to see under such circumstances. With his coal black beard sweeping the ground and his head lowered for the charge, the savage looking animal confronted them, wheeling on his hind legs, and rode round him at 60 paces distance, his flashing eyes glowing like coals of fire through the shaggy boss that covered his forehead, almost concealing his shaggy black, pointed horns. Having sufficiently admired the animal's prey, and Joe having inveigled the buffalo into presenting his broadside to our Nimrod, he leveled his pistol, and, feeling certain of his aim, pulled the trigger, and, expecting to see the huge beast fall over at the report, to his surprise, however, although he heard the thud of the bullet as it struck, and saw the bull flinch, the animal once more galloped off, apparently as fresh as ever. Following neck and neck, our Nimrod poured into the downed beast's side the remaining contents of his revolver, which brought his quarry to his knees, but again recovering his feet, he started as fast as before. But his pace decreasing gradually from a gallop to an amble. Reloading his pistol the hunter gave the coup-de-grace by two well-placed bullets over the forehead, and with a convulsive gasp and a hoarse, hollow groan, the slaughtered animal rolled over on his knees and rolled over on his side, just as the other discomfited sportsman dashed up. Joining in a whoop of triumph, the three hunters dismounted from their paining steeds, and examined their fallen foe, they helped him to turn the carcass upon the belly, stretching out the legs to support it on each side, and watched the experienced half-breed make a transverse cut across the nape of the neck, and a longitudinal incision from the neck to the tail, following the course of the backbone. The skin was then freed from the sides, and spread open upon the ground to receive the "feeces," or masses of flesh from the hump and back, the tongue and other delicacies. Shortly after this operation was concluded, a cart from the main body came to carry the meat, and presently half a dozen squaws arrived on horseback, and were soon screaming and squabbling for possession of the "boudins," as the intestines are called, and which they were considered to be a delicacy by those who could eat them.

Riding slowly back, southwesterly across the prairie, our hunters found the camp formed at Buffalo Lodge Lake, and taking warning from past experience, they pitched their tents fully half a mile from those of the main body. There was, as usual, merry-making in the camp, and our friends indulged their appetites on hump-rib would have made a dyspeptic burst with envy. When their hunger was apparently satisfied, the saturnine Joe, with a greasy chuckle, raked from beneath the ashes of the fire, a tongue so admirably baked, so soft, so sweet, and of such exquisite flavor, that our Nimrods were seized with fresh appetite, and as they ate, wondered how after consuming a quantity of meat that would have served their respective families for Sunday's dinner, they felt as easy and as little inconvenienced as though they had supped on strawberries and cream. Such is the virtue of buffalo beef and hunter's appetites!

Swags was the digestive pipe after such a feast, and the sleep and deep which sealed the eyes of the contented Nimrods that night. Dreams of successful runs; of marvelous feats in killing and eating; and of the stories they could tell when they got home, to the everlasting envy of less enterprising sportsmen, doubtless occupied their sleeping moments, and morning came all too soon for their wishes, after a long night of solid sleep. With morning also came the news of an advancing herd, and the camp was early alive with preparations, not only of the hunting party, but of the squaws and old men who were busily erecting drying stages for the expected meat. An hour's ride with the chief brought the hunters within sight of the herd, which, with a van-guard of old bulls, was leisurely proceeding southward, feeding as it went. As far as the eye could see to the north, there in little groups, anon in larger squads, and lastly in dense crowds—the buffalo had come—and apparently in countless thousands. Letting the old bulls pass by in safety, the chief hunter divided his followers into several parties, assigning to each its particular duty. Some were to make a wide circuit to the south to head the herd, and if possible prevent its crossing the Souris at the usual ford, some were to gallop northward so as to confine the herd within a narrow compass, and the rest, amongst whom were our Nimrods, were to await the signal to charge from their present position. Tightening their belts and saddle girths, and loosening their ammunition, with caps well drawn down over their eyes, they waited until the dense portion of the herd—fat cows and young bulls—had arrived abreast of their situation; and then "shoot!" shouted the chief, and with a mad rush and wild hurrah the hunters were into the thick of it. It is impossible to describe such a scene of excitement. It was every one for himself, and each selecting a target, the firing opened like a storm of hail. It was marvelous that the shot did not take effect upon some of the hunters, as the melee was indiscriminate. But presently the herd seemed to break and to separate, and the hunters, instead of firing into the mass of animals, chased individual stragglers, the plain on all sides becoming dotted with fleeing animals and pursuing hunters. Among the latter were our Nimrods, who each selected an animal, and got it. By this time the herd had swept on, and in front of it our sportsmen rode round, dispatching the wounded animals that, incapable of flight, were left behind in the mad rush. To tell the truth they had had enough of it—it was too much like massacre—and their disgust was increased by the sufferings of the unhappy animals that were floundering helplessly over the plain. So they contented themselves with putting the poor creatures out of pain; and rode back to camp as fast as their caps and ears, leaving the old men, squaws and boys reveling in the "butchering." Their own cart had arrived with the rest, and selecting such heads as they desired for trophies, they left the bloody scene, less trying to their nerves and ovaries.

But they had seen the buffalo—they had hunted—and they had killed! It was not a history of great personal prowess, but was nevertheless a unique experience to them, and to those who paid them for the travail. And though they cannot tell such a story as Horatius, they can, and do, tell pretty tall stories of their experience in an old-time buffalo hunt.

RACE WARS IN THE SOUTH

In the midst of our concern about distant lands of the sea, the defective government which Spain has given the Philippines, and the incompetency of the Cubans and the natives of the Philippines to govern themselves, racial politics in this country are lively, and, in our view, important. Race wars are going on in North Carolina, Alabama and Mississippi. In Mississippi eleven negroes have been killed, and the whites in the neighborhood of Forrest seem to be out gunning for blacks as if they were game. The reign of law was suspended for several days, and Sheriff Stephenson came to aid her outraged majesty, and with the help of 50 good citizens, carried five of the negroes in safety to the jail at Meridian. In North Carolina the fighting between the whites and the blacks seemed to spring from politics. Owing to McKinley's appointment of black politicians to office, the whites there appear to dread the return of negro rule. Now, although Sheriff Stephenson is engaged in the vindication of the right of the blacks to live, he is, according to the expansionists, simply performing narrow duties in the sphere of parochial politics. We, nevertheless, for our part, regard his conduct in the performance of his duty as heroic and useful as was the conduct of any of our heroes at Santiago or at Manila. In fact, we are inclined to think his conduct essentially more heroic than the bravery of the soldiers in battle, because he stood up against public opinion in his own community, and invited persecution, and perhaps ostracism, while the soldiers who fought in the war were sure of praise and honors. These events in the south are symptomatic, and until the country meets and settles properly the conditions thus presented to it, democratic government here cannot be wholly successful. This is the plain truth, and we cannot escape it by deriding those who are for civilization at home, or by shouting for more savages to govern—white or black—in the islands of the Pacific.—Harper's Weekly.

PUBLIC GRAIN STORES IN ITALY. The Italian government, mindful of the experience of last May, when a rise in the price of bread provoked such formidable riots at Milan and elsewhere, has no notion of letting the bread question reach a crisis again. In view of the sudden rise in the price of bread, which is due to speculation in wheat and flour, orders have been issued by Gen. di San Marziano, minister of war, for the opening of the public grain stores in the districts where the price of bread is highest. These prices stores will offer grain to the public at cost price.—Rome cable to the Chicago Record.

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