

prints to mark the shores. The wildness of the tempest added to its apparent loneliness and isolation.

In contrast with the turmoil of the storm, our camp seemed positively comfortable. Nestling cozily down in a grove of firs, with a bright fire in front, on which the frying pans were frizzling merrily and the coffee pot sending up its fragrant steam, it seemed to us—cold tired and hungry—the very beau ideal of contentment.

In the morning the sun shone. Under his genial rays the six inches or so of snow that had fallen during the night rapidly disappeared, in spite of the fact that a pretty cold, raw north wind blew. Everything around was cold and wet and sloppy, and our hands and feet soaking wet in spite of boots and gauntlets. As was to be expected, we had trouble with the horses. They were colder and wetter and crosser than we were. It took the two of us all our time to harness the team, but they were finally hitched up and the guide held them by the heads, while I climbed to my seat and gathered up the reins.

"Let 'em go!" He sprang aside and we were off with a plunge and a jump. As the wagon flew past, the guide grabbed the tailboard and scrambled in behind. In a mile or so the horses quieted down pretty well, and consented to walk and wait for the riders. In a little while they joined us, and I noticed that the sergeant was quite wet down one side of his body, and I asked him if he was thrown.

"Yes," he replied. "The brute reared, and came over backward with me nearly knocking my brains out against a tree."

We were wet enough in all conscience at starting, but a short time afterward

head like a catapult. Fortunately I lighted in a low bush, which broke my fall, and as I had still firm hold of the reins, we reached the bottom safely.

We had to call on the riders for aid to surmount the opposite hill. Taking two picket ropes, we fastened one end of each securely to the tongue, and they the other ends to their saddles. With this novel four in hand we easily surmounted the slope. The trail got worse and worse as we ascended the mountain until the horses could hardly proceed faster than a walk. The deep cart ruts were too narrow for them to travel in, but wide enough to have one or another foot continually slipping in, which is very tiring on the poor brutes. Travelling so very slowly seemed to make the distance longer than it really was, but at last we emerged from the wood on to a stretch of comparatively open prairie. The guide pointed to a range of hills some five or six miles ahead, told us that Pelican Lake lay just at their foot. We had been nearly seven hours doing the odd fifteen miles over the mountain, but now rattled along at a good pace and pulled into the Indian village, cold, wet, tired and ravenous.

Our hunger satisfied, our clothes dried, and our bodies warmed, we sallied forth to pay our respects to old Yellow Sky. The village comprises over fifty lodges, mostly laid out in two straight rows on either side of a wide lane. We strolled down this avenue, and were apparently great objects of curiosity, for every doorway was full of dark faces peering out at the shemanginis. The dogs were also greatly interested and gathered around in their anxiety to find out who were we, and what we wanted in their camp. Having had



A HOMESTEADER.

could only be compared to drowned rats. The trail now wended through thick woods, and the trees grow so close together that we were brushing them on either hand. Underbrush growing ten or twelve feet high stood in the very centre of the trail, and sitting on our high seat we were being continually swept by overhanging branches. In view of the fact that each branch and leaf and twig carried its burden of wet snow, it will be easy to realize our drenched condition. And a cold north wind blowing! Every now and then the front wheels would catch in a sapling, which, being released, sprang back with a swish and caught us a stinging blow across the face. One such blow, from a sharp, icy twig, cut my ear open badly, while the guide's face was a mass of welts. The two riders fared better, as they proceeded in single file in the centre of the trail.

As we rounded a little bend, we found they had halted on the edge of a very nasty hill, and Mr. M— asked me if I thought I could get down without unloading the wagon. I had not the slightest doubt about getting down, though I had grave doubts about reaching the bottom right-side up. However, as I had no desire to lug sacks of oats, etc., down and up a steep hill, I replied with the utmost confidence that I could. Locking the two hind wheels, the sergeant and guide prepared to steady the load, and down we went. All morning I had been blessing the high, narrow, springy seat, and now I had additional cause. Half-way down the hill, the front wheel struck one of the boulders, and I was shot off the seat on to my

some previous experience of Indian dogs, we had thoughtfully provided ourselves with clubs, and the animals kept at a respectful distance. Entering the low doorway of the chief's lodge, we received a very friendly greeting: "Haw! Haw! men kirsecaw" (How do you do? Good day, good day), and a long pow-wow ensued. Mr. M— tells the chief that the oky maw (head man) at Battleford has heard that he (Yellow Sky) is not very friendly to his brothers, the whites. This the chief indignantly denied, and declared that the white man never had a better friend than himself. In the end he succeeded in convincing Mr. M— of his friendliness and honesty and we were soon on the best of terms.

Two pleasant days were spent in prospecting, hunting and fishing with the natives, and on the third day we pulled out for home. Many were the handshakings, many were the men kirsecaws spoken, and many were the invitations given to come and see them again, as with our wagon, laden with presents of fish and game, we reluctantly turned our backs upon our dusky friends. The trip homeward was but a repetition of our journey. We encountered no bad weather, and met with no other incidents other than the every day incidents of travel. We saw some moose and jumping deer, but had not time to stop and hunt. On the evening of the eleventh day we entered the barrack gate, and our trip was over.

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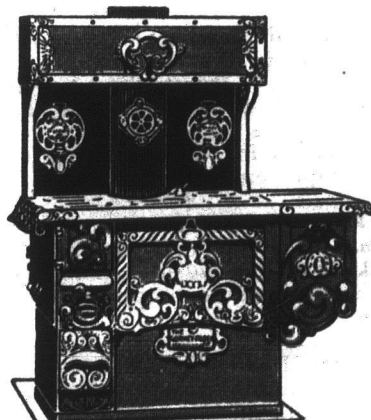
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