

the beautiful flowers of the prairie became a source of intense interest to the botanist. Golden composites were in bloom on every side. The persistent blue bell, which we found even on the mountains, formed a pleasing contrast to the ubiquitous yellow flowers. Among the clumps of scrub passed were seen the beautiful representatives of the convolvulus family, and near by the handsome prairie rose. "What a country where even garden flowers are wild!" "This is glorious!" and similar remarks were heard as the floral panorama was observed.

At every stop a dash was made to secure specimens from the attractive flora of the Northwest, and sometimes a narrow escape from being left behind was experienced. Long ere the first day closed a fine collection of the innumerable forms of plant life which give such a charm to the beauty of the prairie was gathered. About noon we reached the border of the Red River Valley, over which in primeval days the waters of a vast nameless lake were spread. On the bottom of this, alluvial deposits, brought by western streams, were spread until that lake, held back by a retreating glacier for countless years, at last, when the ice melted, found an exit north through the Hudson's Bay, and left the valley a rich heritage to man. Such, geologists tell us, is the origin of our first prairie steppe, 800 feet above the level of the sea, and some 80 miles wide, with an area of 6,900 square miles. This region is underlain chiefly by Silurian deposits, of which excellent exposures can be seen at Belkirk, on the banks of the Red River, and at Stony Mountain, a short distance northwest of Winnipeg.

Continuing our course westward, we observed as we passed through the Sand Hills that we were rapidly rising. What a contrast was seen here among those silent monuments of shifting hills to the prairie clothed in richest green, variegated by flowers of every tint. The footprint of a traveller sometimes leads a hill to change its place. For should such a step expose the sand, in many cases held together by very little vegetation, it immediately changes under the influence of wind, which, stirring it about, drives the whole mound before it, and a new monument is raised to indicate the restless nature of these hills.

A hearty dinner was taken at Carberry, and we were soon on the rails again. A short time elapsed before we reached the Grand Valley, and ere long we saw the beautiful blue hills of Brandon looming up to the south. Brandon reached, the strangers were full of complimentary terms in reference to the site and its general appearance. They were delighted as they looked northward and observed the Assiniboine, meandering through the valley, beyond which the land rises with long and gentle slope. They pronounced the location so well suited for pleasure and health, all that heart could wish. We stopped but a short time, and then moved on rapidly, passing over the rolling country which characterizes much of the second prairie steppe.

SECOND PRAIRIE STEPPE.

The deep black mould seen in the Red River Valley is now represented by a more friable and warmer soil. Stones are more frequently seen, and the general outline of the country changed, for we are now on the second prairie steppe, 1,600 feet above sea level, 270 miles wide, with an area of 10,500 square miles. This district and a large part of the third steppe overlies Cretaceous deposits. Among these attractive rolling patches, are homes for thousands willing to till the soil. We steamed on until night settling upon us closed the scene. The next morning we awakened to find ourselves surrounded by a change in the physical features of the district. Over level prairie we were passing again, and nearing Moosejaw. Regina had been passed and miles of level country crossed. Some new plants were observed, a stiffer soil had been reached, and a drier district entered.

We breakfasted at Moosejaw, where a few Indians made their appearance. They were a source of considerable interest to my fellow travellers, who now