

can "babble of green fields" that take in the whole gamut. For the very reason that the prairie offers so few salient points, the picture appeals to the eye more effectively than a mountain scene. The "values" count. Every stroke tells. On a May day in the prairie one understands Emily Bronte's passion for her desolate brown moors. There is a charm in the sense of isolation that is a far remove from loneliness. Thoreau says, "In a pleasant spring morning all men's sins are forgiven. Through our own recovered innocence, we discern the innocence of our neighbors." Like the nameless, aimless birds, we wander out in the sunshine with no higher object than living to live.

The bump of locality is not much use on the plains, for they are a sea of green, trackless, and uncharted. We are not long in need of guides, for attracted by the report of our guns, we soon have an escort of lively young Indians, eager to pick up the fallen birds. To watch the boys cook and eat the game is to enjoy a primordial scene in a primordial setting.

In the pale-face the hunting instinct, while never extinguished, is modified. In the Red Man it is a passion. Watch an Indian lad stalk a bird. It does not fly on the tree for the reason that there is no tree. It just rises and settles again a few yards away. The boy trails it up closer and closer with a feline softness of tread, a queer, slurring movement that belongs only to animals of prey, and then, standing stiff and tense as a finely-bred setter "making game," this Napoleon of the wilds concentrates the whole energy of his body on a piercing point and sends his arrow home.

Next to the Indian boy, the merriest thing on the plains is the gopher. It gets through the business of life on a dance. All its energies are intensified in its trail. It is the last thing to wave defiance at you, as he playfully dives into his little mound. Like the conies, they are "an feeble folk," but "exceeding wise." Just scoop out a burrow and judge if he who gathers in summer is not a wise son. Many a golden bit these frisky rascals cost the farmer, and so at one time the Government gave the Indians a bounty

of two cents for each gopher tail. Some Indians made as much as \$10.00 a day, and a merchant told me that one day he paid out \$700.00 in awards. The game went on merrily and so did the Government largess until it was discovered that the wily hunter was confining his efforts to the gopher's tails to the entire neglect of their heads, so that they might go free to rear fresh broods of nice little tails at a penny each. Nowadays, the farmer poisons the gophers with wheat boiled in Government strychnine.

The gopher is a very obliging little chap. He will stand up like a begging pug and let you shoot at him. Of course, being a woman, your bullet is far wide of the mark, and he dives into his earthen fastness only to nonchalantly reappear a minute or two later and give you another chance. Eventually, an Indian will whistle him out of his burrow and catch him for you with a noosed string.

The badger makes larger holes than the gopher, but it is almost imposible to catch one, for he will tunnel as quick as you can dig after him, and besides there is a fine for killing him, as he destroys the gophers.

Nor will the Indian boy, with his knowledge of prairie craft, let you shoot at a Jack-snipe, or, to use his term, "the yellow legs." It would mean that you would of a certainty be struck by lightning. The meadow-lark, the feathered music-box of the prairie is, however, fair game and so are the wild doves, plovers, and mallards. The mallards build their nursery in the sedgy sloughs (pronounced slews), and to view them at nesting-time, you must not be squeamish about wet feet and draggled skirts. A frightened mother-bird, a sharp cry of alarm, five white eggs in a nest, and then you almost want to apologise for your intrusion. The water in the sloughs is a pale olive green and all through the summer it is covered with ducks—hundreds of them. The boys tell me that the water, if bathed in, will cause an irruption on the skin. Later in the season these tarns dry up, and it is from their bed the farmer cut his hay.

On the prairies, a bluff is not a hill but a copse of wind-dwarfed poplars, birches or willows. Of late years, where the fire has not passed over the ground, these clumps of