

or wandering in sleet or snow and mud made one get out his pamphlets to read about the early, delightful Manitoba springs and then stick pins in his anatomy lest he might be dreaming after all, or have been spirited away to Greenland by mistake. But pamphlets cannot lie. All these discouraging features are merely items not worth mentioning, or not sufficiently adapted to beguile the would-be emigrant from a fairer clime. But West-ward Ho ! is still the cry, and as a train runs out from Brandon some 30 or 40 miles we enquire as to the hour for starting and are told 8 a. m., next morning. So we go down early to get a seat, and sit down by the car window to watch the muddy waters of the serpentine Assiniboine flowing solemnly thro' the wooded valley below us. Time passes, even when one is waiting for a train to start, and bye and bye the starting time comes and goes and the minutes drag their weary length to hours and we move not. However, we are assured that it will not do for us to leave the car as the train may go any minute. *Dinner-time* comes, and we rush out to the nearest food-market, snatch a bite and run back. *Supper-time* comes and still the solemn Assiniboine rolls past, but the train like a valuable article in the hands of an Auctioneer, though ever *going* seems bound never to be *gone*. And so darkness settles down over river, valley and prairie and town, and slowly the night hours wear away till dawn glimmers in the East.

Then we start on our 30-mile trip, and arrive the same day at our destination. Next night we sleep in a baggage car, so full of trunks and boxes and bags, that there is just room to crawl in between them and the top of the car and stay wherever you can find the softest trunk-lid or box-edge on which to sleep. Jammed thus into the car are, besides ourselves, a gang of navvies, going from the lumber woods to work on the railway. Winnipeg rum had tuned them up, and you can imagine the rest. From there we go on in company with some teams as far as where Broadview is now. The roads were very bad, and wading through swamps, and unloading and reloading teams, which were continually being mired in the "slews," kept us from getting homesick. The country around Broadview is very pretty. Low hills covered with poplars, fresh and green in their new foliage, were a pleasing change after hundreds of miles of low, swampy prairie or barren sandhills. But here, as elsewhere, distance lends enchantment. The soil is somewhat light, though good: the country is very much "broken" by "slews," and the poplar groves do not bear close inspection, being merely clumps of small trees growing around the ponds on the ridges. It was then June and the weather was simply glorious. Breezy, bright, exhilarating, making it a pleasure to live. The nights still kept very cold and mosquitoes

seemed lurking in battalions under every blade of grass. Out in the open air all day, and sleeping in a tent all night, life seemed like a huge picnic. A couple of weeks later we got a chance in a team going back toward Brandon, and took advantage of it. We arrived there in a fierce North-East rain storm, cold as November, and Brandon was again a sea of mud. Cattle had gone down nearly one-half, and we got an able young yoke of oxen, and, after a little delay, started off with our loaded "prairie-schooner" and a cow to spy out the land. The June rains had come late and were now making the roads terrible. We were alone, and, when the wagon got stuck, had only our own team to depend upon to get it out. They were young and not very well broken, but, when it came to drawing a heavy wagon through mud up to the hubs, they were "all there."

To tell of our adventures and mis-adventures during 450 miles of such travelling would take too long. At Fort QuAppelle we stopped two days to rest and put a new tongue in the wagon, as we found there the first hardwood we had seen on the trail. The scenery around Fort Qu Appelle is bold, rugged, and picturesque, and the blue, wind-swept waters of the lakes, lying far down in the ravine, looked more than beautiful to one who had seen nothing for months but swamps and muddy creeks. The lakes are called Fishing Lakes and abound with pike. On leaving Qu Appelle our destination was the Saskatchewan, but, after passing Moose Jaw Creek, the land got so light, and vegetation so scanty, that on arriving at Old Hive's Lakes, 60 miles further west, we held a consultation with those who had accompanied us from Fort Qu Appelle, and decided to return to Moose Jaw and "squat." There we put in three years watching the mercury vary from 65° below zero to 105° above zero. Years of drought and famine. Then we returned East with our own opinion of the country that all the Government Pamphlets and Railway Guides can never change one iota. There is good land in some places: there is fine weather sometimes: there are good crops in some parts. There is lots of wood where it is not needed, and lots of water, such as it is, where it is not wanted, and lots of game and fish somewhere, if you can find them. There are some rivers with water in them, some lakes with fish in them, and some days in winter are too cold for the mosquitoes to be out. But when you see men hauling water 12 miles, wood 15 miles, and hay 20 miles; when you see seed sown over thousands of acres of land four seasons in succession without any return, you get homesick for Nova Scotia again, a far better land in every way than the North-West will ever be. So, for the present, we cease our wanderings in the North-West.