



We have received the following from "Pansy," Pettapiece, Man.: "I am very much interested in the 'Flower Corner.' It is the first thing I look up when the 'Advocate' comes. I am fond of plants, but I think I do not understand the nature of some of them. I have not had good luck with fuchsias, and would like to hear what you think about them, also hydrangeas and pelargoniums."

Fuchsias are very beautiful plants, and it seems strange that so many do not have success with them, especially as they should not be much harder to manage than geraniums. Fuchsias should be planted in leaf mould mixed with just enough sharp sand so that water will run through easily. If you cannot get leaf mould, use the soil that grows just at the roots of grass, which is an excellent substitute for it. Put some drainage—broken up pots or crockery of any kind is good for this—in the bottom of the pots and cover with moss or fibre, which will keep the soil from falling down among it, then fill the pot nearly full of soil, pressing it firmly about the roots, yet not roughly so as to bruise them. The size of the pot should depend on the size of the plant. Never put a small plant in a large pot. Put it in a small one, and just as soon as the roots form a network about the outside, shift it to a larger one. To find out whether a plant requires shifting, put one hand over the clay, turn the pot upside down, and hit the side of it a sharp rap or two, then lift off the pot with the other hand. The soil will usually stay together in a firm mass. Never leave a plant in a small pot, if it requires shifting, as it will surely be injured if you do. Move to one just a size or two larger, fill in with fresh clay around the edge, water, and your plant will grow on as though nothing had happened. When a large plant requires repotting, shake the clay gently off the roots, and plant in fresh; as, of course, you can't keep on putting a large plant into larger and larger pots as you can a small one. But don't forget, fuchsias require quite frequent shifting, as described above, during their first stages of growth.

If right in the house, fuchsias do best in an east window; but they do better still if set out of doors in the summer in some sheltered situation, as in a cozy corner of a veranda. Give them plenty of water; once a day is not too often for these plants, which are an exception to most others in this respect. They should grow very quickly, and as their nature is to droop somewhat, they should, of course, be supported. The majority of fuchsias bloom best in the summer, and may, for that reason, be kept in the cellar from the end of November until the first of March, and given a good rest. While in the cellar they should just be given enough water to keep them alive, and should not, of course, be allowed to freeze. The leaves will probably drop off, but this will not hurt them; they will come out all the fresher in the spring. When brought to the light, they should be given just a little water at first, and the amount increased gradually. After the plant has thrown out a number of fresh shoots, and you know it has had a good start, re-pot. If you take off any cuttings to start fresh plants from, put them first in sand, kept moist and warm. Everyone who keeps plants should see to it in the fall that there is a box of good soil, and some sand set away in some dry place, to be used for re-potting during the winter and early spring. There is just one more point which I forgot to mention above, never let stagnant water stand in the saucers. See that your drainage is good, that the soil is porous, and that water does not stand about or in the bottom of the pots. If this is not attended to, fuchsias are sure to become sickly.

Space will not permit a discussion on hydrangeas and pelargoniums; but these will be dealt with again.

Mr. Joseph Botham enquires how to grow tuberose. For early flowering,

these bulbs should be started in April, or the early part of May. Before planting, pare off the old root, and a portion of the hard substance about the base, which retard the growth somewhat. Put bulbs in four-inch pots, in light soil, covering to a depth of about an inch. Only one bulb should be put in each pot. Keep them in a warm, dark place (75 degrees is the lowest temperature that must be given) until growth begins, then remove them to a sunny window; keep warm, and give plenty of water. In June, or when all danger of frost is past, plant out in the open ground, or shift to six-inch pots, and plunge the pots to the brim in the ground. When this is done, more water will be required than when the bulbs are planted out. In the fall, if the roses are still blooming, take into the house. The Double Pearl tuberose blooms only once, and the small bulbs must be cultivated for two or three years before they are ready; but the variegated-leaved, single variety blooms year after year, and should be taken up every fall and kept over winter in a warm dry place.

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### The Passing of a Frontier.

A STORY OF THE BEAVER HILLS COUNTRY.

Written for the "Farmer's Advocate" By F. W. Hunt, Strathcona, Alta.

Probably no other part of Canada receives more attention at the present time from that great mass of people who are seeking homes or openings for the investment of surplus capital, than that large, fertile tract of country geographically known as the third prairie steppe. Near the northern limits of these great plains, and not far from where the north branch of the Saskatchewan River makes its big bend southward, are the Beaver Hills, so named from the fact that they were once the homes of myriads of those industrious little animals, whose works are still everywhere in evidence.

In extent, the Beaver Hills are about seventy miles north and south, with an average width of about thirty miles, and include within their bounds many small lakes, some of which are beautifully studded with ever-green islands. Bordering these hills, on the east, and lying parallel with them, as if placed there for no other purpose than to receive their drainage through numerous little creeks, is the Beaver Lake.

This lake, whose thin blue line appearing in the distance so often cheered the weary hunter or freighter returning, in the long ago, from his long, lonely travels, occupies a space of about eighty-five square miles, and is the largest body of water in these regions.

It is surrounded by a beautiful, undulating prairie, broken here and there by bluffs of poplar and willow. And, away to the south and east, these bluff plains extend for hundreds of miles, broken at frequent intervals by picturesque hills, small lakes and streams.

Years and years ago, before white people came, and when these prairies were still in their primeval freshness, they afforded pasturage for buffalo in numbers so vast, so nearly countless, that one herd often darkened more space than the eye could reach, even in the open plain.

Here, too, were the elk, the fleet-footed deer and antelope, and the heavy moose; while among the smaller kinds of animal life were almost every specimen of fur, fin and feather to be found in a temperate climate.

Then it was that the red man flourished. Little dreaming that these rugged prairies, with all their richness and verdure, were ever designed for a better purpose than to provide them with a hunting ground, the Indians—the wily Cree in the north, and the warlike Blackfoot in the south—roamed over the plains, paddled their canoes in the lakes, fished in the streams, and stalked moose in the wooded hills.

Thus these dusky tribes lived out their simple lives, thus the years sped by—years that brought but little change.

Then white men came—at first, only a few, brought out by the Hudson's Bay Co.—some of them to hide from civilization, some seeking their fortunes, none of them with the object of settling in or developing the country.

Next to follow were the missionaries. The history of their work may be understood if told in a few words, but let it be told to their everlasting credit: years of hardship, years of devotion, years of self-sacrifice, with but scant appreciation.

Freighters, bringing in supplies overland from Winnipeg, returned with stories of the vastness and richness of the country through which they had passed. Still the progress of the country was slow. Real home-seekers either knew nothing of its existence or were not sufficiently venturesome to undertake the long and dangerous journey across the plains.

Thus it happened that until the advent of a railway, this country had no settlers except a few traders, miners and adventurers.

Then a change came over the scene. Settlers—actual home-seekers—began to pour in, slowly at first, but increasing with each year. The land near the towns was taken, and some of the more hardy spirits settled back from the railways as far as fifty or one hundred miles.

These were the real frontiersmen. They hewed the first roads through the bush. They tracked the first trails across the prairie. The faced want and hardship for the sake of homes. They braved sickness and disease far away from neighbors and beyond the reach of medical assistance. Their little log shacks, often many miles apart, were ever the abodes of good cheer and hospitality to the benighted traveller.

Civilization may bring its macadamized highways with finger-posts and guide-boards, its hotels and stopping places designed for the comfort and convenience of man, but none of these can convey the promise of good cheer to the weary traveller that was conveyed by the modest little candle that gleamed among the dark trees or across the trackless snow.

Civilization may bring its christianizing and moralizing influences, it may bring its institutions for the elevating and upbuilding of mankind, but it will produce no character of greater sterling worth, no hand more willing to help a stranger in a strange land, no heart freer from selfish, ungenerous motives, than his who welcomed the wayfarer to his lowly shelter and cheerfully shared with him his last crust.

But the frontier is passing away. Its associations, its tales of struggle, hardship and adventure, are sinking into that realm which is regarded as bordering upon fiction. Those sturdy actors in the world's drama have played their part.

Ten years ago, I might have ridden from Beaver Lake eastward to Battleford, and in all that distance would scarcely have seen a white man's cabin. If I made a similar trip at the present time, I would pass through large settlements, and would see parties of surveyors at work locating lines for railways which will render the whole of this vast country accessible to settlers.

Ten years ago, the few straggling settlers enjoyed no such conveniences as post offices, schools or churches. But these wants are now, in a large measure, supplied.

Nevertheless, with the passing of

those old times, there comes a feeling that is half regret. It is true that the pioneer endured many hardships, and suffered many inconveniences, but there were compensations. His freedom in those solitudes was unrestricted. His little dirt-roofed shack is the central figure from which radiate all the eventful scenes presented by his fondest recollections. Of comforts he had few of luxuries none, but there was peace and contentment by his fireside. None of the foolish rivalries of the so-called cultured world ever disturbed his tranquil thoughts. None of the petty jealousies, so rampant in society, ever rankled in his honest heart. His life, though attended by much hardship and toil, was full of interest.

And now those old scenes are fading away. The herds of graceful antelope that bathed in the morning sunlight on the hillsides, and cropped the dewy grass, no longer frequent those sunny slopes. And of the buffalo—of those mighty herds, whose heavy, rumbling tread used of old to break the deep silence—nothing remains to tell of their vast numbers, save the white, bleaching skeleton heads staring up through the grass—the last ghastly mementos of a vanished tribe. The moose and deer have sought shelter in the deep thickets among the wooded hills. The wild coyote starts from his lair and glides away across the plains, or pauses on some eminence to gaze on the unusual sights.

But the lakes are still there. Their crystal waters still glisten and shimmer in the mellow sunlight, still serenely and playfully mock the smiles and frowns of the sky. The hills, with their quiet, airy groves and pleasant glades, their sheltered streams and dense wooded solitudes, still wear their inscrutable air of mystery. The red-breasted robins still return in the springtime, and through the early dawn and twilight mingle their joyous chirpings with the dreamy, whispering sounds of the night. The wild canaries and chickadees still flit among the trees and fill the woods with their gladness.

But the red men no longer follow the chase. No more are their tipis seen grouped cosily beside the lakes or in the sheltered groves. Their well-beaten paths along the streams are vanishing amid the growth and decay of rank vegetation. Their favorite camping grounds have been buried beneath enormous crops of fireweed and red-top grass, or obliterated by the white man's plow.

Towns and villages obtrude themselves into the lonely landscape, and fields of grain add new beauty to the scene in summer. In autumn, the early morning echoes, that were to respond only to the melancholy chorus of the coyotes, or the distant howling of the moose calling to its mate, are awakened by the shrill whistle of the steam thresher. Herds of domestic cattle luxuriate amid the wealth of peavine and vetch, or the rich wild grass in the plains. The country is everywhere dotted by houses, which spring up as if by magic. Husbandmen, in the glad work of home-building, bend their strength to axe and mattock with sure and steady stroke. Morning, noon and evening, the rumbling of wagons of comers and goes echo along the roads and mingle with the numerous sounds of life in the settlements. Laborer, artisan and mechanic, each plies his trade in the engines of human enterprise begin to throb and pulsate, and here, on these virgin prairies, where but lately wild creatures strove with one another for their natural foods, the machinery of civilization is set in motion.

And now this young country is entering upon what will probably be the most critical period of its existence. In its nascent condition, much depends on the direction and outline given to its affairs. It is a new society formed from the members of many societies. It is like a child just entering upon a new and strange world. Its condition, its