

Towards evening as we neared the fort the rain poured down in torrents, and continued so during most of the night. The reception accorded us by the officer in charge of the fort was of a most hospitable nature. Nothing which could be done to contribute to our wants and comfort was left undone by Mr. McPherson, the officer in charge, or by any of his officials. The post consisted then of a few log houses surrounded by wooden palisading. It stood on a bank some ten or fifteen feet high, and when viewed from the river seemed pretty.

As you approach the fort, one is met by some half-dozen of the leanest, hungriest looking dogs imaginable, always quarrelling amongst themselves and with an uninviting wolfish countenance. We learned, however, that those were the camels of the northern deserts, particularly in winter, in conveying the mails and supplies from one fort or trading place to another, and where horses could be of no earthly use for want of roads and supplies. In winter while travelling they are fed upon fish, and in summer they are let loose and live in vagrancy.

From my diary. "Rat Portage, August 17. Out of bed this morning at 3 a.m.; put on wet clothes, and still raining, proceeded to load up the boats before breakfast. We procured milk, potatoes and corn at the fort and had a comfortable breakfast. In lifting a barrel of flour into the boat, it fell into the river and I fell in after it. It was only six feet deep at this place. I sank but the flour did not. Both were hauled out of the water, the flour less injured than I was. A good glass of brandy procured at the fort, lent great relief to my dampened and drooping spirits. Here we met a few men from the Red River settlement to act as guides down the Winnipeg River. Being told that Winnipeg River was 168 miles in length with 47 portages and that it would be necessary to unload 47 times and load as many

"more, making 94 changes of stores, together with the carriage across the portages was rather discouraging. We were informed that if we reach Fort Alexander at the mouth of the river in 21 days we would be doing good work. We would have to run chutes and rapids without end, in some places exceedingly dangerous and in others pleasant. For the first 50 miles we will meet numerous islands, so much so, that it will be difficult to distinguish it from a succession of lakes. Sometimes dividing itself into two or three rivers running parallel with each other, and uniting again at the first cataract so as to present to the eye of the voyageur a more majestic appearance. We were told that great danger threatened us upon this dangerous and deceitful river, that the first false movement of an oar in the hands of an inexperienced man, would send boat and crew over falls of great magnitude, to be engulfed in whirlpools from which there was no possibility of escape. These and similar narratives of the difficulties to be met with on the Winnipeg, made many of the more nervous feel not a little uncomfortable. During the day we run a rapid about one mile in length."

The nearest approach to the pleasure of running a rapid is that experienced in a toboggan running down the slide on the Assiniboine near Main street bridge. The boats in running the rapids were kept 300 yards apart, and as soon as they approached the head waters the rowers were ordered to pull with all their might, and the man at the stern kept constantly shouting "pull, boys, pull," and not a whisper made or word spoken by the crew until after running at the rate of 20 or 25 miles an hour we find ourselves again in smooth waters below the rapids, where after rowing a mile or two we pulled ashore and camped for the night.

(To be Continued.)