

be poisonous—the puff ball, which grows to an immense size. I cut some of them down and fried them in butter, and I am here to-day. They are not so good as the others; the taste is not so fine, but they are edible.

*By the Honorable Mr. Macdonald :*

Q. Do the Indians use them? A. They do not. I have had personal experience with them on the subject of mushrooms and it was very unsuccessful; that was in 1878. I was in Battleford at the time and there were in the vicinity of two thousand Indians near the place. They were almost starving for want of food. The mushrooms were plentiful around their tents. Not only were the Indians in want of food, but we were ourselves in almost a starving condition. It was in the spring and communications with Winnipeg were difficult. It was 650 miles distant by the trail and the provisions had not arrived, so the whole settlement were almost in a state of starvation more or less and we had very few animals. Finding the mushrooms plentiful at the time we collected them and ate them. I remarked how curiously the Indians looked at me when I was gathering them, and that they were laughing, apparently, wondering what use I could possibly make of them. I brought one of the Indian chiefs to my place and got an interpreter and explained to him as they were starving—as we were all starving—it was fortunate that we had those mushrooms so plentiful around us, because if nothing else remained we could live on those any way. I told him they were very good eating, and to prove it I would prepare a dish for myself and family, which he would be invited to taste. While the cooking was going on the kitchen had to be left a minute or so and the man disappeared. At that time I did not know that the puff ball could also be eaten without danger, and I had been telling him that some of those mushrooms were poisonous and that great care should be taken in collecting them. I suppose this frightened him. He thought perhaps that I might have gathered some of the poisonous ones, so he suddenly quitted the place and I could not get him to try the mushrooms at all. Up to the present day I do not know that a single Indian has eaten a mushroom. However they might be induced to eat them if they can get nothing else.

*By the Honorable Mr. Ogilvie :*

Q. How long do they last? A. Unfortunately they do not last very long. That spring they lasted about three weeks. It is not every year that we have them.

Q. Do they not grow in September also? A. They do; but not in every part of the country at the same time. Sometimes you may travel through extensive portions of the country where you have seen them, and none can be found, and then you will strike other portions of the country where you have not seen them but where they can be had in abundance.

*By the Honorable Mr. Macdonald :*

Q. It depends upon the rain fall, I suppose? A. Yes, and that year we had a good deal of rain.

Q. Are there any poisonous mushrooms that you know of? A. I have not seen any. The only other kind that I saw were those that we collected—that is the puff balls, as we called them—I do not know the scientific name. We generally threw aside the puff balls, but Sheriff Richard happened to be stopping with me one day and he said that they were as good as the others. At his suggestion we tried them and they proved to be good.

*By the Honorable Mr. McInnes :*

Q. At what part of the North-West were you when you saw those? A. At Battleford, at the junction of the Saskatchewan and Battle River. The crops are in the spring and the fall.

*By the Honorable Mr. Turner :*

Q. Is it along the banks of the river that you get them? A. We get them everywhere on the prairie.

Q. I suppose out in the sun, and not amongst the trees? A. I never saw them among the trees. In the woods you find mushrooms with stems growing; those we do not touch at all. You do not find those on the prairie—you find them growing among the trees.