

country we are accustomed to disregard appearances, to make all kinds of shifts and laugh at them, to neglect superfluities, mind our manners, follow after sport, and love horses. All that is good training for the North-West. But on coming here one finds everybody engaged in making money, or trying to; and that is a new and bracing atmosphere to an Irish constitution. No one is rich here. On the other hand, hardly any one is distressingly poor; of those at least who live on their ranches like ourselves, and make their money by horses and cattle. As to whether they make or lose most, and how they make or why they lose it, I know just enough to be silent on the subject for fear of making some "bad break." The Western tongue is expressive. This, however, I know, that it is a very novel and pleasant experience to belong to a community of which all the members are more or less equal in fortune; and also that it is the most refreshing thing in life never to look at or handle money from month's end to month's end. Wages and bills are paid by cheques. There is no expenditure of small sums when one lives twenty-four miles from a shop; and the diminution of wear and tear to the brain-tissue when one never has to do the sum of fifteen times sevenpence-halfpenny is considerable. After living here for eighteen months, I realised one day that I did not know the currency of the country by sight. Who ever enjoyed such a blessed ignorance in England for a week?

As to the want of congenial society, that complaint may be preferred from many a corner of the British Isles with as much reason as from North-Western Canada. But one observes that

those who are always complaining of the society round them are not, as a rule, its most useful or brilliant members. Here, besides our Canadian neighbours, who are unfailing in kindness and hospitality to new-comers, there live a fair number of Englishmen, ranchers and others; and some of the more adventurous have wives. What should hinder us from enjoying each other's society? It is true that we do not scatter cards upon each other or make many afternoon calls, for reasons connected with time and space and other large considerations. We do not give each other dinner-parties either; but we give each other dinner, generally at 1 P.M., and beds for the night. People usually come when they have some reason for passing this way; and in a ranching country, houses are so few and far between that hospitality of necessity becomes a matter of course. As a matter of course also, people do not expect to be amused. We have no means of formally entertaining each other, and it is not thought amusing to talk from morning till night. A visitor prefers to smoke his pipe in peace, to find his way out and wander round the corrals, inspect any bit of building that may be going on, or cast a critical eye on the stock. After which he saddles his *cayuse* for himself, and departs on his own affairs.

We are all a good deal taken up here with attending to our own business; consequently we do not see so much of each other as people do at home. Will that be thought unfavourable to friendliness? Personally I incline to the advice given in the Book of Proverbs:—

"Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee."

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