

limbs of the aspen, and blink their eyes at the morning sun. I have seen them perched among the branches so numerous they resembled blackbirds and within gunshot of our house. They also swarmed among the wheat and straw stacks, and at times so closely clustered I once saw my elder brother John kill thirteen with one shot. One did not have to travel far to kill game in those pioneer days. Quite often it came of its own accord. Among the aspen groves familial partridge were plentiful, and so tame one could almost kill them with a stick. The woods also abounded with both deer and antelope. When romping about with the Indian children I saw many elk horns lying around. They told me the Assinaboine Indians had killed most of them when the bison became scarce two years prior to our arrival.

The country was then a hunter's paradise, but there were no game restrictions in those pioneer days. The White settlers were killing game both Summer and Winter that rightfully belonged to the Indians. Through the unrestricted slaughter, in less than three years the noble red men were on the verge of starvation.

### *Playing with the Indian Children*

During the first three years of our habitation on the prairie wilderness the Canadian government had not yet established a school in our district. It was during those three years that I was running wild and played a great deal with the Indian children of Chief Piapot's band, who were encamped about our homestead during the Summer months.

In the years 1883 and 1884 the white settlers were widely scattered. The nearest white children I could play with were the Fergusons, who lived three miles to the east. The only means of transportation those early Scotch pioneers had was ox team and wagon, so it was seldom I had the privilege and pleasure of playing with the Ferguson children. And it was but natural that I should want to play with the many Indian children who encamped upon our homestead from time to time.