

## MASSACRE OF FROG LAKE.

We clip the following interesting account of the Frog Lake massacre from "Episodes of the Riel Rebellion," in *Saturday Night*, by Mr. George B. Brooks. Mr. Brooks is a son of Rev. Canon Brooks, for many years Vicar of St. Mary's Church, Nottingham, Eng., and now Canon of Lincoln Cathedral. At the time of the Rebellion, Mr. Brooks was first Lieutenant in the 91st Battalion of Canadian Militia:

Frog Lake is a small but very pretty sheet of water, clear as crystal and studded with small islands, some of them mere points of rocks, others an acre or more in extent. The settlement of the same name is a good five miles from the lake, situated on Frog Creek, which flows out of the lake and finds its way into the Saskatchewan. There are few spots in Canada as pretty as the country around that settlement. It reminds one of English park scenery, plenty of trees but no underbrush; soft grass, plenty of wild flowers, principally roses, and everything green and fresh-looking. The country is not flat, on the contrary, it is hilly, some of the hills rising to a very respectable eminence, something like the wolds of Lincolnshire in England or the combs of Devonshire. At the settlement a dam had been built across the creek, making a mill-pond, and just below this pond a saw-mill had been erected, not far from which was the Roman Catholic Church and mission house, the center of the settlement, and around which were some twenty cabins, each having its small garden plot in front. It was a pretty place and when the advance party sent forward by General Strange to reconnoitre, first came in sight of it and halted, there was but one opinion, that no lovelier spot had been seen since Winnipeg had been left.

It was about seven o'clock in the evening when the settlement was first sighted, the sun still high, the birds still singing, and altogether a beautiful, warm, balmy spring evening. But what a cruel sight the settlement itself presented. Every cabin in it bore the marks of fire. Doors were off and windows broken. In some instances the roofs were gone and the gable ends torn out, and in the little garden plots were to be seen the remains of hacked and broken furniture, farnia utensils and agricultural implements; the mill was a complete ruin, more than half burnt down, the circular saws twisted, broken and scattered about. The church had not been spared. Its roof was gone, one end of it was a mass of charred timber, the bell that once swung in its little belfry was broken and lying in the church-yard almost hidden in the grass; even the few wooden crosses and grave-stones had not been spared, but had been torn from the ground and were strewn about the mounds marking the graves. But perhaps the most pathetic sight and remembrance of what had once been a peaceful settlement, peopled by industrious Ontario and Quebec yeomen, was the torn books, scraps of letters and dilapidated pictures lying around the burnt cabins. Many of the books, or rather what remained of them, were of a religious character, some in English, some in French, others were school books, and on the fly-leaves were the names of those who had once owned and perused them. Not a living soul was to be seen about the place, the only welcome the soldiers received being from a poor half-starved collie dog, which stood in the doorway of one of the cabins wagging his tail, but apparently afraid to trust himself further. That poor brute was subsequently adopted by the 91st, was christened Riel, became a great pet, accompanying the regiment to Winnipeg. But the saddest sight, and one which made strong men weep, was to

be seen inside the ruined church. On the fence around the building were a number of hawks, kites and eagles and other birds of prey, so fat and lazy, so gorged with food that they were scarcely able to rise and fly away when disturbed. The church had a basement, and in it was revealed the secret of the Frog Lake massacre.

In one corner of that basement, lying one upon the other, and evidently thrown there after death, were the bodies of four dead men, all terribly decomposed. It was a shocking and sickening sight. Every head had been scalped, the features were unrecognizable, having been saturated in oil and then set fire to, for they were all charred and burnt. The hands and feet had been cut off and the arm and leg bones protruded. The hearts had been cut out and other indignities had been practiced of the most savage kind. By what remained of their clothes it was evident that two of the victims were the Roman Catholic priests who once had charge of the mission; the other two were evidently laymen. It would be impossible to adequately express the indignation and horror which all felt when the ghastly find was seen. Strong men, men who wore medals honourably won in the Imperial Army, men who had seen and faced death in hard-fought battles, men who were not given to sentimental weakness but were more reckless than sedate—those men as they viewed the horrible sight broke down and blabbered like babes. As the daylight waned and darkness set in, lanterns had to be lighted and lowered into the basement, and by their dim glare the horror of the scene was intensified, if that was possible. There was no furniture in the basement, nor the wrecked or broken remains of any, and the floor was the hardened soil. To what particular use that basement had been put was hard to determine, but it was not destined to be the grave of those four victims of Indian cruelty and treachery.

Word of what had been found was sent to General Strange and just before dark a strong fatigue party arrived from the camp having with it, shovels, picks, ropes, tarpaulins and carpenters' tools. It was not an easy matter getting those bodies out of the basement to the surface. Working in a disgusting atmosphere and by the dim light of a few lanterns, with great trouble tarpaulins were eventually passed under each body and they were slowly hauled up to the surface, where the tarpaulins were rolled around them as shrouds. While half a dozen men had been engaged in this unpleasant operation, others had dug four graves in the little churchyard, others had taken boards from the ruined cottages and had constructed four rude coffins, while others had fashioned four wooden crosses. Just at break of day all was ready for lowering the bodies into the graves, a rite solemnly and decently performed, the liturgy for the dead of the Roman Catholic church being read over the corpses of the two priests by a Roman Catholic officer of the 91st, and the beautiful burial service of the Anglican church over the other two corpses, by Colonel Osborne Smith. It was a sad party that stood around these four graves that bright, beautiful morning, and no four men were more reverently interred by strangers than were those four victims of the rebellion. After the service had been read, the graves were filled in, the crosses were planted at the head of them, roses and other wild flowers were strewn on the mounds, and as the birds carolled their morning hymns those who had been engaged in a sad duty returned to camp, vowing vengeance on the perpetrators of the massacre if the chance was ever offered them, a vengeance that they took afterwards and which was life for life, seven of the Indians engaged in the terrible crime at Frog

Lake being hung up on the same scaffold at the same time at Battleford, singing their war and death songs to the very last.

At last the doubt and mysteries which had for so long hung around the Frog Lake massacre were cleared up, the finding of the four bodies in the basement of the Roman Catholic church proving that a terrible tragedy had been enacted. The people of Canada were slow to believe that the "wards of the nation" had been guilty of so grave a crime, and the truthfulness of the reports which from time to time came from the North Saskatchewan district were questioned and denied. It was on April 11th that the newspapers of Canada published the first rumors of the outbreak—meagre in detail, but giving a list of ten killed, a list which was subsequently proved to be slightly inaccurate. The chief victims of the tragedy were the two Roman Catholic priests, Revs. Father Adelard Fafard and Father Felix M. Marchand, both belonging to the order of Oblates. Rev. Father Fafard was born in the Province of Quebec in 1849 and was made an Oblate Father in 1874. He was ordained a priest in Montreal, and from that time devoted his life to missionary work among the North-West Indians. He was a zealous priest and a man of splendid education. Rev. Father Marchand was a young man born in the Province of Quebec in 1858 and ordained by Bishop Grandin at St. Albert in 1881. He, too, was enthusiastic in his work. And it is the same with all the Catholic missionaries in the North-West. He who has travelled through that vast portion of the Dominion must have often met with educated white men dwelling in the midst of a wild, savage people whom they tended with a strange and mother-like devotion, upheld in their life of denial by a simple faith which seems something more than human. And what is true in one case seems to be true in all, whether the priest be stationed at Winnipeg or in some far remote mission, north or south, far in advance of trader or settler have gone those fragile men, brought up amid the sunny scenes of the St. Lawrence or old France, scenes that they are destined never to see again in this life. It is a curious contrast to find in that far distant, lonely land men of culture and high mental excellence devoting their lives to the civilization of wild Indians. I care not what particular form of belief the onlooker may hold, he is but a poor man who can witness such devotion and abnegation of self through the narrow glass of sectarian feeling and see in it nothing but the self-interested labor of persons holding opinions foreign to his own.

From those who were made prisoners at Frog Lake and who for long weary weeks were compelled to accompany their captors through muskeg and swamp, half-starved and in daily fear of their lives. The following particulars of the massacre were gleaned on their liberation from captivity after the fight at Frenchman's Butte, the latter end of May. Big Bear, a worthless discontented Indian, had been prowling about the country between Battleford and Fort Pitt with his band for some months, stirring up discontent wherever he went. Partly by threats and partly by persuasion he induced the bands of Crees at Pitt, Onion Lake, Saddle Lake, Fort Victoria and Fort Chippewyan to join him, and together they went on their warpath, as motely and ill-favored a gang of vagabonds as ever defied government authority. On April 2nd they visited the settlement at Frog Lake and invited the Indian agent there, T. T. Quinn, and others to a conference in their camp, and stated reason of the desired peace was being the insufficient quantity of provisions served out to the Indians. Quinn and his friends went to the camp and were

immediately shot. Hearing the firing, Rev. Fathers Fafard and Marchand went over to the Indian camp, and it was while they were administering the last rites of the Catholic Church to the wounded and dying, and while kneeling, that they were treacherously shot in the back, their bodies being burnt and mutilated afterwards. Those murdered, in addition to the two priests and the Indian agent, were John Delancy, M. Gowanlock (brother of ex-Ald. Gowanlock of Toronto), Charles Gouin, William Gilchrist and two others. Mrs. Gowanlock and Mrs. Dolaney, at first reported murdered, were taken prisoners together with several others.

## The Work of A Monk.

The most beautiful volume among the half million in the Congressional library is said to be a bible which was transcribed by a monk in the sixteenth century. It could not be matched today in the best printing office in the world. The parchment is in perfect preservation. Every one of its thousand pages is a study. The general lettering is in Gorman text, each letter perfect, as is every one, in coal black ink, without a scratch or blot from lid to lid. At the beginning of each chapter, the first letter is very large, usually two or three inches long, and is brightly illuminated in red and blue ink.

Within each of these capitals is drawn the figure of some saint, some incident of which the following chapter tells, is illustrated. There are two columns on a page, and nowhere is traceable the slightest irregularity of line, space or formation of the letters. Even under the magnifying glass they seem flawless. This precious volume is kept under a glass case, which is sometimes lifted to show that all the pages are as perfect as the two which lie open.

A legend relates that a young man who had sinned deeply became a monk and resolved to do penance for his misdeeds. He determined to copy the Bible, that he might learn every letter of the Divine commands which he had violated. Every day for many years he patiently pursued his task. Each letter was wrought in reverence and love, and the patient soul found its only companionship in the saintly faces which were portrayed on those pages. When the last touch was given to the last letter, the old man reverently kissed the page and folded the sheets together. Soon afterward he died.

## Recreations of Great Men.

The favorite recreation of Pope's leisure hours was the society of painters. Nothing was more agreeable to the poet than to spend an occasional evening with his friend Kneller, who, to use the words of Thackeray, "bragged more, spelled worse and painted better than any artist of his day." Warburton tells an amusing anecdote of the two friends. Mr. Pope was with Sir Godfrey Kneller one day when his nephew, a Guinea trader, came in. "Nephew," said Sir Godfrey, "you have the honor of seeing the two greatest men in the world." "I don't know how great you may be," said the Guinea man, "but I don't like your looks. I have often bought a man much better than both of you together, all muscles and bones, for 10 guineas." — *Chambers' Journal*.

## Timely Wisdom.

Great and timely wisdom is shown by keeping Dr. Fowler's Extract of Wild Strawberry on hand. It has no equal for cholera, cholera morbus, diarrhoea, dysentery, colic, cramps and all summer complaints or looseness of the bowels.

Jumpuppo—Confound the Theosophists?  
Jaaper—Why?  
Jumpuppo—They convinced my wife that she had seven bodies, and she went off and bought a dress for each one.