

I have had many, have given me greater pleasure, and I felt rewarded for my long disappointment in failing to see before that remarkable mammal the prong-horn antelope of Canada.

Several years have since elapsed and I continued to keep a keen outlook on the occasion of my many recent journeys, but I was not privileged to see the antelope again until a few weeks ago. In the first week of May, about 70 miles west of Swift Current, a western man in the Pullman car was calling my attention to a large herd of cattle scattered over some low hills, 400 or 500 yards from the railway track, when he excitedly exclaimed, "There's a small band of antelope beside them." A group of four or five prong-horn antelope were grazing about one hundred yards from the cattle. They fed nervously and every few seconds one or other of them would raise his head and look round, keeping watch. They were plainly to be seen, though less favourably than the group which I had observed a few years before. My friend had the keen acute vision of the western man, familiar with the moving objects of the plains, and he had made no mistake. Indeed, one can make no mistake about this graceful prairie animal as it haughtily tosses its head and looks round, the dark perpendicular horns resembling a high crown on its forehead and adding to its proud bearing. The slender neck held erect, the sharp nose, high forehead, small ears not unlike those of a pony, and the forked curved horns, impart to it a peculiar aspect, very characteristic, and not readily forgotten. There is a resemblance to the goat, the delicate trim feet and the erect horns being so goat-like, but the expression of the eyes and the light graceful bearing recall the deer tribe. Our prong-horn antelope is indeed neither a deer nor true antelope nor goat, but is intermediate in position, and combines their zoological features. Like the giraffe, which is also a unique Ruminant, the antelope of the Canadian prairie occupies a position by itself amongst mammals. The Ruminantia form the highest group of the even-toed Ungulates or hoofed animals. This group includes the Bovidæ or hollow-horned cattle, oxen, sheep, goats, and true antelopes; the Cervidæ or deer, the Ruminants with solid horns; the Camelidæ or Camels; and two peculiar families, the Giraffidæ or Giraffes, and the Antilocapridæ or Prong-horn Antelopes. These two last families are remarkable as containing each only one species, unless there be two species of Giraffes. The Prong-horn is therefore a unique species in a unique family, and cannot be ranked with any other living ruminant. In height our antelope is about three feet at the shoulder and about forty-eight inches from snout to tail, while its weight averages 70 pounds, being therefore much smaller than the Virginia deer (*Cariacus virginianus*),