

an argument that cropped up between two of our party. One man contended that a team of oxen we were passing on our return to camp was quite half way down the next furrow to the one in which it was working when we passed it ten hours earlier. The other contended that the oxen in question were at least three furrows ahead of where they were in the morning!

We do not always discover the settler; sometimes he discovers us. We are out at work on the line, maybe, when he walks up. After an exchange of salutations he will probably evince great interest in the "machine," which he will probably term the transit, and will express a desire to look through the telescope, which he does usually through the wrong end.

On one occasion I was amused to hear the strident tones of a settler's wife from Nebraska enquiring "Is that man takin' fowtergraphs?"

As evidence of the interest which one class of settlers displays in surveying operations, a surveyor wittily stated in his report that there were a large number of Galicians in a certain township, "most of whom were to be found between his instrument and his back picket."

One old rancher whom we met was a very amusing character. Although he had left the Emerald Isle some 35 years ago, he had not dropped a bit of his native brogue or wit. His attention being drawn to the fact that he was wearing an old pair of cavalry breeches, he replied: "God bless the Mounted Police." It appeared that he had had some connection with that noble force some twenty years before.

On one occasion I met a man in the wilds, driving a buckboard, virgin prairie beneath our feet, and prairie all around us as far as the eye could see. That man very curiously I discovered sitting opposite to me in a railway train in the southeast of England, when in the old Old Country on a vacation two years later.

The favorite recreation after a particularly hard day's work is to roll yourself up in your blanket and go to sleep. The other relaxations are a friendly game of cards and the narration of bear stories.

The gramophone was a real friend when the day's work was over. It boasted an extensive repertoire, ranging from "Meet me down in Lona Lina" and "Out in an Automobile" to Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar" and "The Rosary." As the strains of a particular popular tune rang out over the prairie for the 254th time, the boys would lie around with attention as rapt as if hearing it for the first occasion.

Sometimes when in the vicinity of human habitation, the settler would drop in. After exchanging news of the outside world, he would tell how his neighbour had lost two of his horses; no doubt they had "hiked" back to the rancher in Montana from whom they had been purchased; how the half-breed whom the rancher had employed to smuggle horses over "the line" had made off with his three best horses with stock saddles; and so on.

Occasionally we passed through a small town. On one of these occasions a Mounted Policeman rode into the place calling upon able-bodied men in the name of the Law to turn out and fight a prairie fire raging some ten miles away. Needless to say, in the two hotels which the town boasted there was a general scramble under beds and into cupboards of all the able-bodied habitual frequenters of these places.

In another town that we "struck," a brand new gaol had just been erected. There is every chance of this building paying its way, for the police of the town have a commission of one dollar for every victim of fire water brought before the bench. As the minimum fine is \$6.00 for such cases, and as, sad to say, they occur pretty frequently, there is every probability of the new gaol soon being free from debt.