

been told, was mistaken for joy by my comrades. Perish the thought! I am as bold as a lion and don't care a snap for Riel as long as he remains where he is, and I here Pooh-pooh!

FORT GARRY.

Fort Garry in those days was a mile from Winnipeg with no houses between the two, and the latter was a very insignificant spot indeed compared to what it now is. In fact, on the evening of our arrival, a brother sergeant and I—be it known, gentle reader, I rejoiced in the exalted rank of Hospital Sergeant—started from the Fort to view the town. The evening was misty and we walked about a couple of miles, when we met a civilian. "Can you tell us," I asked, "whereabouts Winnipeg is? or if we are on the right road for it?" "Well, I'm a galoot!" was the ill-tutored fellow's reply, "You've come through it!" It was true; we had walked through Winnipeg without seeing it! This will give, better than any description of mine, an idea of the smallness of Winnipeg or the largeness of the beer glasses at our sergeant's mess; one of the two; you can take your choice. During the three years of my service in the North West, Winnipeg increased in size and population at a prodigious rate, and, I doubt not, I should scarcely recognize it now, so much changed must it be from what it was in 1876, when I came away, finding that there was to be no more war.

The farthest point westward which I reached was Lake Qu'Appelle, (a poem on the legend connected with whose name I publish in another part of this paper) whither a guard of 100 officers and men went with Lieut.-Governor Morris, when the treaty of 1874 was made. I regret that I am unable to enlighten my readers about the country where the present fuss is going on, but doubtless full reports will soon flood the newspapers, and though their style of literature will not be so graceful as mine, the information may probably be as reliable as that which I could furnish. I wish I knew something about it; I do indeed.

THE GREAT NORTH-WEST—PAST AND PRESENT.

No. 1.

BY THE REV. THOMAS WOOLSEY.

It has been justly remarked, in regard to this terrestrial sphere,

"Here's a beautiful earth and a wonderful sky;
To enjoy them, God gives us an ear and an eye."

And such is true; but no one can, to any great extent, realize the import of the words except by a close observation of the works of the Almighty hand. And this, I trust, myself and the late Rev. E. B. Steinhilber experienced thirty years ago, when we were sent as missionaries to that section of our vast field of toil and self-sacrifice, where

"The Rocky Mountains eternally rise,
O'erlook the land below, and half invade the skies." Hence, I take occasion, through the columns of TRUTH (though not ranked personally amongst the literati of modern times) to present a few thoughts relative to the vast stretch of country between the metropolis of Ontario and those "imposing landmarks of the Atlantic world—the Rocky Mountains!" And the more especially, as the present rebellion in the North-West, has called forth more than ordinary interest in the "Great Lone Land."

The modes of travel, at the above-named period, though far in advance of former times, necessitated a ramble of three months before we reached our destination, whereas, a recently returned missionary informed me that he came from Morleyville Mission, Bow River, in a week, the C. P. R. running

within three miles of his home. Truly, "time works wonders." Comfort and convenience now stand associated with those who in rapid succession return, and "tell strange tales of foreign lands," so to speak, without passing through the ordeal to which others have been subjected, though myself and colleagues greatly enjoyed our trip by railway to Duluth, via Chicago, and from thence to St. Paul, the metropolis of Minnesota, by one of the floating palaces on the Mississippi river—a very pleasant voyage of more than four hundred miles. St. Anthony's Falls, a few miles beyond the city, gave a zest to our journeyings, taking rank, in grandeur, with "America's majestic waterfalls," though on a smaller scale.

But here the ordinary modes of travel had to be abandoned, and any stray chance of crossing the Minnesota Territory, a distance of more than seven hundred miles, resorted to. This was ultimately effected, by accompanying a return party of traders, and others, who had no less than 200 ox-carts. These persons were banded together, for mutual protection, under Mr. James McKay, who was then known as the "The prince of travellers," though he subsequently became the Hon. Jas. McKay. He, to his praise be it recorded, placed a democrat at the command of the missionaries, a privilege that we very highly appreciated, as we were more than three weeks in reaching Red River Settlement, now the city of Winnipeg. We were thus providentially brought safely through a region of country roamed over by the Sioux Indians, who, a few years after, massacred eight hundred men, women and children in the Sank Valley. Our guide introduced us to a number of that nation, who gave us such a friendly reception as to greatly prepossess us in their favor. No doubt our ecclesiastical status, combined with Mr. McKay being on the best of terms with them, gave us a great advantage over the Americans, for they respected the British flag, and endorsed the idea that

"There's a heart that leaps with burning glow,
The wronged and the weak to defend;
And strikes as soon for a trampled foe,
As it does for a soul-bound friend!"

But I must reserve material for another letter. We had then reached the spot where Riel's exploits a few years after caused quite a stir, and whose recollections, according to reports, must now be regarded as alike destructive to life and property, and which I greatly deplore, if true; but, after a while, I am led to hope that our noble volunteers and others will endorse the sentiment that

"Two ears, and but a single tongue,
By nature a law to man belong;
The inference you have is clear,
Repeat but half of what you hear."

THE SASKATCHEWAN VALLEY.

BY JOHN N. LAKE.

The attention of the people of the Dominion is turned to this most beautiful portion of our great North-West in a way little expected a month ago. Why it should be called a "valley" I never could tell, as it is a most beautiful undulating prairie, with the river running far below the level, with high banks. Taking

CLARK'S CROSSING, (Saskatchewan P. O.) the point where the old survey of the C. P. R. crosses the South Saskatchewan as the centre, and describing a circle of 50 miles around it you cover one of the finest farming sections I have seen in the North-West and that after spending the best part of the past three summers in that country. Saskatoon, 15 miles south; Battleford, 85 miles west; Botoh P. O. and ferry, 45 miles north (Riel's headquarters); Prince Albert, 42 miles, a little

east of north of Botoh; Duck Lake, about 5 miles west of Botoh; and Fort Carlton 12 miles west of Duck Lake. About a dozen families are at Clarke's Crossing and a few settlers along the river north to Botoh. If Riel really meant to fight he would have sent down to the crossing and cut the wires and taken horses, stock and provisions from the settlers to supply his men. As it appears he has not done so, leads me to believe that his trouble is not so serious as reported amongst the Half-Breeds. I have not a very blessed recollection of Fort Carlton. I arrived there with my companion on 15th Aug., '82, after traveling through the woods from 4 a.m. without a morsel to eat from the night before then all we could get was a quart of syrup and some hard tack. Half of the syrup I lost before I got out of the fort, the balance and the hard tack we divided in a hurry and washed it down with good strong black tea. After resting our pony while we were getting our supper, we drove to Duck Lake the same night, and lost our way in the darkness just at the place where the fight of the 19th ult. took place, but one of Beatty's Indians showed us the way and we arrived at Duck Lake at 11 p.m. Many of the Indians at Prince Albert, Duck Lake, and White Cap's reserve (the latter 20 miles south of Saskatoon) are inclined to be industrious, and, especially in harvest time, work well. They are, as a general thing, unfairly treated by the Indian agents, and poor seed and implements are furnished, for which the Government have to pay the highest prices.

DUCK LAKE

is quite a settlement, hardly a village. Stobart & Eden, in 1882, had a very large store and "stopping house," including the P. O. (Stobart). Nicely enclosed, a Catholic church with a good-natured Jesuit priest, re Autre, as pastor, and a large number of small houses owned and occupied by the French Half-Breeds. The South Saskatchewan is navigable from Medicine Hat to its junction with the North branch, some 800 miles. It is amazing how little is known of its capabilities. In 1883 we rafted 50,000 feet of lumber from Medicine Hat to Saskatoon, and last year we sent down the "May Queen," a little steamer forty feet long, which now lies at Saskatoon and could be put to good use against the rebels. We also rafted 100,000 feet of lumber over the same route; there is no difficulty in navigating the river either way.

There is no question Gen. Middleton will have a hard time getting out to the rebel position; they will be snow in a great many coulees, and if the first is all out it will be terribly soft in the great salt plain, which extends for fifty miles after leaving the Touchwood Hills. I know that trail well, having been over it twice in 1882. The trail from Moose Jaw to Prince Albert by Clark's Crossing is much drier, better and shorter, and the reason it was not chosen, may be the Hudson Bay officials would not make so much money if the troops had gone by Moose Jaw, hence the longer and poorer trail is chosen; this latter trail I have been over six times, so I know what I am writing about. These beautiful plains thirty years ago were covered with buffalo at certain seasons. A gentleman at Prince Albert told me he had seen from 50,000 to a 100,000 in one herd on the east bank of the South Saskatchewan in 1855. But these, as well as the red men, are scattered south and west by advancing civilization.

PARLIAMENTARY POINTS.

BY J. E. COLLINS.

Probably to a large number of TRUTH readers the face and the form of Sir John A. Macdonald is familiar. Although now in his seventieth year, the Premier is one of the most active men in Parliament. Sitting at his desk he shows no trace of weariness for all the mass of irksome, wearing work that falls to his hands, despite the vexations, the demands upon his time and patience, the almost innumerable number of questions upon which he is obliged to advise or pronounce. Brightly, and even vigorously, he sits at his desk, ready to parry a thrust, to make a grave and comprehensive statement, or to crack a joke. He is the one man against whom the keen point of Sir Richard

Cartwright's lance is always thrust in vain. The other day Sir Richard, in arraiguing the Ministry, declared that there was no use in convicting the Government of incompetency or corruption before this Parliament, because Sir John's followers would blindly support and approve of anything. If an angel were to come down from heaven, he said, and show them that the Government was doing that which was criminally wrong, they would not be dissuaded. Sir John's eyes twinkled; he tossed his head, and took his pince nez glasses off his nose. But he said nothing then. When the time came, however, he arose and said: "The honorable gentleman seems to think that those who support myself would not be convinced of my evil doings though an angel from heaven came down and gave testimony against me. Well, I know this: They are not likely to be convinced when a fallen angel comes here and tells them so." This brought down the House. The allusion, I need hardly say, was to Sir Richard's having fallen from Conservative grace and becoming a Reformer.

His trip to England did him great good, and those associated with him say that he is as vigorous now as he has been for any time during the last ten years. Yet, as I have said, the strain upon his constitution by the vast quantity of work that he has to do must be very great. From an early hour, till the House meets, he sits in his office giving audience to all conditions of people. Fancy the task it must be to hear and understand cases of every sort from all quarters of the Dominion; to satisfy this one, to appease the other, and to put off, satisfactorily, some one else. No one comes away from Sir John's presence with malignant heart or angry words. The most implacable and unfortunate suitor he can nearly always manage to pacify and to satisfy by laying his hand upon his shoulder in that captivating way of which he is the boon master. In the House he has to keep his eye upon everything; and we can readily forgive even the slip that he made the other day, to which I made allusion in my first letter. But his work ends not when the sun goes down or the House rises. By his side is his "black bag" which every day fills with documents. "How can he get through all these papers before to-morrow?" a gentleman said to me the other evening, as we saw him from the gallery assorting a huge bundle of papers and putting them into his satchel as the House was about to rise. Yet every document had to be examined, and most of them pronounced upon, whether formally or not, before the Premier returned to his office in the morning. I do wish, for Mr. Blake's sake, (for I cannot help admiring his great abilities), that he would take some lessons from Sir John in personal agreeableness. The Premier nearly always, when the chair at his right or his left is empty, has a follower from the ranks sitting beside him, there discussing some matter with him in the most cordial of manners. Every such little *tete a tete* ends with some hearty, friendly word, and with a kindly nod of the leader's head. In the meanwhile Mr. Blake sits alone, like Manfred in the play, a mysterious cloud about him, and a cloud of arctic frigidity at that. I believe, indeed I know, that he prays heaven very frequently to send a thaw upon his disposition; for I have time and again noticed him making the most painful and unfortunate exertions to be warm and agreeable. Yet man is stronger than his original nature, and Mr. Blake ought to be. A phrenologist was once brought blind-fold into the presence of Socrates, and laying his hand upon the immortal philosopher's head said: "Verily, this is a man of evil morals. He is a libertine, he is avaricious, and likewise deceitful." Whereupon the disciples set up a derisive shout and said, "Know you, oh charlatan, that your hands have just been upon the head of our master Socrates." The poor phrenologist was dismayed, and his tongue clove to his mouth. But Socrates, raising his voice, said to his disciples, "Peace. Revile not this man. He hath discovered my original nature, which, by the help of the gods, I have so changed as to be able to appear even as you see me." I hope, then, that the example of Sir John, and the story of Socrates, may not be lost upon Mr. Blake.