

the president of the Assiniboia Agricultural Society. Here he and his wife a bright Irish lady, live, a large family having like the birds taken to rustle for themselves and all doing well. The career of Mr. Bole is a remarkable one. It says more than ten thousand emigration pamphlets for the North West. It speaks of the power of human will. Five years ago when fifty-six years of age he made a new start, not only without capital, but in debt, and in May 1883 he entered for a homestead thirteen miles north of Regina. His son took a homestead near. Now he is independent. He never lost heart, a fine cheerful disposition, resigned, arduous, whenever he put his plough in the prairie the two forces that have done all the great things in this world were guiding the furrow—human will and faith. He has 2,000 bushels of wheat this year and 1,000 bushels of oats. He has already sold 115 bushels cleaned at \$1.11 a bushel, and 500 without being cleaned at \$1. Up to thirty years of age he farmed in the county of Lambton. He then rented his farm in order to go into town, to give his children better schooling. He embarked in business, and being a man of kind heart endorsed for another—forgetting the counsel of the wise book which advises you to give your cloak and coat to your enemy but warns you in the strongest terms against endorsing, being surety for a friend. He lost \$4,000. His fine farm went, and he commenced life again, going into waggon-making, a business he pursued for seven years. At the end of that period he went extensively into the manufacture of agricultural implements. In 1882 he found the balance was on the wrong side of the ledger, and the brave heart said to itself there must be a new start, and with a family remarkable to day in their walks for push, intelligence, character and business power, left for the North-West. He worked in Regina up to the date of his homesteading. As he says: "I went to work and determined to make a home here and I consider"—(with a smile of great noble self-satisfaction)—"that I have succeeded." He and his son near him have 160 acres under cultivation. Like all North-Westerners he thinks there is no land like this.

I have something now to say that should prove interesting as well as instructive. But the interesting should be treated interestingly, and to do this requires some little thought, but in this exigent life up here I have hardly time to say my prayers, and when I sit down to write, all I can do is to throw the reins to the pen and bid it go. Sterne once said of his goose quill, "It governs me, I govern not it." Without quite going this far it is certain my steel pen has to "gang its ain gait" pretty well.

I have a number of friends around Buffalo Lake, about twenty-three miles north of Moosejaw. I had intended visiting them on Monday week, but the roads in consequence of the then recent storm were so bad, I put it off until last Monday, and this the more willingly because a political friend, a prosperous rancher in these parts, Mr. Annable, who ran during the recent election for the Moosejaw District, said he could on that day accompany me. Meanwhile there was another storm. But I was determined to go, and so on the afternoon of Monday we started, the sky still menacing, its clouds hurried on by a cold breeze which had a polar fervency in its kiss. We had a team—a good native pony and a small broncho mare, the rig not a buckboard, but a spring covered conveyance, nice enough to drive down King Street. I did not like it, but I thought my friend of the livery had no buckboard. You can fancy my utter disgust when I learned, when about fourteen miles out, that he had a buckboard, but thought a covered rig on springs more suitable to the dignity of a member of parliament! The roads were fearful, and driving on the prairie was not all plain sailing, for every hundred yards the land was "hummocky." My friend was driving, and he is known as the hardest driver in Moosejaw where they are all Jehus who drive furiously. About five miles outside Moosejaw he dashed into the heavy breakers of a piece of hummocky land and I felt sure we must founder. Bump! bump! creak! creak! "Do you want to wreck us here on the prairie?" I said. He answered he was only trying the springs. I told him if he had no experience of breaking down on the prairie I had, and that it was no joke. He replied with a joyous laugh as he literally "leathered" the ponies, "Well, W—— has no right to give us a rig that will break down. If the springs break we will leave the rig and ride bare-backed to our destination. We have got to get there and we always get there." However, I henceforth made a point when an ugly mass of hummocks were ahead to cry out, "woa!" and the ponies would stop. "Putting on the brakes," my friend would cry and would lean forward to whip the ponies, but I was glad to see the ponies inclined to obey my voice. Sometimes we tried the trail but no way could be made; the wheels sunk deep in mud. We called at Mr. Robert Moore's and at Mr. Frank's, both of whom have good crops, and saw at about half-past four the smoke of the steam thresher rising white against the brown hills of Buffalo Lake, and I said, "Shall we drive up there?" "Oh, no, no!" cried Mr. Annable—"at least not until we call at the house and have our names put down in the pot for supper." It was near five when we reached Mr. W. C. Sanders' house whither we were bound. We had come out in three hours and a half. This would have been good time with the ponies in the best of weather and smoothest of trails. Mr. Sanders was away at the threshing, but Mrs. Sanders made us welcome, excusing the appearance of the house by telling us that for some three days twenty men were there, the men who were working the thresher. At supper she informed me she had taken the prize for butter, thanks to Lynch's book on dairying which I had sent her. Before and after the supper I explored the bookcase in which were really good books. On the walls among other pictures hung one of the old parish church in Ontario. On a table near the window was a case containing some stuffed fowl and geological specimens found on the shores of Buffalo Lake. The fossilized jaw of a mud turtle proved that mud turtles existed on these shores, though none are found there now. What interested me very much

was an old Bible brought over from the United States by the U. E. Loyalist forefathers of our entertainers. The earliest birth registered in it took place in 1715.

It is, I think, to be regretted that in recent times those books branded as apocryphal have been omitted from the Bibles used by the reformed churches. The Bible is not merely a revelation—it is Jewish history and literature, and in undertaking to say they are not inspired it is assumed we can gather from internal evidence whether a book is inspired or not. I know I spent a very interesting and profitable half hour with the tabooed writings, and left them reluctantly to talk wheat—the one topic at present for North-Westerners—farmers, shopkeepers and railway men naturally are eloquent on this subject. But that ladies should have more to say on the crops, on the prospects for next year—which owing to the wet autumn are of the best—on the size of the kernel and the relative merits of red fyfe, ladoga and judket, than on winter fashions, shows how impressive must have been nature's golden bounties, as well as the truly progressive character of the female intellect, which has something in it, though at times hidden profoundly away, that silks and satins, bangs and bustles cannot satisfy.

Interesting as I found the book of Tobit, talk of wheat—of experiments in its growth—and one of fruitful suggestion, drew me away from Palestine, and I woke to the fact that I was not on the banks of the Jordan but on the shores of Buffalo Lake. Mr. Sanders says the prairie sod takes a long time to pulverize and that this explains why the drought of 1886 was so destructive. In that year a young Englishman of an ingenious turn of mind was farming near him. This young man instead of ploughing the sod under cut it clean off and then ploughed. The earth packed, and could thus contain and retain the moisture. He had a good crop of wheat when all his neighbours' fields were laden with wilted stalks which had caved in and fainted for want of a drink. All round the country in that year not a pea was destined to ripen, yet in the fields of the Englishman peas were abundant. Mr. Sanders took the prize this year for the best collection of grain—judket, white Russian, red fyfe, ladoga, white fyfe. The judket seems, if anything, a better wheat than the red fyfe—It yields more to the acre and ripened nineteen days earlier. It is a fine kernel—hard as a piece of flint.

We went out to the stables to feed the horses—Mr. Sanders carrying a lantern like Guy Fawkes—but the stables with rambling roof of straw, whither he bends his steps hiding the lantern with the tail of his coat, but only from the north wind, do not in the least suggest St. Stephen's. Having given the horses oats I saw mine host steal up behind the rooster perched on the top pole of the rude division between the stalls. On either side of him was his harem, and he never moved though he cast a wakeful eye on the lantern, debating within him perhaps whether it was the star of day and if he should or should not crow. In an instant Mr. Sanders had seized two hens. A "cluck! cluck! cluck!" was heard finishing with a despairful gurgle, while the bodies of the hens literally described a circle round their necks. "You are killing them," I said. "It is done," was the terse reply. I said I felt like the prodigal in the Scripture. The fatted calf was killed for him; the fatted hens for me. Driving in the North-West quickens the gastronomic imagination. I had a vision of roast chicken for breakfast. Little did I dream that my aspirations at that moment were destined to add to the ten thousand *triste* illustrations of the vanity of human wishes.

Mr. Sanders has 1800 bushels of wheat, not a grain that is not hard, plump, a magnificent kernel; 500 of oats and 200 of barley; thirty head of cattle. He illustrated the importance of fire guards by telling us that at one time they were surrounded by fire; the prairie blazing on all sides; but the flames could not jump their fire brakes. Mrs. Sanders, a well-read Ontario lady who was not brought up to farming, likes the country. "It is," she says, "a fine healthy country," and she loves to look out on the vast expanse of prairie. "It is," says Mr. Annable, "a fine country for young men." "It is," replies Mrs. Sanders, "a fine country for any one." She showed us a number of curiosities picked up on the shores of the lake, among them the head of an arrow found in the eye socket of a buffalo head and a small hatchet found in another skull. When my valise was emptied our hosts evidently observed one of their guests did not indulge in the superfluity of a comb, a hair brush being equal to all the needs of his toilette. In the morning Mr. Sanders handed a comb into this person who said, "Well, this is adding insult to nature's injuries," and he told the story of the Frenchman who in his dream was visited by angels after the manner of a certain school of painters, all head, neck and wings. The polite Frenchman, sensible of the honour done him, begged of them to be seated, whereupon they replied "*Nous n'avons pas de quoi*." The hired man in this Canadian farmhouse is a Yankee not of the sharp order, a simple creature, and he had searched in vain for the axe. He was sure some of the threshers had taken it. He was bade to search for it again. Out he went with the lantern. He returned in half an hour minus the lantern and with the axe. He said he had searched in vain for the axe but at last the wind blew out the lantern, he tripped, fell and luckily fell on the axe. Mr. Sanders read us a letter of enquiry about the country prompted by reading one of these articles in THE WEEK.

During the night there was a high wind and I heard my friend stirring and asked him whether he thought it was time to get up. He said, No—that a storm was coming on, that he was afraid the buggy would be broken and was going out to take down the top of the rig and roll it where it would be protected from the wind. When I went out at half-past six the storm was gone, the morning was clear, cold, sunny, inspiring—far as the eye could see—from horizon to horizon—the concave blue above the vast plain was without a cloud; the chinook had taken away much of the snow, the trails were gathering firmness, care was an impos-