

Barley Loaves.

ONLY five barley loaves !
 Only two fishes small !
 And shall I offer these poor gifts
 To Christ, the Lord of all ?
 To him whose mighty word
 Can still the angry sea,
 Can cleanse the leper, raise the dead ?
 He hath no need of me.

Yes, he hath no need of thee ;
 Then bring thy loaves of bread :
 Behold ! with them, when Jesus speaks,
 The multitude are fed.
 "Two hundred pennyworth,"
 Said one, "had not sufficed."
 Ah, true ! What is abundance worth
 Unless 'tis blessed by Christ ?

Only one talent small,
 Scarce worthy to be named ;
 Truly he hath no need of this ;
 O soul, art thou ashamed ?
 He gave that talent first ;
 Then use it in his strength ;
 Thereby—thou knowest not—he may work
 A miracle at length.

Many the starving souls
 Now waiting to be fed.
 Needing, though knowing not their need,
 Of Christ, the living Bread.
 Oh, hast thou known his love ?
 To others make it known,
 Receiving blessings, others bless ;
 No seed abides alone.

And when thine eyes shall see
 The holy ransomed throng,
 In heavenly fields, by living streams,
 By Jesus led along,
 Unspeaking thy joy shall be,
 And glorious thy reward,
 If by thy barley loaves, one soul
 Has been brought home to God.

POLICEMEN OF THE CANADIAN PLAINS.

THE little army of red-coats with which the Canadian Government maintains order, preserves the peace, and promotes temperance throughout the vast regions of the North-west is, in some respects, unique. In the country patrolled by this force, the Indian, the half-breed, the horse-thief, the outlaw, and the whiskey-smuggler are all causes of disturbance or danger. The members of the North-west Mounted Police, as the force is officially entitled, combine in themselves the functions of soldier, policeman, and whiskey detective or revenue officer.

The history of this organization is briefly told. In the year 1870, the Government of Canada acquired by purchase from the Hudson's Bay Company all that corporation's immense landed possessions in the unknown and mysterious West, and, of course, immediately became responsible for the protection of life and property on the new domain. The Company had made no other use of its illimitable estate than to obtain furs from it, and no attempt had ever been made to check the sale of "fire water" to the thirsty redskins, or to interpose as peacemakers in the incessant tribal wars.

The Canadian authorities had not been long in possession ere they clearly realized that both these reforms were absolutely necessary before any satisfactory return could be had from their investment. The organization of a force to meet this need was, therefore, determined upon.

In the autumn of 1873, a company of over one hundred men, the germ of the present force, was gathered at Fort Garry, now the City of Winnipeg, but then little more than the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company.

This beginning had hardly been made, before it was seen that in order to be of any service, the force must be much larger. Accordingly, during

the following spring, two hundred more men were sent out from Toronto. From year to year more men have been required, as the country was opened and settlement extended, until the present number, one thousand, which is generally regarded as the maximum, has been reached.

At the outset, many of the police were regular soldiers who had obtained their discharge, ex-members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, graduates from the gunnery schools of Canada, or, at least, men with militia training. Now the composition of the force may be said to include all sorts and conditions of men, the preference, however, being always given to those who have had some military training.

When arrayed in full regimentals, the mounted police present quite an imposing appearance; and this fact, no doubt, has much to do with the uniform success which has marked their work, for appearances go a long way with our dusky brother of the plains. Their dress uniform consists of a scarlet tunic, blue breeches with scarlet stripes, and a white helmet. The officers are distinguished from the privates by appropriate decorations of gold lace, and also by their carrying field-glasses and a sword.

In the early days the armament consisted of a Snider carbine; and a revolver carried in the belt, but of late years a Winchester repeater, fitted with special sights for long distances, has replaced the Snider.

Besides their usual arms, the police have a light battery of artillery for special emergencies, and one division of the force is trained to its management.

The horses upon which the police are mounted are the best obtainable. At first they were brought from Eastern Canada, but it was soon found that these animals took, at least, a year to get into harmony with their new environment, and become thoroughly useful. Accordingly, mounts were sought in Northern Montana and Oregon, until the development of the ranch system within the Canadian boundary line enabled the Government to transfer their custom to their own tax-payers.

As the force was organized under the direction of an officer in the Imperial Army, the equipment first used was naturally that of the British cavalry. But a little experience soon showed its shortcomings, and the army saddle made way for the Mexican or American prairie saddle, which is now used.

The territory for the good behaviour in which the mounted police are responsible is, undoubtedly, the vastest police district in the world. It extends from the international boundary line on the south to the Great Saskatchewan on the north, and from Manitoba on the east to the shores of the Pacific Ocean on the west. The whole of this immense country is patrolled, the dangerous districts being constantly under surveillance.

What, we may wonder, would be the sensations of an ordinary city guardian of the peace, who thinks his beat of three or four blocks a heavy responsibility, if made to understand that there are policemen whose beat extends for hundreds of miles?

When a threatening crowd gathers in the streets of a city, the policemen keep moving up and down amongst them to prevent their massing together for mischief. So in this great North-west country, where an Indian uprising is always to be guarded against, do the mounted police keep moving from camp to camp, and reservation to reservation, ready to scent out the first signs of combination or conspiracy.

There are ten headquarter posts, each having about one hundred men with complete equipment,

which includes stores, transport, guides and scouts. Each post is the centre of a system of small outposts, to which the men are sent in groups, and from which they carry on their patrol.

The success of the force in the performance of the work for which it was created has been remarkable. At the time of its formation every element of discord and danger incident to a new country existed in the Canadian North-west. Indians, indignant at the usurpation of their hunting grounds, French half-breeds, darkly suspicious of their British masters; whiskey-smugglers, determined to carry on their abominable traffic at the muzzle of the rifle, if need be, and in some cases entrenched behind strong fortifications; and horse thieves, ready to resent with the revolver any interference with their nefarious occupation.

Yet amid all these sources of disorder, let it be said to the credit of the force, that there has never been any necessity for a visit from Judge Lynch, nor for the organization of vigilantes or regulators since they entered upon their duties.

The whiskey-smugglers surrendered without a blow; the half-breeds submitted to the inevitable; the Indians bowed down before the red-coats in their martial array; the horse-thieves yielded themselves up quietly if they could not get away. In the region patrolled by the mounted police, life and property are almost as secure as in Toronto or Montreal.

In some cases outlaws and desperadoes who have defied all authority on the southern side of the forty-ninth parallel, surrender at once to the mounted police.

As an illustration of this, a most notorious whiskey-smuggler, horse-thief and outlaw, whose hands were freshly stained with the blood of United States marshals, was reported by a scout as having crossed the boundary line on his way northward. An officer who had heard the report rode out one afternoon from Winnipeg across the prairie with no special end in view, but thinking to himself that possibly he might see some sign of this unwelcome visitor.

While cantering carelessly along, he suddenly came upon an encampment concealed in a coulee, which at once aroused his suspicions. He had only his revolver, but he thought he would investigate notwithstanding. As he approached, a sinister-looking man whom he readily recognized, from the published description, as the fugitive desperado came out and demanded his business.

The officer told him who he was, adding that he would like his company back to Winnipeg. The fugitive thought to-morrow would do, but the officer thought not, and the end of it was, that that night the scoundrel lay safe in the city jail.

The methods employed by the police in dealing with the Indians may be illustrated by a well-known case. One of their spies brought in word to a headquarter post that three noted horse-thieves would spend that night in an encampment about thirty miles distant. The inspector at once determined to capture them, and, soon after sundown set off with ten chosen men.

Guided by their scouts they rode hard, but warily, through the gathering darkness, until they reached a thick clump of trees that crowned a hill within half-a-mile of the camp. There they halted to rest their horses, and to wait for midnight.

When midnight came, and the Indians were wrapped in profound slumber, six of the police, led by the spy, crept cautiously into the midst of the camp, and approached the *tepees* in which the criminals were sleeping.

Then followed a sudden entrance, a startled confusion, a smothered exclamation, and in another