

"O that long and dreary winter!
O the cold and cruel winter!
Ever thicker, thicker, thicker,
Froze the ice on lake and river,
Ever deeper, deeper, deeper,
Fell the snow on all the landscape,
All the earth was sick and famished.

Hungry was the air about them.
Hungry was the sky above them,
And the hungry stars in heaven,
Like the eyes of wolves, glared at them."

But even such a winter as this must pass, and in the spring the colonists returned for a fifth time to their abandoned habitations. Fortune seemed, at last, to smile upon their efforts. The crops were ripening around the little settlement. Hope beat high in every heart. But an unforeseen catastrophe awaited them. A cloud of grasshoppers, like the Egyptian plague of locusts, darkened the air and covered the ground, and in a single night devoured every green thing. Strong men bowed themselves. The sturdy Highlanders, who had gazed undismayed upon the face of death, wept as they thought of the inevitable sufferings of their wives and little ones. Another weary march, and a miserable winter at Pembina was their fate.

Again, in the spring, that forlorn hope returned to their devastated fields. But agriculture was impossible. The larvæ of the previous season multiplied the grasshoppers a thousand-fold. They covered the ground, they filled the air, they polluted the water, they put out the fires in the fields with their numbers. The effluvia of their dead bodies infested the atmosphere. Pembina must succour the hapless colonists yet another winter.

The story of their mishaps becomes wearisome. Anyone less determined, say less dogged, if you will, than Lord Selkirk, would have abandoned the colony for ever. Not so he. His resolution rose with the difficulties of the occasion, and surmounted every obstacle. He led back his little company—those advance skirmishers of the great army of civilization—to the scene of their blasted hopes. He bought two hundred and fifty bushels of seed wheat from Missouri, a distance of twelve hundred

miles, at a cost of \$5,000. It was sown, and, by the divine blessing, after eight years of failure, the harvest was happily reaped.

The colony now struck its roots deep into the soil. It grew and flourished. Recruits came from Scotland, Germany, Switzerland. They suffered many privations, and encountered some disasters, but none worse than those of the winter of 1825-6. It was a season of unprecedented severity. Thirty-three persons perished with hunger and cold, and many cattle died. With the spring thaw, the river rose nine feet in a single day. For three days every house had to be abandoned. The inhabitants fled to the hills. They beheld their houses, barns, crops, fences—everything they possessed—swept on the rushing torrent to Lake Winnipeg. The waters continued to rise for nineteen days. The disheartened colonists proposed abandoning for ever the luckless settlement. At this crisis, tidings of the abatement of the flood was brought. They rushed *en masse* to the water side. It was indeed so. They accepted the deliverance as from God. They resolved to remain where they were. A new beginning had again to be made; every trace of the settlement had disappeared.

Since then, no serious drawback to the prosperity of the settlement has occurred, although it has experienced many fluctuations.

The want of an outlet for their surplus produce led to some ill-advised manufacturing speculations. Among other visionary schemes, was one to manufacture cloth from the wool of the buffalo. A huge factory was erected, and machinery and workmen imported from England. Results—a grand failure. The cloth cost far more than it would sell for. A sheep's wool company was then formed. Fifteen thousand sheep were purchased in Kentucky, two thousand miles away. So severe was the journey, that only two hundred and fifty-one reached Red River, and these soon died of exhaustion.

A flax manufacturing company and a