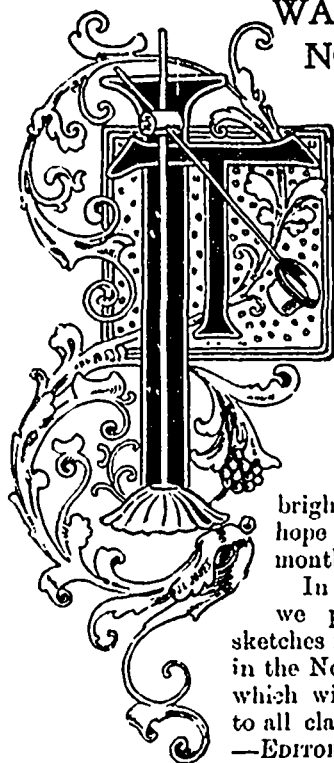


## WAYS IN THE NORTH-WEST.

By M. Bayne.



THIS with regret we announce that our Vancouver contributor, who writes so entertainingly of life in British Columbia with its many interesting features, is deterred by sickness from forwarding the third of her bright sketches, which we hope will appear next month.

In place of it, however, we publish a group of sketches from a lady resident in the North-West Territory which will prove of interest to all classes of our readers. —EDITOR.

### A BACHELOR'S HOUSEKEEPING.

To western people it is very amusing to read of the efforts well-meaning but misguided people are making to supply our bachelors with wives. There are two Mormon settlements in the west, where the efforts of eastern philanthropists might be appreciated, but the Canadian bachelor, as we know him, will have none of it.

The majority of our bachelors are from the best homes in Britain and Eastern Canada. Many are college graduates. Some have travelled much in Europe, others have served in Her Majesty's army at home and abroad, others have been in the British navy and visited the ports of many lands. All have read, too, many tales of the wild West, its Indians, its buffalo and game, its exhilarating freedom and bloodstirring adventurous life, until here they have come, awakened from their delusive dreams, and too proud to return home, have homesteaded, worked hard and "bached" it; the successful ones working themselves into a competence and the less fortunate drifting no one knows where.

But amidst all their reverses and hardships, they never forget what they have been, and in imagination see what they might now be, had these far-reaching western plains always remained as the bottom of the former wide-spreading lakes of the long by-gone ages.

Most of the Canadian-born bachelors came out to this country as members of the Mounted Police force. Their fathers or uncles or brothers, are either cabinet ministers, senators, judges, or members of the civil service. The wise and clever Canadians engaged to-day in our nation-building, men to whom future historians will be proud to do honor, these have their families represented in the bachelors of greater Canada in the far West.

The bachelors, British born, are not less interesting. Sons of British army and naval officers, clergymen, merchants, titled and untitled landed gentlemen, are very numerous. Almost as numerous as the Britons themselves are the men who wear buckskin shirts, spurs, and a Piccadilly accent.

It is easy to imagine the sort of luxurious homes in which these men were reared, and no contrast could be greater than between those homes and the habitations they have made for themselves here. Yet there is almost as great differences in the "shacks" as in the men themselves.

An Englishman from the far famed region made memorable by the Lake School of poets and by Ruskin, once invited us to his "shack." As no particular time was named we took him by surprise. Arrived there we found he and his chum,

an Oxonian, had just finished their washing, and were hastily donning fresh top-shirts. The washing was tied to the branches of a willow overhanging a pretty stream near by. The ends of the boughs were dipped in the water and held in place by large boulders. The swiftly flowing current performed its duty as well as an ordinary washing machine.

The "shack" was built of logs, thirteen logs high, the roof very slightly pitched and pretty well shingled. Windows small and not numerous. Rooms two. The outer one for harness, pails, old boots, saddles, bridles, and the out-door utensils generally, and disorder was everywhere. In the inner room were some attempts at decoration. True, the stove was very red, ashes were plentiful, the home-made bed in the corner looked very tumbled and the pillows were guiltless of slips. At one end of the room was a bench on which stood the water pail, wash basin, and soap; at the other end two rows of shelves. The top shelf held books and magazines, the lower one the dishes, groceries, butter, and lamps. On the floor below this shelf stood a can of kerosene, a box for bread, and two boxes of clothing. The log walls had been papered with English newspapers. This formed a foundation for row upon rows of pictures given with the Christmas numbers of numerous magazines.

The bachelors would be delighted to entertain us, and if we would wait long enough, would get up the best meal they knew how to make. Not every day do they hear the frou-frou rustle of big sleeves, of dainty shirt waists, nor have the safe keeping of ladies' hats, hat-pins, veils, gauntlets and riding whips. Memories of far off English homes, of their own sisters, and other fellow's sisters, rise before them but are hastily banished.

The "sour dough" bread (at this stage it is simply flour and water fermented) in a covered tin pail, behind the stove was rising and running over and down the outside. Our host stirred in some more flour, some bicarbonate of soda, and soon had his bread in the oven. Meanwhile the Oxonian had gone fishing and in good season returned with a fine string of speckled trout.

The frying pan was fished out from under the stove, hastily washed, and soon the fish were frying and sputtering in it. The coffee making was a puzzler. A tin coffee pot holding about a pint was that in daily use. It was inadequate when the family was suddenly increased by four. "We might make it in the tea kettle" said Oxonian in an undertone, "if we had a clean rag to tie the coffee in." "That's no go" said he of the Lake country, "we haven't the rag. We will make it without. An egg will clear it. Go and rustle one from the hens."

The table was moved near the bed so that two of us could sit there while we ate. Two boxes were brought in and placed, also the only two chairs the cabin contained. Three granite plates and two tin ones were set, two granite mugs and three cups, black handled knives and three-tined forks, also pewter spoons. The warm bread was laid upon a stoneware plate.

The bread pan was washed out and the nicely fried fish laid daintily in it. A cold stove lid was laid on the table and the tea-kettle containing the coffee was put on it. This beside Oxonian's plate.

We were invited to partake of refreshments; and how good everything tasted. Speckled trout from a Rocky Mountain stream are a luxury wherever eaten. The "sour dough" bread proved most palatable and "Chase and Sarborn" never knew their coffee to taste better than it did when Oxonian made it in, and served it from, that coffee tea kettle. We begged of our host to be seated and eat. There was a box to sit on and plenty of room at the table. But no, he would wait on us. Oxonian volunteered the information that they were short of plates. The bread did not need a plate under it, though a piece was broken out of it, still it was all right for fish.

This course finished, our host seized the dishpan

and hastily washed our plates and knives and handed them back to us. A can of peaches was opened and poured into the only bowl the house possessed, and with cream and sugar and some more sour dough bread we fared sumptuously. All the while our host chatted his personal reminiscences of Ruskin, gossiped about the people and places mentioned by Wordsworth, while Oxonian in his turn told charming stories about some famous Oxford professors.

In that homely two-roomed cabin, standing in a grove of tall waving cottonwood, and bushes of spicy, fragrant, buffalo willow, that fringe the banks of an unnamed stream whose source is in the snowy Rockies that glisten and gleam in the July sunshine; there with no other dwelling within miles and no society save the cattle upon the surrounding hills a clever Oxford graduate and his equally literary companion of the Lake country are spending the flower of their splendid manhood trying to redeem themselves from the folly of a too credulous belief in wild west stories and land companies' pamphlets that are scattered broadcast over every town and hamlet in Britain.

### THE CHILDREN OF THE RED MAN.

Are there not many Canadian girls and boys who would be happy to live the life of the child of the Red Man of our far-western prairies?

The Government's reservations upon which the Indians live are all in close proximity to wood and water, two of the most valuable considerations in the west, where the trees grow chiefly along the banks of streams, and streams are nowhere abundant except in Alberta. There are many white children in the west who never saw a stream or a large tree or a good-sized hill, for the white man cares less for the beauties of nature than does the Indian, and in choosing his home thinks only of the fertility of the soil, or the abundance of pasture for his stock.

So you see the homes of the Indians are in the choicest scenic spots in the whole country. Amid groves of aspen, willow and cottonwood the Indian erects his tee-pee, — it is never called wigwam in the west — and lives an ideal life of idle happiness. The children do no work, not even chores. The mother gets all the wood, carries the water, takes down and erects the tee-pee whenever the family move, which is very often, and in fact does all the work.

An Indian boy when quite young learns to make bows, traps and fishing tackle, and spends many, many happy hours shooting birds, catching fish, or trapping gophers that live in countless numbers everywhere on the prairies. When tired of these he catches one out of the band of ponies that is hobbled and feeding not far off, mounts him bare-backed, and has a race with some of his boy-companions over the green-level prairies, gemmed with the many hued flowers whose variety, beauty and luxuriance are unknown in our eastern wild woods. Or, what is more exciting sport, a bucking contest, where the pony performs evolutions and antics wholly undreamed of by the civilized and well-bred horse of cultured eastern Canada. All the while our hero keeps his place on the horse's back, for derisive are the cheers and laughter should he be bucked off.

When the Indians have any food they all eat as long as it lasts. Children are not refused successive helpings for fear of their little stomachs becoming rebellious. Men, women and children feast alike while the food lasts, and then all starve together until further supplies are obtained. No Indian child is ever reproved, or corrected, or punished, for anything he may say or do; his table manners give no one any concern. My little girls and boys whose manners and behavior are not in accord with the rules of good society, and are a constant worry and subject of correction to your elders, what heart-burnings and sorrows would you have escaped had you been born a child of the Red Man of our western prairies!

(Concluded in next issue.)