

Continued from page 16

The northland night may be long, but not too long or lonely when the trail has been hard. "For then the body is very weary . . . moccasins are removed and four or five pairs of woollen socks are hung to dry. Maybe you sit near the stove for a while and smoke, but the fire burns low and it grows cold in the tent.

"The night's allowance of half a candle burns out. A thin layer of ice forms over some tea left from supper. You wrap yourself in three heavy blankets, pull a fur cap over your ears and move your swaddled feet to find the warmth of the dog's body. It is six o'clock and dark. Then you are asleep."

Other passages recount portages with birchbark canoes and watching Indians trade the winter's harvest of furs at a Hudson's Bay Company trading post. Rich pelts go for gaudy ribbons, coloured thread or patent medicines, prompting the author to brood on the "great tragedy" of the nomadic Indians whose trails run

from the post like silver threads. "They live and die," wrote Mr. Schoonover. "A little bleached cross marks their grave, and a friendly Indian hangs upon it a rosary and a few leaves." Later, he reflects, the furs will be seen in Canada's big cities of a winter's evening, all "plucked and groomed and fashioned for the season of social struggle."

Famous illustrator

Writer, lecturer, artist and photographer, the author studied under renowned teacher Howard Pyle at the Drexel Institute in Philadelphia. He flourished during what is recalled as the "Golden Age of Illustration" and is remembered particularly for the illustrations he created for such books as Jack London's "White Fang" and John Buchan's "The House of the Four Winds."

Other prominent writers whose works he illustrated included Rex Beach ("Where Northern Lights Come Down"), W. A. Fraser ("The Blood Lilies"), and Sir Gilbert Parker ("Northern Lights").

Some 800 of his Canadian photographic studies survive, their clarity of definition remarkable. His son Cortlandt, book collector and English instructor, helped prepare the present edition. The publishers say they chose stories, paintings and photographs to "portray the spirit of the Canadian wilderness and its native people with truth and validity." They add: "The continuous struggle with the elements, the pride and integrity of the people who called the North their home, the stark physical beauty of the wilderness can all be found in this uniquely visual and literary documentation." There is no argument with this claim.

Cricket gains favour

For all but a minority, cricket in Canada has long been viewed as a harmless eccentricity — amusing, perhaps, but not in the same league, old chap, as baseball or ice hockey.

Now it's gradually becoming more popular, with some 5,000 people playing the game in seven of Canada's 10 provinces.

In the next decade, the Canadian Cricket Association looks for further advances as national and provincial squads compete against sides from Ireland, Bermuda, Denmark, Holland, Scotland and other countries.

Interest was enhanced by the visit in May of the Australian Test cricket team. The Australians played Canadian teams in Vancouver on May 21 - 22 and in Toronto on May 24 - 25.

From July 21 - 28 in The Hague, a Canadian team was to take part for the first time in an international junior tournament. All Canadian players are under 21. England was to have two teams in the tournament, Ireland, Denmark and Holland one each.

British Columbia has long been a flourishing area for cricket. Seven schools play organised cricket and there are senior-level leagues in Vancouver and Victoria. Cricket also does well in the province of Ontario with 40 teams competing in the Toronto area. Generally, the sport lacks major crowd appeal so funds must be raised from cricket enthusiasts to bring visiting teams to Canada.

Save the whooping crane

Canada's whooping cranes have unwittingly joined the jet set in a desperate battle for survival of the species that is being fought by the Canadian Wildlife Service and the United States Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife.

While the few remaining in the wild whoop on oblivious, nests in Wood Buffalo National Park, on the Northwest Territories boundary with Alberta, were gently raided in May of this year and 13 eggs removed, first by helicopter to Fort Smith and thence by a Canadian Armed Forces jet to the Patuxent Wildlife Research Centre at Laurel, Maryland.

There the eggs were placed in an incubator, with the idea that the young birds hatched out of them should join a captive flock, now numbering 17 birds, kept at Patuxent. It is hoped that this flock will in due course produce young which can be returned to the wild.

The scheme has been instituted because it is feared that the tiny wild flock may be too vulnerable to survive unaided; just one violent storm or serious disease could wipe them all out. It is felt to be valid because although two eggs are usually laid in each nest, few families arrive at the wintering grounds in Aransas, Texas, with more than one chick. Studies by CWS show that the number of young reaching the south annually averages only about one fourth of the number of eggs laid by the wild birds. Therefore it was concluded that removal of one of the two eggs in each clutch for hatching in captivity could be done with little chance of harming productivity in the wild flock.

The programme began in 1967, when six eggs were picked up; 10 were taken in 1968 and another 10 in 1969. Since then there has been only one pick-up; 11 eggs in 1971. The practice has been renewed this year because of the low survival rate of fledglings in the wild. Only one of the two young that flew south last fall survived the winter, lowering the total number of whooping cranes in the world to 48.

Conservation

The handsome Arctic hare, white in winter and grey in summer, is also getting careful attention from conservationists. Driven dangerously close to extinction in its native Newfoundland by centuries of hunting and by imported competitors, it is now being reintroduced there through an experiment by the Newfoundland Wildlife Service.

Six years ago the Wildlife Service discovered a small population of Arctic hares in the southern area of the Long Range Mountains, which run like a spine inland from Newfoundland's west coast. Four were captured and set loose on Brunette Island, an uninhabited island in Fortune Bay off the south coast of Newfoundland. Last autumn biologists counted one thousand of the animals on Brunette.

Jim Inder, a wildlife biologist involved in the scheme, said that the establishment of a "reservoir" population of Arctic hares was a necessary prerequisite to introducing them elsewhere. Although the general location of various colonies was known, capturing them in the western mountains would have been difficult.

Since 1973, two lots of hares have been brought over from Brunette Island and set free — thirty-six in the centre of the Avalon Peninsula some fifty miles south of St. John's and thirty-five on the south coast of Burin Peninsula. The hares were tagged and several of them have since been reported killed, but the colonies have bred and numerous sightings have been reported to the Wildlife Service.

The hares were once plentiful across Newfoundland and provided an alternative flavour to the winter diet of the Beothuk Indians, which became extinct in the first part of the nineteenth century. ♦