

A HORRIBLE NIGHT.

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE NORTH-WEST REBELLION.

BY GEO. B. BROOKS.

In that land of clear skies and magnificent distances which is bounded on the south by the north branch of the Saskatchewan river, and which stretches northward to the region of eternal ice and snow, there is, perhaps, no lovelier spot than that known at one time as the Frog Lake Settlement. Beautiful as the landscape generally is in that particular portion of the Dominion, nature seems to have redoubled her efforts in some localities, and to have made one supreme exertion to excel herself about the lake and settlement with the somewhat uneuphonious name. Grandeur scenery, more magnificent views, can be seen in hundreds of places in Canada, but it is doubtful if anywhere else—even in beautiful Prince Edward Island—can be seen more pastoral loveliness, more of that charming landscape which so reminds the traveller of rural England. There is the same hill and dale, the same refreshing greenness of leaf and blade, the same park-like beauty, the same wealth of fern, bracken and wild flowers: all that is wanting to make the visitor believe himself in Devonshire or Kent is the villages with their ivy covered churches and thatched cottages.

Frog Lake is a sheet of water about ten or twelve miles in length and from three to four miles in width, clear as crystal, full of fish and studded with islands. It is connected with the Saskatchewan river by Frog Creek, and it is on the bank of that creek, five miles from the lake, and thirty from Fort Pitt, that

the settlement was planted, some ten or twelve years ago with every prospect of a flourishing future, by sturdy pioneers from Ontario. Seven years ago the place was in ashes; its inhabitants—those who had not been cruelly tortured and murdered—had been driven away, and where once all was industry, hope, happiness and contentment, there was desolation and ruin.

The events which led up to the North-West Rebellion of 1885 are too well known to need recapitulation, but during the month of March in that year rumors of a very ugly kind reached Winnipeg from Fort Pitt, Edmonton and Battleford districts, and were forwarded on over the rest of the Dominion. Among them was one to the effect that the Cree Indians in the Fort Pitt district, after driving Inspector Dickens and his force of Mounted Police from the Fort, and taking the Hudson Bay factor and his family prisoners, had raided the settlement of Frog Lake and had massacred its people. The excitement in Winnipeg and throughout Canada was intense, and was rendered doubly so by the impossibility of obtaining any trustworthy news. Time brought no details of the affair, for the Indians and Halfbreeds were in rebellion, the telegraph wires had been cut near Battleford and there was no communication to be had with that place, Fort Pitt, Edmonton, or Frog Lake.

The Dominion Government issued a call to arms—a call responded to with alacrity, from the Atlantic to the Pacific—