

FOR YOUNG FRIENDS' REVIEW.

PRAIRIE AND MOUNTAIN.

At the tender age of nine years, thro' the medium of a much used and much abused Campbell's geography, I made my first acquaintance with Red River. The name being suggestive of many delightful possibilities, I pictured to myself the paradise it would be for any lucky youngster, aged nine, who lived upon its shores. Not that I supposed its waters to be actually red in hue, but I fondly imagined they would be, say a lively pink, something between the color of Aaron's robe in my "Scripture Illustrated," and the ibis on the next page.

If any cobwebs of childish fancy still cling about the dark corners of my mind they were destined to speedy expulsion when I first beheld the river of my early dreams. I first saw it as we entered Winnipeg one rainy morning about a month ago, and of all the brown, muddy streams I ever saw surely it was the brownest and muddiest. It was swollen with late rains, and seemed to have almost a sullen look without a vestige of that cherry sparkle, and song inherent in most rivers. But then the majority of things as well as people look their worst in rainy weather. That same morning I had also my first glimpse of the far-famed Winnipeg mud. Its blackness so impressed me that traces of it still cling to sundry of my garments. But the main streets of this enterprising little city are now well paved; and the mud of early history, consigned, as in all other well-regulated and self-respecting towns, to oblivion and the back streets, Winnipeg is a self-respecting town, very much so. But I was obliged to regret, which I trust I did with a proper sense of the enormity of my mistake in not having arranged otherwise, that I could remain in this "chief factor of westward civilization" only the length of time required to "clean de cawh, sah." This welcome operation over and having meanwhile partaken of Winnipeg hospitality

to the extent of three oranges, for which I tendered the unworthy sum of twenty-five cents, I doffed waterproof and rubbers and betook me to my seat in the car. Those oranges were the smallest I ever saw; yes, and the seediest, but be it understood that in stating these facts I cast no reflection upon Winnipeg, I am aware that that city doesn't aspire to raise its own oranges.

Soon we were steaming westward again, out into the boundless prairie, such miles and miles of it, "as far as eye could see" and a great deal farther! All day long the same monotonous stretch of level plain, and at night when curtained into my tiny corner of creation I peeped out of the window to see a dim vision of straight land stretching away to a horizon which might be near one million miles distant. The morning light broke again to reveal just the same expanse of level, grey-green earth reaching out to the blue dome above. Uninteresting? Let me tell you some of the things I saw on this monotonous prairie journey.

First then, the ineffacable traces which the once reigning king of the prairie has left behind him. "Buffalo tracks" stretching across thousands of acres are plainly to be seen. They are two parallel lines or ruts sometimes very deeply cut into the soil. It is said that so vast was the number of Buffalos in one herd that a single immigrating journey sufficed to cut a track which should stand for ages. Another trace of buffalo is the "wallow," a round hollow or indentation, now for the most part grass-grown, in the plain. Judging from the innumerable hollows of this description one is led to the conclusion that the noble animal must have, as an irreverent fellow-traveller put it, "done no end of wallowing." Here and there a white skull gleams from under the low sage brush or is half hidden in the grass. Often the horns are still attached, and, though somewhat roughened by wind and weather, make with their rich dark tones a striking contrast to the white bone of