

THE ROCKWOOD REVIEW

My way further west was not so pleasant, the sleeper was full; among the occupants were two crying babies, who had evidently made an arrangement to take turns, with the noble ambition of banishing sleep. This scheme they carried out with an attention to business worthy of a better cause.

Together with a couple of girls from New York, who were to me guests like myself of my friend Mrs. N., I got off at Medicine Hat one rainy morning at daybreak.

This little town, situated in a cup-shaped valley of the Saskatchewan, was at one time a great place for the Indians. In the severest winters there is one spot on the river which never freezes, this the Indians thought the breathing place of the Great Spirit, and the medicine men of the various tribes frequently assembled here to hold communion with the god; this circumstance coupled with the shape of the valley, accounts for the name, so I was told. Here we stayed twenty-four hours, and then off west for the mountains in a private car.

I said some time ago that "I was off for the land of the red man and the buffalo"; the red man we saw in all his glory, one circus day in the village, and all circus attractions were as nothing, while we gazed on gorgeous "Lo." On a brave in particular won our hearts, he was so unconscious of his grandeur, and our admiring glances, so unassuming in his manner, "yet even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed" in such splendor. Let me describe him,—he was tall, at least six feet, his hair was parted in the middle, and the portion on either side in front, was braided and tied with red yarn, the back hair hung in straight black masses; down the part was a broad streak of yellow paint, each cheek bone was ornamented with a daub of red paint, and his eyes were encircled

with outspreading rays of yellow; a couple of large pearl buttons ingeniously fastened on with strings, dangled from his ears; a blanket with broad stripes of yellow and red, covered his shoulders and body, reaching the ground in places; his nether garments were fringed, moccasins adorned his feet; altogether he was a most fantastic object, yet he suited the prairie and had a certain free dignity, which he would assuredly lose, were he garbed as a white man.

The buffalo is almost as fabulous a thing as the dodo, great heaps of bones, piled beside the track, were all that remained of the immense herds, which roamed over these plains, in the not far distant past.

The country between "The Hat" and Calgary is monotonous in the extreme and we were glad to reach the latter place, where we made a brief stay. This is the chief place between Winnipeg and Vancouver, is prettily situated, and has fine stone buildings. We left just before lunch, tacked on the end of a long freight train. After lunch we adjourned to the cupola of the car just in front. Here we were able to see all about us, and away down by the sky line, immediately in front and to our left were the far off Rockies.

If I could only make you see them as we saw them that sunny afternoon; soft, indistinct, billowy, ethereal, cloudlike masses, with amethystine and opaline tints, "now pure as a dove's throat, now warm as a flame," shimmering in a light "mystic and wonderful"—rising, spreading, growing, changing—filling our souls with a delight so great as to be pain. Gradually the formless assumed form, and the fairy-like unreality gathered shape, and the majesty of the eternal hills was before us.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)