

## A Midsummer Trip Among Our Missions in the North.

(Continued from page 56.)

**A**N early start, with slow but steady driving, for the roads are heavy, and we continue our journey to Whitefish Lake. Every turn of the road is instinct with memories of the days that are gone.

Yonder I camped alone one winter's night, no blankets, no food, but a rousing toothache which kept me awake and doubtless also kept me from freezing. Over there I once ran down a hill and across a valley and up another hill, perhaps faster than a man ever did. First, because I was naturally swift of foot; second, because the whole of a big Buffalo bull was after me. Head down, tail up, on he came. What signified two feet of snow. I flew and did not waste any energy looking behind until I reached the top of the next hill. I can laugh now as I see myself touching the snow-covered prairie here and there, and by leaps and bounds fleeing from the huge "King of the Plains." We killed him and packed part of the meat portions of his carcass on our dog sleds, and notwithstanding we left all the head and neck and back and rump bones, yet the meat we took home weighed 960 pounds. No wonder I went as one inspired, and undoubtedly I was for the time. Here is the hill where I had good Bro. Wolsey buried under his overturned cariole and in the snow, while I put the "fear of death" in his dogs, who before that had looked back at me when I called to them, instead of bounding on as they should have done, the lazy brutes knowing full well that Mr. Wolsey, wrapped in robes and tucked into the coffin-like cariole, was helpless, and that I, away behind my own dogs, with the narrow track and the very deep snow between us could not get at them when I would. But when my old friend upset and rolled over and over to the foot of the hill and there remained both cariole and man, bottom up, why then my chance came, and I went for those dogs in a way that made them jump when I spoke to them after that.

But I am digressing. We stopped for the first spell at the Vermilion, for the second at Cache Creek, and in the evening made Goodfish Lake, where our teacher, my old friend Peter Erasmus, met us right gladly, and we camped with him for the night. This is holiday time and the Indians are scattered, some in different parts of the Reserve, others away freighting and visiting. The next day we went from camp to camp, canvassed for the new school, held a service in the church at Whitefish Lake, and another in the school house at Goodfish Lake. Visited and sang and preached and prayed and talked of education and industrial school until I was really tired and glad to stretch on the floor for the night, and though the bed was hard, my rest was sweet, for God had owned our humble work, and souls were blessed and quickened, and quite a number of scholars were secured for the school at Red Deer. To these men who had always lived together, unless war or disease parted them, it comes hard to give up their children to be taken 250 miles from them and to have them placed in the hands of strangers. The mothers wept and the fathers solemnly considered and then finally both consented, and to me it was a glad surprise that in a few years these people should have grown to an appreciation of the advantages of education to the extent they have, limited as that is.

The next morning, which was Saturday, we started for Saddle Lake, and lunched at Cache Creek. The roads being better, and the distance only forty miles, we reached the Mission House at Saddle Lake early in the afternoon; found Mr. and Mrs. Deane, our missionary teacher and wife well, but tremendously lonesome; and indeed it is a translation from a city to Saddle Lake. Three or four English-speaking people two miles distant, and a scattered Indian settlement all around them, but themselves without any knowledge of the language. No wonder the first few months were full of thoughts of home and friends, and these good people could not shake off an omnipresence of isolation. But after all, do not men in every line of life undergo the same experiences—the trader, the first settlers, the explorer—and these for objects and aims of less importance by far than the missionary? To the latter the very thought of his work should be a parental inspiration, and in his ears

should constantly ring the gladdening promise, "Lo, I am with you"; and then the pioneer missionary has, as it strikes me, the advantage over all men.

We spent the afternoon and evening between the Agency and Mission House in visiting and encouraging and advising, and among the Indians in talking up the Industrial School and securing pupils for the same. Peter Erasmus had come with us to this point, and was a great help in the matter of the school. Sunday we held two services in Cree at the Mission, and one in English at the Agency. Brother Somersette look the latter, and gave us a right manly, inspiring gospel sermon, which did me good, and also told me clearly that a man, if of the right stamp, on an Indian mission, will develop strength of mind and true manly capacity, and perhaps even more than if among his own people.

Monday morning we moved over to the Agency, as I had business with the agent in arranging for the transport of the pupils from their reserves to Edmonton, Peter Erasmus having volunteered to accompany the children to the new school, and as we had still the reserves north and west of Edmonton to visit, we fixed the next Monday evening as our time of rendezvous, at the end of the railroad in South Edmonton. Dining with the agent and his hospitable family, we started in the afternoon for Victoria, at which place we camped for the night, and the next day made the Hardisty Ranche, which brought us into Edmonton for Wednesday noon, where we spent the rest of the day answering letters, gleaning news of the world, and visiting among old friends. Thursday we drove to River Que-barre; found Brother McKittrick tenting and building on the edge of the Reserve, and doing all he could for the poor people among whom his lot was cast.

In isolation extreme, and quarters small and crude, our brother and his good wife are seemingly contented and happy in their work tending the sick, feeding the hungry, living the Gospel among a people who have been too long neglected. After supper we drove some miles and visited quite a number of tents, and it was not until late that evening we returned to the home of our friends. Next morning we drove on to the Reserve; held a council and a short service, and went on towards Lake St. Anns, Mr. McKittrick accompanying us to our mooring place beside a little lake. Few can more appreciate an hour of congenial converse and association than the missionary, who is largely shut off from his brethren, and is surrounded with that which is depressing. A visit, however short, is a blessing. Our lunch over, we bade good-bye, and our brother returned to his work, and we went on across muskegs, and through the mud-holes, and over the thickly-wooded hills, and on in the late evening to the old Hudson's Bay Co.'s post at Lake St. Anns. At this place there is a Roman Catholic mission and a recently improvised shrine, and just now there has been a great pilgrimage made to these relics. We met numbers of the returning pilgrims. Their appearance was as if they had come from a regular hard time, and as I learned later, the gathering at the lake had been one of great dissipation.

We were hospitably and kindly entertained at the Hudson's Bay Co.'s post by our friends the Taylors. Here we found rest and comfort and hearty welcome. How sweet these are to the weary!

The next day, Saturday, we drove to White Whale Lake Mission. This is Brother Somersett's headquarters, and to him we are going home. Mrs. Somersett is now in England, and my friend is keeping bachelor's hall. But every thing is in first-class trim, neat and clean, and we are glad to sit down in the bright, airy room of the new mission house, which is a credit to those who planned and built it. Right glad would I be if all our missionaries had as good a home.

Here I found one of my boys at Pigeon Lake twenty-five years ago, who has grown into a chief, respected alike by white men and Indians. Well do I remember the little wild boy from the northern woods who came to my first mission shanty, and as I had just come in from whip-sawing lumber, I went to wash myself. The boy watched me closely, and saw the soap. To him it was the reason for my being whiter than he was. He said: "If I had some of that stuff I also would be white like the praying man." We were glad to meet once more after the years, and many other of my old friends came around, and we went over the