

PEOPLE AND PLACES

LITTLE STORIES BY LAND AND SEA, CONCERNING THE FOLK WHO MOVE HITHER AND THITHER ACROSS THE FACE OF A BIG LAND.

A RELIC OF REBELLION.

PROGRESS in the West is so rapid that people are inclined to forget even the romances and the tragedies of development. There are some hundreds of thousands of folk on the prairies who do not know that such a man as Louis Riel ever lived. They are aware of the Hudson's Bay Company because it still exists; they see the mounted police and may be interested in their history; here and there a Red River cart forerunner of the railway. But the big little war in the Saskatchewan valley; the Rebellion of 1871 and that of 1885, is very largely in the memory of those old-timers who were on the scene, or such of the militia as went to the West twenty-four years ago. The capture of Louis Riel, the little half-breed Napoleon; his imprisonment at the mounted police barracks in Regina; his trial and execution as a murderer and a rebel against government in Canada, were swift scenes in a rather lurid and romantic drama which had a huge country for a stage at a time when Indians, half-breeds and a few traders were most of the population. There are left but few of the landmarks associated with the Rebellion; but of these the little shack behind the court-house in Regina where the notorious rebel leader had his meals during the trial is by far the most interesting. Unfortunately it has not the pleasant association that would make it a good feature for a national park or a museum. Its interest is melodramatic; but at least it recalls an epoch in Canadian development when the vast interior of Canada was a very mysterious limbo of a place.

* * *

THE PRAIRIE MISSIONARY.

REGINA is to be created a new diocese of the Roman Catholic Church in the West. It is nearly a century since the Church began to organise parishes in that country. The early vicariates were huge in extent. They have since been subdivided and raised to dioceses and arch-dioceses, chief among which is the archdiocese of St. Boniface at Winnipeg. Much of the romantic story of the West has been the story of the Roman Catholic missions as well as of Protestant missions, which in many cases side by side have spread everywhere under conditions the most unusual. At first concerned solely with the Indians and half-breeds, the missions have now the majority of their constituents among the new peoples who have come in from Europe. It is claimed by Bishop Pascal that forty per cent. of the population of Saskatchewan are Catholics. Many of these are German Catholics, who already have three newspapers in the province. No possibility of the Church losing ground in the West.

The missionary, however, is becoming a remote figure as civilisation advances. Some of those who were missionaries long ago are still among the most conspicuous of history-makers. Two or three of these, respectively Anglican, Methodist and Roman Catholic, are situated at such far-asunder points as Morley in the foothills, Onion Lake, Saskatchewan, and Duhamel on the Battle River in Alberta. Of these the story of Rev. Marchmont Ing, Methodist missionary at Morley, was written in the *Canadian Courier* two years ago. The Roman Catholic missionary at Duhamel—whose name for the present has slipped from memory—is a personality that cannot easily be forgotten. He has been in that mission on the Battle since before the Rebellion. He has still the same little church with the moose-skull at the gable, has the same half-breeds, who were once famous buffalo hunters in that valley; one of the most hospitable and benevolent men that ever wore a gown.

Then there is the Anglican missionary at Onion Lake—a short sketch of whom was given on this page last week. En route from Edmonton down the big river by scow—is the best place to observe this missionary, who is not only a preacher of the gospel but a community-builder and a trader. The missionary scow is one of the poetic remnants of the day when the Saskatchewan was more used for navigation than it is now. A remarkable craft; starboard amidships the team and buckboard in

which the missionary with his half-breed mate has driven over the trail to Edmonton. A canvas-shrouded rampart of bags, boxes and bales—goods for trading to the Indians at the mission. Two hundred miles of crooks and rapids to Onion Lake; at the bow sweep the half-breed man; at the stern pole the missionary close by, his wisp of tobacco smoke mingling oddly with the trail from the fire-box. Croaking and crawling round the curves of the crooked river, this gospel scow on her six-days' glide keeps green in the missionary's imagination the days when from Edmonton to the head of Lake Winnipeg the only settlement not a half-breed colony was old Battleford on the right bank. Past Pagan and St. Paul's de Metis—the grey humpty shacks with the mud chimneys the sixth day out—and the half-breed mate repeats wearily that he has seen not a moose swimming the river as it used to be at the beginning of the century before the railway came; even the moulting wild geese are scarce; and alongshore the bald gleaming dots of settlers' houses spangle the fat round domes of the splendid hills. A few years ago—nothing of this; the unweary solitude unbroken by even the flat-bottom steamers that went off when the branch railways pushed up from the old line south; and before that the long York boats that plied to the fur posts from Hudson's Bay.

When the missionary lands he is greeted by a company of Crees; the red men whose souls and bodies and children he shepherds from the mission hill seven miles north. Busy as beavers under the

half a dozen Crees may be found congregated here. Some to buy goods and some to beg; many to smoke and jabber of the hunt and the fish baskets and the doings of police. And if a Cree is sick but able to visit the mission, there he airs his symptoms; profoundly pleased to note the pack of hospital stores fetched with the cargo of goods—packs of gauze and lint; bottles of chloroform; bottles of whiskey and brandy; sundry medicines—not least among which are the bottles of cod-liver oil which to the Crees is a sort of grand medicinal beverage. The missionary's wife compels the wondering awe of the natives. They verily believe that all craft and knowledge of healing belong to her. Once she was a missionary in India—then an undergraduate in medicine. Since her advent at Onion Lake she has completed her examinations for the degree of M. B. besides bringing up a family of children.

* * *

PRESTISSIMO! A TOWN.

HEAVEN knows where Zealandia got its name; but this little town with the unusual handle to it is one of the most remarkable in the whole wide West. Eight months ago there was no Zealandia—sixty miles south-west of Saskatoon. All that the traveller's eye could see as the railway crawled in was a few sod shacks of settlers. In November the new little town began to be. It was a town made to order; site chosen and lots put upon the market—a community launched within a few weeks; packing cases arrived; shacks whacked up for temporary accommodation. And in eight months, five of which were winter, the town of Zealandia has come to the status of a real live civic community with more than eighty buildings. A topographical census of the new little city shows that it has gone into business in the most cosmopolitan way. In a few months this town has more of the things that go to make up civilisation than some Ontario towns used to have after forty years of paying taxes. Here is a list of the businesses in Zealandia:

Three large general stores, two hardwares, one furniture, one book store, one printing office, one butcher shop, one jeweller, two tinsmiths, one harness maker, one barber, two pool-rooms, one shoemaker, five restaurants, four boarding houses, one bake-shop, four large lumber yards, half a dozen insurance and land agents, four implement agencies, one hotel nearly finished (forty bedrooms), two doctors and one dentist. There are two grain elevators completed, capacity 40,000 bushels each, and three more to be built.

This is the new kind of progress that makes the Canadian West the most unusually commercial big area in America. Henry George in his picture of community-building in "Progress and Poverty" never dreamed of Zealandia.

* * *

THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS A FOOT.

FOR one foot frontage of land in the City of Edmonton a well-known mercantile firm in that city has been offered three thousand dollars by one of the banks. One hundred and fifty thousand dollars was offered for the entire lot. The offer was refused. There is a three-storey store on the property—just as there was nine years ago; but as the store could not be used by the bank, it was not counted of any value in the estimate. The land on that corner—at three thousand dollars a foot! Well do I remember that corner; nine years ago mainly a bluff of little poplars from which a few years before the Edmonton boys used to chase jack-rabbits. Up and down the whole length of that dog-leg, fine wide street lined with its little shacks of trade and commerce one might see the wild prairie roses hanging through the wooden fences along with the bluebells. Vacant lots everywhere; here and there a relic of the Klondike—some outlandish rig that had gone the trail and come back or had not gone at all. For the old fur town then was a reminiscence of the huge busy time that opened up that whole west to the eyes of the world—the delirium of the overland route.



A Regina Landmark destroyed a few days ago. This house stood just behind the old Court House, and in it Louis Riel took his meals during his trial in 1885.

PHOTOGRAPH BY E. ROSSIE.

thumb of the over-lord they lug ashore the sacks, bundles and boxes. Down come the waggons and soon the cargo crawls in a slow caravan over the hills headed by the missionary in his buckboard—somewhere in the rear the police rig of the red-coated sergeant whose yellow barracks are two miles from the mission.

But the mission settlement is the metropolis. There also is the Agency house; one store of the Hudson's Bay Company; shack of the telegraph operator—and two little churches. In the wall of that heterogeneous aggregation of wings and annexes and lean-tos, known as the mission, are the decks and hold timbers of a score of scows built in Edmonton and broken up at Onion Lake for the lumber and nails. Log stable crammed with prairie hay; waggon-loads reeling in from the sloughs and the uplands—slough hay in the dry season and upland in the wet. In the yard a mob of Cree lads shooting arrows; some with football. Out of the mission comes a pale careful woman—the missionary's wife. She is a doctor, in charge of all the Crees; and the two women in her household are both teachers and nurses, according to the needs of the case.

Unloading of goods brings a pack of idle babbling Crees; hunters and women—a blanketed woman—and babies in laced-in cases. The missionary's room is audience chamber, office, study and storehouse for dry-goods. Almost any time of day