

study in the Royal College of Music, the leading musical school in London. The first students deemed worthy of the scholarship were the subjects of this notice, who, curiously enough, obtained an exactly equal number of marks in their examination in the year 1886. Their equality was the more marked from the fact of both being singers, and both possessing mezzo-soprano voices. Under the circumstances the founders of the scholarship generously provided that a three years' course should be given to both these ladies, who accordingly, after giving a very successful farewell recital, left for England, whence they have just returned. Their career at the College of Music has been in the highest degree successful, and the singing of the young artists fully justifies the high hopes of their many friends. Under the tuition of Mr. George Henschel and Signor Vizetti they have completed the vocal studies begun under Prof. Couture, and in voice and style are charming and "musically" singers. Miss Moylan will remain in Montreal and teach singing, and her presence will be a welcome addition to the ranks of competent musicians here. Miss Walker, who is returning to pursue her musical studies in London, contemplates going on the lyric stage. Prior to her departure the young artists will give a concert here on the 1st of October, so that their friends will have the opportunity of judging the result of arduous study, combined with fine natural gifts and true artistic impulse.

IDLE MOMENTS.—This engraving of one of the compositions of not the least distinguished of our modern masters, is a fair illustration of a style of art and class of subjects which address a large *clientèle*. The scene is drawn from the daily life of "a girl of the period"—whether a girl by which the period will be most worthily remembered by posterity we need not say. Criticism of details would be out of place. There is certainly much to admire, and, doubtless, there is also something to criticize. The accessories which add interest to the central figure are all pleasing in suggestion and ably executed. Small as the picture is all the kingdoms of nature—including that most important domain, the Woman's Kingdom—find representation within its confines. "Idle moments" is, indeed, in many respects, a reflection of one of the salient features of this most busy age. To attain for a few the bliss of such moments is one of the chief aims of its manifold activity.

OUR WILD WESTLAND.

POINTS ON THE PACIFIC PROVINCE.

(BY MRS. ARTHUR SPRAGGE.)

XIII.

KAMLOOPS IN 1888—THE THOMPSON VALLEY IN ITS RELATION TO TOURISTS—FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE DISTRICT—AN EXCURSION ON FOOT—THE INDIAN RESERVATION—AN ADVENTUROUS DRIVE—CHARACTERISTICS OF KAMLOOPS—ITS SIZE AND IMPORTANCE.

In October, 1888, my husband was engaged as counsel in a murder case. The trial took place at Kamloops, in the Thompson Valley, about 260 miles east of Vancouver, whither we repaired at the beginning of that month. Kamloops, the county town of this district, derives its name from an Indian word, signifying the junction of two rivers, the waters of the North and South Thompson uniting opposite the town. Kamloops and curiosity had become synonymous terms in my mind, as I had heard this centre of the ranching business of British Columbia constantly disparaged on account of its dust and dryness. The Thompson Valley is almost entirely unknown to the majority of tourists, owing to the fact that the two daily Canadian Pacific Railway express trains pass through it one at midnight and the other at daybreak. Four times in as many journeys to and from Victoria had Kamloops flashed by me unobserved, so when the opportunity presented itself I determined to do the Thompson Valley thoroughly. Arriving late at night, tired and sleepy, after a twelve hours' journey from Donald, I thought of nothing but repose, and was little prepared for the scene that met my gaze the next morning when I emerged upon the upper verandah of the Grand Pacific Hotel and formed the very rapid conclusion how greatly any locality benefits by being under, rather than over, rated. To the north the valley of the North Thompson opened out, enclosed by ranges of curious buff-coloured hills dotted with conical evergreens; east and west, a quarter of a mile below the hotel, the South Thompson (the main river) flows, its banks outlined by belts of willows and poplars, whose foliage was mellowing into autumn tints of russet and gold, faintly indicated in the distance by lines of pure yellow. Rolling dim-coloured hills rise behind the town in terraced

heights, their inequalities and ravines marked by neutral gray and indigo blue shadows, giving a most peculiar, yet artistic, value to the landscape. Reproduced in colour, every point of view forms a natural picture, which blue sky, green hills, and emerald water could never be made to represent apart from atmospheric effects. To me these dim hills are the striking characteristic features of the Thompson Valley; yet surely the average human being must be naturally unobservant, for during the time I have spent in the Pacific Province no one has ever mentioned their existence or peculiarity. Nowhere else in the Dominion, except in the South Kootenay district, is such odd colouring to be met with. Some English officers, who spent a few days at Kamloops, compared the country to Abyssinia and North Kaffir Land, which indicates that its aspect is foreign to that of Canada in general during the summer season, when the climatic dryness which prevails inland recalls, in its effect upon vegetation, the arid features of the Dark Continent. After breakfast I started out to explore the neighborhood. Crossing the railway at the station below the hotel, I made my way along the Thompson in an easterly direction and found that the river flowed between sloping banks of verdant but boggy sward, beautifully shaded by clumps of fine willows, beneath which the ground was firm and solid. I wended my way through this sylvan grove to the wooden swing-bridge which spans the Thompson, half a mile above the town. Its elevation furnished me with a pretty view of Kamloops, a group of brown and white houses nestling at the base of a semi-circle of hills, under the lee of a high grass bluff. This being in deep shadow, looked like a wall of dark rock barring the western entrance to the valley (the river taking a sharp southerly bend immediately below it), while on the opposite side the bluff ranges rose and fell away in a soft grey line towards the coast. A heat haze hung over the whole country, adding greatly to the effect by softening the hard lines which the usually clear atmosphere has too often a tendency to emphasise.

Crossing the bridge, I found myself upon the Indian reservation of the district, a wilderness near the river bank, of fine shifting sand, covered profusely with a large plant of the cotton tribe, with spear-like leaves and enormous rough, wrinkled pods full of a silky down, which might, I should think, be turned to some account. Huge crows flapped and cawed overhead as I wandered on convinced that I was treading the bed of some ancient lake. In my rambles I came upon several ghastly groups of bones, which I attributed to defunct cattle. A closer examination, however, revealed thigh bones, vertebrae, jaw bones and, finally, half a skull, protruding from the sand. I learnt later that I had chanced upon the battleground of two Indian tribes, who had fought and bled for a lost maiden and a stolen steed, the steed being the fundamental cause of the feud. The conquerors in the fray, as is their custom, left the bones of their enemies to bleach upon the plain. Finding a further promenade over this trackless waste threatened to be both irksome and unprofitable, I recrossed the bridge and returned to the hotel. The next day my husband and I, thanks to the kindness of the senior counsel in his case, passed over this sandy flat again and drove for some miles up the valley of the North Thompson in search of what was described to us as a delightful river road. Following the trail through an Indian ranche, the focus of the reservation, a collection of log cabins, whose boundaries were defined by waving lines of brilliant blankets and bright petticoats, seemed to indicate that our visit had fallen upon the washing or drying day of the female population. Leaving these scattered habitations behind us, we drove on and on, crossing endless roads and tracks that intersected the prairie in all directions and led, apparently, to nothing but occasional haystacks, which did not seem to account for the amount of traffic they had caused. The valley of the North Thompson is about two miles wide. Where we explored it, viz., from the base of the grass hills to the banks of the river, it produces a good hay crop, which the Indians raise in open fields. The level surface of the prairie, however, is broken by curious sandy ridges, covered with tall bunch grass like

rushes, and small thickets of wild rose bushes, while the shallow ravines between are lined with poplars and low shrubs, offering an admirable cover for flocks of prairie chicken, which got up most aggravatingly within easy shot. No doubt we saw an unusual extent of the valley, owing to the fact that the senior counsel and I were bent on discovering the above-mentioned river road, while the junior counsel, who controlled the reins, held on his way steadily towards the hills, and being eventually coerced into leaving the main and very dusty road, brought our drive to a temporary conclusion at the foot of a haystack, on top of which an Indian was at work. We applied to the noble red man, rather hopelessly, for direction, and by dint of signs and guttural ejaculations were assured that there was a road by the river, towards which, accordingly, my husband, in revenge for our bullying, drove straight across country, up sandy ridges and down wooded ravines, till the Thompson was eventually reached. Beside its somewhat steep banks no ghost of a track for a four-wheeled vehicle could be discovered, so he turned the horses' heads in the direction of Kamloops and followed the faint indications of a bridge road, rashly undertaking to pilot us back to the town on his own responsibility. The result of this independent enterprise was not less astonishing than alarming. We did everything in that long-suffering carriage but leap fences and climb trees, and I will venture to assert that we sampled the nature of the Thompson valley as thoroughly as the most devoted agriculturists or the most active mining prospector.

I feel unlimited gratitude to the livery stable whence our conveyance emanated that horses, harness, and vehicle sustained these unwonted exertions uninjured, and am convinced they owed their preservation to the foresight with which the senior counsel, who is no lightweight, and I withdrew from our seats to *terra firma* at some of the most critical junctures. We all had a dinner engagement for that evening and naturally dreaded a break-down so many miles from town. As I studied the valley of the Thompson on this occasion, with its parched grasses and dusty bushes, I tried to imagine what it must look like in the spring, when the floating clouds of dust were solidified into cool brown earth, when flowers bloomed, birds sang, and vegetation flourished on the broken prairie.

The town of Kamloops contains a population of 1,200, including two or three hundred Chinese; possesses a bank, four churches, excellent Government buildings, and the best courthouse and gaol in the country districts. It is a very prosperous, flourishing place, of which much may be expected in the future with the development of its ranching and mining neighbourhood. Living is cheaper there than in the mountains. Were I asked, in geographical language, the characteristic feature of Kamloops, I should say, unquestionably, horses. Horses are coming and going morning, noon, and night. They may be seen tied to fences, posts, and buildings throughout the length and breadth of the town. Every man, woman, and child, I believe, owns a horse or pony. Vehicles are comparatively few, and these are used only for heavy transport and the actual requirements of business. Of the quality of the quadruped I wish I could speak more highly. I believe there are excellent horses on the ranches, but the class in use is certainly poor, deficient in bone and muscle, and though possessing, I was told, numerous virtues, they were not manifest in the flesh to the unprejudiced eye. I think I can confidently affirm that I know a good horse when I see one, but of the hundreds I have seen in British Columbia, there were not half a dozen I would take as a gift; so I am forced to the conclusion that the inhabitants follow the example of the business-like Indian and sell all their good horses, keeping their inferior animals for the home circle. The dust of Kamloops has not been exaggerated; it is very dense and very irritating, and when the wind blows, as it is much given to doing, it must be wholly unbearable and a source of great revenue to the Celestial laundries. When the town owns and uses a few water-carts, it will be a pleasanter summer and autumn resort than it was in October, 1888.