

DEAR FRIENDS:--

No exhibition notes this year. I barely fled to the wilds and left fairs and other marks of civilization behind. So, please, let anyone who visited the fairs send in their impressions for my benefit. In exchange, here is a short account of my week's trip up Lake Winnipeg. Do you know anything about said lake? We didn't know much before starting, but the people who asked about our vacation plans knew less, for they almost invariably said: "Oh, going up to Winnipeg Beach, are you? That will be nice." Now, Winnipeg Beach is just an ordinary summer resort at the very foot of the lake, and while one might have a very good time there it would be impossible to wax enthusiastic over it. But common opinion seemed to hold that Winnipeg Beach was the only place on the lake, and as we knew so very little more about it ourselves, it seemed wiser to defer explanations till we got back again, and—here we are.

Lake Winnipeg is the third longest lake in North America, only Superior and Michigan exceeding it in length. Isn't that news to most of you? It is two hundred and seventy-five miles long, and you've passed the famous Beach almost before you realize that you've started. It is shaped remarkably like a wasp with its head down, its slender waist being about one-third of the way up the lake, after which it opens up into a large body, sixty miles wide. The lake differs from the wasp, in that it has no sting that we discovered.

The good ship Wolverine was to sail from Selkirk on Monday, so we packed our grips and hied us to that town on Saturday morning, there to stay till sailing time. Selkirk is an old, old town as prairie towns go, with about 3,500 people living in its comfortable, lawn-surrounded tree-shaded homes. It was a surprise to us to find such a bower

Seeing Lake Winnipeg

his ears, and as there was only one of him and three of us he was allowed to escape, when the ferry drew in, and drove off leaving a trail of dust and gratitude behind him.

But, pleasant as it is, we mustn't dawdle round Selkirk any longer, or this story will have to be a serial. The

on the other side of him said: "You live on reserve?" in that idiotic fashion Anglo-Saxons have of thinking that bad English is easier of comprehension than good for an alien.

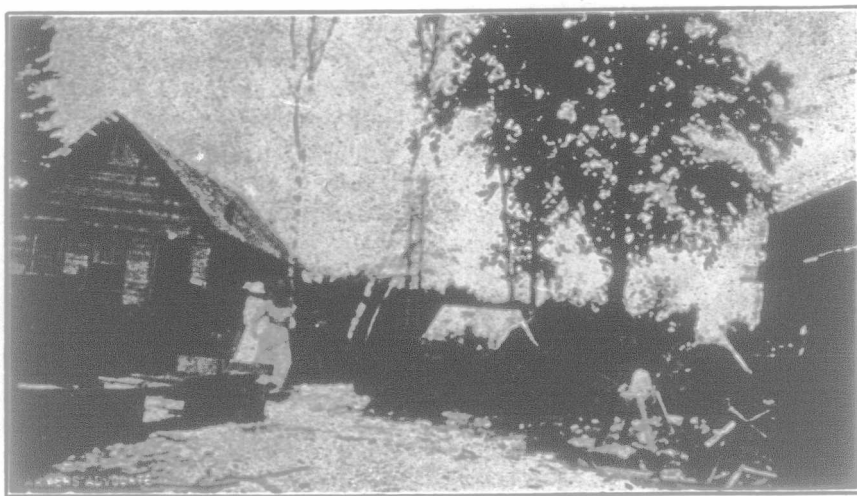
"No," was the quiet answer in which could be detected dignity and pride. "I do not take treaty. My father and

side of the world. After that it was bedtime.

Bedtime needs to come early, too, when just at daybreak a roar breaks in on the spirit of your dream. With a sleepy eye opened to the glimmering day you

think drowsily that you know why Kipling said "The dawn comes up like thunder." Wider awake, you find it is merely the crew swabbing off the top deck and all is still well with the world. That begins at the sinful hour of four and the first breakfast bell rings at six. Nothing to eat after eight until noon, so we must perform be early birds. A man high up in R. N. W. M. P. service came to the dining room at 8.05 one morning. He sat down. Nothing happened. No voice in his ear, "Oatmeal or force? Beefsteak, mutton chop, bacon and eggs?" Nothing like that. But the stewardess, a blonde goddess with auburn hair and remarkably good to look at, appeared and disposed of him with a cold "Sorry, sir. Breakfast has been served." And this big fellow who could hold a whole rough camp in check with his eye, got up meekly and faded from the landscape.

Breakfast over, out we go on deck to view the scenery, and incidentally the passengers. After all the grandest view lacks something when the human element is wanting. Only that rare bird, the genuine hermit, enjoys beauty more when separated from his kind entirely. Men and women are more interesting material for observation than mountains and seas. Our passenger list presented many phases of human nature. Some dozen of us were palpably loafers for the time being, out "for to admire and for to see, and for to be old this world so wide," or a piece of it any way. But the rest had an end in view. Among them was a member of the mounted police going back to duty after a holiday in the land of pavements and electric lights. Two half-breed mothers

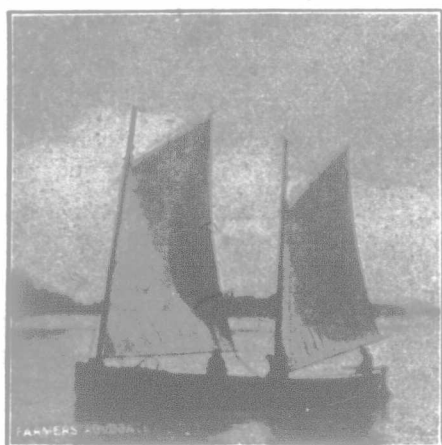


THE STORE AT THE FISHING STATION

Wolverine sailed early in the evening with a full passenger list. There wasn't any time to view our companions of the next few days, because there were matters of interest along the twenty miles of river bank between Selkirk and the lake. St. Peter's Reserve stretches out along the bank for a long distance, its nearness to town accounting for the dusky faces and bright-hued garments that were so noticeable in every store and at every street corner in Selkirk. The industry, prosperity, poverty

mother stopped taking treaty money and have their own land."

The sun was setting gorgeously among scattered black clouds that were trying to get together to make a thunderstorm as we got down—down the river, but up the map—to the wide expanse of water and marsh, and more water and more marsh, that makes the mouth of the Red. Strips and patches of green it showed, splashed, as far as sight could reach on a "sea of glass mingled with fire" in the red light of the dying



BRINGING HOME THE CATCH

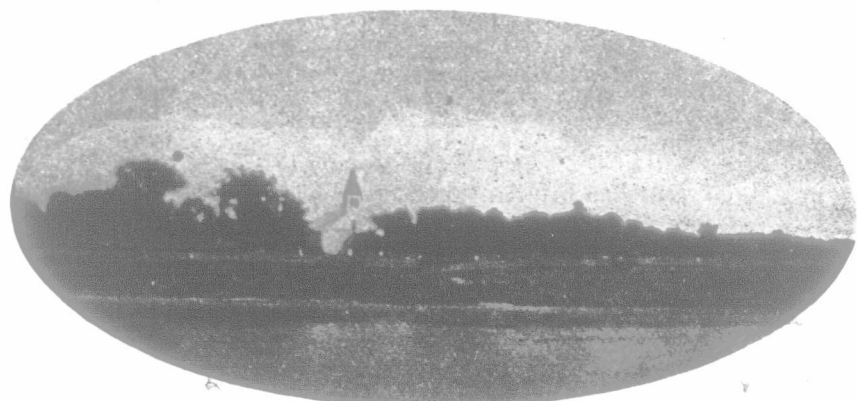
of shady quaintness and green peace. A lovely place to loaf in and we acted accordingly. At the end of the first day someone else was carrying my money and the empty purse lay disregarded in the grip for a week. Not a thing did I do but eat my own meals and—it must be confessed—no one could be found to take over an attack of seasickness for me. But that calamity belongs to a later part of the story. On Sunday morning the opposite bank of the river looked inviting—in the way opposite banks have—so we crossed on the ferry to investigate and so got on speaking—no, listening terms with the commodore, who "always took the boat across himself when there were ladies," but contented himself with giving orders to a small boy on other occasions with many roaring "ship-ahoy's" and "avast my hearties" from the bank. In the three minutes or so it took to cross the stream we learned many things; among others, that people didn't talk half enough—this to three women, mind you!—and that there would be less lung trouble if there was more conversation. He jumped to the conclusion that his fares were unwedded females and offered us a sedate-looking man who sat on the ferry in his buggy with his back to us. "Fine man," he said, "with a big farm over on the east side. Good chance for any girl. Only 'illegible' man on this trip." The subject of these encomiums was growing pink behind

or shiftlessness of the occupants of reserve land could be read in unmistakable characters just as they can be read in any other collection of habitations, but it is only fair to say that the trim, neat places, speaking of cleanliness and thrift, seemed to predominate among the houses that faced the river. And it seemed as if there was a church on every bend of the river.

An Indian stood against the rail near us and an over-inquisitive white man

sun. It was desolation, but a desolation of greenness restful to the eye which had seen lawns and roadsides burnt brown in this summer's drought.

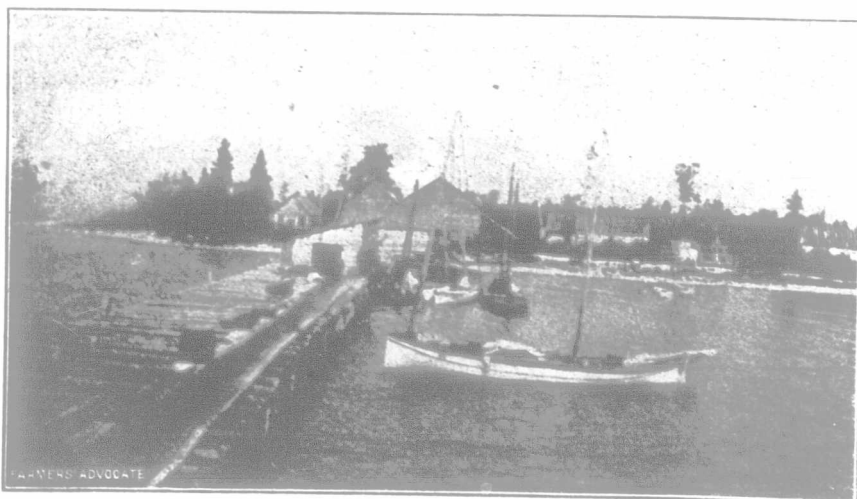
The south end of the lake is very shallow, so we celebrated emerging from the river by running on a sandbar and wobbling around for a time. Trifles like that are of no moment, when you can watch a moon like a Thanksgiving pumpkin climbing up to look after things while the sun is busy on the other



A CHURCH ON ST. PETER'S RESERVE



BONNY JEAN MCLEOD



PART OF THE SANDY ISLAND FLEET

with their children gave one a glimpse into the early history of the north land and the part in it the Hudson's Bay Company has played. One had a treasure of a black-eyed baby with a fair skin, who answered smilingly when you called "Jean McLeod." The other, sweet-faced and with patient eyes, looked fondly on a blue-eyed boy, straight and slim as a hardy young sapling, who called her mother. There was a motherly white woman who was going four or five days' journey by canoe beyond the head of the lake to Island Lake. She and her husband were missionaries there to the Indians; she had come out into the world for a visit with her people and was being escorted up the lake on her return by an enthusiastic group of young people, who called her "auntie" and were as proud of her as if she were going to a king's court.

Ladies first! But there were some interesting men, too—men who had been in places and done things, and could tell of them, after a judicious prodding to get below the un-self-conceit that made them think that what they had accomplished was a mere matter of course and devoid of interest to outsiders. One of this kind was a civil engineer of the surveying staff, who was to go by canoe from Norway House right down to Hudson's Bay, he and a guide, with Indians to paddle. They had their own canoes, tents and food