

enough, in the intermediate waters the size of this fish is considerably smaller. In the two extreme lakes they sometimes reach the extraordinary weight of fifteen pounds—this is amazing, and caps Lake Superior—and so fat as to yield each over a pint of oil. Beneficent, compensating Nature! for is not the true white-fish, when bred in the right waters, the king of all fish—a piscatory delight which enslaveth the palate alike of the rich and the poor.

Upon a reaching point, which absorbed the lake until it became a narrow channel, upon the opposite side of which the wooded, beautiful heights swept directly down into the water, one mass of superb colour, we came at last to the mission—a small Catholic chapel where alike the *voyageur* and the *habitan* meet to kneel in worship and minister to their spiritual wants. They are bidden to this from the high Prairie, where a large wooden cross, overlooking the country, signals men to a duty they are prone to forget. The story of the cross, told by this rude emblem, has a significance which it does not possess in lands where men and churches most abound. Fraught as ever with the Divine tenderness of surpassing love, it also tells mutely of the fervour and devotion of the earlier sons of the Church, who bore it amid suffering and death in kindred wilds. In these quiet days, rid of danger, the good Fathers have, in their peaceful natural surroundings, accessories to meditation and elevation of thought eminently helpful to that theory of life which makes abstraction from the fever of mankind part of the routine of their sacred office.

Whatever feelings of kindness I might have entertained towards the solitary pastor of this remote flock, they were evidently not shared by that high strung and wayward animal, my ox. To save us from being choked by the dust of "the train," I had blandly entreated him to fall a bit to the rear, and not press the flying vanguard too closely. He replied by running away—not from me, but with me. I braced myself at all impossible angles: he dragged me along like a fly; we dashed down a bad hill and up a worse one; fled off in the direction of a tent—a close thing—the ox overweighted, but having an advantage in the number of legs. One of the women here rushed to the point with a stick, and after a gallant affair of a few minutes he succumbed, to the extent of

following a pioneer armed with a club, which she brandished in his face when he rallied for another rush.

While I, perforce, from the revival of a certain *mal de raquette* which had hardly entreated me of old—while I sat riding, perched up over that fatal ox, and pondering gloomily why I could not stick a knife into him without his kicking wildly and impaling the pioneer in front—we suddenly debouched from the road and came upon the treaty ground of Qu'Appelle.

A few camps of half-breeds; some rude houses, from one of which was flying a flag indicative of the immense bargains to be had within; a great camp of Indians on the plain across the river; the Company's fort beyond; the whole shut in by the brown bluff—here, at last, was Qu'Appelle.

The little Treaty world was as agog as such a sleepy little world could be, awaiting the arrival of the Commissioners, and news was eagerly sought—as if a man driving an ox could ever by any possibility have any news.

In accordance with the etiquette of the Plains, which shuns, when in sight, further uninvited approach, I stopped at the river, took out the graceful beast with whom I had been so lately at feud, and awaited the summons from our friends in camp to cross and be at rest. It soon came, and, preceded by two young gentlemen with feathers in their hair and ribbons in their horses' tails, my sagacious old runaway, with much precision and dignity, took us across the ford, and briefly halting, his and our travel was over, for a space at least.

The wife's brother came forward to greet and conduct us into his spacious, handsome skin lodge, where we were received with a quiet warmth and cordiality. After the friendly, welcoming calumet had duly made its rounds, we brake of the bread of the Plains—pemmican—and drank what never cloy—tea—dear, delightful tea! brief prelude to the welcome sleep under the accustomed cart.

We awoke next morning in a wealth of sunshine and wigwams. There was no lazy ox to gird at; nothing to do but see and be seen; which apparent idleness is an honest pleasure when it brings you, as it often did me, face to face again with fellow-*voyageurs* of other days—friends whom one scarce could expect to ever meet again.