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(PAGES NINE TO TWELVE)

Life in Our Far Northwest

Interesting Letter by F. S. W. Tobey Descriptive of the Troubles and Joys of Making a Home in the Northwest.

The following letter, written by F. S. W. Tobey, descriptive of life in our far Northwest, was written in reply to a letter of enquiry from several parties in Scotland. A Scotch firm of printers has turned the letter out in circular form. The following is the letter:

Galashiels, 28th March, '04.

The following is a copy of a letter we have received from a gentleman in the Far West, who had requested by Mr. Tait, who left at Fountains, in June, to reply for him in answer to a query as to how he liked the place. We are, etc.,

A. YELLOWLESS & SON.

Westa, Battledore, Saskatchewan, N. W. T., February 13th, 1904. Mr. Yellowless,

Galashiels, Scotland:

Dear Sir—I have before me a letter from you to Mr. Tait, asking his opinion of our district, which letter he has requested me to answer for him.

As Mr. Tait and I have fished together, drawn wood together, cut timber (poles) in the same way (bluffs), smiled, and even sang together, we must be similar, for tastes are somewhat similar, for what is a bonnie fish to him is a duty to me, what is a good wear to him is very cold to me, and, what is a bonnie wee bairn to his family is a very pretty to me. The last reference is to six weeks' old first child. Well, enough of preliminaries, and for the garden of fertile West-Canada, viz., Jack Fish Lake District, in the Battledore District. I left Ontario in March, with desire to find the best for \$10 could be found. Arriving at Saskatoon, we purchased a light rig team, and proceeded to drive different localities. After about a month of sightseeing our eyes rested on the coast waters of Jack Fish Lake. An afternoon's drive about the district thoroughly convinced us that it might find better in the course of another month's drive, but assured us beyond a shadow of a doubt that it would be much easier to find localities much worse. Therefore we hurried back to Battledore, and "homedstead" immediately. Were we satisfied? Well, so much so that we bought 339 acres at \$7 an acre, \$1 more than any land near here.

We had wandered much by prairie and "sleugh," but here, like all our neighbors, found a permanent and satisfactory resting place in the land of plenty and few—plenty of wood, land, water, fish, game and possibilities—but few people to enjoy and profit by them. Here one can truthfully say is the earthly paradise for the rancher, dairyman, mixed farmer, sportsman, and lover of the piscatorial art, and in a few years, the lumberman and business man.

A rancher desires good pasture, natural winter protection the year round, supply of water and hay, and a sure market for his stock? Can he find it here? I say "yes." Although I have been here but nine months, I have seen more fat cattle, calves, and horses than I ever saw before. On the thick green sward in the summer, and the abundance of fattening food. In the fall they hunt the poplar bluffs for the rich wild pea vine that remains green long after the grass is frosted. In the winter they paw the snow for the vetch and frozen grass, excepting when the winter is very severe, and then they come to the hills, and hay that have been put up by the industrious rancher and his men. In the spring the buyers come through and buy all you have to sell. In the fall their cow punchers come after them, and you trouble no more.

The dairyman's wants are in common with the rancher's, but for the present he has not the market for dairying on a very extensive scale. However, there is sale at from 25 cents a pound up for butter any farmer here can make. With the railroad will come large creameries, and then dairying will be an important industry at Jack Fish Lake. One old settler and his wife made \$900 off ten good milk cows last year, so you see when properly cared for a good milk cow pays.

The mixed farmer wants fertile land, good pasture, favorable weather, and no summer frosts. What after land could anyone desire than here to eight inches of black loam on a clay subsoil? The pasture I have spoken of before. The weather is as good as in Manitoba, and even milder, for we are in a valley. They have summer frosts here as they had in Manitoba before the soil was till, but all the old settlers this year excellent crops and vegetables, say they have never been with either. I have seen and eaten every vegetable grown in Ontario, the Garden of Canada. One settler and his wife cleared \$200 week during the fall months off their garden vegetables. The land's

practically free, the pasture and hay absolutely free, and you can cut hay and dry wood any place from one hundred yards to one hundred miles off your cabin, or estate, as the bloomin' English tourists say. To the sportsman, Jack Fish Lake is like the Garden of Eden or Noah's Ark in variety, quantity, and quality. Partridge, prairie chickens, mallard and teal ducks, wild geese, badgers, wolves, antelopes, and rabbits are very common. Wild cats, fox, deer, bear, and moose all seem to fancy the bracing air and atmosphere of Jack Fish Lake. These latter animals are scarce here, but where it is most rugged there are a goodly number of them.

The wily piscator finds all that his soul delights in Jack Fish Lake or Creek. You do not travel all day long for a fish or two, but simply forget all your troubles in the keen sport of pulling up real live fish. One man caught a fine twenty minutes, but that was a rare catch. I caught thirty-five pike and pickerel in ten hours. They averaged over four pounds in weight. White fish are very common. You catch them in nets. In the winter we put our nets through the ice. Mr. Tait and I got our three small nets in rather late, but still we caught 563 white fish, pike, and pickerel, mostly white fish. The largest fish we caught were two pike or jack fish, weighing 19 pounds each, and being 18 1/2 to 19 inches in girth, and 40 to 40 1/2 inches long, besides several six, eight, and twelve pound jacks.

For the lumberman there are miles of virgin forest north of here from 30 to 50 miles, which needs but the C. N. Railway to change it into a meadow of stumps, chips, bark, and sawdust. When we came here in May you could count the houses on your fingers. Now you could not count them on a dozen people's fingers combined. What will it be in a few years? We have a good store and post office at the Creek, and the thriving town of Battledore is but twenty miles away. With the railroad will come stores, blacksmith's shops, etc., and soon another town will find its site in the once wild and woody West.

Our neighbors are English, Scotch, Americans, Canadians, and some Americanized Norwegians. Each and every one of them is heart and soul in love with Jack Fish Lake District, and the Northwest generally. We have had a nice winter. February so far being the most disagreeable month, but still I have been logging every day but two or three so far.

Lastly, I will give a little advice to new settlers. First, don't buy all of Saskatchewan when you land there. Secondly, buy nothing until you need it. Thirdly, get up a shack on your homestead as soon as you can, sod, log, or anything else, and then pitch in with a "plow" and good yoke of oxen, and break, break, break. It is a good plan to buy oxen, wagon, "plow," some provisions, and a few absolute necessities in Saskatoon, and then start out and see for yourself, unless some good honest friend has "homesteaded" for you. Fourthly, come with the determination to work, and work hard for a few years, and then you can begin to take things easier, if you wish.

Well, from the land of the heather, I trust I have given you the desired information about our district. I sincerely hope that if there are any more staunch, honest, open-hearted, urbane, good-natured, good-looking, Christian, whole-souled lovers of Robbie Burns, like Mr. Walter Tait and family, that they will renounce their allegiance to the haughty earls and come here and be independent and happy. Men like these are too good for titled masters, for they are noble masters in their own sphere of life, and absolute when they become landowners in the Canadian West.

Come expecting to rough it for a few years, and you will never regret it. Our wood shed in Ontario is as good as our house here, but the reverse will be the case in a few years, if I work as hard as I did in Ontario. No need of being idle. When your work is done on your homestead, then there is the bush, the railroad, and the great grain fields to find ready employment and good wages, if you look for it. Hoping that I will see some more Scotch immigrants here, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

F. S. W. TOBEY.

DEEPER DOWN.

Master Fred is one of those little people whose curiosity knows no bounds, and who seems always wound up to ask questions.

One day he was to have his bath, and his father jokingly said it must be cut very short to stop his asking so many questions.

"Oh, that wouldn't do any good," said Fred. "You'd have to cut my head clean off; my questions are inside of it."

Next to acquiring good friends the best acquisition is that of good books.

How Diplomatic Messages Are Telegraphed

Just at the present time, when the States of Europe are in an unusually anxious condition of mind as the result of the situation which has arisen through the war in the Far East, the telegraph wires are kept constantly busy with the most important and delicate work that is ever entrusted to them—that is to say, in transmitting the official despatches which are sent from one Foreign Office to another and from the head Ministers of State to Ambassadors of State to Ambassadors abroad.

These important messages are always sent in the most absolutely complete detail, not a single word being omitted or left to be guessed, inasmuch as a word left out might lead to a misunderstanding, the consequences of which would be of the most serious character. Thus the telegraph bills are extremely heavy; and it is estimated that Japan in her communications with the different Powers on the subject of the war which have been published in the newspapers, but have spent something like \$75,000, whilst the bill for unpublished despatches is likely to be far in excess of this.

One of the most recent communications from Tokio to the Japanese Embassy in London cost over \$1,500 to transmit, and the last telegraphed message from St. Petersburg to the Japanese Government cost \$1,350.

SENT IN CODE.

These despatches are invariably sent in code when they are from a Government to its own Ambassador, and sometimes in code from one Government to another when it has been arranged to employ one for the pur-

Of course, the diplomat who writes the despatch in the first instance has the counterpart of this dictionary—that is, one in which all the words are given in alphabetical order and the code figures attached to them. The number of possible arrangements is infinitely greater than the words to be found in any language, and least a key should at any time get into the wrong hands the code figures are constantly changed. The Russian Government employs codes of this description for all its diplomatic messages to its own Ministers, and the Czar, who has a private code for his own, makes use of it nearly every day for communications to his officers and Ministers abroad. The British Government also uses this class of code exclusively, and so do the German and French.

The Japanese code, however, is of an unusually complicated character, and whilst it has the merit of being, if possible, even more absolutely safe than the others, it is not so easy to decipher by those in possession of the key. A message which was recently at the Japanese Legation in London from the Foreign Office at Tokio took a whole day to translate.

RULES AS TO PRECEDENCE.

There is a common understanding among the different nations as to special facilities which are to be accorded to the transmission of these telegraphed despatches. The rule is that a Government message of any country must be given precedence on the wires over all other telegrams handed in, irrespective of the time when they were passed over the counter. Thus, if the Russian Minister in



Cost of biscuit colored cloth with deep circular cape. Heavy linen face is used to border the cape, and the tabs are stitched in white silk and decorated with cloth covered buttons.

pose, the key to which is in the hands of both Foreign Ministers. In these days—when his code message is handed in at the London office it goes off at once, even though there are dozens of business and private messages waiting for their turn. When it is extremely urgent a "pilot telegram" is sent in front of it, the words "Clear the line," being a warning to operators at the exchange stations all along the route to get ready to pass the despatch on the second it reaches them.

This rule as to the precedence of the diplomatic telegram is subject to only two variations. The first is that the home government always has the preference over any other, so that if the British Government desired to telegraph urgently to Japan its messages would go before that sent by any foreign Ambassadors, even though handed in later. In the same way, if the Russian Government were telegraphing to its Ambassador in London, the message would be despatched in advance of any given in by the British representative at St. Petersburg.

DECIPHERING THE MESSAGES.

When such a message is received the decipherer first divides the numbers into groups of five and then sets to work upon them with the code dictionary. In the latter all the different arrangements are given in progressive order, beginning at "000001" and going on to "999999," and the solution to any group may thus be found in ten seconds, or as quickly as a word could be found in an ordinary dictionary.

Help whoever, whenever you can; man forever needs aid from man.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne

Interesting Events of Ye Olden Times Gathered from The Planet's Issues of Half a Century Ago.

From Planet files, Sept. 24, 1859, to Oct. 13, 1859.

James Houston is Reeve of the township of Chatham.

R. M. Campbell advertises his confectionery business.

Peter E. McKerrall keeps the Caladonia Inn, North Chatham.

Samuel Cowan opens up a new harness shop near the market.

John McKerrall opens up a new grocery store in North Chatham.

Kenneth Urquhart is conducting a grocery business on King St.

Geo. D. Ross conducts a general store in Barfoot & Miller's or Post Office block.

The second cattle fair was held on Oct. 5th, and was very successful and well attended.

B. J. Earl sells hardware, agricultural implements and farmers' supplies in his store, Post Office block.

Michael Faber conducts a hotel on Fifth street and also keeps a stock of shoes.

John Sparks, clock and watch maker and jeweller, advertises in The Planet.

Henry Smith is agent for the Canadian Real Estate Register, Whitby, Canada West.

Birth—At Brighton Farm, Harwich, River Thames, on Saturday, the 18th inst., the wife of Wm. H. Stephens of a daughter.

The yacht "Fox," R. Y. S., returns from Sir John Franklin's expedition to the Arctic regions.

A great cricket match, between the English and Canadians was played at Montreal, the English winning out.

Birth—In this town, on Tuesday, the 27th inst., the wife of O. I. V. Dolson, of a son.

Mr. Jason Grant, of Chatham, endeavors to purchase his wife from slavery. The price of purchase was fixed at \$250.

Married—At Chatham, on the 11th inst., by the Rev. Wm. Walker, Mr. Robert Gray to Miss Ann Phillips, both of Tilbury East.

At the last assizes in Warwick, England, James Nemo Smith was found liable in fifty pounds damages to Mira Adams, for having endeavored to kiss her.

From a letter received from A. McKellar, Esq., M. P. P. for Kent—who is now on a visit to the Old Country—on Saturday last, we learn that he has arrived in Liverpool in good health, after a pleasant ocean voyage.

Supposed Case of Drowning.—For the past two days several persons have been engaged in searching the river in hopes of finding the body of a young boy, about nine years of age, son of Mrs. Butler, who was drowned.

We observe from the Provincial Freeman that Dr. Delaney, late of this town, who left a few months ago as chief of an exploring expedition into Central Africa for the purpose of ascertaining and reporting upon the fitness of that locality for the reception of colored emigrants from America, has arrived in that far-off land all safe and sound, and in good spirits.

Mr. Thomas Stone avails himself of our advertising columns to inform the public that he has just received a new stock of fall and winter goods. Mr. S. is always up with the times, and is so proverbial for his good selections that his store is generally resorted to for good goods and new styles.

We take pleasure in directing the attention of our readers to Mr. Geo. Ross' advertisement to be found in this issue. Mr. R. has been for the past fifteen years engaged in the mercantile business of Chatham and from his urbanity and general disposition to please, and with a good stock of goods we doubt not he will continue to meet with that favor from the public which has heretofore been accorded to him.

Our old friend, James A. Davidson, Esq., has returned from his lecturing tour through New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Great Britain, and is looking better than we have ever seen him look before. Mr. Davidson travelled through Ireland, England and Wales, and in the two last named countries addressed large open-air meetings on the subject of Temperance.

SKYLIGHT PICTURES.

Campbell Ambrosy Post has removed to his new and commodious skylight rooms, just erected by Dr. White, dentist, opposite Jos. S. Beatty's store, where he is prepared with a superior sky and side light combined and every facility possessed by any establishment in Detroit or other large cities, to make pictures which cannot be surpassed in beauty and tone. This is the only sky-light picture gallery in Chatham.

The Fate of a Nation.—There are in Egypt three hundred miles of railroad. When the running of the trains was commenced mummies were used for fuel and are said to make a very hot fire. The supply is inexhaustible and they are used by the cord. What a destiny! Think of devoting one's existence to providing fuel for a locomotive!

THE SEVEN LIES OF MAN

Behold the seven lies of man
And tell his age by that;
As soon as he can lie, he says—
"It must have been the cat."

Next, when the baseball team begins
To make his thrilling score,
His well loved grandmamma falls dead
A dozen times or more.

Third, like a furnace does he sigh;
Of course we know the gist,
He tells the maiden fair she is
The first he ever kissed.

Fourth age, he comes home in the
Morn,
And gladness fills his cup—
The good Samaritan has been
With sick friends sitting up.

Fifth, to the woodshed he repairs
His hear to interview,
And says—"My son—kewswat! Kewswat!"
This hurts me more than you!"

He next has leisure on his hands
And fills a jug with bait;
He hooks a minnow, then he swears
Ten pounds to be its weight.

Last age, when lean and slipped
Grown,
He finds his greatest joy
In telling what perfection ruled
The days he was a boy.
—New York Sun.

WHEN YOU AND I WERE BOYS

When you and I were boys
There were more joy in joys,
More fun in fun,
More mirth in mirth,
Than since we've walked the earth
One-third a century down.
And know the world's cold frown.

The sun held then more light,
More sweet the flowers—more bright,
More song of bird,
More love, more cheer,
Than line the pathway here,
When we have trod half way
Toward the close of day.

Then bluer were the skies;
More stars made glad our eyes;
And, bathed in light
Both day and night,
The future pathway lay
All glorified and fair,
To tempt us onward there.

When you and I were boys,
Sweet were our childish joys,
God's mercy hid
The rocky-strewn path,
The wintry blast, storms' wrath,
The weariness, the thorn,
And gave a cloudless day.

REST.

Down beside our sleeping river,
Where the waters laugh and sing,
There is pleasure for the weary;
With its merry little ring
It will load your heart with joy,
As it leaves its grassy banks,
And curls and swirls so funny,
With its many little pranks.

Then leave your stuffy office,
And lie yourself away,
To take a little heart-ease,
And spend a pleasant day;
Your mind will be far brighter,
Your soul will rise above
The vexing cares of daily life,
And brighten up your love,
God always holds a lesson,
For you to see and know,
The music of the winding stream,
As it doth ever flow.

Go learn to see God's beauty,
That shines on every hand,
And is an index truly,
To His holy, happy land.
Then give your soul more freedom,
To tread in brighter ways,
And serve the Lord more truly,
In all your coming days.
—E. B. Parkes.

Only he who lives a life of his own
can help the lives of other men.

Fear not when men speak evil of you; fear lest you should do evil.