

is taken. Peter has none to give except his word, which is as good as his bond. He stays away two months, returning just before Christmas. He arrives at the fort driving his dog team of three "giddies" (Indian dogs) and a battered old sled. Coming into the house he takes off his hat and sits down on the floor. Then he takes out his pipe and gazes significantly into the empty bowl; he hasn't had a smoke for three weeks—think of it, you lovers of the weed. With a smile the factor hands over his tobacco pouch and Peter proceeds to load up.

Next he goes over to the fire place and spears a live coal on the end of his knife, then he is ready for conversation.

"Well, Peter, what kind of a hunt did you have?"

"Not very good."

Peter is lying and he knows the factor is aware of it. He has had one of the best hunts of his life. The factor, however, is a little bit worried.

"What did you get?"

"Oh, one or two martin and mink and a few beaver and foxes, about fifty skins." As he had received one hundred skins

in "debt" the factor looks disappointed, but noting the canny look in Peter's eye he cheers up.

"Well, we will take a look at your catch to-morrow; in the meantime put your sled in the fur store for safe keeping."

The next morning Peter comes around about 9:30 and they go over to the store. The sled wrapper is opened up and discloses to view a goodly assortment of mink, martin, foxes, etc. The factor begins to cheer up. Peter has been having his little joke. The furs are sorted out, minks in one pile, martins in another, and so on. Then they are counted and it is found the catch includes forty martin, twenty-five mink, thirty beaver, ten foxes, three otter, five fisher, and three bear skins; five hundred and six made beaver in all. The skin of each animal has a set value regardless of its quality, so that there is no haggling over prices. Besides, the Company is the only buyer. These conditions obtained some years ago. I understand the method of appraisal is now different.

After the counting is done they go over to the merchandise store and Peter's name is entered on the books showing a credit of four hundred and six made beaver; his debt having been deducted.

Then he proceeds to do his buying. First, he wants ten pounds of tea, and spreads out a very dirty red cotton handkerchief for its reception. The Company supplies no wrapping paper. Next he wants some powder and ball, and twenty plugs of tobacco. He doesn't know where to put this, so pulls out his shirt and ties it in a knot in one corner.

ing that the still "must be thrown into the river." He first tied a stout rope to it, on the other end of the rope he tied a piece of wood. Then, so there would be no lack of evidence, he invited the population of the fort—including the resident missionaries—to the river bank. Carefully concealing the rope. The still was duly "thrown into the river" in full view of everyone, but the same night Sandy rowed out to the spot where the improvised buoy floated on the surface and drew back his precious still to safety.

But to get back to the fur trade story.

In the spring a few days before the departure of the boats for the south, the furs are put up in bales weighing about one hundred pounds each. The method of baling is as follows: The skins are first placed carefully in a large wooden press, designed to hold a bale eighteen inches by three feet. On top is placed a heavy wooden beam secured on one side with a rawhide rope and projecting out from the other side about ten feet; then a heavy pressure is brought to bear on this end until the bale is pressed down tightly, after which it is bound with rawhide thongs—three wooden staves being placed on top and bottom to keep the binding from cutting the fur. Meanwhile another stave has been branded with the number of the bale and letters designating the district and fort. This is then driven in under the thongs and the package is ready for its long journey to the Company's warehouse in London, England, where they are auctioned off at the annual fur sale.

The next time we see Mr. Martin or



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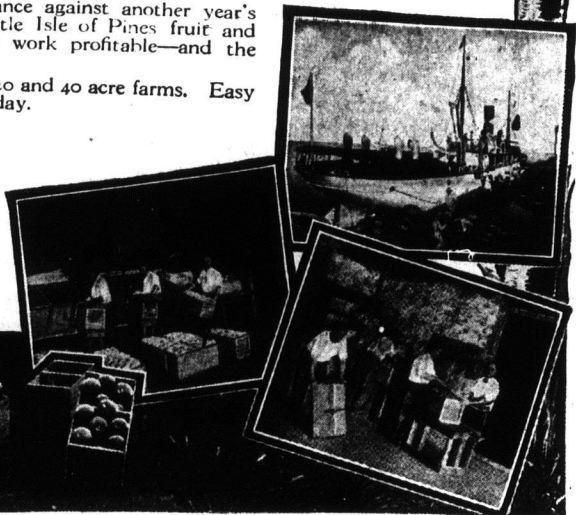
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Newly equipped Belgian Army preparing for the launching of a great offensive. Photo shows the auxiliary sub-lieutenants at a military field instruction camp jumping over the handicaps with their mounts.

Next he wants matches; having no convenient receptacle he places them in his cap and goes bareheaded. And so the trading goes on until Peter has exhausted his imagination and decides to let the balance stand to his credit. The next day he leaves for his hunting grounds and is not seen again until the following April, coming in on the last ice.

A paternal government does not permit the sale of spirituous liquor to the Canadian Indian and the McKenzie river Indian is no exception to the rule. Only a limited supply of liquor is permitted to be imported into the country, each white man being allowed the privilege of importing not more than five gallons, under a special permit, which is issued at the discretion of the department. This limited quantity, however, did not satisfy the demand of one old Scotchman at Fort Simpson, who had been brought up in the distillery section of Scotland. Although from the number of Scotch whiskeys advertised one gathers that the whole of Scotland is one vast distillery.

However, to get back to the story, this old chap decided to install a miniature distillery of his own and did so, making a very fair brand of whiskey. As far as he knew the law contained no provision prohibiting the manufacture of liquor in the country.

The still had been in operation a couple of years when an official order was received from the Hudson's Bay Company's commission in Winnipeg, commanding that the still "must be thrown into the river." It was a sad day for "Sandy." He studied the order carefully many times and at last thought he had discovered a loophole in the very definite word-

Mink he is decorating the fair feminine forms of New York, London or Paris. During the transition from Peter's sled to their ultimate destination they increase wonderfully in value; the difference accounting for the very satisfactory dividends which the shareholders of the Company are permitted to enjoy.

I am afraid, however, that neither Mr. Shareholder nor my lady realize the hardships, loneliness and dangers gone through in order to satisfy their desires.

Good Attendance at Manitoba Short Courses

The attendance of students at the various two weeks' short courses being put on in Manitoba this winter promises to be large. The first course of the series has just been completed at Whitmouth. This is in a district east of Winnipeg where, up to the present, there has not been a great deal of organized activity along lines of agricultural education. The enrollment there was over 40. At the Brandon course devoted exclusively to field crops, the enrollment of young men is expected to be about 60 or more, while at Winkler more than 60 men and 40 women are expected to attend. The list of places to be visited by these short courses this season are as follows: Whitmouth, Beausejour, Winkler, Brandon (two separate schools), Souris, Deloraine, Killarney, Boissevain, Gilbert Plains, Plumam, McCreary, St. Pierre, Holland, Portage la Prairie, Langruth and Birtle.

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