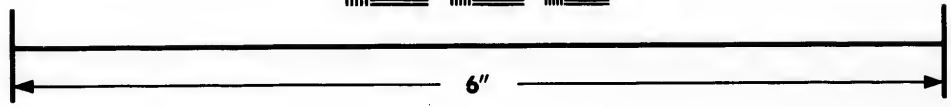
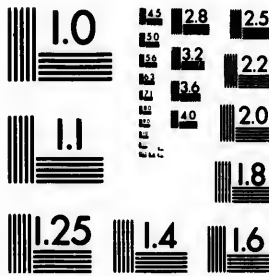


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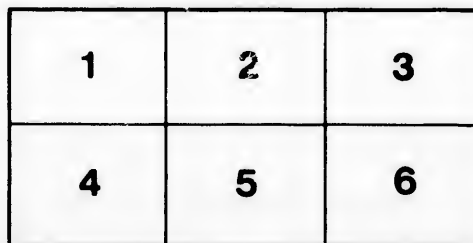
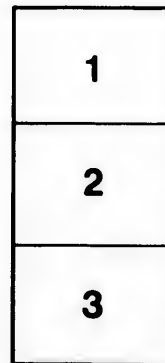
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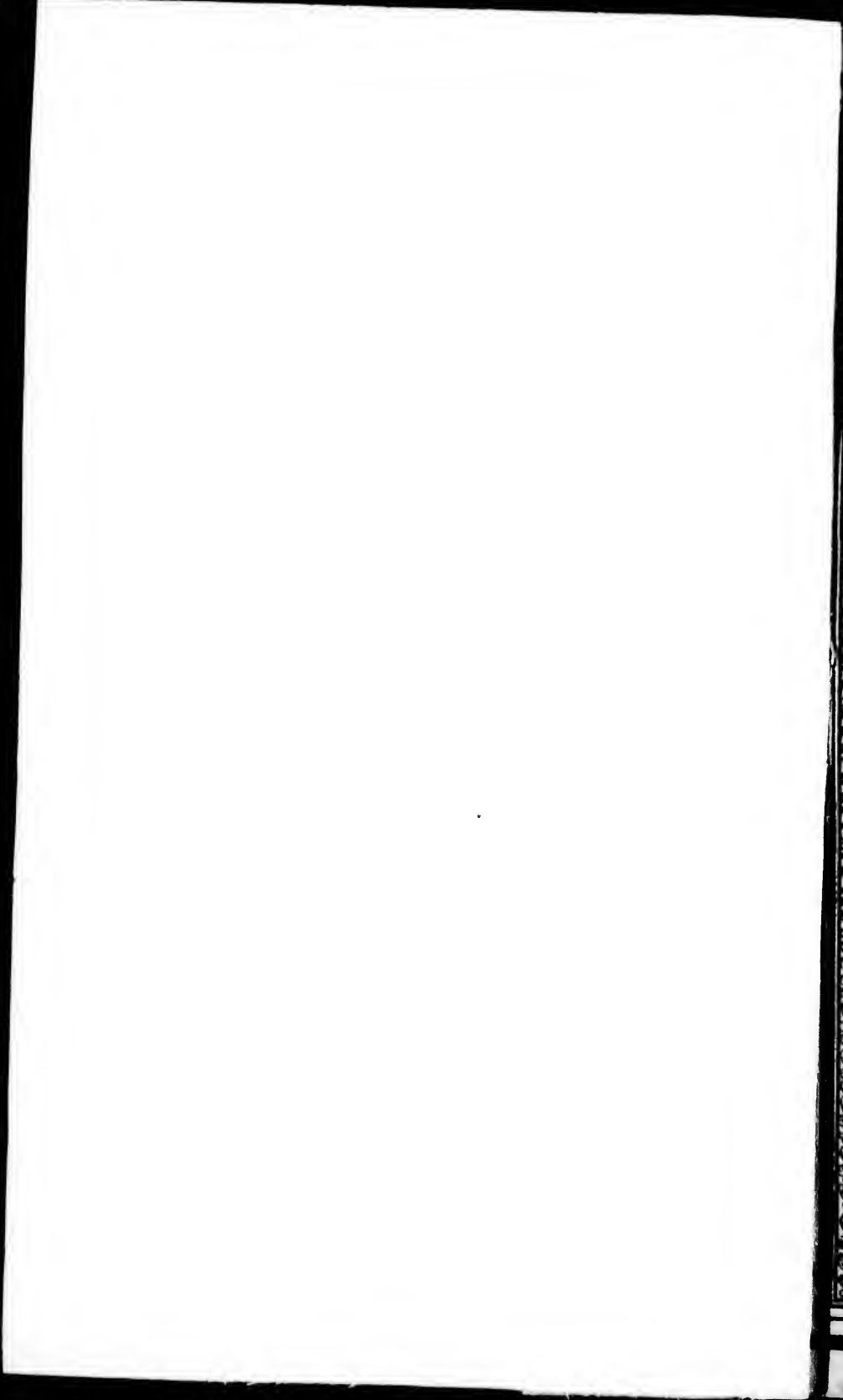
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# TRAVEL ADVENTURE AND SPORT.

FROM

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE

No. II.

**Narrative of the Red River  
Expedition. By GENERAL  
VISCOUNT WOLSELEY, G.C.B.**

**Remarkable Preservation  
from Death at Sea.**

**A Ride to Babylon.**

**The King of Tristan  
d'Acunha: A Forgotten  
Monarch.**



NEW YORK: WHITE AND ALLEN

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TRAVEL,  
ADVENTURE, AND SPORT

FROM

'Blackwood's Magazine'

VOL. I.

NEW YORK: WHITE AND ALLEN  
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A SKETCH IN THE TROPICS.

HOW I CAUGHT MY FIRST SALMON.

NARRATIVE OF THE RED RIVER EXPEDITION.

REMARKABLE PRESERVATION FROM DEATH AT SEA.

A RIDE TO BABYLON.

THE KING OF TRISTAN D'ACUNHA: A FORGOTTEN MONARCH.

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NARRATIVE OF THE RED RIVER  
EXPEDITION.

BY GENERAL VISCOUNT WOLSELEY, G.C.B.

[MAGA. DECEMBER 1870-FEBRUARY 1871.]

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I.

**W**HILST two great Powers were preparing for that fearful war which in 1870 devastated the provinces of France, a small military expedition was being organised on the shores of Lake Superior for an advance into the Red River Territory. The writer of this article took an active part in the many wild adventures by flood and field encountered during that undertaking, and has good reason to remember with admiration the manner in which all ranks bore their share of the excessive toil and constant exposure entailed upon them during that curiously interesting operation. It had been determined upon in the spring, and the circumstances which necessitated it may be briefly described as follows.

After many years of fruitless negotiation between Canada and the Hudson Bay Company, in which England acted as a sort of go-between or mutual friend, it was arranged, in 1869, that the undefined country officially known as Rupert's Land, together with all the territorial rights appertaining to the Company in North America, should be transferred to the recently-established Dominion of Canada for the sum of £300,000. That was practically the arrangement; but there was a three-cornered ceremony to be gone through first, in accordance with which those vast outlying portions of the empire were to be legally transferred on paper to England, and then made over by royal proclamation to the Dominion.

The country had long been in the possession of the Hudson Bay Company, who had received a charter in 1670 from Charles II., granting them sovereign rights over a large proportion of the North American continent. In the days of that gallant monarch our geographical knowledge of the western hemisphere was but small, and consequently the description of the limits given over to their jurisdiction, as recorded in the charter, was very vague. It may be fairly assumed that this uncertainty of title was one of the chief causes why the Company had never been desirous of having its claims inquired into before the courts of law.

In 1783 a rival trading-company—the "North-Western"—was started; and in 1812 Lord Selkirk

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attempted to form a colony of Sutherlandshire High-landers on the Red River, but the attempt was little better than a failure. These two companies—the Hudson Bay and the North-Western—having contended with one another for the valuable fur-trade of the country to their mutual injury, and until both were nearly ruined, united in the year 1822, both being since then merged in one under the ancient title of the Hudson Bay Company.

In order to carry on commercial operations, it was essential to have a certain number of white men at each of their numerous posts scattered over the continent from its western shores to where Canadian civilisation, advancing from the Atlantic, was met with. Each of these posts soon became the nucleus of a small community. European women were scarce, and communication with England was both difficult and tedious; so men were obliged to content themselves with Indian wives, and a half-breed population was the result. For inland navigation along the many lakes and rivers that form such a network over a large proportion of our North American possessions, there is no better man than the French Canadian voyageur. A large number of them have always been in the Hudson Bay service, which accounts for the fact of the French and English languages being spoken by about equal numbers on the banks of the Red River. The language of the voyageur class, no matter from what race he may have sprung, has long

been French ; and the officers of the Company, speaking both languages, have always found it simpler to speak French than to take any trouble to teach their servants English.

French Canadian priests and Jesuit missionaries from France soon established themselves everywhere under the protection of the Company, and, with their usual zeal, quickly built up for their Church a considerable following amongst the families of a mixed origin. People conversant with the ways of priestcraft in other countries will easily understand the influence they obtained amongst a rural and scattered population, in such an isolated place as Red River. Although the Hudson Bay Company officers were the rulers *de jure*, the priests were so *de facto*.

At first sight it may appear strange that this could take place in a settlement where the Protestants and Romanists were about equal in numbers ; but when it is remembered that the former consisted of several nationalities, and of still more numerous sects without any one recognised ruler, and with many divergent interests, it can readily be understood how the smaller half, acting and voting as a unit under the direction of a clever wily bishop, backed up by a well-disciplined staff of obedient priests, maintained an unquestioned supremacy. So much was this the case, that the legal rulers were only too glad to govern through their influence.

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occupation of these vast prairies. First, the Hudson Bay Company; and secondly, the Roman Catholic priesthood.

To have opened them out for colonisation would have been suicidal to a Company enjoying the monopoly of the Indian trade. It would also have seriously affected the supply of fur, as the number of wild animals decreases in a geometrical ratio, whilst population goes on increasing only in an arithmetical one. Its governing body has therefore for years back endeavoured in a quiet way to keep the country as unknown and as much to themselves as possible, and to deter emigrants from going there by depreciating its value in the eyes of the world; so much so, that many believed it to be a desert, where grasshoppers ruled in summer, and an almost life-destroying cold in winter.

As for the Roman Catholic priesthood, they were desirous of gradually building up there another French province, where the language, religion, and laws of Lower Canada might be perpetuated, and which in times to come might, in conjunction with it, be some counterpoise to the steadily-increasing, and by them much dreaded, preponderance of Ontario. They hoped to mould the Red River into what they would have described as a peaceable, orderly, and contented people, but which, in the exact and cold-blooded language of Protestantism, meant an ignorant and superstitious peasantry, recog-



nising only as law that which was announced from their altars; devoid of education, except such as their priestly teachers thought fit to give them; taught only the *patois* which passes current there for French, so that they should be unable to read English papers; and only just sufficiently well off in that fertile land to enable them to lead a lazy, idle life. In fine, both Company and priesthood were determined to oppose an immigration which would be destructive to the trading monopoly of the one, and to the unquestioned authority of the other. Both combined in describing the country as unfit for settlement; and quite recently a Roman Catholic bishop, who has long resided in the north-west, published an interesting work upon that country, but full of startling statements as to the fearful severity of its climate, and of its general unsuitability for farming purposes. He endeavoured as far as possible to depreciate its value politically, so as to have deterred the Government of Canada from taking steps towards opening out communication with it.

Canada, a thickly-wooded country, only affords a home to settlers after years of toil spent in clearing the land. The western province, now known as Ontario, has long been the go-ahead portion of British North America, whilst that to the east, now called Quebec, was always lethargic, progress being neither known nor desired there.

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by side—not even divided by any natural boundary, as England is from France—have always maintained their original national characteristics. Those of Quebec evince a contentedness with their lot in life, and a dislike to change of all sorts, not only as regards their manners and customs, but even their place of residence; whilst those of Ontario, descended from British ancestors, retain that love for adventure and that spirit of enterprise for which our countrymen are so generally celebrated.

The men of Ontario have always suspected the truth of the statements made regarding the great prairie country which every one knew lay between the Red River and the Rocky Mountains. For years back their gaze has been fixed upon that territory, longing for the privilege of planting it with grain, and of establishing themselves in a country where rumour said that luxuriant crops were obtainable without either the labour of clearing it from timber or the cost of manuring it.

The distance from Canada was so great, and the intervening difficulties were of such magnitude, that it was practically out of the power of farmers or of the ordinary class of emigrants to make a journey there. Unless, therefore, Government stepped in, and, by opening out roads and improving the almost continuous line of water communication existing between Lake Superior and the Lake of the Woods, enabled the working class to reach Fort Garry at a

reasonable cost, the Red River country never could be settled by British subjects.

A few disinterested travellers, such as English officers on leave, bent on buffalo-hunting, now and then penetrated into this much-asperseed land, and came back telling of its boundless plains and unparalleled fertility; but as it is the English fashion to pooh-pooh information coming from such sources, their reports received but little attention.

The secret was tolerably well kept for many years; but at last so much pressure was put upon the Canadian Government that an exploring expedition was despatched by it in 1858, with orders to report fully upon the resources of the North-West Territory. The results of these explorations were published the following year, and the people of Canada learnt, on official authority, that it was fertile beyond the most sanguine expectations. A few settlers from Ontario soon after established themselves in the neighbourhood of Fort Garry, and so gave birth to a party whose policy was progress, and whose constantly-repeated demand was—"Open out communication between us and Canada; let us have plenty of emigrants: all we require is population and facilities for carrying our produce to a market." It was soon known as the "Canadian Party"; and its feeling was disseminated throughout the neighbouring provinces through the columns of a newspaper estab-

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lished under its auspices at the village of Winnipeg, in the neighbourhood of Fort Garry.

As may easily be understood, this party of progress soon came into collision with those already described as bent upon keeping back the country. The result was a very angry feeling between the two sections into which public opinion thus became divided. All the Canadians who had settled there, backed up by the press of Ontario, were on one side, and the great mass of the French-speaking people were on the other. This difference of opinion coincided with difference of origin, the parties quickly assumed a national aspect, and the priests endeavoured to give it a religious one also.

The Hudson Bay Company, governed by a Board of Directors in London who were aloof from the direct influence of local feeling, was first of the two divisions comprising the reactionary party to perceive that the time had arrived when they must either endeavour to withdraw, with profit to themselves, from their hitherto obstructive policy, or else submit to see their power to obstruct taken forcibly from them. A disposition on their part to treat for the voluntary surrender of their undefined and disputed rights soon resulted in the bargain of 1869, by which they were to receive the sum already stated, and retain possession of all their forts and posts, together with a large acreage of land in their vicinity.

The Ministry of Canada, backed up by public opinion throughout the country, at once passed a Bill for the establishment of a government in this newly-acquired province. We are warned by a French proverb, that the first step in all transactions is a most important one; and that taken by the Dominion Government towards establishing their authority was no exception to the rule. Their first direct step was to send forward surveyors to plot out the country into townships; and this was the actual circumstance that gave rise to the first overt act of rebellion on the part of the French people there. The men employed upon this service, as well as their assistants and followers, were all either from England or from Ontario. Around these surveyors, as round a centre, were collected a small band of Canadians, who had followed in their wake, hoping to obtain large grants of land and make fortunes when the new Government was established.

The people of the country were thoroughly discontented at the cavalier way in which they had been treated, as their will had never been consulted by any of the three parties who had arranged the terms of transfer. A feeling of irritation was abroad, which the bearing of the surveyors and other Canadians towards them served to increase beyond measure. Many of the latter began to stake out farms for themselves, which they openly declared they meant to claim as soon as the new Governor had arrived.

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The Hudson Bay Company officials residing in the territory were loud-spoken in denouncing the bargain entered into by their Directors in London: they said it injured them materially, without providing any compensation for the loss they were about to sustain; that they, the working-bees of the hive, were to receive nothing, whilst the drones of stockholders in England were to get all the honey in the shape of the £300,000.

The English-speaking farmers, although thoroughly loyal, and anxious for annexation to Canada, so as to be delivered from what many called the "thralldom of the Hudson Bay Company," regarded the terms of the transfer in no favourable light. They thought they should have been consulted; and the injudicious silence of the Canadian Ministry with reference to the form of government to be established, caused many divisions amongst this party. Although they would have scorned to take part in any actual resistance against the establishment of the new order of things, yet they were by no means sorry to see the Ottawa Ministry in difficulties. They considered themselves slighted, and were sulky in consequence. They had no intention of giving themselves any trouble to aid a Government that had not only failed to consult or consider their interests, but had ignored their existence altogether.

With the exception, therefore, of the small handful of Canadian adventurers already alluded to, no

one residing in the settlement in 1869 was pleased with the arrangement, and many were loud-spoken in denouncing it. Where such active elements of discontent existed, it may easily be imagined how simple it was to fan the smouldering embers into the flame of active rebellion.

The previous political history of the country was curious, from the fact of there never having been any active government whatever. There was nominally a Governor and a Council, in whom resided all sovereign powers. A lawyer's clerk had been converted into a judge by the Hudson Bay Company, and consequently there was an impression abroad, be it true or untrue, that no one could look for impartial justice being done in any case in which that corporation was interested. There was a code of laws, but there was no police, so the rulers had to depend upon a few special constables sworn in from time to time as required, for the execution of the law's decree.

Upon several occasions the law had been forcibly resisted with success: men condemned to imprisonment in suits in which the Company was interested had been released from their cells under the walls of Fort Garry by a crowd of sympathising friends, who had assembled for that purpose. Not many years ago four men had combined together and proclaimed a republic. One was named president, and two others appointed the principal ministers of this liliputian government. Amongst the first acts of

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this self-constituted trinity was a decree condemning the fourth conspirator to death. This fourth man was a German tailor, and as he constituted in his own person the whole of the population recognising the authority of these *soi-disant* rulers, there was no one to carry the sentence into execution. Whether it was owing to the discredit which this powerlessness to enforce their decrees brought upon them, or from the general loyalty of the people to British institutions, we know not; but this republic was as shortlived as a butterfly, and its appearance and disappearance caused as little excitement and had as little influence upon the Red River world as would the advent or departure of such an insect.

This trifling incident is merely related to convey an idea of the state of society which existed there up to 1868. The people lived in peace and harmony with one another. They paid no taxes, and were so little accustomed to the machinery of a government, or the responsibilities of having to make laws or administer them themselves, that when these few adventurers tried to impress upon their minds the glories resulting from the exercise of the noble right of self-government, following up their lessons by proclaiming a republic, the inhabitants of the Red River Territory merely laughed.

The only politics which existed—and they were of recent growth—consisted in being for or against the Hudson Bay Company. A monopoly must al-



ways be obnoxious to the majority, and never even in feudal times has there been a more rigid one than that established formerly throughout the great North West by that corporate body. No one else could import anything into the country, or send any fur out of it; and it may be said that no one could either buy or sell except from the Hudson Bay officials. Even at this moment the whole of the inland communications are in its hands, and no banking arrangements can be made except through its agents. Notwithstanding the heavy expenses entailed by the conveyance of goods over the great distances that separate the country from civilisation, yet it will always be to many a subject for wonder how it was that the Company generally was not tenfold richer. Even since the monopoly of trade was abolished, the Company still practically received a percentage in some way or other upon every business transaction that took place.

The only export from the country was fur: an Indian comes to sell skins; after some bargaining he agrees to take so much money for them. He is paid in powder, shot, or other goods, which are sold to him at a great profit, whilst the purchased articles are exported to Europe, and again sold at a great profit. In this way a double advantage was obtained; and consequently it is very strange that the affairs of the Company have not been for some years back in as flourishing a condition as they might have

and never even been. There is only one solution to be arrived at, which is, that it has long been very badly served and administered abroad.

The enemies of the Company were numerous in Canada, and had made themselves felt even within its own territory of Rupert's Land. Every year added to their numbers. Those born there said their poverty was owing to the country being cut off from all outside trade and emigration by the direct action the Company took to keep things *in statu quo*. All Canadians or others who penetrated into the country and settled there joined this discontented party, which had assumed such importance previous to the arrangements being made for the transfer of the country, that had the Company refused to comply with it and persisted in its former policy of seclusion, it would soon doubtless have had all power forcibly wrested from it by the Canadian party within its own territories.

Unfortunately the arrangement entered into had an air of purchase about it, and a cry resounded throughout the North-West that its inhabitants were being bought and sold like so many cattle. With such a text the most commonplace of democrats could preach for hours; and poor indeed must have been their clap-trap eloquence if an ignorant and impressionable people such as those at Red River had not been aroused by it.

The surveyors were at work all through the

autumn of 1869, and in prosecuting their operations frequently ran chain-lines across the farms of men whose language they could not speak, and with whom they had no feelings in common. A report soon got abroad that the Canadian Government intended possessing themselves of all the land for the purpose of allotting it among the host of emigrants who, rumour said, were to follow the establishment of the new order of things. A large proportion of farmers could produce no title-deeds to the lands they claimed; many could not even assert what is generally recognised as the outward visible symbol of possession in such matters—namely, the fact of their being fenced in. The country had never been regularly laid off for settlement; but according as each successive settler occupied land, he had followed the example of those who had done so before him—that is, he nominally “took up” 100 acres, abutting with a narrow frontage on the river, but fenced in only the few acres nearest the water, on which he built his house, and which alone he placed under cultivation. In rear of this undefined plot of land extended the prairie, over which, to a depth of two miles with a breadth equal to the river frontage, the farmer exercised by custom a right of cutting hay. There was no market for produce: as the nearest railway station was about 600 miles distant in the United States, the export of grain was practically impossible; and there was no internal demand for it, as every

their operation settler grew enough corn for his own consumption. The consequence was, that not more than a few acres of each farm, as has been already stated, was ever cultivated or fenced in, the remainder of the 100 acres being allowed to remain in its primeval condition.

A few restless spirits, such as are ever to be found in all countries, saw in the state of affairs which we have endeavoured to describe an opportunity for action. They went round in the autumn of 1869 amongst the French-speaking portion of the community, preaching resistance to the Canadian Government. Every feeling that stirs mankind was appealed to. They were called upon to be men, and by their courage to save themselves from having their lands taken from them and distributed amongst others, and their altars from being desecrated. They were told over and over again that Canada intended to destroy their religion, and to overrun their country with a heretical population, who would ignore their rights. Their priesthood encouraged this feeling, and aided the movement.

At the head of this rising was a man named Louis Riel. He was born of French Canadian parents, who had emigrated to the Red River; and although he had not a drop of Indian blood in his veins, he had a large number of half-breed relations and connections; and in order to identify himself as much as possible with the people, he invariably spoke of himself as a half-breed. He had been educated at

a Roman Catholic school in Canada, and at one time it was hoped he would have entered the Church. Instead of doing so, however, he became a clerk in a shop at St Paul's, Minnesota, where he resided for a few years, but was eventually dismissed for dishonesty. His prospects being thus under a cloud, he returned to the neighbourhood of Fort Garry, and lived in the greatest poverty with his mother. So indigent were their circumstances that, finding himself succeeding in his *rôle* of demagogue, and considering it necessary to be the possessor of a black cloth coat, he was obliged to sell his mother's only cow to procure the money required for that purpose. He is a man of considerable moral determination, although all who know him say that he is wanting in physical courage. His command of language is great, and his power over his audience immense. He speaks English intelligibly, and his proclamations denote considerable talent and power of thought.

The first overt act of resistance was in October 1869, when Riel, followed by a few half-breeds, warned a surveying party to desist from their work, and insisted on their moving their camp out of the district where they were employed. Meetings were then called in the various parishes where the French predominated, at which Riel and others made inflammatory speeches. The people were thoroughly aroused; and even the priests, who generally kept as much as possible in the background, preached re-

sistance to the Canadian Government from their altars.

Mr William M'Dougall had been selected by the Dominion Ministry to be the Lieutenant-Governor of the newly-acquired province. It was an injudicious appointment, as those who knew that gentleman were aware at the time. He had been for many years in political life, having been previously well known as an able newspaper writer. Indeed, like a large number of men who have held high positions both in Canada and the United States, he may be said to have attained power through his connection with the press. He was known to be an essentially cold-blooded man, entirely wanting in that cordiality which is an indispensable quality with those who have to lead or even to act with others in the direction of affairs. He had some political supporters, but he was said to have no friends. There was nothing genial about him, and his manner was said at times to be so unsympathetic that many left his presence accusing him of rudeness. We shall not attempt to enter upon Canadian politics—that most uninteresting and least edifying of topics—in order to trace the progress of events which led up to this strange appointment; suffice it to say that the Ministry which then ruled at Ottawa was a coalition one, the Conservative element being, however, the strongest. The intended Lieutenant-Governor was Minister of Public Works in that administra-

tion, having been brought over from the Opposition upon certain terms when the coalition was formed. The Tory element being in the ascendant, and many changes having recently occurred in the Ministry, vacant places in it were filled up by the adherents of that party, thereby destroying the proportion or balance between the several parties which it was alleged by Mr M'Dougall's clique had been agreed upon when the Ministry was first formed. This gave rise to dissensions, which the far-sighted policy adopted regarding the Intercolonial Railway afforded many opportunities for widening into such a breach, that it became at last a necessity that Mr M'Dougall should cease to be a Minister. To have dismissed him would have been fatal, so it was necessary to provide for him. The annexation of Rupert's Land just at that time was most opportune, and to send him there as Lieutenant-Governor was an easy solution of the difficulty. What mattered it whether he was fitted for the post or not, as long as he was got rid of without any scandal! Who cared whether he might or might not be agreeable to the people he was to rule over, and what could it matter whether the wretched half-breed population were pleased or not!

Party politics in Canada must first be attended to; they were of all-absorbing importance; and the North-West and its new Lieutenant-Governor must settle their affairs between themselves.

No attempt was made by the Ottawa Govern-

ment to conciliate their newly acquired subjects. The Governor appointed by the Hudson Bay Company, who was to exercise authority until Mr M'Dougall reached Fort Garry, was never even communicated with. One would have thought that common civility, if not political tact, would have caused the Ottawa Ministry to have informed him in writing of Mr M'Dougall's appointment, and of the date at which his arrival might be expected; the old Governor's co-operation and assistance in establishing the new order of things might, with advantage, have been solicited at the same time. No explanations were made as to what was to be the policy of Canada in its dealings with Rupert's Land. In fact, the people of that country were so thoroughly ignored, they were easily led to believe that their material interests would be so also, in favour of the emigrants that rumour and the Canadian surveyors said might shortly be expected to arrive at Red River.

A little judicious management at first would have secured an amicable settlement, and have frustrated the clerical party, which was desirous of fomenting resistance. A clear statement of what was intended to be done, and a declaration stating, that the rights of property would be respected; that all those in *bonâ fide* occupation of land should retain it without rent, and receive a regular legal title for it; that all religions would be respected, and every one allowed to worship as he liked,—this would most certainly have



cut the ground from under the feet of all the political agitators there.

During a crisis such as that which occurred in the settlement in 1869, when rebellion hangs in the balance, every moment is of such importance that, when once the scale has gone down on the side of revolution, days or months afterwards cannot compensate for the loss.

Men who to-day shudder at the idea of resistance to the laws, or at the word disloyalty, will to-morrow take office under a revolutionary government, and exercise their functions with placidity when once the first overt act of rebellion has been committed, and they have accustomed their minds to the fact of its existence. When we see around us the machinery of a government at work without any opposition, we are prone to accept its decrees unhesitatingly, not so much from the tendency of mankind to follow with the herd, as from that love of order, and that respect for those whom we see exercising governing functions, which is inherent in us.

Mr M'Dougall was told to go to Fort Garry, and that, shortly after his arrival, the Queen's proclamation transferring the territory to the Dominion would be published. He travelled through the United States to Pembina, which is a wretched little village on the frontier dividing the British and American territories, but situated within the latter. He there learnt that a number of French half-breeds had

announced their intention of preventing him from entering their country, and that a party of them had erected a barricade on the road leading from Pembina to Fort Garry, which they intended to defend by force of arms.

It is unnecessary to describe the little rebellion any further, or to dilate upon the cruelties, the robberies, and the imprisonments, which were inflicted upon subjects of her Majesty by the wretched man Louis Riel, aided and abetted by the French priesthood. Is not a description of all these violent deeds written in numerous Blue-books?

Louis Riel had, with the assistance of the priestly party, declared himself "President of the Republic of the North-West," and had nominated a Ministry from amongst his followers. Without attempting to follow the doings of this ridiculous Government, suffice it to say that Riel thought it necessary to take a man's life in order to prove that he was in earnest, and to strike terror into the English-speaking portion of the community, which, although not actively opposed to him, was still, he knew, inimical to his sway. From amongst the many Canadians whom he kept ironed in his prison, he selected as his victim a man named Scott, apparently because he was the most objectionable to him personally, and because he had been most loud-spoken in his expressions of loyalty to the Queen, and in denouncing Riel and his gang as rebels. Scott could not speak

French ; but he was arraigned before a mock court-martial composed of some half-breeds, having a man named Lapine as president, the French language only being used. A frivolous charge of breach of parole (which was not true) was alleged against him, and he was condemned to be shot. The execution was carried out within a few hours by some intoxicated half-breeds, commanded by a United States citizen who had been in the Northern army. This murder is said to have been carried out in a cruel and atrocious manner. Those who perpetrated it by Riel's orders were at the time addressed by a French priest on the ground where it was committed, and told they were about to perform a righteous act.

Mr Scott's murder caused a cry of execration to resound throughout the English districts of Canada. The press, which everywhere in the province of Ontario had all through these affairs called for active measures, now preached up a crusade, and with such effect that it is almost beyond doubt that had the priestly party in Canada succeeded, through their mouthpieces, in preventing an armed expedition being sent to the Red River, there would have arisen in Ontario an organisation for sending an armed body of emigrants there, sworn to avenge the foul murder which had been perpetrated. Mr Scott was an Orangeman, a volunteer, and an Upper Canadian, and he had been murdered by those whom the people of Ontario regarded as French Canadians.

The event was pregnant with every element capable of calling forth the most violent feelings. The national rivalry between the English and French races, stronger in Canada than it has ever been at home, and the intense hatred which Orangemen, Low Churchmen, Presbyterians, and sectarians generally, entertain for Popery, were acted upon. Had 10,000 soldiers been required, they might have been enlisted with ease in Ontario. On the other hand, amongst the French Canadians popular sympathy was entirely with Riel; so much so, that when subsequently it was determined to despatch two battalions of militia to put down the rebellion, and to raise them in the two old provinces of Canada, one in each, it was found impossible to obtain more than 80 French Canadian recruits. The priesthood throughout the country had preached against the expedition, warning their flocks not to take part in an undertaking planned to injure their compatriots in the North-West, who spoke their language, were descended from the same ancestors, and who belonged to their faith. Over and over again they were told from the altar that the Protestants were anxious to send forth this expedition for the purpose of overturning the Catholic Church in that territory. Riel was painted in the most glowing colours as a patriot and a hero, struggling and prepared to fight for the rights of his race and the maintenance of the true faith.

With such antagonistic feelings abroad in the

country, the Ministry felt themselves in a most difficult position. All were agreed that the despatch of an armed force to the Red River was a political necessity if they wished to preserve their newly-bargained-for territory ; but a special vote of money would be required for that purpose, and the French-speaking members of Parliament had announced their intention of opposing any such appropriation, if coercive measures were to be resorted to. It would have been next to impossible to have carried the measure in the face of their opposition, so it became necessary to soothe their alarm by fair promises : no coercion was to be attempted, and the troops, when in Manitoba, were only to be used for the protection of property and the maintenance of law and order ; in fact, they were going there more in the capacity of police than of soldiers.

Mr Riel had previously been invited to send delegates to Ottawa to explain to the Government what the rebel demands really were. Two of the three he sent were obnoxious to the loyal Canadians. One, a French Canadian priest, was said to have taken a most active part on the rebel side throughout the disturbances, and to have been amongst the first to preach resistance. He was known to be a most intimate friend of Riel's, and was generally believed to be one of the chief pillars of the rebellion. The other was a young man of drunken habits and of no education. He was a shopboy by trade, and was what

is known in America as an Irish Yankee—a race that is not thought highly of in the United States. Having nothing to lose and everything to gain, he had gladly joined the rebel movement.

As soon as it was known in Ontario that these men were on their way to Ottawa by invitation of the Ministry, the whole country was indignant. "What!" it was said, "treat directly with two men who are alleged to have taken part in Scott's murder?" So violent was this feeling, that it was considered necessary to send a police magistrate to meet them in the States for the purpose of taking them to Ottawa secretly, by a roundabout way, so as to avoid passing through any of the large cities. When once they had reached Ottawa they would be safe from popular violence, as the French element is strong there. When it was announced that these men had arrived, indignation meetings were assembled all over the western province, at which resolutions were made deprecating in the strongest language their reception by the Governor-General. The brother of the murdered Scott had them arrested on a charge of being privy to the crime. They attempted to assume to themselves the importance and position of ambassadors sent by one sovereign state to another, and pleaded their immunity from imprisonment upon those grounds. The French party was entirely in their favour, and regarded the treatment they had met with as an outrage. This circumstance compli-

eated matters greatly, and was most embarrassing for the Ministry ; they could not override the law, and for some days it was doubtful whether a "true bill" might not be found against them. Fortunately for all parties, the case fell through from want of evidence.

These proceedings, however, added fuel to the flames of popular excitement, and served to embitter the feeling between the French and English parties. After long conferences between the delegates and the Ministers, a bill was framed for the establishment of a government at Fort Garry, the terms of which were so favourable to the rebels that the French-speaking members withdrew their threatened opposition. 1,400,000 acres were to be reserved for distribution amongst the half-breeds, ostensibly "to extinguish the Indian claims to land," but in reality for the purpose of enriching the Roman Church.

As previously mentioned, the half-breeds in the Red River settlement were already possessed of considerable farms, a very small part of which only they cultivated, if such a term may be applied to the trifling labour they bestow upon their land. Still, although they already owned more land than they knew what to do with, it was considered necessary to appropriate this vast acreage for their exclusive use, as by doing so the priests were satisfied, and when they were contented the whole French party was so also. All opposition having thus been re-

moved, the money required for the Expedition was voted in the House when the Manitoba Bill was introduced.

The only man of really statesmanlike ability in the Canadian Ministry was the Premier, Sir John A. Macdonald. Unfortunately for the country, he was just at this critical moment struck down by severe illness, and the general management of affairs devolved upon Sir George Cartier, the leader of the French Conservatives. In early life he had played a minor part in the Canadian rebellion of 1837, when he had actually borne arms against the British Crown—a crime which, in the opinion of some of his political opponents, his subsequent loyalty had not sufficed to wipe out. This tended to prejudice many against him; for it was considered natural that, having been once himself a rebel, he should sympathise with rebellion wherever he met it.

Sir G. Cartier, although a poor debater and of no very great ability, was a creditable specimen of Canadian public men. His greatest enemy dare not question his honesty, for he was still, comparatively speaking, a poor man. He was a firm friend and a good hater. His ordinary promise was more to be relied upon than the oath of many of his contemporaries, and he was a hard-working public servant. To accuse him of descending at times into jobbery and political trickery, is merely to accuse him of being a Canadian politician. Sir George Cartier



had entered Parliament in early life, and was soon recognised as the leader of the French Canadian national party, a position which enabled him at all times to command about 60 votes in the House of Commons. With such a following, it is easy to understand how he was able for many years to maintain himself in a prominent position in public life. Many who ought to know assert that at heart he had no real love for the Roman Catholic priesthood: such may perhaps have been his private feelings, but in public he had to bow before it. It is a lever of mighty power in the province of Quebec, and by doing political jobs for it, he secured its influence. Had he estranged that party from him, another who longed for the opportunity would soon have occupied the position he held as leader of the French Conservatives. Sir John Macdonald's illness was a fortunate circumstance for the rebel clique in Fort Garry, as it enabled their sympathising friends in Canada, through their influence with Sir G. Cartier, to obtain for them all that they could have reasonably wished for.

The reservation of land provided for in the Bill was calculated to injure the true interests of Manitoba by retarding emigration. There are several other clauses in the Bill referring to the creation of a legislature and to the rights of franchise, which tend to give a monopoly of political power to the French-speaking people for some years to come.

From what has been already stated regarding their views and aspirations, it may be inferred that a love for progress is not included in their political belief, so their political ascendancy promised no good for the country.

Although the Manitoba Bill passed through both Houses of Parliament with but little opposition, still the Government policy as expressed by it was denounced by all the leading and all the independent English newspapers in Canada as altogether in the interests of the French rebel party.

The £300,000 was paid to the Hudson Bay Company; and the Queen's proclamation transferring the whole North-Western territories to the Dominion was shortly to be issued.

The Imperial Government consented to co-operate in the military expedition to the Red River; and the strength of the force was, after a lengthened telegraphic correspondence, fixed at one weak battalion of regular infantry, two battalions of Canadian militia, and a small detachment of Royal Artillerymen and of Royal Engineers; about one-fourth of the total expense was to be defrayed from the home treasury, the remainder to be paid by the Dominion. Colonel Wolseley, then on the staff in Canada, was appointed to command it, and its organisation and equipment were rapidly pushed forward.

Having given a rough sketch of the political events that rendered necessary the despatch of a military

expedition to the Red River country, we shall now endeavour to give a general description of the region to be traversed, and of the difficulties to be overcome by it, reserving for another chapter an account of its organisation, and of the manner in which it fulfilled its mission.

A glance at the map of North America will show the reader that lying west of the inhabited provinces of Canada are Lakes Huron and Superior. They are united by the St Mary River of about fifty miles in length. A canal has been constructed on the American side of the river, by means of which vessels can avoid the rapids of Sault Ste Marie, and pass easily from lake to lake. Taking therefore Toronto, the chief town in Ontario, as a starting-point, a traveller wishing to reach Fort Garry through British territory would go by rail 94 miles to Collingwood, and from thence by steamer 534 miles to Thunder Bay, *viâ* the St Mary River Canal. The waters of Lake Superior and its tributaries flow into the Gulf of St Lawrence, whilst those of Lake Winnipeg empty themselves into Hudson Bay. These two water-systems are separated by a line of rugged hills which approach to within about 80 miles of Thunder Bay, the lowest pass over them in that locality being about 839 feet above Lake Superior.

Some years ago a route had been explored from Thunder Bay to Fort Garry; and a scheme was laid before the Canadian Parliament for improving it, by

the construction of canals, dams, and short roads, for facilitating the navigation of the lakes and rivers that lay along it, and for establishing land communications between them. The first link in the chain was to be a road of about 29 miles—from Thunder Bay to Dog Lake—by means of which the difficult navigation of the Kaministiquia River was to be avoided.

Little attention was, however, paid to the subject until 1868, when the road was begun. In the following year a better pass over the hills than that by Dog Lake was discovered, necessitating, however, a lengthening of the road from Thunder Bay to about 48 miles. As the word "portage" will frequently be met with in all narratives of North American travel, the reader should remember that it means a break in a chain of water communication, over which canoes and stores have to be carried on the men's backs.

The new route was therefore 48 miles by road through the forest to Shebandowan Lake, and from thence about 310 miles by rivers and lakes (with about 17 portages), to the Lake of the Woods. Some of these portages were more than a mile in length; and when it is remembered that all the boats and stores, &c. &c., required for the Expedition, had to be carried by the soldiers over these breaks in the navigation, an idea can be formed of the physical labour which such an operation would entail. From the Lake of the Woods to Fort Garry was about 100

miles in a straight line by land, but there was only a road made for about 60 miles of that distance, the unmade portion being laid out over most difficult swamps. If, therefore, the troops could not advance by that route, as was subsequently found to be the case, the only other way of reaching Manitoba was *viâ* the Winnipeg River, the navigation of which was known to be so difficult and dangerous that none but experienced guides ever attempt it. There were about 30 portages to be got over in the 160 miles extra thus added to the total length of the distance to be traversed.

In 1869 about twenty miles of the Thunder Bay road had been constructed; during the winter of 1869-70 bridges were constructed over the two largest rivers which crossed the line of road, and in the following spring the road was pushed on still farther some six or seven miles.

When early in 1870 arrangements were being made for the despatch of the Expedition, the Canadian Ministers impressed upon the military authorities responsible for its success that, by the time the troops had been collected together on the shores of Thunder Bay, the road from thence to Shebandowan would be fit for traffic, and that good roads would have been constructed over all the portages by the Public Works Department.

The country lying between Lake Superior and Red River was known to be a wilderness of poor

timber, lakes, rivers, and rocks, and to be uninhabited except by wandering tribes of Indians. The waters, it was said, abounded in fish, but the woods were almost destitute of game.

The Indians are the Chippewahs, a tribe that occupies the islands in Lakes Huron and Superior, and is scattered along their shores. They are essentially wood Indians, and venture but seldom on to the plains, being in mortal dread of their hereditary enemies the Sioux—the most warlike tribe now in North America. As long as the rivers are free of ice these Chippewahs almost live in their canoes, roving about in the localities where fish is most plentiful. Their canoes are small, and so light that a woman can easily carry one over the longest portage. On the shores of the great lakes, where these Indians have long been in contact with the white man, many of them are Christians; but those in the interior are still heathens, and will not submit to having missionaries settled amongst them. In summer they get blueberries, but their chief article of food is fish, although, here and there on fertile spots, they grow a few potatoes and a little Indian corn. They are an extremely dirty race: the men are very lazy, and cannot be depended upon to continue at any work they may be employed upon, although they are said to be truthful and honest. They are polygamists, and the morality of their women is not of a high order. They are very improvident, and cannot

be induced to lay by provisions in case of want, so that a winter seldom passes that some do not die from starvation. As they are all armed and capable of great endurance, and as the country generally is a network of lakes, where they can go in any direction for hundreds of miles in their light canoes, they might cause endless trouble and great loss to any military force seeking to push its way through the country without their permission.

They expect to be well paid by travellers in presents of provisions ; so their presence along the line of route added to the difficulties to be overcome, as all such presents would have to be carried by the troops, and every pound of extra weight was a serious matter.

For the conveyance of the provisions and stores between Thunder Bay and Shebandowan, a considerable transport corps would be required—all the material for which would have to be sent there in steamers, as also the forage required for the animals, for neither hay nor grass was to be had on the spot.

In fine, to get a military force to Red River, it was necessary to send it complete with all warlike appliances, and with at least two months' provisions, through a wilderness for a distance of above 600 miles, where no supplies of any description were obtainable. It was no wonder, therefore, that our Government paused and considered well before they committed any of her Majesty's troops to an opera-

tion beset with such difficulties, and where any serious mistakes on the part of those who conducted it would most probably have led to disastrous results.

## II.

The force consisted of the 1st Battalion 60th Rifles, two battalions of Canadian Militia, a detachment of Royal Engineers, and a detachment of Royal Artillery, with four 7-pounder guns.

Navigation opens usually on Lake Superior about the 8th or 10th of May; and it was essential that the troops for the Red River Expedition should rendezvous at the earliest possible date in Thunder Bay, on the western shores of that lake.

As described in the previous chapter, all ships sailing from Collingwood for that place must pass through the canal at the Sault Ste Marie, which runs exclusively through United States territory. To send soldiers through that canal had never been contemplated. They were to be landed on our side of the Ste Marie River, below the rapids, to march up the Canadian bank about three miles, and then embark again in the same steamers in which they had sailed from Collingwood, and which in the mean time were to have gone round through the canal. During the war between the North and South, we had never made any remonstrances when the Washington Government



sent warlike material up the St Lawrence through our canals into the lakes; in fact they had once sent a gunboat by that route. It was hoped that similar facility would be allowed to us, and that as long as no armed men violated their territory, no difficulty would be raised to our sending stores of all descriptions through the Ste Marie Canal. It was, however, thought advisable to send a steamer, laden only with a purely mercantile cargo, through the canal, as soon as it was open for traffic. One of the steamers that run every summer between Collingwood and Thunder Bay was selected for the purpose, and, when once on Lake Superior, it was intended to keep her there until it was officially ascertained whether the Americans meant to be obstructive or not. Having even one steamer on that lake would render us independent, as she could be kept constantly running across, taking men, horses, stores, &c., &c., from the Sault, to which place they could be brought by other vessels from Collingwood, without any possible violation of American territory. This was carried out successfully. The steamer was allowed to pass through the canal, the United States officials there being rather taken by surprise, and having no instructions on the point; the next steamer which attempted to pass about five days afterwards was stopped, although she had no warlike material on board; and the American authorities stated that no more British ships, no matter what their cargo might be,

should for the present be allowed to pass into Lake Superior.

This obstructive policy on the part of the Ministers at Washington did not, however, prevent the existence of very cordial relations between the local government authorities on both sides. We always felt that as a last resource we could buy or hire steamers belonging to United States citizens on Lake Superior for use there.

It was said that Riel, or at least some of his gang, had been coquetting with the American authorities upon the subject of annexation, and the press throughout the Western States of America openly declared a desire to hinder the British troops from getting to Fort Garry.

As it was thought that the single steamer which, as already described, we had succeeded in placing upon Lake Superior might not be sufficient for our own requirements, an American propeller was hired at Sarnia, and sent up empty to Lake Superior through the canal, her master swearing to the United States authorities at the Sault that he had not been hired by the Canadian Government, and that he had nothing whatever to do with the Red River Expedition. This declaration was entirely spontaneous on his part, and not the result of any instructions received from us. When he had passed through the canal, and was seen to steer over and anchor near our shore, the canal officials realised how

they had been taken in by one of their own citizens. A protest having by this time been sent to the President by the Governor-General of the Dominion, all restrictions upon British trading-vessels having no warlike material on board were withdrawn.

This affair of the canal had the effect of retarding for some time the departure of the Expedition, but it was not the only cause of delay. As this was the first military expedition ever undertaken by the Government of Canada, excuses can easily be made for the ignorance displayed by its Ministers upon all points connected with army matters, or the requirements of troops in the field. They cannot, however, be so easily pardoned for having failed to recognise their ignorance, and for having neglected to avail themselves of the military talents of the able soldier, General the Hon. James Lindsay, who had been sent out from England especially for the occasion. That officer was most anxious to relieve them of all responsibility regarding the organisation, equipment, and despatch of the expeditionary force; but such an arrangement did not suit their political ends. A large outlay of money was to be made, and they wished to spend it as much as possible amongst their political supporters. When therefore the General, with the thoroughness and energy for which he was celebrated, went to Collingwood on the 5th of May, and made all the necessary arrangements for the despatch of the troops by

steamer from thence, and telegraphed for permission to close the bargains, he was told by the Ottawa Government to do nothing in the matter, as all such arrangements would be made by their own agents. The result was, that instead of starting about the end of the first week in May, the first detachment of the expeditionary force did not leave Collingwood for Thunder Bay until the 21st of that month.

The steamers used on these great Canadian lakes are a sort of cross between the ocean-going and the ordinary American river-steamboats. They have their state-rooms and their bars, so that in calm weather one can enjoy all the luxuries that are so dear to our Transatlantic cousins; whilst their hulls are strongly built, and capable of enduring the heavy weather so often encountered on these inland seas. The scenery has been so frequently described, that we make no apology for landing the reader without more ado, together with the expeditionary force, on the western shore of Thunder Bay, about four miles north-west of where the Kaministiquia River flows into Lake Superior, the place being now known as Prince Arthur's Landing. There was but a small clearance in the woods when we landed, where a few wooden shanties had been erected, and all around the prospect was extremely desolate. One of those dreadful fires which occasionally sweep over whole districts in Canada, destroying houses, crops, cattle, and sometimes many human lives, had raged over the

country between the landing and Shebandowan Lake, destroying small bridges, culverts, and cribwork on the road already partly made between those two points. No lives had been lost, and the two large bridges which had been erected during the winter, and most of the public property, had been saved by the exertions of the workmen. The forest, which came down to the water's edge all round the bay, presented a pitiful sight. Nature never wears a more sombre appearance than when the fiery element has swept over a forest, burning every leaf, every small branch, and every blade of grass, leaving nothing but the tall dismally blackened trunks and burnt-up rocks around them.

Such was the first impression upon landing: it had a depressing effect on our spirits, for go where we might, the scene was one of funereal mourning, whilst here and there the peaty soil still smoked heavily, showing that although no fire was visible on the surface, the elements of destruction still smouldered beneath it. During our subsequent stay at Prince Arthur's Landing, we had more than one opportunity of witnessing great fires in the woods; and the imposing grandeur of such scenes may be imagined, but words cannot describe them. To be surrounded by a forest, and to hear the roaring, crashing, crackling sounds of a raging fire borne by a high wind in your direction, is, we feel sure, the most appalling of all human sensations. The smallest and most despised insect seems then your superior as

it flies away out of harm's reach with what sounds at the time like a chirp of mocking disdain and pity for your earth-bound impotence. Your only hope of safety is either a change of wind, or being able to reach a swamp, a lake, or a large river, before your swift and relentless pursuer overtakes you.

Any one who has ever witnessed the landing of an army at a point which is to become the base of further operations, will easily understand how little time was left for either mournful or poetical reflections upon the manner in which such a fair spot had been converted into a dismal wilderness. Work, work, work, from daylight until dark, and often even until late at night, getting stores, horses, waggons, &c., &c., ashore, and conveying them from the beach to the several depots appointed for their reception. Road-making and opening out communications between the camps, which the nature of the ground rendered it impossible to have in one place, gave employment to a large number daily. It was decided to establish a large depot of supplies and ammunition at Prince Arthur's Landing, which we could draw upon in case of need, or upon which we could fall back in the event of any untoward disaster; a hospital was equipped for the reception of the wounded if there should be any, and to which all who fell sick during the advance were to be sent back. As the Fenians had declared their intention of fitting out an armed vessel on Lake Superior for the purpose of

attacking our store-ships whilst *en route*, and of falling upon our depots when left unguarded by the advance of the Expedition, it was considered necessary to construct a redoubt for their protection. This entailed considerable extra labour upon the soldiers: but notwithstanding the frequent rains, the work went on merrily, so that when the force left Thunder Bay, the rear with its stores was perfectly secure from any attack that could possibly be brought against it by this Hibernian brotherhood. A company of militia was left behind, with two guns, as a garrison for the redoubt. Of all known parts of the world it may be truthfully stated that the Thunder Bay region is the most subject to violent thunderstorms—whether owing to metallurgic influences or to geographical position we do not know. Many officers who had been “all over the world” admitted they had never heard such appalling claps of thunder before. On some occasions trees were blown down, on others they were split into shreds. At times, especially at night, the noise was such that the ground seemed to shake, and it sounded so close that one expected to see the tent-pole riven in two. Now and then these storms were accompanied by rain of quite a tropical character, after which the numerous streams became so swollen that bridges were swept away, and long portions of the road, which had been constructed with infinite toil, were completely destroyed. Every such misfortune retarded progress.

The Hudson Bay officers best acquainted with the country, reported that we could not calculate upon being able to get through the higher region over which the route lay after the end of September. Every day was therefore of consequence; for although it was intended to leave the militia regiments at Fort Garry for the winter, instructions had been received from the home authorities that the regular troops should be brought back from the Red River before the winter set in, if it was possible to do so. This was not the only incentive to haste; for every mail from the north-west brought urgent appeals from its inhabitants, praying for the earliest possible arrival of the force amongst them. Alarm, and a dread of some unknown evil, seemed to have possessed their minds; men had begun to suspect one another, and no one knew to whom to look for either comfort or safety: all eyes and thoughts were bent upon the expeditionary force as the sole chance of deliverance from the bondage, both of mind and body, to which every loyal man was there subjected.

As already stated, the Ottawa authorities had announced that the road from Thunder Bay to Shebandowan Lake would be fit for traffic before the end of May; whereas by that date not more than thirty miles of it were finished, and many miles were still uncut through the primeval forest. A rumour got abroad amongst the regular troops that the Canadian authorities were not very anxious to



hasten the operation, lest by so doing they might make it possible for the regulars to get back before the winter set in; and every one knew that the Dominion Ministry were most anxious that they should be kept at Fort Garry for at least a year.

The construction of this road was under the superintendence of the Public Works Department, the gentleman representing which in the Ministry was a French Canadian, and known to be heart and soul with the priestly party in Quebec, and therefore favourably inclined to Riel. Men of a suspicious turn of mind began to say that the fact of there being no road ready for our advance was part and parcel of a political scheme whereby the departure of the Expedition might be stopped altogether. As the promised road was not likely to be ready in time, a river-route to Shebandowan Lake was sought out and utilised for the conveyance of the boats, &c., &c.

A large-sized river flows out of that lake, and being joined by two others of about equal magnitude, empties itself into Thunder Bay: it is known for the greater part of its course as the Kaministiquia River. The difference of level between Shebandowan Lake and Thunder Bay is more than 800 feet, and in descending from that great height the water passes over some very fine falls, one of which is about 120 feet high, being one of the most picturesque spots in British North America.

The officials of the Public Works Department who

had been employed for several years exploring, surveying, and road-making in that district, had impressed upon the military authorities, when the plan of operations for the Expedition was being decided upon, that this river could not be made use of owing to the dangerous nature of its rapids and the magnitude of its falls. However, when it was found that the road could not possibly be ready in time, an exploring party of one company, under Captain Young, 60th Rifles, was sent up it in boats to ascertain the practicability of using it for the conveyance of boats and stores. The weather was most unpropitious; it poured continuously: the men were never dry, having constantly to work up to their waists in water; the labour was excessive, but the perseverance of the above-mentioned officer, capable of overcoming any difficulties, was duly rewarded. This discovery was a happy event, as it rendered us independent of the road.

As numerous portages have to be got over before we land the reader in the province of Manitoba, it is perhaps better to describe here the mode of crossing one, the work on all being alike in character, and only varying in amount according to the distance to be traversed and the nature of the intervening ground. The bulkiest articles taken with us were the boats, which were all about 30 feet long, and made in proportion. They were built with keels, and in form were very much like those used in our

navy. Each boat carried eight or nine soldiers, and two or three Indians or civilians, who had been especially engaged as skilled in managing boats in rapid water. The stores were sixty days' provisions for all embarked, consisting of salt pork, beans, preserved potatoes, flour, biscuit, pepper, salt, tea, and sugar. The heaviest of these articles was the pork, which was packed in small barrels, weighing 200 lb. each, the others being in much lighter and much handier packages. Besides food, there was ammunition, intrenching-tools, camp equipment, cooking utensils, waterproof sheets, blankets, &c., &c.; and with the artillery, two 7-pounder bronze guns, and their ammunition, material, &c., &c.

The boats were distributed into brigades of six, to each of which a company was allotted. With each brigade were boat-builders' tools, and all sorts of stuff for repairs, besides spare oars, sails, &c., &c. Once started, it was known that we should have to rely upon ourselves and the stores we took with us; for such was the utter barrenness of the wilderness through which we were about to penetrate, that nothing but wood, stones, and water were to be had there.

Every probable, indeed almost every possible, contingency had to be thought of and provided for; and it may be confidently asserted that no expedition has ever started more thoroughly complete or better prepared for its work.

The brigades of boats were to move singly or in groups of two or three, according to circumstances; but three was the largest number that could work together on a portage, two being the best. When one of these detachments reached a portage—which it generally did before the one immediately in front of it had got all its stores, &c., over, and had again started—the boats were at once drawn in to the shore as close as possible and unloaded, the stores belonging to each boat being put in a separate pile. These were covered over with tarpaulins if the hour was too late for work, or if—as was always the case with the leading detachment, consisting of three brigades—the road over the portage had to be opened out, and rollers for the boats laid down upon it. At other times the men began to carry over the stores without delay, piling them in heaps, one for each boat, at the far end of the road. The ordinary method in vogue with Indians and the regular North American voyageurs for carrying loads, is by means of a long strap about three inches wide in the centre, where it is passed across the forehead, but tapering off to an inch in width at the ends, which are fastened round the barrel or parcel to be portaged.

Men accustomed to this work will thus carry weights of 400 lb., and some 500 lb., across the longest portage, the loads resting on the upper part of the back, and kept there by the strap going round the forehead. The great strain is thus upon the neck,

which has to be kept very rigid, whilst the body is bent well forward.

As it could not be expected that soldiers untrained to such labour would be able to carry loads in that manner, short pieces of rope with a loop at each end were supplied to the boats, by means of which two short poles—cut in the woods at the portages as required—were easily converted into a very efficient hand-barrow, of just the dimensions required for the conveyance of the small barrels in which our pork and flour were packed.

After, however, a little practice, a large proportion of the men soon learned to use the common portage-strap, their officers setting them the example by themselves carrying heavy loads with it. As soon as all the stores had been conveyed across the portage, the boats were hauled ashore, and dragged over, their keels resting on small trees felled across the path to act as rollers. The labour involved by hauling a heavy boat up a very steep incline, to a height of about a hundred feet, is no child's play. In each boat there was a strong painter and a towing-line, by means of which and the leather portage-straps a sort of man-harness was formed when required, so that forty or fifty men could haul together. Say the portage was a mile long (some were more), and that each man had to make ten trips across it before all the stores of his brigade were got over, he would have walked nineteen miles during the operation, being

heavily laden for ten of them. At some portages considerable engineering ingenuity was required—small streams had to be bridged and marshy spots to be corduroyed over. By the time our men returned many of them were expert axemen, and all were more or less skilled in the craft of the voyageur and American woodsman.

The country between Prince Arthur's Landing and Shebandowan Lake is wild and rugged. The road between those two places runs W.N.W., and may, for purposes of description, be divided into three sections—the first extending to Strawberry Creek, about eighteen miles; the second to the Matawan River, about eight miles farther on; and the third from thence to Shebandowan Lake, about twenty-two miles more.

The first section is very hilly, the soil near the bay being sandy, with a surface-covering at most places of from six to twenty-nine inches of peaty mould. In the valleys between the hills are deep swamps, over which roads can only be made with considerable labour. The timber has been entirely destroyed at some places by fires, so that every now and then the road emerges from the thick forest into clear open spaces sometimes of many hundreds of acres in extent, where the ground is covered with the burnt trunks of fallen trees, piled up at places one over the other like spillikins, an occasional pine of great height being left standing as it were to show the traveller

the vastness of the destruction. These places are called *brulées* in the language of the country ; and in a few years after the fire has passed over them, are so thickly covered by raspberry and rose bushes that it is difficult and tiring to cross them on foot. The timber consists of white and red spruce, pitch-pine, balsam, cedar, tamarack, white birch, and poplar, the latter being at some places along the road in large quantities and of a great size. The rocks are trap-pear, a hard compact slate, with numerous veins of amethystine quartz and jasper, and jasper conglomerate, running through them in irregular directions. Many silver-mines have been discovered in the neighbourhood, and galena, plumbago, and copper in several forms are known to abound ; so that no prophetic powers are necessary to foretell the great importance that this country will assume ere long from the development of its mineral resources. About midway in this section is the most rocky district traversed by the road, where it ascends through a rugged and hilly country to a height of many hundred feet above Thunder Bay. This region is also heavily wooded, so road-making through it was no easy matter. At many places large-sized boulders had to be removed from the road ; and at others, where great rough rocks cropped up in the way, they were broken up by lighting huge fires around them, and by throwing water over them when thoroughly heated. This caused them to split up into pieces, reminding one of the

method said to have been adopted by Hannibal in crossing the Alps.

Some half-dozen emigrants had settled along this first section of the road, the *brulées* enabling them to establish themselves without the labour of felling timber; and their little shanties were, when we arrived, already surrounded by potato-gardens, whilst here and there the rich greenness of a patch of oats gave an air of civilisation to the scene. Numerous small rivulets are crossed in this section, over which bridges and culverts were constructed; also two streams, one about 30 and the other about 40 yards wide, requiring more substantial work in carrying the road over them.

As you approach Strawberry Creek, which separates the first from the second of the three sections, the general aspect of the country changes completely, and a red clay soil takes the place of the sand, rock, and peat passed over up to that point. The whole of the second section is composed of hills formed by this red clay, which, although admirably adapted for bricks and pottery, is extremely bad for road-making. When hard and dry, it was good for traffic; but after a shower of rain it became so slippery that horses had much difficulty in keeping their feet, and a regularly wet day caused the wheels to sink so deep, that the horses struggled through it with difficulty, losing shoes at every stride. A few days' rain renders it impassable for wheeled transport, so that during the



operation of forwarding stores over it in waggons, all traffic was stopped several times for days together.

The valley of the Kaministiquia, where the road crosses it, is extremely pretty: the hills around are sufficiently rugged to be picturesque; whilst fires have for generations back so frequently swept over them that their surface is tolerably open, with rocks cropping up here and there, as if to give shadows to the picture; clumps of willow are scattered at places, whilst the river's edge is fringed with bushes and stunted trees. The river is about 107 yards in width, and unfordable. The Matawan falls into it about half a mile above the bridge; above that again is a succession of heavy and imposing-looking rapids, over which our boats were tracked with difficulty, and with trying labour to the men.

The second section ends where the road crosses the Matawan by a bridge about 70 yards in length, constructed, like the previous one, during the preceding winter. The distance between the two bridges is about five miles, the road running through some deep valleys and along the sides of rounded hills of red clay, the timber of which lay about in decaying logs, bearing witness to the many fires that have swept over the district at various remote periods.

As the road descends into the valley of the Matawan and enters the third section, the character of the soil and scenery again changes—the red clay is left behind, and one enters a rolling country of rich

clayey loam, with sandy rises here and there, all thickly wooded over. Two unfordable streams—one of 24, the other of about 33 yards in width—had to be bridged over in this section. As already stated, nearly the whole of the last eighteen miles of road, including these two bridges, had to be made after our arrival, which retarded our progress to an extent that had not been anticipated.

The road is much more level in this section than in the other two; but at many places the natural drainage is so bad, that even up to the date when the force had finally embarked at Shebandowan, the track cut through the forest was useless as a highway for constant and heavy traffic. Had it not been discovered in time, as already detailed, that the river could be made available, particularly along parts of this third section, for the transport of our boats and stores, we should have been delayed a month or six weeks still further than we were, and could not possibly have reached Fort Garry in time to have fitted up barrack accommodation for the troops before the winter set in, or to have brought them back before the frost had closed the rivers and small lakes to be passed on the higher portions of the route.

It was the knowledge of these facts, and the consciousness of the emergency, that justified those responsible for the success of the Expedition in calling upon the men to undergo the unceasing labour that was entailed upon them. "Sunday

shone no Sabbath-day for them." From the time the troops began to advance, "Push on, push on," was the hourly cry of the officers; and every one, down to the youngest bugler, being taken into the leader's confidence regarding the necessity for haste, recognised the urgency of the case, and put his shoulder to the wheel with a will and a cheery energy that bade defiance to all obstacles. We treated our men not as machines, but as reasoning beings, having all feelings in common with ourselves; and they responded to our appeals as British soldiers ever will when under men in whom they have unbounded confidence.

Before a start could be made it was essential that at least two months' supplies for the whole force should be collected at Shebandowan Lake.

Our transport horses were very fat when they landed, and had to begin work at once, so that, although allowed to eat as much oats and hay as they could, they quickly fell off dreadfully in condition. The badness of the roads rendered the work very severe upon them, and a large proportion were soon unfit for draught, owing to sore shoulders. Two causes contributed chiefly to this: first, the badness of the collars; and secondly, the carelessness of the drivers.

The harness had been provided by the Canadian Government, and, like all the military stores supplied by it for this Expedition, was of an inferior descrip-

tion obtained by contract. The military force in Canada was to be reduced in the summer of 1870; and orders had been received by the general commanding, desiring him to dispose of, on the spot, or to send home to England—according as he might think best for the public interest—all the military stores, giving the Dominion Government the option of buying at a valuation all or any portion of them. We had in store plenty of harness and every description of article required for the equipment of the force, the regulation prices of which were considerably below what similar but vastly inferior articles could be obtained for in the open market.

It did not, however, suit the Ottawa Ministers, whose province it was to obtain the required stores, to get them from our magazines; they preferred purchasing the inferior and dearer articles through their own agents from their own political friends and supporters. When money is to be spent in Canada, the opportunity is seldom lost for furthering party objects. As a stronger illustration of this, we may here mention that the boots supplied to the militia regiments were so utterly worthless after a few weeks' wear, that, upon arriving at Thunder Bay, it was found necessary to send back to Canada for new ones from our stores—so that the country had to pay for two pair per man instead of one.

The men for the land-transport service were especially engaged for this duty by the militia department;

and, with some exceptions, a more worthless set as drivers and horse-keepers it is scarcely possible to imagine. Men of all sorts of callings, except those accustomed to the care of horses, were enlisted, so that some of them did not even know how to put a set of harness together. As soon as these men got clear of a station on the road, and out of view of the transport officers, they played all sorts of pranks, and instead of going at a steady walk, chose their own pace, sometimes amusing themselves by racing. It was found necessary to make some examples amongst the worst-behaved before anything like discipline could be maintained amongst them.

As a protection for the horses against the heavy rains, ranges of rough stables were erected at several places along the 48 miles of road between Prince Arthur's Landing and the lake—the planks for those at the former place being brought from Collingwood in steamers, those used elsewhere being sawn from trees cut down where required. The Canadian axeman is very handy at constructing shelter for either cattle or stores: the bark of trees, particularly of the birch and tamarack, is largely used instead of planking. A roof is also quickly and efficiently made with troughs hewn from logs of American poplar, placed, as tiles are, in rows alternately convex and concave, each trough being cut of sufficient length to reach from the apex to the eave of the roof; and one large one, cut from a tree of greater diameter, being placed

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During the month of June, and half the month of July, the work on the road went on unremittingly, "corduroying" being alone attempted; ditches were made at points only where they were essential to prevent flooding. As few of our readers have ever seen a corduroy road — may none of them ever have to drive over one! — a few lines describing its construction may not be out of place. The course to be followed through the forest having been marked out by "blazing" a line of trees, the required breadth of road is cleared of timber and all serious obstructions, and partially levelled. Logs of from six to nine inches in diameter are then cut ten feet long, and laid close together side by side, small branches and sand or earth being strewn over them to fill up the unavoidable interstices. Such was the rough method pursued by us; but in Canada more careful labour is bestowed upon roads of this description when they are intended for more permanent use.

Before leaving Prince Arthur's Landing, a deputation of Indians from the neighbourhood of Fort Francis arrived to inquire what we were doing, and what were to be our intended movements. The party consisted of three men, two boys, and a squaw. Few of us had ever before seen the pure heathen

North American Indian, and it must be admitted that none of us were very favourably impressed by these specimens of that people. When near our camp, the speaker of the party, called "Blackstone," having lagged behind the others, was overtaken by an officer who was driving towards the bay, and who volunteered by signs to give him a lift; the offer was good-humouredly accepted. This Indian chief had never been in a wheeled conveyance before; and having, like all these wood savages, an instinctive horror of horses, the drive was gone through with more solemnity than pleasure. When he came in sight of the tents he requested permission to dismount where there was a little stream of water. Pulling from his pocket a small piece of soap, he wet it, and plastered down his long, straight, black hair with it, and tied round his head a mink-skin, from which at the back stood up a row of eagle's feathers, with here and there an ermine-tail hanging from them. Having thus completed his toilet, he came into camp.

An English missionary who had recently arrived from Canada, and who lived close to the beach, invited the whole party to his tent, where he gave them a good dinner—no easy matter, as an Indian will eat as much as four white men if allowed to have as much as he likes. The feast over, the zealous clergyman thought he might improve the occasion by administering to their spiritual wants; but they no sooner understood his object than they hastily bolted

from his tent as if it had been infected, such is their horror of those who seek to convert them.

The deputation was formally presented to Colonel Wolseley, and a great deal of talking ensued. The Indians call such an interview a "pow-wow," and are very fond of making long speeches at them. Many of the chiefs have great oratorical powers, and use much gesticulation when declaiming. They expressed astonishment at finding us making a road through their country without having previously made any treaty for their lands, and were very anxious to enter upon the subject of the terms we intended proposing for the extinction of their territorial rights. These men had really no just claim to the land near the bay, nor, indeed, one might say, to the land lying between the hills and Lake Superior, as they never hunted there; and beyond those hills, until you reached Rainy River, there was no land worth making a treaty about. They were told that there was no intention whatever of making any arrangements on the subject at present; but that hereafter, should the Canadian Government require any of their land, a suitable treaty would be made, when ample justice would be done them. They expressed themselves as devotedly loyal to the "Great Mother"—meaning the Queen—and anxious to assist their white brethren to the utmost of their power. They were made to understand that we merely wished for a right of way through their territory, and that we had no intention of occu-



pying their lands. Promises were made to them that their head men should receive suitable presents; but that as we were pressed extremely for time, and would have great difficulty in carrying enough supplies with us to last during our tedious journey, they must not expect to receive them from the soldiers this year; that the officer who was then representing Canada at Fort Francis would arrange all particulars as to the quantities of things they were to be given, and when and where they were to receive them.

They said they would go back and inform their friends of what had been told them, and in the meantime we were welcome to help ourselves to as much wood and water along the line of route as we might require daily.

These representatives of the once flourishing tribe of Ojibewahs—or Chippewahs, as they are indifferently called—were fine straight-looking men, and moved about with a certain dignity of bearing. Never but once did any of them express astonishment at what they saw, when the oldest of the party, after long and silent contemplation of the busy scene at our crowded wharf, said, “What a number of white men there must be in the world!” They were told to help themselves to a suit of clothes each from a shop which an enterprising tradesman had established near camp; and, with the usual childishness and improvidence of their race, they seemed to select those articles which, of all others, were least

suiting for the life they had to lead—a frock-coat of the finest cloth being the garment most dear to them.

Early in July our headquarters were transferred to the bridge over the Matawan River, a most picturesque spot. Immediately below the bridge there was a fall, and below that again a series of rapids for many miles. The banks being wooded down to the water's edge, there was some difficulty in clearing sufficient space for the camp of two battalions, and the large mass of provisions which it was found necessary to collect there. Here we erected stables and rough store-houses, so that the place quickly assumed the appearance of a little village busy with life, where the noise of the blacksmith's hammer resounded from early dawn until dark. The departure of empty waggons, and the arrival of loaded ones, went on at all hours; and the noisy scene at the falls, where the boats arriving by river from Thunder Bay had to be portaged over about fifty yards, impressed upon the stranger visiting our camps the earnestness of the work before us.

The black flies and sand-flies were very troublesome at times, but a merciful Providence has only given them power to annoy man by day, so that, except occasionally, when the never-flagging mosquito buzzed round our heads at night, our sleep was undisturbed. Before leaving Canada we had heard such "travellers' yarns" about the positive torture we

should have to undergo from flies, that considerable trouble was taken to design, as a protection against them, a veil made of net, shaped like a bag open at both ends: it was to be worn round the head, with which it was prevented from coming in contact by hoops made of fine crinoline wire. Much expense had also been incurred in providing each boat with a can of stuff known to all salmon-fishermen in North America as mosquito oil. It is made with creosote and pennyroyal; and when the face is well anointed with this disgusting unguent, no mosquito or other winged torment will touch you as long as it is fresh. The parties engaged in bringing up the boats by river, and some of those stationed at places along the road, were occasionally glad to use the veil towards evening; but after the final start of the force from Shebandowan, the only use they were put to was for straining water through on the Lake of the Woods, where, as will be hereafter described, the water was almost opaque from the vegetable matter it held in suspension. The oil came in useful for burning in the lamps when the supply taken for them had been expended.

Although the extreme measures of veils and oil were not found necessary, yet whilst we were encamped in the woods, the mosquitoes were always sufficiently annoying to render it desirable to have as much smoke as possible round where you sat in the evening, to keep them at a distance. In front of

each tent-door, as soon as the sun went down, you generally saw what the backwoodsman calls a "smudge" smouldering away, filling the tents with the volumes of steamy smoke which it emitted. A smudge is simply a small fire, on which is put damp moss, or wet rotten wood or bark, which in burning gives out clouds of vapour laden with carbonic acid gas. To impregnate the air more effectually, the smudge was frequently placed actually inside the tent, the door being left open, so that the flies incommoded by the atmosphere might escape. When the tent is completely filled with smoke, the door is fastened up for the night, so that no mosquito can enter.

The stores were brought by our land-transport waggons as far as the Matawan camp; the road as far as that being in fine weather very good, all things considered. The great nut to crack was to get them over the twenty-two miles between there and Lake Shebandowan, a small portion only of that distance having a practicable road over it. Every mile of navigable water on the river was therefore made use of, the stores being sent up for the first few miles in boats, then conveyed a few more miles in waggons, then in boats again for about eleven miles, then a short distance again by waggon, and finally by water again for the last three miles to Shebandowan Lake: there they were collected on a sandy beach, previous to being distributed amongst the brigades as they started finally for Fort Garry.

It is scarcely necessary to remind the mercantile reader that this "breaking bulk" so repeatedly injured the stores considerably, and entailed much labour on the soldiers.

The only recreations enjoyed by our men were bathing and fishing. Of the former, whilst working in the boats, all had more than enough, for the men had constantly to work in the water; but whilst employed at road-making or moving stores on shore, a swim after the day's work was most enjoyable. The water in Lake Superior is always very cold; but that in some of the rivers—the Matawan, for instance—was positively tepid, so that the men would roll about in it for a length of time without feeling any ill effects. The strangest phenomenon was in M'Neil's Bay, on Lake Shebandowan, where, in swimming, at one moment you passed through a narrow strip of very cold water, and the next instant you were in water as warm as the human body. The effect was most curious, and is supposed to come from springs rising from the bottom of the lake in that shallow portion of it. When encamped at Prince Arthur's Landing the men caught immense quantities of lake trout, many of them weighing ten or twelve pounds, those of five or six being considered small. They are without exception the most tasteless of the finny tribe. There is nothing repulsive about them, either in appearance or in flavour; but still, as food, we know of nothing which is less pala-

table without being positively nauseous. At the various other camps along the road, and subsequently during the advance upon Fort Garry, the men caught pike by trolling from the boats. Those with black backs were fair eating; but the other sorts were bony and soft, with a muddy flavour. Each brigade was furnished with a fishing-net, as it was expected that large quantities of fish would be obtained along the line of route to vary the daily diet: but it was subsequently found impossible to use them; for, being pressed for time, we never halted for a day until we reached Fort Alexander, close to Lake Winnipeg; and as every one worked hard from sunrise until dark, there was never time for net-setting.

Headquarters were moved on the 14th July, to a spot within about three and a half miles of Shebandowan Lake. The 16th of that month had for some time been named for the departure of the first detachment; but as the day drew near, so much still remained to be done that few believed it possible to carry out the programme laid down. The spot on the lake selected as the starting-point was its extreme eastern end, where there was a beach of bright yellow sand for some hundreds of yards devoid of rocks or stones. We named it M'Neil's Bay. The forest reaching down to the water's edge, entailed a considerable amount of clearing before sufficient space for a small camp, and for the marquees to

hold the perishable stores, could be obtained. A wharf was soon run out into deep water, alongside of which the boats were to be loaded. A cooper's shop was established, where all the barrels that had received injury during their many changes from carts to boats, and *vice versa*, were re-hooped, those from which the brine had leaked being refilled. Carpenters were hard at work repairing the boats, many of which leaked considerably, all having suffered more or less from the sharp-pointed rocks of the Kaministiquia. According to the arrangements made with the Canadian authorities, the boats were to have been handed over to us complete with all their own stores; but unfortunately, from want of an organised system, and from the lack of an efficient staff to carry out the instructions received from Ottawa, the details of all such arrangements throughout the progress of the Expedition invariably fell to the ground. The result was, that according as every six or eight boats arrived daily, they had to be fitted with rowlocks, masts, sails, rudders, &c. : those made for each individual boat were not to be found; the *onus* of fitting out the boats devolved upon the troops, each captain looking after the equipment for the boats of his own brigade. This occasioned some delay; for as the boats were of many different models and sizes, rudders, &c., required much alteration before they could be made to fit boats of a different class from those for which they had been constructed.

During the progress of this Expedition, we had many opportunities of observing from behind the scenes how Government affairs are managed in Canada. The gentleman who represented the Public Works Department with us was a most hard-working man, who never spared himself in any way. If he was always over-sanguine, it was at least an agreeable failing, and perhaps arose from calculations based upon the belief that other men would work as hard as he did himself. He had his hands always full, and had as much to do as any man, aided by the most efficient of staffs, could possibly do well. Alas for his sake, for the good of the service, and for the progress of the Expedition, those under him, with one or two exceptions, were the most helplessly useless men that it is possible to imagine! Instead of being permitted to choose his own assistants, he had all sorts of hangers-on about the Ministers forced upon him. Some were broken-down drunkards who it was thought by their friends might be reclaimed, if they could only be sent on an errand into a country where no whisky was to be had. All more or less belonged to the class known in America as "loafers"—men who lived no one knew how, spending nearly all their time in bars "liquoring-up" and smoking. We were much amused one day upon entering into conversation with a young gentleman who called himself the "book-keeper" at one of the roadside stations. Upon



being asked the employment he had been hired for, he replied most *naïvely*, that having a brother in Manitoba whom he desired to see, his uncle, the Minister for Public Works, had placed him upon the staff of that department, so that he might be taken there in one of our boats without expense to himself. When appointments are to be given away, it is not a question of obtaining good men, but of how party purposes may be served by a judicious allotment of them amongst political supporters and their relations.

Strong westerly winds prevailed on Lake Shebandowan whilst the final arrangements were being made for our start, so that upon some days such a sea came rolling in and breaking upon the shore that it was impossible to load boats, or to get them off had we even succeeded in equipping them. Most fortunately these "blows" seldom became powerful until about nine or ten A.M., and generally wore themselves out towards four or five P.M., so that we had almost always several hours in the morning and evening for pushing on our work.

On the night of the 15th July we had the most violent thunderstorm experienced during the entire operation. The heavens seemed at times as if to open and let fall great crushing weights of exploding substance upon the earth beneath, which they struck with blows that made all nature shake and tremble. Then followed what is commonly known as rain,

but which in this instance was as sheets of water tumbling upon us in rapid succession, beginning suddenly and ending as abruptly. The morning of the 16th was, however, fine, with a bright sun shining, and a strong westerly wind blowing, which, although it served to dry up everything, raised such a sea on the lake that wave after wave rolled in towards shore, breaking with a heavy surf over the sandy beach in M'Neil's Bay. Whilst this lasted little could be done: the empty boats were either kept moored out in deep water in strings one behind the others, or were drawn up high and dry on the shore. Its force lessened as the sun approached the horizon; and as the lake became sufficiently calm, boat after boat was brought alongside the wharf and received its allotted cargo. Such a scene of bustle and excitement is seldom to be witnessed. Each boat had to be complete in itself with sixty days' provisions for all on board, with ammunition, camp equipment, and a hundred other things all essential for health and safety. Every one felt that their comfort and preservation would be endangered if any of the articles selected after so much careful thought by General Lindsay were forgotten; for we all knew that in a few hours we should have bid a long farewell to civilisation, and that ere many days had passed we should be beyond the reach of all assistance from the outside world. Officers and non-commissioned were running about in all directions,

some searching for oars, others for missing sails, &c. Here a sergeant came to say that the spare rowlocks issued to his boat would not fit; another reported that although he had been given a lamp, he had not received any oil for it,—and so on; staff officers running about in all directions, endeavouring to rectify mistakes and smooth down difficulties. To a civilian unacquainted with the working of an army, and the manner in which various duties are classified, divided and subdivided amongst ranks and individuals, each having their special work assigned to them, such a scene must have been like Pandemonium let loose.

The boats being duly loaded, the crews were put into them. In more than one instance it was found that the men when placed on the thwarts had no room to stretch their legs so as to enable them to row, and a restowage of cargo had therefore to be effected. All were laden to the utmost extent compatible with safety. Up to a late hour the proper number of voyageurs had not arrived. The original intention was to have three in each boat who were to steer it, and manage it when in rapid water—an art of itself requiring great nerve as well as lengthened experience.

At the last moment the number per boat had to be reduced to two, more not being forthcoming.

The sun had disappeared for some time ere, all being in readiness, the order was given for this first

detachment to "shove off." It consisted of two companies of the 60th Rifles, a detachment of Royal Engineers and of Royal Artillery, with two 7-pounder guns, all under command of Colonel Feilden of the 60th.

The wind had died away completely, leaving the surface of the lake calm as a mirror, wherein was reflected only the mist of the approaching evening. There was no hum of birds or insects from the woods which fringed its shores, no swallows rippled its smoothness in their hunt after an evening meal. Except at this little spot, where we were all bustle and excitement, the scene had the stillness of death about it, which in the distance seemed all the more deathlike from the contrast between it and the noise immediately around us. This absence of animal or even insect life in the North American woods is one of their most striking characteristics.

It was a pretty sight to see this little flotilla of boats row off over the lake whilst it still glowed with the golden tinges of the sun's last rays. It called to mind many an account read in early youth of very similar scenes, when freebooting Norsemen weighed anchor and shook out their sails in some secluded inlet bent upon adventure. Except that we had rifled guns and cannon, our equipment and our arrangements for overcoming the obstacles of nature were of a most primitive description. It seemed curious that a military expedition should be fitted

out in such an advanced era of civilisation, in an age so justly celebrated for its inventions and its progress in those arts and sciences which now enter so largely into the organisation of armies, and yet that it should not be possible to enlist into its services the aid either of steam or of the electric telegraph. The sail and the oar were to be our means of propulsion, as they had been those of the Greeks and Romans in classic times; and when arrived at the end of our 600 miles' journey, we should have as much difficulty and as far to send in order to communicate with even the nearest telegraph office, as Cæsar's messenger to Rome, who carried the news of the successful descent upon our shores more than 1900 years ago.

All sorts of melancholy prophecies had been published in the papers as to the dangers we should have to encounter. We were to be devoured by mosquitoes and other flies. It was said the Indians themselves could not live in the woods during July; others who knew the country declared that the heat was then so stifling that the most acclimatised hunters had to forsake them, and seek for air and breath along the shores of Lake Superior. Many asserted that the Indians would never permit us to pass through their country without enforcing the payment of a large subsidy; whilst many laughed at the notion of ever attempting to make the journey to Fort Garry in anything except bark canoes manned by Indians.

When told of the description of boats we were taking with us, some pitied us as poor deluded people, totally ignorant of what was before us; whilst all these wiseacres seemed to consider us as men whom the gods having doomed to destruction had first becrazed.

Sensible men who had but recently returned *viâ* the United States from Manitoba said that our force ought at least to be three times stronger than it was: that Riel was on the look-out for our advance, and intended to defend step by step and mile by mile the difficult country we should have to pass through, where a few good huntsmen, accustomed to the woods, could annihilate an army; in fact, that General Bradlock's fate was in store for us, &c., &c. Never did any expedition have more lugubrious prophecies made concerning it.

From time to time the soldiers were, however, encouraged by intelligence received from Red River announcing Riel's determination to show fight. The work on the Kaministiquia River had been so very severe, and that of road-making—always distasteful to soldiers—so very wearisome, that all looked forward to the embarkation at Shebandowan Lake as a relief from toil, or at least regarded it as a new phase in the undertaking whose novelty alone would compensate for any drawbacks attendant upon it. From the 1st June to the 16th July (when this first detachment started) it had rained upon twenty-three

days. Fine weather always cheers men up when in the field; and as the embarkation took place on a lovely day, this fact, added to the novelty of the operation, raised our animal spirits. Even the few of a desponding temperament, who for some time before had never ceased repeating that a start was out of the question "for a long time"—even these men were seen to smile with gratification as the boats pushed off from shore, the men cheering for "Fort Garry."

No men ever began an undertaking, notwithstanding the evil forebodings of croakers, with lighter hearts; every man seemed as if he was embarking at Richmond for a pleasure-trip on the river; and all, the private just as much as the officer, appeared to take a real earnest interest in their work. They were pictures of good health and soldier-like condition. Whilst stationed at Prince Arthur's Landing, and the other larger camps, the men had fresh meat, bread, and potatoes every day. No spirits were allowed throughout the journey to Fort Garry, but all ranks had daily a large ration of tea. This was one of the very few military expeditions ever undertaken by English troops where intoxicating liquor formed no part of the daily ration. It was an experiment based upon the practice common in Canada, where the lumbermen, who spend the whole winter in the backwoods, employed upon the hardest labour, and exposed to a freezing temperature,

are allowed no spirits, but have an unlimited quantity of tea. Our old-fashioned generals accept, without any attempt to question its truth, the traditional theory of rum being essential to keep British soldiers in health and humour. Let us hope that the experience we have acquired during the Red River Expedition may have buried for ever this old-fogyish superstition. Never have the soldiers of any nation been called upon to perform more unceasingly hard work; and it may be confidently asserted, without dread of contradiction, that no men have ever been more cheerful or better behaved in every respect. No spirit-ration means no crime; and even the doctors, who anticipated serious illness from the absence of liquor, will allow that no troops have ever been healthier than we were from the beginning to the end of the operation. With the exception of slight cases of diarrhoea, arising from change of diet, it may be said that sickness was unknown amongst us.

The same busy scene was repeated daily up to the 2d August, when the last detachment started. The weather had improved greatly, and remained good until nearly the end of August, when it again turned to rain. The expeditionary force, from front to rear, covered the route for 150 miles; but as arrangements had been made for communicating and sending messages either backwards or forwards, and as the officer commanding the whole force travelled about in a bark



canoe, well manned by Indians, going from one detachment to another as he considered necessary, all were well in hand, and under his control for concentration at any time, should circumstances have required it. The officer commanding each brigade had been furnished with a map of the route, which, although far from accurate, gave a sufficiently detailed delineation of the country to enable them to steer their course by compass across the large lakes. We had been promised an ample supply of guides, but only very few were forthcoming when required.

The officer representing the Canadian Government with us, whose duty it was to have furnished them, found at the last moment that the Indians he had depended upon to act in this capacity held back, and refused the "job" upon all sorts of excuses. The priesthood of Canada being much opposed to this Expedition, had preached it down everywhere; and there can be little doubt that priestly influence was brought to bear upon the Christian Indians settled near Fort William, to prevent them from acting as our guides. These Indians are partially civilised, many of them speak French, and a considerable proportion can write their own language in a character which has been invented especially for them. They live in houses clustered together on both banks of the Kaministiquia, a few miles above where it falls into Lake Superior. The village, for such it may be called, is known as the "Mission," from the

Jesuit establishment there. They cultivate small patches of ground ; but their chief means of obtaining a livelihood is by hunting and fishing, and by working for the Hudson Bay Company as voyageurs on the inland rivers, transporting goods from one post to the others. This Expedition to Red River would have been a godsend to them if they had not been tampered with, as it would have afforded them lucrative employment. They know every river, lake, and portage in the country as far as Fort Francis ; and in previous years, when exploring and surveying parties had been at work in their country, they had done good service in a most willing and cheerful manner.

They are a simple-minded but very superstitious race, easily ruled by the Jesuit Father who has spent his life amongst them doing good. Rumour was busy at this village frightening them with stories of Riel's determination to fight, and of the great numbers of armed men at his back. These Christian Chippewahs have an extraordinary dread of war—so much so, that when we had reached Fort Francis, the few who did accompany us so far became terror-stricken by the warlike reports that Riel's emissaries had spread amongst the Indians in that district, and positively refused to go any farther. When a little coercion was tried by telling them that we could not afford to give them any provisions to take them back to their homes unless they kept with us, they bewailed their

fate, many of them with tears, saying they would risk anything sooner than go on where there was to be fighting—their determination was not to be shaken by any arguments or promises. The warlike characteristics for which the North American Indian was so celebrated, if they are faithfully described in “Hiawatha” and Cooper’s novels, have disappeared even from the once celebrated tribe of Irroquois. Of this latter race we had a considerable number as voyageurs, a large proportion of whom were most anxious to turn back from Fort Francis when they heard the startling accounts of the number of Riel’s followers, and of his determination to fight. Their minds were only to be quieted by assuring them of the falseness of these rumours.

Shebandowan Lake, about 20 miles long and a few wide, running in a W. by N. direction, has no striking features to distinguish it from thousands of other lakes in Canada. It has about the same proportion of islands, and the same cliffless shore common to nearly all of them. As it is almost at the summit level forming the watershed between the basins of the St Lawrence and the rivers which flow into Hudson Bay, no mountains abut upon it, although there are some hills in the distance. The north side had been burnt over for miles inland, where blackened trunks stood up against the sky-line as one viewed the shore from the boats. For miles raspberry-bushes had taken the place of the destroyed forest, the fruit

of which supplied a good supper to the several detachments that had to spend the evening there. The southern side is thickly wooded with very poor timber, poplar being the prevailing tree; indeed there is so much rock and so little soil everywhere in this vicinity, that it is only wonderful how anything can grow. A portage of about three-quarters of a mile took us into another lake about 8 miles long, our course over which was due north; Lac des Mille Lacs was reached from it by a portage of over a mile in length. The latter is a curiously-shaped and straggling expanse of water, in which there are islands without number, many being of sufficient size to have great bays stretching for miles into them. One island so closely resembles another that it is wonderful how any of us found our way over the 20 miles to be travelled before we reached the next portage. Even the brigade, furnished with the most experienced guides, strayed sometimes for hours out of their course. Steering solely by the compass took one repeatedly into these large bays; and nothing is more disheartening than finding one's self in a *cul de sac* after a pull for many miles up one of these bays, and having to row back again to search for another passage. Immediately as we passed out of this lake we had the stream with us all the rest of our voyage.

Having steered for about the first 5 miles over this lake a N.W. course, the general direction for more than 100 miles is S.W. : a slight detour is then made

to the south, and the rest of the journey as far as Fort Francis is in a N.W. direction.

We shall not weary the reader with descriptions of the many lakes and rivers and dreary portages passed over during the journey, but in order to give a general idea of the country, we shall divide it into three sections: the first, between Shebandowan and Fort Francis; the second, from thence to Fort Alexander; and the third, from that place to Fort Garry, the objective point of the Expedition.

The first section is a dreary region—unfit, from its sterile barrenness, for man's habitation. Rock, water, and stunted trees everywhere. When it was necessary to pitch tents, we seldom found enough soil for the pegs to support them, and were forced to use large stones instead. The surface is covered with moss, which in some places was so thick that, with a blanket rolled round one, our bivouac had all the softness of a luxurious spring bed. The blueberry-bushes were in full fruit as we went along, affording us many a good meal, and enabling us to vary the usual *menu* of salt-pork and biscuit. We met numerous families of Indians, who thronged round our boats begging for provisions. They were an intolerable nuisance, and so very dirty that their presence gives one a sort of creeping sensation. It was curious to see them arrive at a portage, a family travelling generally in two or three canoes. The lord and master would step ashore, pull his canoe up, and shouldering

his gun would stalk off to the other side, leaving his wife or wives, as the case might be, and perhaps his mother, to carry over the canoes and all their worldly goods.

We were once pointed out an old woman who some years ago had supported life, when in a starving condition, by eating human flesh—by no means an extraordinary or unusual occurrence amongst those people when in such straits. She was certainly a most loathsome creature to look at; her face was so deeply wrinkled, and the wrinkles so full of dirt, that she seemed as if tattooed.

We generally spared these poor creatures a little from our ration: whatever we gave them was put into a pot, in which was boiled together pork, flour, blueberries, fish, biscuit, &c., &c. No two things could be too incongruous to be boiled at the same time. They never roast, grill, or stew, boiling being their sole idea of the culinary art. They were very fond of the water in which the pork was boiled, drinking it freely, as if it was some delicious beverage. They generally carried in their canoes a fish-skin bottle filled with sturgeon-oil, of which they took copious draughts at times. The women wear their hair in one long plait hanging down behind, the men in two, very often joined at the ends. So very beardless are the men, that when one meets a canoe with Indians sitting in it, there might often be difficulty in distinguishing the sexes, if it were not for this variety in

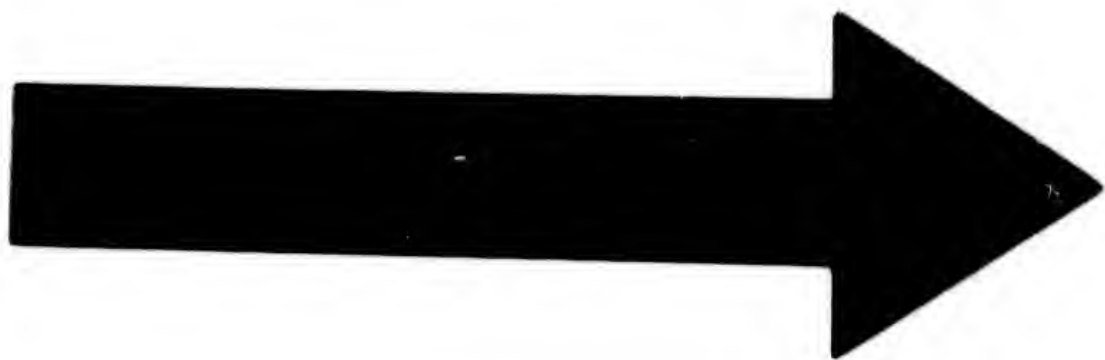
the number of plaits with which they are *coifés*. The women always wear leggings from the knee to the ankle, with a petticoat reaching to the calf of the leg; an open cloth jacket, with a sort of boddice supported by braces over the shoulders, completes their costume. The men were generally clothed in woollen garments, mostly of quaint old-fashioned patterns purchased at the Hudson Bay posts. Having become accustomed to the coats made in the style common here a hundred years ago, the Indians will not purchase those of any other pattern; so that the Company, who have their tailoring done in London, have to get the clothes they require for exportation made accordingly. Unlike their squaws, they almost always wear some sort of shirt; and although they are frequently without trousers, they never, from earliest boyhood, go without a breech-cloth. They seldom or never build a hut of even the roughest description, living, as their ancestors have done for centuries, in wigwams made with birch-bark stretched over poles driven into the ground in a circle, and all meeting at the top. An aperture is left to serve as a chimney, for they light a fire and cook within during cold weather. The space left as a door is closed by a curtain. Altogether it is a cold residence in a climate where the Fahrenheit thermometer ranges for months from zero to many degrees below it.

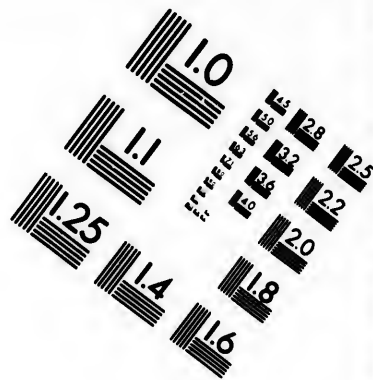
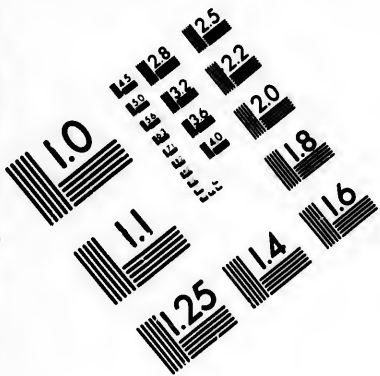
During the whole of our journey to Fort Francis we seldom had a favourable wind. Although this

added greatly to our labour at the oar, still it blew us fine weather. Easterly winds in these regions bring the evaporations from the great lakes, which break into heavy showers of rain against the hills forming the height of land. Most of the rain we had fell at night; and if we occasionally had a wet bivouac, wood was plentiful, and we were able to dry ourselves easily before large fires. Now and then we got a slant of wind, and when the weather was fine there were ample materials for the artist's brush, the white sails standing out so well against the dark-green foliage common to every island and shore throughout the route.

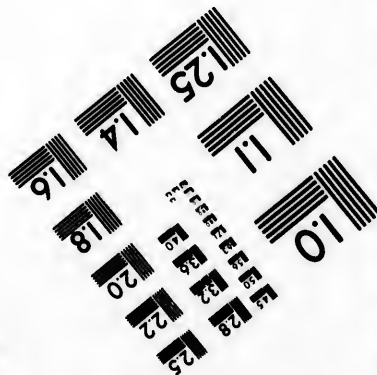
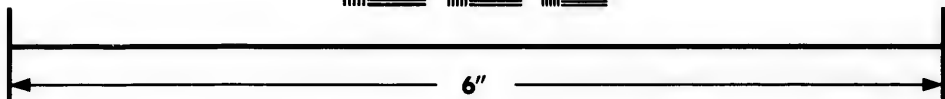
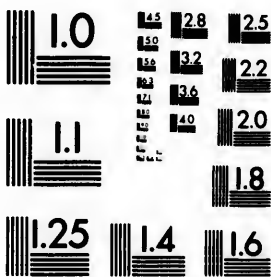
The only difficult and dangerous rapids in this section were on the Sturgeon River, where extreme care is necessary in running them. A number of Irroquois were permanently stationed there until all the troops had gone by, who took down every boat, only one being totally wrecked. It is a fine sight to watch these splendid boatmen taking a boat down a rapid. Four generally rowed or paddled; two others steered, with large-sized paddles—one in the bow, the other in the stern. The post of honour is in the bow; and it was curious to see how their eyes sparkled with fiery enthusiasm as they approached the roaring, seething waters, where the breaking of a paddle, or a false movement of any sort, would send the whole crew to certain death. They seemed thoroughly at home at the most trying moment; for there is generally in all







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rapids one particular spot—perhaps where some back eddy from a rock tends to suck in everything that approaches—that is the climax of the danger, which, if passed safely, the rest is easy sailing. The intensity of the look with which they regard the rushing water in front of them whilst every fibre in their powerful frames is at its utmost tension, is a thing to be admired, but not to be described in words, nor even on canvas. There is a mixture of extreme, almost unearthly, enjoyment, alloyed with a realisation of the danger to be encountered, in their expression, which we never remember having seen in any face before, except in the countenance of soldiers at the hottest moment of a storming-party. It bespoke the earnestness of men prepared to dare anything, and who gloried and revelled in the attendant danger.

Our daily routine was as follows: At the first streak of daylight (occasionally long before it) the *réveillé* was sounded, followed quickly by a cry of "Fort Garry" from every tent or bivouac fire. This was the watchword of the force, as "Arms, men, and canoes" ("Arma virumque cano") was the punning *motto* adopted for us by our witty chaplain. Tents were struck and stowed away in the boats, and all were soon on board and working hard at the oar. We halted for an hour at 8 A.M. for breakfast, and again for another hour for dinner at 1 P.M., and finally for the night about 6 or 7 P.M. It was surprising, after the first week's practice, to see the rapidity with

which the men cooked: they quickly became most expert at lighting fires, cutting down trees, &c., &c. The sun soon burnt them a dark colour; indeed some became nearly black, the reflection from the water having a very bronzing effect upon the skin. The wear and tear upon their clothes was excessive: carrying loads on their backs tore their shirts and coats, whilst the constant friction from rowing soon wore large holes in their trousers, which, being patched with canvas from the bags in which the beans or other provisions had been carried, gave them a most motley appearance. Leading a sort of amphibious life, they were well nicknamed the "canvas-backed ducks." This constant pulling was very monotonous employment; but we had a goal to reach, and all felt that every stroke of the oar brought us nearer to it. The long portages were most trying to the pluck and endurance of our men, and it is very questionable whether the soldiers of any other nation would or could have gone through the same amount of physical labour that fell to our lot daily. It is upon such occasions that we learn to appreciate the full value of the British officer. He may be idle in peace, but the very amusements of his idle hours—boating, shooting, hunting, cricket, &c., &c.—fit him to shine, when hard work has to be done, in a manner that would be impossible to the officers of most other armies. Our officers carried barrels of pork and other loads on their backs like the men; and the emulation

and rivalry between the captains of companies, each being afraid that he should be passed in the race, soon spread to all ranks. You had only to tell a detachment that some other company had done a thing without any great effort, to ensure its prompt execution. There was also called into play the rivalry between the regulars and the militia. The latter were determined that, no matter what the former did, they would not be beaten. The regulars were in front all the time. One had only to tell them that they were making so little progress that the militia complained of being kept back by their slowness, to cause them to push ahead at any required speed; and, *vice versa*, if you told the militia that the regulars were running away from them, each successive company hurried on until those in the immediate front were overtaken. Indeed it may be said that each detachment trod upon the heels of the one before it, all were so eager to get on. At some shallow places the men had to get into the water, and pull their boats along after them. Occasionally it was necessary to unload them partially or entirely, the boats being then run down rapids, or hauled over the shallow spots into deep water, where they were reloaded, their cargoes being carried along the banks by the soldiers. At times it blew very hard from the west, so that many detachments were detained one or two days on some of the large lakes, unable even to start.

A voyage W. by N. of forty miles across Rainy

Lake takes you to Rainy River, upon the right bank of which stands Fort Francis, two miles from the lake. The leading detachment reached this post on the 4th August. They had done two hundred miles in nineteen days, having taken their boats, stores, &c., &c., over seventeen portages in that time, and having made a good practicable road at all these seventeen places. The troops in rear of them were able to make the journey quicker, as they found a made road and rollers laid down for the boats at every portage.

Fort Francis, a Hudson Bay Company trading-post, is exactly due west from Shebandowan Lake. It is a collection of one-storied wooden buildings surrounded by palisading. Although dignified by the high-sounding title of fort, it has no military works whatever about it. The river bends here, so that immediately in front of the place is a very fine fall, about twenty-two feet in height, from below which the broken, boiling, bubbling waters send up volumes of spray, covering the land, according to the direction of the wind, with a perpetually-falling rain. This, and the luxuriant fertility of the soil, causes the banks near it to be clothed with grass of the brightest green, affording the richest of pasture. After the wilderness of water, rock, and scrubby wood that we had passed through, the sight of cattle grazing, and of ripe wheat bending before the lightest wind from the heaviness of the ear, was most refreshing. Only a few acres were under cultivation, although there was a consider-

able clearance; and a large extent covered with bushes bore evidence to there having been here at one time a good-sized farm. There was a garden close to the dwelling-house, where there were peas, potatoes, and onions growing, and apparently going to waste, until we arrived to partake of them.

A mill for grinding corn had once existed here, there being water-power enough on the spot to drive every mill in America, but it had disappeared. There was an air of decay and neglect about the whole place that bespoke either poverty or want of energy on the part of those in charge. The half-breed race to which the officers of the Hudson Bay Company at such posts generally belong now is extremely apathetic—there is no go-aheadness about it; and in these out-of-the-way localities the half-breeds quickly go back to the manners, customs, and mode of living of their Indian mothers. They live upon fish as their Indian ancestors did, and, like them, have no appreciation of the value of cleanliness or order.

By the rules of the Company it is compulsory to have at each post an ice-house, a garden, and a few cows; so they have them, but they seem to care for none of these things.

The fertile belt of land along the north bank of Rainy River is only about a mile in width, great swamps existing between it and the chain of lakes which lies to the northward. There had been a large Indian encampment here during the early part of



July, it being a great annual resort for the surrounding tribes; but this summer, as they expected our arrival amongst them, they had collected from all quarters in the hope of obtaining presents. They also wished to appear imposing by their numbers, so as to enhance the value of their goodwill towards us, and to impress upon the white-faced soldier how formidable they might be as enemies. Unfortunately for the success of their intentions, we were not able to start for at least six weeks after the time originally proposed for our departure from Shebandowan; so that as days wore on and there was no sign of our arrival, the crowd grew weary of waiting, particularly as the supply of fish in the neighbourhood became exhausted, there being so many mouths to feed. The Government had early in the preceding winter sent a gentleman to Fort Francis for the purpose of keeping the Indians of that district quiet, and preventing them from being tampered with by Riel. He had exerted his influence—which was considerable—to induce them to disperse, fearing that their presence might lead to collision with the soldiery when engaged in carrying stores and boats over the portage on which stood the Indian wigwams. His persuasions, and that most potent of arguments, an empty stomach, soon caused them to leave; so that when we arrived not more than about a dozen lodges remained, although their uncovered poles stood thickly around, reminding one of the way poles are piled to-

gether in a field at home when the hops have been picked.

Colonel Wolseley had several "pow-wows" with those that remained. A hideous old chief named Crooked-neck, from the manner in which his head was set on his shoulders, was the principal speaker. He was very old and very dirty, and, in the name of his people, made most exorbitant demands in stating the terms on which they were prepared to allow us permanently to open out a route through their territory. There was much difficulty in making them understand that the military necessities of our position rendered it impossible for us to have brought them up large presents, but that whatever it was settled by the Government of Canada they were to receive should be given to them next year. There was the usual talk about loyalty to the Great Mother, and of their desire to live on good terms with their white brothers. They said that the passage of so many boats through their waters had frightened their fish, so that but little was now to be had; and complained of our men having at many places thrown empty barrels into the rivers, which scared the pike and sturgeon, alleging that even the grease from these barrels had been generally destructive to fish of all sorts. Some one had put this idea into their heads, and there was no eradicating it.

The costumes of these people were very grotesque, and all the warriors painted their faces most fantasti-

cally with red, yellow, or green. A fine tall fellow had one side of his face painted black and the other red, his coat being also of two colours similarly divided. All wore a blanket wrapped round their bodies, which gave them the appearance of height.

Fort Francis, or rather the ground about it, has a sacred repute with them; and here take place annually their medicine ceremonies, a sort of secret orgie, beginning with eating the flesh of dogs—white ones if they are to be had—and ending by initiating those anxious for instruction into various mysteries, and the use of many herbs.

Previous to leaving Prince Arthur's Landing, Colonel Wolseley had sent a proclamation into the Red River Settlement, informing the people of the objects of the Expedition, and calling upon all loyal men to assist him in carrying them out. Copies of it were sent to the Protestant and Roman Catholic bishops, also to the Governor of the Hudson Bay Company at Fort Garry, who were at the same time requested by letter to take measures for pushing on the road to the Lake of the Woods, already partially made. It was never anticipated that this road could be completed in time for us to use it, even should there be no hostilities; but it was considered advisable to impress Riel with the idea that we intended advancing by that route, so that, in case he was bent upon fighting, he would frame all his calculations upon a wrong basis, and make his

preparations along it for our reception. This ruse was successful ; for we learned at Fort Francis that he had armed men on the look-out in the neighbourhood of where he thought we should disembark on the shores of the Lake of the Woods. A loyal half-breed of undoubted character had been despatched early in June from Prince Arthur's Landing for the purpose of going into the Red River Settlement by the Lake of the Woods road, and of obtaining reliable information as to the state of affairs there up to the latest possible date that he could remain, compatible with his meeting Colonel Wolseley at Fort Francis on the 31st July. This service was faithfully performed. He had left his home in the Indian settlement on the lower Red River on the 20th July, bringing letters for that officer from the Protestant bishop and others, containing information as to the supplies of fresh beef and flour we could calculate upon obtaining at Fort Garry, and interesting but melancholy accounts of how things stood there. It was essential that the commander of the Expedition should have the latest and most reliable information as to the rebel movements and Riel's intentions before leaving Fort Francis ; for it was necessary to decide upon the final plan of operations there, as beyond that place we should be, one might say, in rebel territory, or at least where it would always be possible to attack us. The scanty intelligence supplied by the Canadian Ministry was not

to be relied upon, as it came chiefly from disloyal sources, and had always percolated through rebel sympathising channels before it reached us. Under any circumstances it is difficult for a civilian to collect or to convey useful military information. General Lindsay had therefore sent a sharp, intelligent officer, who knew the north-west country and its people, round through the United States to Pembina, with instructions to act upon his own judgment as to his farther progress from thence, but under any circumstances to adopt measures for communicating with Colonel Wolseley at Fort Francis. He was most successful, having managed to get to the Lower Fort, where he remained some days amongst the loyal inhabitants. Leaving on the 24th July, by travelling incessantly he reached Fort Francis on the same day as the leading detachment of the force. He described the people as panic-stricken—the English- and French-speaking populations being mutually afraid of one another, and both being in the direst dread of the Indians. The messages sent to us verbally as well as by letter were all in the same strain—“Come on as quickly as you can, for the aspect of affairs is serious and threatening.” Riel and his gang had been for some time past busy in removing their plunder from Fort Garry, distributing it amongst his friends, and in places of safety within the United States territory. This looked as if he was preparing to bolt, although he still ruled every one most despot-

ically. His great anxiety—now that the rebel aspirations had been satisfied by the Manitoba Bill—was that he himself should have an amnesty for the crimes he had been guilty of. The Government would have willingly given him an amnesty for all his political offences, but such would not have protected him from the charge of having wilfully and in cold blood murdered a loyal subject. Therein lay the difficulty; for, anxious as the Cartier party might be to secure him from all punishment, it was known that the English-speaking people of Canada would not tolerate his being protected from legal proceedings in that matter. The rebellion had obtained for Bishop Taché and his party all that even the most sanguine had expected from it; and he was naturally afraid lest Riel, from personal motives and fear of punishment, might upset the whole arrangement by attempting to resist. He was wise enough to know that nothing was to be gained, whilst everything already gained was to be lost, by an appeal to arms. He therefore strained every nerve at this juncture to keep Riel quiet. He had left for Canada with the especial object of procuring an amnesty by which he should be held entirely blameless; and this wily priest had impressed upon him the certainty of his being able to obtain it, his influence being so powerful at Ottawa. Riel knew not what to do: at one moment he talked of resistance; then, when the word amnesty was whispered in his ear, and vision of

future political greatness came up before him, he would announce his intention of coming out to meet us for the purpose of handing over the government of the country to the commander of the Expedition. The result of this hesitation was that he did nothing; and his followers kept dropping off from him daily in consequence.

He still held Fort Garry with an armed garrison, and his published proclamations at the time, although indicative of declining power on his part, were by no means sufficiently reassuring or peaceable in their tone to warrant any departure from all military precautions by us. Orders were therefore given to the leading detachments to approach Rat Portage, at the entrance to Winnipeg River, with the greatest care, and to take measures for guarding against surprise or ambush, as it was a very likely place for an attack, should Riel mean fighting. The first detachment having arrived at Fort Francis on the 4th of August, and portaged its boats, &c., round the falls there, started again that same afternoon.

### III.

In the last chapter we described the advance of the expeditionary troops as far as Fort Francis, and endeavoured to convey to the reader a general idea of the country in the first of the three sections

into which we divided the entire distance between Shebandowan Lake and Fort Garry.

The second section begins at Fort Francis, where the leading detachment arrived, as previously stated, on the 4th August, starting again that same afternoon. A garrison of one company of militia was left for the protection of the hospital, bakery, and depot of stores established there, and to ensure our communications being kept open through the Chipewah territories. Although these Indians had been hitherto very friendly, there was no saying when they might give us trouble, particularly if they saw large quantities of that much-coveted article, flour, stored in their very midst without a sufficient guard to protect it. Indians have great appetites, and are always hungry—and hungry men are ever more or less dangerous. Our voyage down Rainy River was most enjoyable. As we pushed off from shore below the falls at Fort Francis, we were twisted round for some time in every direction by the numerous whirlpools formed by the falling of such a great body of water into a circular basin, where it acquired a rotary motion. At one moment a boat was going at the rate of about nine miles an hour, and the next it was perfectly stationary, having stopped without any shock, but as suddenly as if it had struck a rock. In some instances minutes elapsed ere the utmost exertion at the oar, the whole crew pulling their best, could impart the least motion to the boats.



They seemed as if held in a vice by the hand of some hidden giant—the sensation being all the more peculiar from the contrast with the rushing, frothing waters around, in themselves the very symbol of motion. Then, after some moments of hard pulling, every muscle being strained to the utmost, the boat was released so suddenly that it bounded forward as a spring would which had been kept back by a rope that had suddenly snapped. The sensation of being in a small boat amongst such eddies, whirlpools, and upheaving waves, which, rising from below, broke on the surface in great mounds of water without any apparent cause, was most exciting and enjoyable to the strong-nerved man; whilst the weak-headed experienced a disagreeable feeling about the stomach that seemed to give a strong tendency to grasp at something or somebody.

As we glided down this deep river at the rate of about four or five miles an hour, the scenery was very pretty. Its breadth was from three to four hundred yards; the banks were wooded to the water's edge, with here and there a patch of green-sward peeping out through the trees; whilst occasionally one came to an open park-like clearance, where fine spreading oaks reminded one of England. This river is the frontier between British North America and the United States. There are no settlements upon either bank, but the numbers of lodge-poles showed that the locality was a favourite one

with Indians. From Fort Francis to where Rainy River discharges itself into the Lake of the Woods, a distance of seventy miles in a westerly direction, the navigation is unbroken. There are rapids at two places, but they can be run easily and safely; and in ascending the stream, boats are tracked up them without discharging cargo.

At both, many Indian families are always encamped, as they are favourite spots for fishing, particularly during the winter, as the water never freezes there. There are wide open spaces at these rapids, covered when we passed with rich luxuriant grass, small spots being under cultivation as gardens for potatoes and Indian corn. There were also some circular mounds of earth, one or two being about twenty feet high. We had not time to land and examine them, but the natives call them underground houses, although not now used as habitations.

It was a lovely day, and as there was a good current in the river, we determined upon trying the plan of drifting along it during the night. So, after the evening meal, we again started, lashing the boats together two and two, one man remaining awake in each boat to steer, the others lying down to sleep as best they could. As the sun went down, a dense mass of curious-looking flies came streaming up with the gentle westerly wind. They were nearly white, with grey wings and pale-yellow bodies, having a tail more than an inch long, consisting of what looked

like two white hairs. They flew in a regular column, closely formed up, without any stragglers to the right or left, which opened out with a sort of tactical regularity when a boat pushed into its midst. At a little distance they had all the appearance of a driving fall of snow. The pressure from above caused vast numbers of them to strike the water, from which they had not the power to rise again.

We had not been many hours drifting along when black clouds came up and hid the moon; the wind freshened and brought heavy rain with it, which soon wet us through. We were making no way; and it became so pitchy dark that steering was impossible. We had therefore to push into shore, and await daybreak as best we could.

We reached the mouth of the river next day in time for breakfast at a small Hudson Bay post, formerly called Hungry Hall, from the number of men who had from time to time nearly died from starvation whilst quartered there. It has now been renamed Fort Louisa by the Company, and, it is expected, will become shortly a post of some importance, being so advantageously situated upon what will henceforth be, until a railway is opened, the highway for North-western emigration. Close to the post is an Indian burial-ground, where there were some coffins raised in the air on platforms about six feet high: chiefs only and their sons are thus honoured after death. Around the post are many

Indian potato-gardens; but there were very few families there as we passed, every one that could being away from the ordinary hunting-grounds at this season, for the purpose of collecting wild rice, which abounds in some neighbouring localities.

In every part of Rainy River sturgeon are found in great abundance, one of fifty, sixty, or more pounds being no extraordinary fish. It is very good eating, and is a great staple of food amongst the poor half-starved Indians.

The land upon each side is low and marshy at the mouth of Rainy River, from which rose up quantities of wild duck, disturbed at their feast upon the wild rice by the noise of our oars, and by the cheery laughter and songs of our men. A large sand-bar has formed in the Lake of the Woods immediately across the mouth of the river, upon which great seas, rolling in from the ocean-like lake beyond, broke with a loud roar, sending up clouds of spray in an angry fashion. Looking out westward as we passed into the space between the bar and the shore, where the water was calm as in a harbour, the lake was covered with "white-horses"—bespeaking, as the breeze was freshening, by no means a pleasant day's work for us. No open boat could have crossed the bar; so we turned northward, keeping near shore, but between it and a line of sandy dunes, which seemed to be a continuation of the bar at the entrance to the river, and which had been formed most

probably—as the bar has been—when the river's mouth was more to the north than it is at present. These sand-banks extended some six or eight miles, running tolerably parallel with the shore, and from a thousand to two thousand yards from it. The water was very shallow at places; and as we got towards the end of the protecting sand-banks, the force of the waves increased, so that all chance of beating to windward under sail was out of the question. We were therefore forced to put into a rocky island partly covered with trees, where we were detained two days by a heavy westerly gale—a severe trial to our patience. When we did get off, a journey of two days, sometimes under sail and sometimes having to depend solely upon the oar, took us to Rat Portage, at the northern extremity of the lake, where the Winnipeg River flowed out of it. Some of us were without guides in crossing the lake, which for miles at places is crowded with islands of all shapes and sizes; and as the maps were altogether wrong, many wandered about at the northern extremity of the lake searching in vain for the mouth of the Winnipeg River. The Lake of the Woods is about seventy-five miles long, with an average width of about seventy miles. It is in reality three lakes, separated one from the other by clusters of islands, all more or less pretty, some having fine perpendicular cliffs tinted with many shades of red, and standing majestically out of the water.

All are well wooded, and in some there are a few acres under cultivation as gardens, where the Indians, from time immemorial, have been in the habit of growing potatoes and maize. The water in the lake is nearly lukewarm, being from 70° to 78° Fahr. : it is, except at a very few places, of a dark-green colour, and almost opaque from a profuseness of confervoid growth. These confervæ are minute, needle-shaped organisms, of a bright-green hue, and about half an inch in length. They abound throughout the lake, and are in such quantities at places that the water resembles green pea-soup. When pressed between the teeth they have a pungent flavour like mustard. Our mosquito-nets were here very useful for straining the water ; but even after that process had been gone through, it was not fit for drinking until boiled. A few of the long deep bays receding from the lake are free from this substance ; and upon their banks lived the majority of the Indians who belong to this neighbourhood.

To lose one's way upon an expanse of water like the Lake of the Woods, and to wander about in a boat, as the writer did, through its maze of uninhabited islands, where no sound was to be heard but the dip of the oars at regular intervals, or the distant and weird-like whistle of the loon, is to experience the exquisite sensation of solitude in all its full intensity. There are trees and rocks, and earth and water, in all their varied and united beauty, but no

sign whatever of man's handiwork anywhere. Oh, if it were not for the trouble of having to cook one's own dinner, how delicious would be existence passed in the society of nature!

The drainage of an immense country is collected in the Lake of the Woods, which flows into Lake Winnipeg by a river of that name. This river begins in the former lake, flowing from it by several channels, all more or less romantically picturesque in their scenery, and at the entrance to each of which there are falls about thirteen feet high. Upon one of the central islands thus formed is the Hudson Bay post of Rat Portage. It is approached by a most intricate channel, winding round islands in such a manner that a stranger would have very great difficulty in finding it. There is a nice little farm there, and a good garden, the vegetables of which were a great treat after our journey of so many days through a wilderness. There was a most striking difference between the climate at Shebandowan and on the shores of this great lake: every day's journey from the high level of the former place brought us into a more genial temperature, humming-birds having been seen for the first time at French Portage before we reached Rainy Lake; and the corn was being cut as we left Fort Francis, where the summer is very early. The post at Rat Portage consists of a few log-houses surrounded by a high wooden palisading. It stands on a bank some

fifteen feet high, and when viewed from the river, bears a strong resemblance to a Burmese village. As you ascend the bank to enter the post, you are surrounded by a pack of the leanest-looking and most cur-like dogs, who are always quarrelling amongst themselves, and have starvation written on their countenances, as well as evidenced by their bone-protruding flanks. They are to the Indians, or the dwellers in the backwoods, during winter, what canoes are to them in summer. These dogs drag their *traîneaux*, or *toboggans* as they are indifferently called, and are capable of lengthened exertions over snow-tracks where no horse could travel. In summer they are turned loose about the post, and pick up enough to eat as best they can among the Indians encamped around it; but in winter they are regularly fed upon fish.

The gentleman in charge of Rat Portage had been there for thirteen years, without having had, during that period, any further glimpse of civilisation than what could be obtained at some of the other posts. He was a half-breed married to a squaw. It is next to impossible that any man could lead such a solitary life and still retain the intelligence and enlargement of ideas imparted by even an ordinary country-school education. Men's minds are too prone to assimilate with the minds of those with whom they are exclusively associated, to retain, after a series of years spent amongst ignorant heathens, many traces of



education or civilisation. Great, therefore, was our astonishment at finding the table neatly arranged with breakfast things, laid out on a clean table-cloth, when we entered the house the morning after our arrival. Thrice blessed is the man who first discovered the pleasures of eating. Your *gourmet* in refined life really knows nothing of them; nor has he ever enjoyed the rapturous sensations which broiled fish, boiled potatoes, and tea, afforded us that morning. *En route*, our daily meals were always cooked and eaten in a hurry. A picnic once a-year is very pleasant to the man accustomed to eat his dinner for the following 364 days in a white cravat, and with his legs under an artistically-decorated table; but to eat one's breakfast, dinner, and supper of salt-pork, beans, and biscuit, sitting on a log or stone, day after day for months together, is, to say the least of it, rather monotonous, and makes one appreciate the luxury of a chair, table, and clean table-cloth in a remarkable degree.

At Rat Portage more letters were received by the officer commanding from the Red River Settlement, urging the necessity of haste, and begging of him to send on even a couple of hundred men in advance, for the purpose of inspiring confidence, and of putting an end to the feelings of doubt and apprehension of impending danger, then universal amongst the loyal inhabitants. Riel was still in Fort Garry, surrounded by armed men and the banditti composing his gov-

ernment. He still ruled most arbitrarily; and although he had permitted the Hudson Bay Company to recommence business, he had forced its representative to pay a large sum for the privilege of doing so. The chief of the Swampy Indians (who inhabit the banks of the Red River for a distance of about fifteen miles from where it falls into Lake Winnipeg) wrote volunteering the service of his people in any way in which they could be made useful. They had been staunch and loyal throughout all the half-breed disturbances, and had always been most anxious to take up arms against the rebels. The dread of calling in such a dangerous element as these Indians would have been, had hitherto deterred those most anxious for the re-establishment of order from making any use of them. This Indian chief complained greatly in his letter of the inconsistency of our conduct in having made a practice of punishing Indians when they robbed or committed any crime, whilst the gang of robbers under Riel was allowed, he said, to overturn the lawful government of the country, to pillage private property, to imprison loyal men, and even to commit murder with impunity. A number of the English-speaking people of the low Red River Settlement had, under the sanction of the Protestant bishop, started off up the Winnipeg River to meet us with some large Hudson Bay boats, having experienced guides and crews, for the purpose of assisting us in descending that river. Its navigation is generally

esteemed to be most dangerous, and none but those well skilled in the voyageur's art, and acquainted with this river in particular, will ever attempt to take boats along it. We were very deficient in good steersmen, and had not more than a few guides—obtained at Fort Francis—who knew the route: so when this party of men, under charge of the Rev. Mr Gardner, an English clergyman, met us at Rat Portage, we realised for the first time that there was really an active party in Manitoba, who had not yet bowed the knee before Baal; that there were men whose loyalty was not of the lip only, but a reality, for which they were prepared to leave their homes, and share the dangers to be encountered by their countrymen who were struggling through a vast wilderness to their assistance, and in order to relieve them from the tyranny to which they had been so long exposed.

The description given to us by these men of the dangers which were before us—of rapids where the least false step would send us over heavy falls into whirlpools of such magnitude that the largest-sized boats are quickly engulfed in them—made many of us wince. When shown the boats in which we had made the journey up to that point, and in which we expressed our determination to go on, they shook their heads in mournful astonishment. Here, as throughout the whole of this Expedition, we found a general conviction stamped upon the minds of every

one of every class that we met, that the British soldier was a fine brave fellow, who, as a fighting man, was superior to two of any other nation, but utterly useless for any other purpose. They thought it was impossible that he could carry loads, perform heavy bodily labour, or endure great physical fatigue. It need scarcely be added that we now bear a very different reputation in those parts; and it is not saying too much to assert, that we left behind us a character for every manly virtue. Our men soon acquired considerable skill in managing their boats, in portaging, &c., &c. ; and the natural cheery energy of the British character shone out brilliantly when displayed side by side with the apathy and listlessness of the half-breed voyageur.

We were informed that it would take us about twenty days to get to Fort Alexander, at the mouth of the Winnipeg River. This was very discouraging, because we had been previously told by our leader that we should reach Fort Garry about the 23d of August, which would be impossible if it were to take us so long in descending the river.

The journey down the Winnipeg River can never be forgotten if once made. The difference of level between the Lake of the Woods and Lake Winnipeg is 340 feet—the distance between them by river being about 160 miles. The descent down that number of feet is distributed throughout thirty falls and rapids, presenting every variety of river scenery

that nature is capable of. For the first fifty miles there are numerous islands—so much so, that the river is a succession of lakes, or as if there were four or five rivers running side by side, uniting here and there only to separate a few miles lower down. At some points it is, however, contracted into one or two comparatively narrow channels, where the great rush of water resembles a magnified mill-race. The passage of such places is always more or less dangerous, particularly if small islands or large rocks divide the rapids into several channels, crossing one another before they meet in the boiling caldron of foaming water below. Numerous were the hair-breadth escapes: in many instances the lives of boats' crews seemed held in the balance for some moments—more awful for those who watched the scene from the bank than for the soldiers actually in the boat. Providence—a noble term which this war in France has taught newspaper writers to sneer at—watched over us in a remarkable manner; for although we had one or two boats wrecked on this mighty river, and many men were for minutes in imminent danger, the whole force reached Lake Winnipeg without any loss of life.

There is no more deliciously exciting pleasure in the world than that of running a really large and dangerous rapid in a canoe, or in a small boat. As your frail skiff bounds over the waves, ever and anon jumping as it were from a higher to a lower level, whilst the paddlers or oarsmen tug away with might

and main, and the outcropping rocks are cleverly avoided by the skilful bowsman and steersman, every pleasurable sensation is experienced. As each boat turned into the slack water below the rapid, one took a long breath of relief, and the world and life itself seemed to be different in the calm stillness there from what it was when we were dashing through the roaring, rushing waters in mid-stream.

No length of time, nor any amount of future adventures, can erase from the writer's mind his arrival at the Slave Falls. He was in a birch-bark canoe manned by Irroquois, one of whom acted as guide. The regular portage for the boats was several hundred yards from the falls, and lay in a slack-water bay, reached without any danger as long as the boats kept tolerably well in towards the bank on that side. Our astonishment was great at finding the guide take the canoe out into mid-stream, where the current ran at an exciting pace, becoming swifter every yard, until at last, as one approached the vicinity of the falls, it was palpably evident that we were descending a steeply-inclined plane. Consoling ourselves at first with the reflection that the guide knew best what he was about, we sat motionless, but, let us confess it, awe-stricken, as we swept into the narrow gully at the end of which the great noisy roar of falling waters, and the columns of spray that curled up like clouds into the air, announced the position of the fall. We were close to the brink. We appeared to have

reached that point which exists in most falls from whence the water seems to begin its run preparatory to a good jump over into the abyss below; and we knew, from having watched many great cataracts for hours, that it was a bourne from whence there was no return. Quick as lightning the idea flashed across us that the Indians had made a mistake, and that everything was over for us in this world. In that infinitesimal fraction of time a glimpse of the countenance of the sturdy bowsman rather confirmed this idea—his teeth appeared set, and there was an unusual look in his eye. All creations of our own heated fancy; for in another second the canoe's head swept in towards the rocks, and was turned nose up stream in tolerably slack water, two of the paddlers jumping out and holding it firmly there. All our poetical fancies were rudely dispersed by a cheer and chorus of laughter from the Irroquois crew. The breaking of a paddle in the hands of either bowsman or steersman would have been fatal at that critical moment when we turned sharply in to the bank, the stern being allowed to swing round in the heavy stream, and by so doing, aid in driving the bow inwards. Nothing could have saved us if such an accident had occurred; yet here were these Indians chuckling over the danger they had only just escaped by the exertions of their greatest skill and of their utmost muscular power. They had needlessly and wittingly encountered it, for they could have gained

the shore about a hundred yards higher up with comparative ease, and then lowered their canoes through the slack-water pools in the rocks along the side to the place they had only reached with extreme danger. There was no use in arguing with them on the subject; they had confidence in themselves, and gloried in any danger which they felt certain of overcoming. If any of these Indians say they can take you down a rapid, reliance may be placed in their doing so, as they will not attempt what they feel would be beyond their powers. Therein lies the great difference between them and the white-faced voyageur, who is so often foolhardy, and prone to allow his pluck to overtax his strength and skill.

The name of Slave Falls is in memory of a base, cruel act perpetrated there some generations ago by the Chippewahs. The Sioux of the plains have always been their hereditary enemies, and from time immemorial raids have been made by each into the other's country. The Chippewahs, upon one of these forays, had taken two prisoners, whom they kept as slaves. To gratify some passing whim, or to afford amusement to their children, they one day bound these poor wretches in a canoe, and in that manner sent them over these falls, so sublime by nature, but put to a cowardly and degrading use by what we are taught to call nature's noblest creature—man.

The banks of the river are wooded everywhere,



poplar being the prevailing timber, interspersed here and there with poor birch and stunted pines. The syenite rocks and granite boulders were very grand at places; and occasionally river-scenery was presented upon the largest imaginable scale.

Several large-sized rivers join the Winnipeg, particularly from the west, up some of which the Hudson Bay Company have outlying posts. About half-way to Fort Alexander is an English missionary establishment, with a good farm attached, and a few Indian log-shanties scattered around it. No clergyman resides there, but it is presided over by a catechist, who has a school where he teaches English to about twenty or thirty children. Now and then we came to a spot capable of cultivation; but, as a general rule, the land on the Upper Winnipeg is poor, and unsuited for settlement.

We had a good deal of rain whilst descending it; but as we neared Fort Alexander the weather mended considerably, the days being warm and balmy, although the nights were always cool and sometimes extremely chilly.

The locality most celebrated for its danger is at the "seven portages," where the boats have to be unloaded and everything portaged that number of times, although the entire distance from the top of the first to the bottom of the seventh is only two and a half miles. The work was most wearing upon both men and boats: every one looked forward to

Fort Alexander as the end of their hard work, it being clear-sailing from thence to Fort Garry. The finest scenery on the river is at Silver Falls ; there is nothing that can compare with them in Northern America to the eastward of Red River. Niagara is a thing apart, as there is nothing elsewhere that can be likened to it. Silver Falls, as a great rapid, also stands alone. Time pressed, so we had to hurry past them ; but their magnificent grandeur will long remain impressed upon the memory as a glorious picture, illustrating the vast power of running water. Owing to some dividing rocks above, the stream rushes down this steep incline in two separate volumes, which appear so to jostle one another in their downward race, that in the centre the water is pushed up into a high ridge, marking their line of contact, until both are lost in the great chaos of foam, spray, and broken water below.

The leading brigades reached Fort Alexander on the morning of the 18th August, having descended the river without accident in nine and a half days instead of twenty, as the Hudson Bay Company voyageurs, who were ignorant what well-led British soldiers can do, said we should take. By the evening of the 20th August all the regular troops were concentrated there, the brigades of militia being echeloned along the river in rear, at close intervals one behind the other. There was not a sick man amongst those collected at Fort Alexander—all

looked the picture of health and of soldier-like bearing. Oh for 100,000 such men! They would be invincible. Up to the 20th of August it had rained upon thirteen days in that month. The work had been incessant from daylight until dark, but no murmur was heard. The men chaffed one another about being mules and beasts of burden; but when they saw their officers carrying barrels of flour and pork on their backs, and fairly sharing their fatigues, eating the same rations, and living just as they did, they realised the necessity for exertion. There must surely be some inherent good in a regimental system which can thus in a few years convert the British lout into the highly-trained soldier, developing in him qualities such as cheerful obedience, endurance, &c., &c., unknown to the beerhouse-lounging rustic.

A fresh batch of news from Fort Garry was here obtained. Riel had summoned together his followers, who had assembled to the number of about 600, and had endeavoured to organise a force to resist, but had not received the support he expected. He had also called a council, who met in secret conclave, no English-speaking man being admitted. Of course it was not known what had passed upon that occasion; but when the council broke up, an order was sent to the Hudson Bay Company forbidding any further sale of gunpowder or bullets. This was done, our correspondent alleged, to prevent the supply of am-

munitio running short should they require it. Riel had been told that the governor was not to reach the Settlement in company with Bishop Taché, as the rebels had hoped, and to accomplish which had been one of that prelate's objects in going to Canada. Riel's mind was still much troubled upon the subject of an amnesty, which the Canadian Government did not seem in any haste to grant. All letters received ended in the usual strain, "Come on as quickly as you can; we are in momentary dread of our lives and property." The general tenor of the news proved two things—first that there was every possibility, almost amounting to a probability, of resistance being offered; and secondly, that should our advance be opposed, the number we should have to meet would be small compared with that at Riel's disposal during the past winter. It was therefore determined to push on at once with the 60th Rifles, the detachments of Royal Engineers and of Royal Artillery with their two 7-pounder guns, leaving the two militia battalions to follow with all speed.

We waited half a day in hopes that the two leading brigades of militia, which were known to be close behind, might come up; but as they did not do so in that time, we started without them, for the wind was fair, and when foul it is often impossible to get round the point at Elk Island in Lake Winnipeg for days together.

There are numerous clearances in the vicinity of

Fort Alexander, where some half-breed farmers have established themselves. There is also a very fine farm belonging to the post in a good state of cultivation. The land is very rich for about half a mile or a mile back from the river, beyond that being a succession of swamps impassable during the summer, but travelled over when frozen in winter. The Fort is like the others already described, but is on a larger scale, and has a less decayed air about it. It stands on the left bank, which is about twenty feet above the water, and is two miles from the mouth of the river. There is a Protestant mission here, and much good is done by its schools, in which English is taught. The 21st of August being Sunday, there was a parade for divine service in the morning, at which the servants of the Hudson Bay Company, and the few half-breed farmers in the neighbourhood, joined us in prayers for the success of the operation we were about to undertake.

The afternoon was lovely, with a bright warm sun shining down upon us as our fleet of fifty boats hoisted their sails, and started with a light wind from the S.W. It was a very pretty sight, and a subject well worthy of an artist. As we rounded the point of Elk Island, eighteen miles N.W. from Fort Alexander, evening was falling fast; so we halted for the night in a bay with a wide sandy beach between the water and the high overhanging bank, which was covered with timber, chiefly birch. The boats drew up in a long line, side by side, with their bows on the beach.

Fires were soon lighted, and a few tents pitched here and there. As one looked down from the high bank upon the busy scene below, where all was cheerful bustle, the hum of voices, the noise of the axe chopping wood, and now and then the crashing sound of a falling tree, one realised how quickly the solitude of the forest is transformed into life by the presence of man, endowed as he is with so many wants. The climate was that of the south of Europe; and as the sun set beyond a horizon of water, one might have imagined one's self in some Grecian island looking out upon the Mediterranean, the beach covered with the crews and boats of a corsair fleet.

*Réveillé* sounded next morning ere it was light; and after a hurried breakfast, we once more embarked, steering about S.W. for the mouth of the Red River. Lake Winnipeg is 264 miles long by about 35 miles in breadth, and has an area of 9000 square miles. It drains about 400,000 square miles of country. Its average depth is not more than from 6 to 8 feet; and those who have navigated it for many years say it is filling up more and more every year. Owing to this shallowness, a little wind soon raises a very heavy sea, the waves being so high at times for days together that no boats can venture on it. Many of the detachments in rear were thus detained at Fort Alexander and in the neighbourhood of Elk Island.

As we approached the mouths of Red River, the water became so shallow at places that many of our

boats grounded ; but as the day was calm and the bottom was muddy, they did not suffer any damage.

The scenery is extremely dreary as one nears the river—not a tree to be seen, and only a few bushes at places where the land seemed to be somewhat higher than elsewhere. Great flats of alluvial deposit stretched out into the lake, all densely covered with reeds and rushes, a fitting home for the flocks of wild-duck that quacked out a greeting to us as we approached them.

Where the left bank terminates there is a little firm ground, upon which a few Indians were encamped, who fired their guns off as a salute as we landed to cook dinners at about one o'clock. A few presents soon made us friends ; and they consented to man a canoe to take up a loyal half-breed whom we had with us to the Lower or Stone Fort, as it was considered desirable that we should communicate secretly with the Hudson Bay officer in charge of that post. Dinner over, we lost no time in pushing on ; but the wind, unfortunately, was blowing down stream, so that pulling against the current was laborious work. We advanced in three lines of boats, the guns in the leading boats of one line, and kept ready for action at a moment's warning. We had hoped to have reached the Lower Fort by evening ; but night coming on when we were still about twelve miles from it, we were forced to halt opposite the Indian settlement.

The chief of these loyal swampy Indians soon made his appearance, and had a "pow-wow" with Colonel Wolseley, being dismissed, after a lengthened conversation, with presents of pork and flour. He told us that although every one had long been expecting us, no news of our whereabouts had lately reached him ; so that, until he saw the fleet coming round the bend in the river, he was not aware that our leading detachment had even reached Fort Alexander.

The Hudson Bay Company's officer from the Lower Fort having been sent for, arrived in the middle of the night, and corroborated this statement. No one at Fort Garry, he said, expected us so soon, or knew anything of our doings, further than that some of our boats had been seen on the Lake of the Woods.

An early start the following morning, the 23d of August, enabled us to reach the Lower Fort in time for breakfast.

As we advanced towards it, the people turned out from every house on both banks—the men cheered, the women waved handkerchiefs, and the bells of the churches, which are all Protestant below Fort Garry, were rung to manifest the universal joy felt at seeing us. At some places numbers of Indians were encamped, who welcomed us by the discharge of firearms. As each man emerged from his wigwam, bang, bang, went his double-barrelled gun. As we neared the Stone Fort the farms became



better, and the left bank more thickly settled—the opposite side of the river being covered with poplar, aspen, and thick undergrowth. The banks became higher and steeper as we ascended the river, exposing to view a section which would have delighted a geological explorer. The surface was composed apparently of alluvial clay and vegetable mould, four or five feet deep, lying over clay interspersed with boulders to a depth of about ten feet; under it again was stratified limestone of a highly fossiliferous character, and of a light brownish-yellow colour—it was the first limestone we had seen during our journey. The upper half of the banks was nearly perpendicular; the lower half, being composed of debris from the clay, boulders, and disintegrated limestone, formed an easy slope. When wet, the mud formed from these substances is of such a soapy and sticky nature that it is almost impossible to walk over it without losing your shoes.

As we pulled in to shore in front of the Stone Fort, we were welcomed by cheers from all the people, who, from below, had proceeded there on horseback as soon as they saw us row past their farms. The union-jack was hoisted by the servants of the Company—an emblem of nationality that none had dared to display for many months. Joy was written on every one's countenance.

The Lower or Stone Fort is twenty-one and a half miles by road from Fort Garry, and stands on the

left bank of the river. It is a square enclosure, with large circular bastions at each angle, the walls being of substantial masonry and loopholed throughout. There is a good steam-mill, where the Hudson Bay Company grind all the flour they require in this northern department. The stone used in all these buildings is quarried from the bank on which the Fort stands, which is there about forty feet high. We discharged all surplus stores here, retaining only enough provisions for a few days, so as to lighten our boats as much as possible. A company of the 60th Rifles was mounted on ponies and in carts, and extended as a line of skirmishers on the left bank, with orders to keep well ahead, but always in communication by signallers with the boats. An officer on horseback was sent to examine the right bank, so as to protect us from surprise there, although there was little chance of any opposition being attempted on that side, even should Riel intend fighting. That bandit potentate, according to the news of the day before from Fort Garry, was still in the Fort, awaiting the arrival of his friend Bishop Taché, who was hourly expected. Strict watch and guard was still maintained by his armed followers, whose numbers varied constantly. We took every possible precaution to prevent intelligence of our arrival in the river from reaching Fort Garry. No one was permitted to pass in that direction, although every one was allowed to come within our line of skirmishers. This was

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done so successfully, that although we halted for the night at only six miles from the place, Riel did not know positively that we were in the river. A vague report of some boats with men in them being on their way up towards the Fort had reached the village of Winnipeg; but there had been so many previous rumours of a similar nature from week to week in the two preceding months, that no one credited it. We subsequently ascertained that Riel and O'Donoghue rode out late at night in our direction; but heavy rain coming on as they approached our pickets, and being in dread of capture, they returned without any certain information regarding us.

Our advance up the river had much of a triumphal procession about it. Every church-bell rang out its peal of welcome; ladies in their best toilets, squaws with papooses on their backs, the painted warrior of the plain—all testified joy after their own fashion. There are some small rapids a few miles above the Stone Fort, caused by a ledge of limestone cropping up and forming a natural dam to the waters above. The detention caused by having to pole and track up so many boats at one time enabled the inhabitants to get a good view of us; so they assembled in numbers to do so.

The wind being against us, we had to halt for the night at a point six miles by road from Fort Garry. Our bivouac was carefully watched by a cordon of sentries on both banks of the river, and trustworthy men were sent forward into the village near the Fort

to gain information, and meet us in the early morning, as it was intended to march upon the Fort at daybreak. The "shave" that night was, that we should have a fight; and it was well that we had something to cheer us, for a more dreary attempt at repose it is impossible to imagine. It began to pour with rain soon after nightfall, and continued without cessation until morning. To march upon Fort Garry was out of the question, or at least it would have been folly to have attempted it, when we had the means of going there by water, as the face of the country was changed into a sea of mud. Roads there are none on these prairies, in the ordinary acceptation of the term. Places between which there is any traffic are joined by cart-tracks, for which a width of about eighty yards is allowed when they pass through a farm; so that when one spot becomes cut up, the traveller can have a wide margin to select his way from upon each side of the old path.

This necessary change of plan was annoying, as we had looked forward to advancing upon the Fort in all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of war.

As we bent over our fires at daybreak, trying to get some warmth for our bodies, and sufficient heat to boil the kettles, a more miserable-looking lot of objects it would be impossible to imagine. Every one was wet through; we were cold and hungry; our very enemies would have pitied our plight. A hurried breakfast of tea and biscuit was soon over,

and we were again in the boats by 6 A.M., rowing in three columns towards Fort Garry, as upon the preceding day. It poured heavily, and the country was at places a sheet of water, through which our skirmishers on the banks had to wade as best they could. As we approached the Protestant cathedral, the union-jack was run up to the steeple, and its bells rang out a musical welcome to the expeditionary force. The left bank was neatly cultivated and well settled, the population being entirely of English and Scotch descent. The other bank was a tangled mass of poor timber, and an underbrush consisting of hazel and rose bushes, intertwined with Virginia creeper. The moderately-rapid current in the river has, in the course of ages, cut out for itself a canal-like channel, which averaged from 150 to 300 yards in width. The floods in spring, when the ice breaks up, have in the last twenty years doubled in some places the distance between the banks, which are of most tenacious clay, steep throughout, and generally about thirty feet high. We landed at a place called Point Douglas, on the left bank, where the river makes a great bend to the eastward; so that, although it is only about two miles by road to the Fort, it is about six there by river. Our skirmishers had collected a few carts and horses, sufficient for the conveyance of some tools, ammunition, &c., &c. The guns were fastened by their trails to the rear of carts, and dragged along in that manner. Messengers who had

been sent on the previous evening to the village of Winnipeg joined us here with information that Riel and his gang were still in the Fort, and that the current rumour was that he intended to fight. He had distributed additional ammunition amongst his men, and the gates were closed and the guns loaded.

The men were quickly ashore, and advanced towards the Fort under cover of a line of skirmishers. It was heavy work marching through the deep mud with a driving rain beating in our faces, making it very difficult to see more than a few hundred yards before us. Notwithstanding all these drawbacks, the men's pace was most elastic, and they were in the highest spirits at the prospect of a fight, which all the inhabitants we encountered now assured us we were certain of having. The village of Winnipeg is a small collection of houses, chiefly of wood, situated about 800 yards north of the Fort, with which a straight road connects it. The Fort is in the right angle formed by the junction of the Assinaboine with the Red River, being north of the former and west of the latter stream. It was known that there was a boat-bridge over the Assinaboine, immediately opposite the southern gate of the Fort. It was therefore desirable to draw our line of attack round it, so as to command the two rivers, and so getting the enemy into the corner formed by them, prevent his escape.

Instead, therefore, of passing directly through the village, we swept round to the west, leaving it on our left; and when clear of it, swung round our right with the intention of taking up a position commanding the bridge. The people in the village assured us that Riel was in the Fort, and intended to resist. Several were asked to go forward in advance of our skirmishers, to ascertain if the southern gate was closed and the walls manned; but all feared to do so. As we passed the village we could see the guns in the embrasures bearing in our direction. Some people in buggies were descried going off from the Fort westerly, but were brought to a halt by our skirmishers. They proved to be some of Riel's counsellors; but nothing could be learned from them. The atmosphere was so thick that it was difficult to make out, even with our glasses, whether men were or were not standing to the guns which we saw. We expected every moment to see a puff of smoke from an embrasure, to be followed by the whizz of a round shot past our heads. Every moment increased the excitement: the skirmishers quickened their pace as they neared the place, as if in dread lest others should enter it before them. Everything remaining silent, some staff-officers were sent galloping round to see if the southern gate was open, and what was going on in rear of the Fort. They soon returned, bringing word that it was evacuated, and the gates left open.

This was at first a sad disappointment to the soldiers, who, having gone through so much toil in order to put down the rebellion, longed to be avenged upon its authors. Our victory, although bloodless, was complete. We dragged out some of the rebel guns, and fired a royal salute as the union-jack was run up the flagstaff, from which had floated, for so many months, the rebel banner that had been worked for Riel by the nuns in the convent attached to Bishop Taché's cathedral. The scene inside the Fort was most depressing: the square in front of the principal house was under water, and there was mud and filth everywhere. Riel and some of his friends had remained in the Fort up to the last possible moment, and had only left when they saw our skirmishers. Their breakfast was still on the table; and their clothes and arms lay scattered about through the numerous houses they had occupied, in a manner denoting the suddenness of their departure.

Every one was drenched with rain; and as the ground round the Fort was deep with mud, the men were temporarily lodged in the storehouses and buildings within it.

Fort Garry is a rectangular parallelogram, surrounded by high walls of masonry, except on the northern side, where they are formed of large square logs placed horizontally, one over the other. At each of the southern angles, and half-way down the eastern and western faces, there is a circular tower affording



flanking defence to the place. The Assinaboine River flows at about a hundred yards from its southern side. Like the Red River, its banks are steep, and of very sticky clay, the Fort being about forty feet above the water's level. Looking east over the Red River, one sees the Roman Catholic cathedral, with its monastery, convent, and bishop's palace, all well-built and neatly-kept buildings. Close to them are some miserably squalid cabins belonging to French half-breeds, whose houses generally are vastly inferior in every respect to those of British origin. The eastern horizon is formed of trees, chiefly poplar and aspen; for although the regular wooded country is not reached for about thirty miles west of Red River, still there are numerous belts of wood intersecting the prairie in that direction. Looking up that river towards the south, the eye wanders over a series of wretchedly-tilled farms, with their houses and barns situated upon both banks, and interspersed here and there with patches of poplar, dwarf oak, willow, and underbrush. The banks of the Assinaboine are skirted by woods of a similar description, having occasional clearances for the squalid houses of the French half-breeds, who occupy the adjoining farms. Looking north, the whitewashed buildings constituting the village of Winnipeg, and the farm-houses of well-to-do English-speaking people, give an air of prosperity to the landscape: in the distance is the square tower of the badly-built English cathedral,

ail out of the perpendicular, and foreboding a fall at no very distant time.

The one point of view having peculiar interest to the stranger is gained by turning west or south-westward. Far as the eye can see, there is stretched out before you an ocean of grass, whose vast immensity grows upon you more and more the longer you gaze upon it. Gallop out alone in the evening for a few miles from the Fort towards the S.W., and the most unimpressionable of mortals will experience a novel sensation. A feeling of indescribably buoyant freedom seems to tingle through every nerve, making the old feel young again. Old age and decrepitude belong to civilisation and the abodes of men. We can even associate it in our mind with mountains, whose rocks themselves appear as monuments of preceding centuries; and the withered and fallen trees in ancient forests seem akin to it: but upon the boundless prairies, with no traces of man in sight, nature looks so fresh and smiling that youth alone is in consonance with it.

Notwithstanding the badness of the weather on the day that we took possession of Fort Garry, numbers of the loyal inhabitants came in to see their deliverers. All were most anxious that immediate vengeance should be taken upon the rebel leaders, and many volunteered to capture Riel and others of his gang, who were stated to be still within easy reach. The officer commanding the troops had

had no civil authority conferred upon him by the Canadian Government, so it was not in his power to issue warrants for their arrest. The Ottawa Ministry had intended that the civil Lieutenant-Governor whom they had appointed for the province of Manitoba should have arrived at Fort Garry either with or immediately after us. We reached that place on the morning of the 24th August, but he did not get there until the evening of the 2d September, no arrangement having been made by the Canadian Ministry for the government of the province during that interregnum. Colonel Wolseley found himself in a difficult position. The most influential people, longing for some form of government that would be strong enough to afford the community protection, begged him to assume the position of provisional Lieutenant-Governor. To have done so would have been illegal; for the Hudson Bay Company, represented by its officers, were *de jure* the rulers of the country, until an official communication had been received announcing its transfer to the Dominion of Canada. As the rebels had bolted without firing a shot, to have proclaimed martial law would have been unwarrantable. He therefore insisted upon the senior officer of the Company then present being recognised as governor of the province, as if there had never been any rebellion whatever, and as if the rule of the Company had continued without any break, until the newly-appointed Lieutenant-Governor arrived.

Few, except those who have had revolutionary experience, can form a just idea of the condition of affairs on the Red River for some days after our arrival. There were no police to maintain order; all those who had during the past winter suffered in body or in property from Riel's tyranny, considered they were justified in avenging themselves upon those who had had any connection with rebel affairs. The reaction from the state of fear and trembling in which all had lived for the preceding ten months was too great for many, and there was some little trouble in keeping them in proper restraint. The rebel leaders had disappeared, but many of their adherents had merely gone home, hoping to be forgotten through the insignificance of their position. Those who had remained loyal were loud in expressing their discontent at these rebels being allowed to live at large.

Every precaution was taken by the military to prevent any serious disturbance. Armed parties patrolled about the Fort and through the village each night until everything was quiet, and a few special constables were sworn in as policemen to assist in preserving order in the town. Unfortunately, whisky was to be had in every shop in the village; and the Indians who had served with us as voyageurs added to the excitement by their noisy drunkenness. The Lieutenant-Governor was hourly expected; but as day after day passed without his being heard of, a good deal of nice management was required to keep

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things quiet, and prevent any collision between the loyalists and those who had recently been in arms against her Majesty. If military rule had been resorted to, quiet and peace could have been easily maintained; but it was considered essential for political reasons to keep the military element in the background as much as possible, and to make it appear that law and order were maintained there in the same manner as in the other Canadian provinces. The difficulty of doing so may be partially appreciated when it is remembered that all the former machinery of government had disappeared, and even the few magistrates who remained were afraid or disinclined to act. There was no law officer of any description; so that in reality order was kept by the moral effect produced by the presence of the troops, and by the consciousness that they would be used at any moment if necessary for the suppression of disturbance. There were occasionally rumours of armed bodies of rebels collecting on the frontier, or in the plains to the west; but as soon as the people generally perceived that no arrests were being made by the military, and that even the few leading rebels who had been captured by our skirmishers in their advance upon the Fort had been released without any trial whatever, public confidence revived. Even the poor ignorant French half-breeds, who had been misled by their priests for political objects, accepted the position, and settled down to their ordinary occupations. In such sparsely-

populated countries, revolutionary movements hold within themselves the germ of dissolution. It is difficult to collect the men together for action ; and if collected, it is difficult to obtain food, or funds to buy it for them. Riel got over this difficulty by seizing upon the Hudson Bay Company stores of provisions as a preliminary step in his rebellion. He was thus able to feed, clothe, and pay his soldiers at the Company's expense. If at the outset of his revolutionary career Fort Garry had been set on fire, and all its stores of food, money, clothing, ammunition, &c., &c., thus burnt, the rebellion would have been smothered and buried in the smoke and ashes.

Riel in his fall experienced the fickleness of Dame Fortune. On the 23d August he was the despotic potentate issuing orders like a dictator, there being none to gainsay him. Early in the forenoon on the following morning he might have been seen accompanied only by one follower, both on stolen horses, galloping through the rain and mud, their backs towards the scene of their villany. Let us hope that as he passed in his flight the spot where the poor Canadian volunteer had been murdered by his orders, he repented him of his crime. These two worthies, the master and the man, having crossed to the right bank of the Red River, fled south, thinking they were safer from pursuit on that side of it than if they followed the regular road to Pembina, which runs on the western or left bank of that stream. Night

having set in, they bivouacked on the plain, and upon waking the following morning discovered that their horses had disappeared. They were without food, but their pockets were well lined with stolen money. Having lost their horses, and that side of the river being little inhabited, it was necessary for them to cross to the other bank. There was no boat, so they set to work pulling down a fence to make a raft. They could not find enough rope or cord to fasten it together, so Riel's follower—his late "Secretary of State"—took off his trousers and used them for that purpose. Upon landing on the other side they were assailed by the farmer, who had seen them pulling down his fence, and were forced to disgorge some of their plunder as compensation for the damage. Two days afterwards they reached Pembina—Riel with bare feet, swollen and sore from the journey. He found that he was not at all well received by the Americans there, who had taken umbrage at his having imprisoned their consul ; so he went to St Josephs, a village about fifty miles to the west, and within a few miles of our frontier. He had previously sent a large proportion of his plunder to that place ; and, according to the latest received accounts, he is still there, living comfortably in the enjoyment of his stolen property.

The first detachment of the regular troops started from Fort Garry on their return-journey to Canada on the 29th of August, and all of them had left on

the 3d of September. The two militia regiments had been quartered, one in the Lower or Stone Fort, the other in Fort Garry. The regulars had all crossed the height of land near Lake Superior on their return-journey before the 1st of October, and were in their barracks at Quebec and Montreal before the autumn had closed in.

So ended the Red River Expedition—an undertaking that will long stand out in our military chronicles as possessing characteristics peculiarly its own. The force which landed at Massowah in 1867 had to march about 400 miles inland, through an inhabited country where supplies were obtainable, to relieve some British prisoners held captive by a sovereign, half tyrant, half madman. Europe was in profound peace at the time, so all eyes were turned upon its doings. Although there can scarcely be said to have been any fighting, as we had not even a man killed, still our Ministry was glad to have an opportunity of attracting so much general attention to a military operation entirely English; and many think that for the millions spent upon it, we, as a nation, received an equivalent in proving before the world that we were still capable of military enterprise. The force sent to the Red River for the purpose of crushing out rebellion there, had to advance from its point of disembarkation more than 600 miles through a wilderness of water, rocks, and forests, where no sup-



plies were to be had, and where every pound-weight of provisions and stores had to be transported for miles on the backs of the soldiers. Happily its object was accomplished, as in the expedition to Abyssinia, without any loss of life. A great war was raging in Europe whilst this Expedition was forcing its way over and through the immense natural obstacles that lay in its path. All thoughts were of affairs upon the Rhine ; no one could spare a moment's reflection for the doings of this little British army. No home newspapers cared to record its success, nor to sound one single note of praise in its honour. By the careful administration of General Lindsay, and the officers he had selected to carry out his orders, the total expense of the whole Expedition was under £100,000, one quarter of which only is to be paid by England. There was no reckless waste either in material or in money. Such a careful economy was exercised in its organisation, and in administering to its subsequent wants, that it may be safely asserted that no such distance has ever been traversed by an efficient brigade numbering about 1400 souls, in any of our numerous little wars, at such a trifling cost.

The English flag had been pulled down, and the standard of rebellion had been raised at Fort Garry. A man loyal to his Queen had been murdered, loyalty having been his crime. Men were imprisoned and robbed without even the mockery of a trial. The

perpetrators of these crimes believed that the wilderness which separated them from civilisation would secure them from punishment; but the manner in which our Expedition performed its allotted task, proved that no distance or intervening obstacles can afford protection to those who outrage our laws.

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