

THE PIONEERS

(By Peter McArthur in Toronto Globe.)

To one who seeks records of his surprise he returned hours before he was expected. The life there is really an embarrassment of material at hand. The whole country is a vast museum. What are the broad fields but an imperishable monument to their honest ambition and industry? The old houses and barns that remain standing and have not been improved out of existence cast a flood of light on the past. Here and there one finds a building roofed with oak clapboards that were split with a frow, from timber that "split like ribbon." These clapboards, in some cases, are fastened down with hand-wrought nails when a dollar not only went farther but spread wider and deeper than it does to-day, cost at least fifty cents the pound. Specimens of hand-sawn planks and scantlings may still be met with, recalling the days when logs were rolled over the saw-pits and into planks with rip-saws operated by two men; one of whom stood on top of the log and guided the saw while the other coughed and smothered in the dusty pit. To be called a "top-sawyer" was to be highly complimented, the term having much the same significance as "high financier" has to-day. His job was clean and masterful as compared with that of the laborer who worked below.

It is still possible to find occasional split shingles made from a quantity of pine that has become a memory. The dove-tailed corners of the building are a record of the race of axemen who have passed out of existence. Some of these men were so expert with their axes that they were even said to shave with them. It is still possible, however, even in the most up-to-date tontorial parlors, to get a shave that makes you feel as if it had been done with an axe, but that is not a subject for printable comments.

In some of the older houses there is still some furniture that has escaped the progress of fashion—solid beds and tables put together with pers, and often made of solid walnut. Sometimes you will find a housewife boasting that she was able to pay for the nicely varnished factory-made furniture that is her pride by selling the old beds, cupboards, and tables to some furniture-maker, who valued them solely for the solid and well-seasoned walnut they contained. The old cranes, pot-hooks and Dutch-ovens that were used in the broad fire-places have been gathered up by unromantic junk-dealers of Greek or Hebrew extraction. By the way, it would be interesting to know how many of the children who get their fingers inky with their first exercise, at writing know that the figures they find it impossible to make without biting their tongues and wringing their toes are really fair pictures of implements used by their grandmothers? A search through the junk corner of a country blacksmith shop is sometimes rewarded by the discovery of such things as ox shoes and swamp shoes for horses. The beasts of burden of pioneer days had troubles of their own and had to be properly equipped for their work. Swamp shoes for horses were really boots with flag wooden soles to keep the horses from sinking in the miry ground—which gives a hint of what the country was like before Government drains were let off the water in sudden and sometimes destructive freshets. Oxen were used by the pioneers rather than horses, not because they were easier to get or handle, but because with their spreading hoofs properly shod they were less likely to be mired, either when working in the poorly drained fields or on the roads. The progress that has been made in the country can be estimated by comparing the gait of the slow lumbering ox and that of the "false, fleeting, perjured" scorcher. In this connection a couple of stories are recalled that should be recorded, partly because the conditions that produced them have passed away, and partly because they have not. It apparently was just as good sport to fall of the mistakes made by newcomers in pioneer days as it is now. One story is of a farmer who sent his newly-imported man to the mill with the ox-team. To

"Old Morality" should devote themselves to keeping in repair the graves and other memorials of the pioneers, just as their prototype cared for the graves of the martyrs. If the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church, it is equally true that the labor of the pioneers was the seed of the nation. Their achievements should be kept in mind for the good of future generations. Even though some of the schemes suggested may be foolish, some would undoubtedly be wise enough to endure. In any case the subject is worthy of much more thought than it is now receiving.

VANDELEUR

Quite a number of the Foresters and their wives spent a most enjoyable evening at the home of Mr. A. Shaw, Wodehouse, on Friday evening last. Mr. Shaw and his estimable wife are unequalled as host and hostess.

Messrs. Ross Alcox and Allan Milligan are engaged cutting wood for Mr. Fred Boland.

Mr. W. Swanton, of Flesherton, was the guest of Mr. Fred Boland recently.

The Temperance Division met on Friday evening of last week and installed their new officers. This Division is very sorry that the temperance people of Markdale, after putting up such a splendid campaign for local option, were defeated by a few votes. It is believed by many here that had we gotten a petition the same as our Wodehouse friends, it would have made a difference of some votes. However, the temperance sentiment is growing, even in Markdale.

Our Water Supply.

In the annual report of the Department of the Interior for year ended 31st March, 1909, the Superintendent of Forestry gives some interesting information regarding irrigated farming and the extent of the water supply in the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

It is stated that the water rights already granted in connection with the larger irrigation projects are sufficient to provide for the irrigation of some 2,000,000 acres, and that these systems, when completed, will have cost in the neighborhood of \$10,000,000. When it is remembered that the lands to be irrigated are without water, suitable chiefly for grazing and that they have heretofore been sold, when sold at all, at from three to ten dollars an acre, whereas with water rights they are readily saleable at from \$25 to \$35 an acre, the value of water in these regions of scanty or uncertain rainfall is at once apparent. Truly water is wealth in the southern portions of our prairie provinces, and it is interesting to note that steps are now being taken to ascertain the extent of the water supply with a view to its fuller utilization.

Three parties of two men each, have been assigned to the work of stream measurement in the Cal-

Rural Hospitality.

Toronto Saturday Night tells the story: "Rural hospitality is proverbial and the son in the city is too forgetful of how a visit from him brightens up the old folks at home, especially in the weary winter days when the old people are not so busy as in the summer time when visits of city folk are usually paid. But sometimes there is such a thing as overdoing it, if the remarks of an old man in Huron county may be believed. He has a son out in Wisconsin who has married out there. Some months ago he brought his bride home for the old folks to see. They made a long visit and apparently the old folks were happy. But at last the sad parting arrived. The old man drove them to the station at Goderich, and as they stood on the platform just before the train pulled out, there were embraces and farewells. "Oh it's done my whole heart good to see you both," exclaimed the father heartily. "And it's done mother good, too. I hope you won't forget us out there in Wisconsin, and hope you'll both come back again—but not for such a darn long stay as you made this time."

Thieving in Hanover

What bears all the ear marks carefully planned thieving was perpetrated in Hanover on New Year's Day, Dr. and Mrs. Ball and daughter, Mrs. V. J. Telford, New Year's dinner with Mrs. Ball, parents, Mr. and Mrs. T. Campbell, and left their residence on Main street between 9 and 10 o'clock. Mrs. Telford left her bag which contained a purse with some fifteen dollars hanging in wall in a closet. On their arrival home, Mrs. Telford having occasion to use her hand bag, immediately discovered that her purse was missing. The natural supposition on learning the above facts is that it had either been mislaid or had been dropped in some way out doors, but there is abundant evidence to prove that such is the case. The inmates of the house are quite clear of the fact that it was a case of deliberate thieving. The doors were all locked and is the belief that someone, familiar with the situation on seeing opportunity to visit the door, outer door is not locked and door of the vestibule possesses an ordinary lock, so that it would not take a very expert criminal to effect an entrance. There are many on the stairway which would have been made by any member of the family. There have been acts of petty thieving in town occasionally but none of late quite so barefaced as this.

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MADAME JOSEPH LIRETTE

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