

TO HUDSON BAY WITH MINISTER OF RY. Some Day the Haunt of Water Fowl and Mosquito Will Be Invaded By Tourists

by canoe to Hudson Bay! To follow in the footsteps of Franklin and the host of hardy traders who made the waters of the Northern slope the scene of their adventures; to journey through a region where the veneer of civilization has not yet effaced the romance of other days, where the Hudson Bay Company is still the father confessor of the Indian, where the simple red man even believes that it is the company and not the Government that is now building a railway through their happy hunting-grounds—for is it not the Hudson Bay Railway?

It was the writer's privilege to make the journey with the Minister of Railways, on Mr. Cochrane's recent visit to Port Nelson and Fort Churchill, to inspect possible terminals for the Hudson Bay Railway. It was not exactly a pleasure trip, five hundred miles by paddle in seven and a half days being strenuous enough for even the hardened Cree Indians of the party, but it was brimful of interest and incident from start to finish.

The route was from Winnipeg to Selkirk by motor car; from Selkirk to the northern end of Lake Winnipeg, some two hundred and seventy miles, by "The Lady of the Lake," the Dominion Fishery steamer; from Warren's Landing, eighteen miles to Norway House, the historic Hudson Bay post, by smaller steamboat, and thence by canoes, through Little Playgreen Lake, the Echamamish, and Franklin Rivers, Pine, Windy, and Oxford Lakes, Trout River, Knee Lake, and the Hayes River to York Factory. And when at York Factory Professor C. B. Tyrell, who was in that North country on a mission for the Ontario Government and who has seen more of the Canadian hinterland than most men, said that this route comprised the most diversified canoe trip in Canada, one could readily agree with him.

Tourist Traffic Some Day.

Some day when the jaded Westerner finds he can reach these, or the adjacent Nelson waters, handily by train; or go down by canoe and return by railway, a large tourist traffic may be expected to develop. The man who has been fed upon prairie scenery will find plenty of change at his own back door. He may have the sullen, rush-lined stream, the haunt alike of water fowl and the mosquito, or the swift water where the roar of the rapids will be always in his ears, and where the excitement of running the rapids is pleasantly offset by the occasional portage. Then there are lakes where he may find smooth water or rough, where the paddlers pray for a fair wind and welcome a half gale. Also there is a hundred miles of strong, resistless current where, head wind or beam, it is all one, and you are carried headlong until you find the cool salt air in your nostrils, while the Indians gently hint that the water is no longer good to drink.

The forest growth will look good to him, for nature has made up in density on that northern slope what she lacks in quality of timber, and the contour of the country is pleasantly diversified. He will find game in abundance, but may find the regular camping places malodorous and fly-infested, by reason of the untidy habits of the Indians. The natives obey the fire laws now that they are acquainted with them, and fire-rangers' notices in English and in Cree adorn every camping place to the bay. But if the Indian could be similarly instructed regarding camp sanitation it would be a good thing.

Indians Strict Sabbatarians.

The Government party comprized Mr. Cochrane, J. P. Gordon, of Winnipeg, assistant chief engineer of the Hudson Bay Railway, and G. W. Yates, the Minister's secretary. The journey was made in three nineteen-foot canoes, with three Indians and one white man in each. The Indians were Swamp Crees, strong Methodists, and for the most part boasting of Scottish names, though scarcely speaking a word of English. They will decline to commence a journey on the Sabbath, even though there be a fair wind—in fact they are such strong Sabbatarians that it seemed to be impossible to get them started before noon on Monday. The chief guide and steersman of the Minister's canoe was old Solomon Farmer, who with black and impassive countenance, his long hair tied in a colored kerchief, and his waist scarf of many colors, only required a cutlass and a sheath knife to pass for a Spanish brigand. His bowman was Charles Wesley (no relation), long and lank and burly, who upset all preconceived notions of Indian impassiveness by fondling and kissing the baby goodbye before setting out on what to his assembled family must have seemed a long journey. John Bradburn, a handsome buck, was the third Indian in the leading canoe. With Mr. Gordon were the three Robertsons, Anos (Steersman); Henry, (bow), and Johnnie, the first two father and son, and the last a nephew, who also engaged as camp cook. Amos, a serious-minded man of forbidding countenance, looked like the chap who did the bloody deeds Fenimore Cooper made us acquainted with behind the barn in the days of our youth. The third canoe was manned by three McKays (McKi, if you please), Donald, James and Joseph, all brothers. Of the entire party, Donald or "Tonal," as the Indians called him, was the only Indian with any particular acquaintance with the English language. He had been out to school at Brandon.

Every morning and every evening these braves assembled about the camp fire for family worship, led by either of the two old men, Solomon Farmer or Amos Robertson. And though the language was strange, it was like a benediction to listen to the voice of the intercessor reverently pleading in a tone that spoke eloquently sincere devotion. Such Indians certainly compelled respect.

White Chief Paddled.

They could not at first understand the White Chief, who, instead of taking his "ease with dignity," in accordance with Hudson Bay custom, took hold of a paddle and plied it from start to finish. It was disconcerting to the Indians to find the White Chief paddling when they would rest, so after a while they cut out the rests, and the white travelers in the other two canoes also had the option of paddling or being left too far behind to be sociable. They therefore paddled day after day all the way to the Bay, except when a beam wind made it possible to hoist sail and rest for an hour or two, though as often as not the aid from the wind was so inconsiderable and uncertain that paddling could not be laid aside. Blisters and paddleritis developed early. For the former, gloves afforded relief, and for the latter, still more paddling was the sovereign remedy.

The first camp was made on the Echamamish, or Crooked River, (rightly named), on what proved to be just a little the worst camping-ground any one of the party had ever encountered. The river traversed a marsh at this point, and the camp site was a steep rock about fifteen feet high, on the other side of which, in some bushes where the mosquitoes and black flies held sweet converse, the tents were pitched. Said Solomon Farmer, the chief guide, just before retiring at 8.30 p.m., "Will the White Chief want to rise early to travel?" Said I to "Tonal" McKay, who interpreted, "The White Chief in an early riser. You can't set the alarm clock too early for him." Donald passed on the message and the Indians went to prayers and to bed.—By George Yates.

THE CRUELTY OF REALISM.

John G. Johnson, the lawyer and art expert, was talking at a dinner in Philadelphia about some of Sargent's cruelly realistic portraits. "Sargent once painted a Philadelphia woman," Johnson said, "and when the work was finished the woman's coachman called for it. 'As the coachman was studying the portrait, Sargent said to him: 'How do you like it?' 'The man answered thoughtfully: 'Well, sir, ye might have made it a little better lookin' mebbe; but if ye had ye'd have spoiled it.'"—Globe-Democrat.

MENACED BY THE WILD BEAST

Student Rangers Want Fire Arms And Less Arduous Labor During the Summer

According to the Toronto News the student fire rangers have a vigorous kick coming and it is quite probable that a large deputation of them will wait upon the Ontario Government to register their complaints and ask for future relief from their arduous duties during the summer.

Increasing indignation has been felt as detachment after detachment of these men have arrived in Toronto after their season's work to find that the severe toil to which they have been subjected has been the common lot of many. Work, which in its severity and tax upon the physical system, has not heretofore been required of any woodsmen, they claim has been imposed upon them.

They are inclined to attribute this to the fact that the chief rangers in this way have determined to deter students from this recognized method of summer employment.

Although the report of last summer, to the effect that students were to be eliminated from fire-rangering appointments, was denied by the Department of Lands, Forests and Mines, it is felt that their right to serve in this capacity is no longer so clearly recognized.

Would "Work Them to Death."

One chief ranger is reliably quoted as saying: "I will work these students to death, and teach the department not to send them to my reserve." In the carrying out of this idea rangers on his beat were forced to stand waist-deep in an icy stream for five days during the last two weeks in September, dragging logs from a creek to clear the waterway. This work, they claim, was entirely unnecessary, inasmuch as the chief had caused them to cut a wide trail along the course of the stream earlier in the season to offset the impassibility of the waterway.

They were given five days in which to do this, on the stipulation that the months' salary would be docked if they failed.

Wants Firearms.

Another matter which may receive attention is the regulation that no fire-ranger shall be allowed to have guns or arms in his possession. Those who have come in from the outlying districts claim that this mandate leaves them in a very dangerous position.

Two canoe boys were placed in a very uncomfortable situation one evening at dusk recently by the appearance of a huge lynx at the door of their shack. The beast stood at the doorway glaring in upon them and the only weapons to which they could lay their hands were a couple of axes. The rangers set up a loud yell to startle the creature but to their alarm it showed no inclination to move.

As one said, "our skin began to crawl as he gazed at us." In the end, however, it turned away without molesting them and vanished in the forest. Night after night, too, the wolves could be heard howling in the vicinity. Not all of the rangers had shafts, some using tents alone throughout the summer.

Says Guns are Necessary.

The foreman of a large lumber camp stated that he would never go into the bush without a gun.

"No man should be made to do so," he said. "I would never work for the Government if I had to submit to such a regulation. One is always in danger of meeting wolves or bears on these tote-roads and you have to be prepared."

It is thought that this fall some understanding will be arrived at so that the question will be thoroughly threshed out.

NOT IN STYLE.

"Pa, come here quick!"
"What's the matter my boy?"
"Come and look out of the window. Here come two girls who are dressed respectably."

DIFFERENT WITH WOMEN.

They generally try to save the man who starts to go to the devil. But when a woman starts the disposition is to give her a lift in the direction of her destination.

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