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**A STRANGE TEMPEST**

By C. A. STEPHENS.

When, in 1907, I journeyed out to the Peace River country, in the Province of Alberta, to visit my kinsfolk, the Massmans, at their wheat farm, I became good friends with the Woodbridges, who lived near by—that is, near as distances go in the great Northwest. Freeman Woodbridge had settled there some years before with his son and daughter, Winthrop and Milly, and their Uncle James. Woodbridge had built a saw-mill below Fort St. John, on what is now called Woodbridge Creek.

That is a beautiful country—the Peace River region. To the west rise the "White Hills of God," as they call the Rockies; to the east the wild, rolling plains stretch away into the distance. Miles of blueberries carpet the unfenced, billowy hillsides. Scattered patches of balm of Gilead and the sands of acres of wild roses make the air fragrant. In July and August the land is covered with wild strawberries and blueberries.

One day, when I had stopped to eat some of the delicious strawberries, I came upon a curious fact: under the vegetation on the hillsides were thousands and thousands of ant hills. I learned later that they were scattered everywhere, for hundreds of miles, especially on the vast stretches of sandy loam among the fragrant balm of Gilead trees, or beside the long, spare belts of pine woods. I should never have supposed there were so many ant hills in the world as I saw on the rolling plains of the Peace River country.

Through that region a great many gold seekers passed in the mad rush for the Klondike. Often their outfits were woefully inadequate. Two of the gold hunters, for example, set out with only a shovel and a quantity of food, which they carried in wheelbarrows. An old man started out with two dozen packages of oatmeal on his back, a pot of salt, two pounds of sugar and a quart boiler; he expected these provisions to last him until he reached Alaska. Six others pooled what money they had and bought a second steam engine, which they set up in an old freight car provided with a walking beam and a clumsy crank axle. This self-propelled contrivance they named the "Hercules"; and they expected to cross the Rocky Mountains in it, and to use it as winter quarters after they arrived in Alaska! Needless to say, the Hercules did not travel far.

A party of seventy or more got as far as the Battle River region, and there camped in sad discouragement for a fortnight. Apparently their outfit was not at all adequate; and there was probably internal dissension and fighting in the camp. At any rate, the party broke up tumultuously. Some of the more adventurous preceded on across the mountains, some turned back, and some—no one knows what became of them.

About ten years later, when trapping in the Battle River region, Winthrop Woodbridge and his Uncle James came upon the place where the party of gold seekers had camped and disbanded. Winthrop named it Calamity Camp.

The camp was on the bank of a creek that ran into the Battle River, in an open prairie country north of the Clear Hills. A few straggling cottonwood trees, the only trees in sight on that prairie, grew along the creek. Everywhere were evidences of the disorder with which the camp had broken up. The wrecks of not less than twenty carts or wagons were scattered along the bank of the creek; strewn over the ground were barrels, boxes, shovels, picks, crowbars and a great quantity of tinware; in one place were the bones of some horses and some rotted harnesses.

Winthrop and his uncle took home a great many of the abandoned articles that would be useful; and for a year or two after that, whenever the disbander needed iron for their mill or for farming tools, they used to make a trip to Calamity Camp, and take home as many wagon tires and axles as Old Peregrination could draw. Old Peregrination was the stray horse that Winthrop had found some time before, and that, they supposed, had frightened them; then she guessed that it was wind that had caused the flock to scatter. A fitful gust or two, rustling the leaves of the cottonwoods, had already reached them from the south. Before long, harder gusts of wind made the whole wide expanse of grass wave and seethe. Glancing southward again, Milly saw what seemed to be a great, dim cloud, like thin mist, that fitted the whole sky in that direction; the cloud appeared to extend down to the very earth. She did not think it could be dust, for they rarely saw dust clouds in the Peace Valley. And it was not a great, thin piece of black gauze, let down from the sky to the earth.

Milly called to Winthrop to look at the cloud. He and Uncle James set down the carrying poles and stood looking at it for some time. It was still four or five miles away. "I can't imagine what that is," Uncle James said.

Mr. Woodbridge stopped the thrasher, and stood with the others staring at the strange cloud, which was coming rapidly toward them. It did not at all resemble a thundercloud. To Milly it seemed like a black veil that

was twisting and turning in great eddies a mile high. She thought of the waterpots of which she had read, and of tornados; but this cloud was so thin that she could see through it.

"Some kind of queer storm!" Winthrop exclaimed. He and Uncle James turned the prairie boats over the bags of grain, in order to protect them from rain. Mr. Woodbridge tied the horse to one of the trees and went to secure Brighteyes, who was lying in the grass, farther down the creek, chewing her cud.

The curious black mist was now within a few hundred yards of them, and as it approached, they heard a ho, hissing noise, as if drops of water were falling on a hot stove. The peculiar sound made Milly think of kettles and tin snappers at the camp fire, and she started to put them under cover. A second later the strange cloud enveloped them, and at that moment a queer, sharp smell made them both gasp. Their eyes, too, were nearly blinded. Winthrop had run to help Milly, but the girl could hardly see him. They felt in their faces, necks and hands a thousand sharp little stings, like needle pricks. They fought for breath.

"What is it? What is it?" Milly gasped. Winthrop was brushing himself frantically with his hat. "It's a sort of winged things—wasps, bees!" he cried. "No, not bees! It's ants, Milly, flying ants! Millions of 'em!" Uncle James came running toward them, brushing himself with all his might. "Flying ants!" he gasped. Mr. Woodbridge, too, came racing up the creek bank; as he ran, he tried to brush the ants from his face and body. Old Peregrination was squealing and kicking, and uttering a very unbecoming noise. Milly caught a glimpse of Brighteyes going down the creek with her tail high in the air; a moment later she heard her splash into a deep pool. Instinct had shown the cow how to escape her tormentors.

Hundreds of the ants settled over the Woodbridges. Gusts of them, with hissing wings, dashed into their faces. Wherever the ants touched their flesh they felt the same sharp little pain. Milly could not tell whether the creatures bit her or stung her. Probably the smart was caused by the formic acid that all ants give out when they are hurt or disturbed. As the ants fell to the ground the wings of many of them seemed to brush off.

Winthrop shouted to Milly to get into the tent; as soon as she was safe inside, the others followed her. They closed the flap as quick as they could, but a gust of ants flew in before they could fasten it, and they could not free themselves from the pests for some time.

Old Peregrination had a bad time of it; but Mr. Woodbridge was afraid

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that if they untied him he would run off for miles. Away down the creek above Brighteyes' head just where she had plunged the pool into which she had plunged, the whole atmosphere was pervaded by the whole atmosphere.

The tent protected the Woodbridges pretty well from the pests that swarmed outside, and when they had brushed off the ants that had followed them in they were fairly comfortable. After an hour or more the tempest of ants abated perceptibly; the cloud of flying creatures ceased to thin out until there were scarcely any in the air. It was then about sunset.

When the Woodbridges came out of the tent the ground was covered with the bodies and the white wings of the ants. Millions of the little creatures had been caught in the dry grass and grain; and on every little pool in the creek they had laid a layer several inches deep. Most of them seemed to have perished where they fell.

There were such large quantities of their wings along the grass and the grain that, without knowing it, the Woodbridges carried home great numbers of them in the bags of oats. Indeed, it was difficult to keep them out of the food that they cooked that evening and the next morning.

Milly was not much poisoned by their bites or stings, and suffered only a little; but Winthrop passed a very uncomfortable night, and Uncle James had a good deal of pain.

How far the vast swarms of ants extended they had no means of knowing; but going home the next day they passed a little lake that was coated with a scum of ants; the fish were jumping merrily, and were making a great feast. The family were at a loss to know where so many ants could come from. They had never noticed any great number of ant hills in that part of the Peace River country. Mr. Woodbridge at last came to the conclusion that the ants must have come from some sheltered valley among the mountains to the southwest, and that the remarkably warm weather for the past week had caused them to swarm in unusually large numbers. For such steady swarms of ants, temporary wings, the south wind that blew that afternoon had perhaps blown them on for a long distance from the place where they had first risen. (The End.)

**Used Autos**

Breaker's Used Car Market. The first flight of 100 miles by aeroplane was made by Henry Farman in 1909. Dohls were used to display styles in dress as long ago as 1821, when one was sent to the English Queen of that date. In Siam a certain small fresh-water fish is specially bred for its fighting powers, contests and matches being arranged.

Parallel with the exhibits, in educational value, are the demonstrations in canning, baking and so forth now so frequently conducted at our fairs, not by trained leaders from outside the community, but by the women—and boys and girls—themselves. An exhibit plus a demonstration, to the exhibitor who really wishes to learn, is worth ten printed chapters on how to do these things. The very fact that you have the know-how, means that you have a definite responsibility to put your knowledge within the reach of your fellow farm-women who have not had your opportunities.

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**NORTH MANITOBA MINERAL BELT**

PROVINCE HAS GREAT INDUSTRIAL FUTURE.

Adequate Railroad Facilities Needed for Full Development of Rich Discoveries.

The discovery of various minerals in Northern Manitoba and activity in one of the most promising of Canadian mineral belts has changed the status and prospect of the middle western province, and from being solely an agricultural province—one of the world's finest farming areas—the disclosure of sources of prospective mineral revenue forecast a future of great industrial importance. Though the industry in this vast region cannot be regarded as other than in the first stages of development, and has been hampered by its remoteness from actual facilities, every month has something to reveal in the way of new discoveries, and much progressive work has been undertaken and completed. The value of minerals produced in Northern Manitoba in 1919 amounted in value to \$654,633, whilst production for 1920 is estimated by Commissioner Wallace of that territory at around \$600,000.

Approximately three-fifths of the total area of Manitoba is pre-Cambrian, a formation which in Ontario gave rise to the development at Sturby, Cobalt and Porcupine. There was little prospecting in Manitoba before 1912 when the Rice Lake camp was opened up, and the Hudson Bay Railway gave access to the mineral areas of the northern part of the province. Successful prospecting has since that time been carried on over a wide area, the most noticeable districts of which are the Pas belt and the Rice Lake area.

Development at the Pas. Since 1915, development has been rapid in The Pas mineral belt. Twenty million tons of low-grade copper ore have been explored by diamond drilling at Flin Flon Lake and are now being actively developed. High-grade copper is being exported from Schist Lake to the smelter at Trail, B.C., and more than 7,000,000 pounds have already been realized. Other copper prospects are under development, and the prospecting building of a smelter at Flin Flon will lead, it is expected, to the establishment of a large copper industry. Gold is now produced at Herb Lake, and active underground development work is being carried out in four other regions.

During 1920, development work in The Pas mineral belt was confined mainly to the western and eastern ends. There was considerable diamond drilling at Copper Lake, a good deal of interest aroused over gold discoveries at Elbow Lake, an amount of prospecting done in the West Lake territory, and active exploration work was carried on in the Flin Flon area by the Longyear Exploration Company for the Thompson interests. Production of the Mandy Mine which went through the Trail, B.C., smelter, totalled more than \$2,000,000 in copper, gold and silver. There was a small production of gold from the Rex mine and trial mill runs from the Northern Manitoba and Binsco properties. As far as copper development is concerned in particular there has been a tendency to await railway facilities consequent upon the operation of the Flin Flon property before any very considerable expenditure of capital is made on other copper properties. Extensive exploration has satisfactorily established the fact that there is an ore body of very large dimensions in the Flin Flon deposits which will become increasingly important to the Province of Manitoba.

Active Prospective Program. The development of the Northern Manitoba mineral area in 1920 can be considered as satisfactory in the face of the general situation, and, whilst production may not have attained startling proportions, results have been achieved which cannot be estimated statistically, in the amount of good publicity received and the influential interest aroused. The visit, for instance, of members of the provincial legislature to the Flin Flon promises to show good results, for the trip was to these men a wonderful revelation of the possibilities of development in the north of their province. Full development and production from this rich mineral belt cannot be attained until adequate railroad facilities have been provided.

Man Wanted. Mr. Johnson was the business manager of a big concern and was obliged to travel a great deal in his interests, much to the displeasure of his daughter, Dorothy, aged nine. "Daddy," she asked, "Why don't you stay at home and work like other little girls' daddies do?" "Why, I'd love to, Dorothy," said father, with a smile, "but the fact is I have to earn a lot of money to take care of mother and you and I can't get enough work at home to do that." "Daddy," continued Dorothy, "I don't believe you have ever tried hard enough. Why, I see just now and lots of signs all the time 'Man Wanted.' This very morning there was one in front of the hardware store."

Guns were used by the English at the Battle of Creecy in 1346.

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Seasonable Salads. Housewives too often neglect to give salads the proper place in the diet, serving them only on special occasions. In reality the salad plays a very important part in the diet and the wise planner will see that it is served in some form nearly every day.

The food value of the salad is very apparent, since the fresh green plant contains large quantities of mineral salts, essential in the building of the body and in a form which is readily assimilated and also very nourishing to the palate. The salad dressing contains fat in the form of oil and the vegetables, meat, fish, eggs or fruit are all good food material often more nourishing when served in salad combinations than in some other way.

Only fresh crisp greens should be used. They should be washed, rolled in a wet cloth and kept in a cold place for several hours before using. Ingredients, such as vegetables, fruits or meat must be cut into uniformly sized pieces. They should not be allowed to stand until discolored or soggy. Apples, for instance, cannot be cut up until just before serving. All materials must be cold, dry, crisp and combined just before serving time. Much care should be used in combining the selected ingredients to make the salad attractive in appearance. Make the individual portions of uniform size and not too large. A spoonful of salad dressing or whipped cream is carefully placed on top of the whole, with an additional garnish of any of the following: sliced green peppers, pimientos, pickles, hard boiled eggs, stuffed olives or cherries. These make an attractive appearance which readily appeals to the appetite. Heavy salads, such as the meat, fish or cooked vegetable salads should not be served with a heavy dinner but should form the main dish at lunch or supper.

For a delicious country supper, serve vegetable salad or fish salad, with baking powder biscuit, fruit and coffee. To make fish salad use the chicken salad recipe given here, substituting fish for chicken meat. To make the biscuit, sift very thoroughly with one quart of flour, two heaping teaspoonfuls of baking powder and one-half level teaspoonful of salt. Add two rounding or four level tablespoonfuls of shortening. Mix as soft as it can be handled with milk or cream. If you use cream mix in add the liquid until the biscuits are in a "quick" oven. If you prefer not to make salad dressings, delicious substitutes can be

Looking Forward to the Fall Fair. Shall you exhibit? The answer is that every forward-thinking farm woman includes at least the county fair in her plans for the year. The whole scientific world proves to us that there is no such thing as luck. Even in the world of invention men do not wait for inspiration to make discoveries, but when there is need for something new they begin at once to "figure" how it can be supplied. The matter of prize-taking at our provincial and county fairs is no matter of luck but of good planning and hard work and determination not to be beaten. Now, while the chicks are fluttering out of the incubators, while the calves and pigs and colts are tame under the hand, while the garden is yet in the stage where cultivation and care help a whole lot, it is the time for the farm woman to make up her mind what and where she will exhibit. The exhibit is the trying-out field, the place where every man and woman—and increasing numbers of boys and girls—have a chance not only to show their mettle but to prove what can be done in field and garden and yard and pen to bring up the whole standard of production. Every year the number of women

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**Woman's Sphere**

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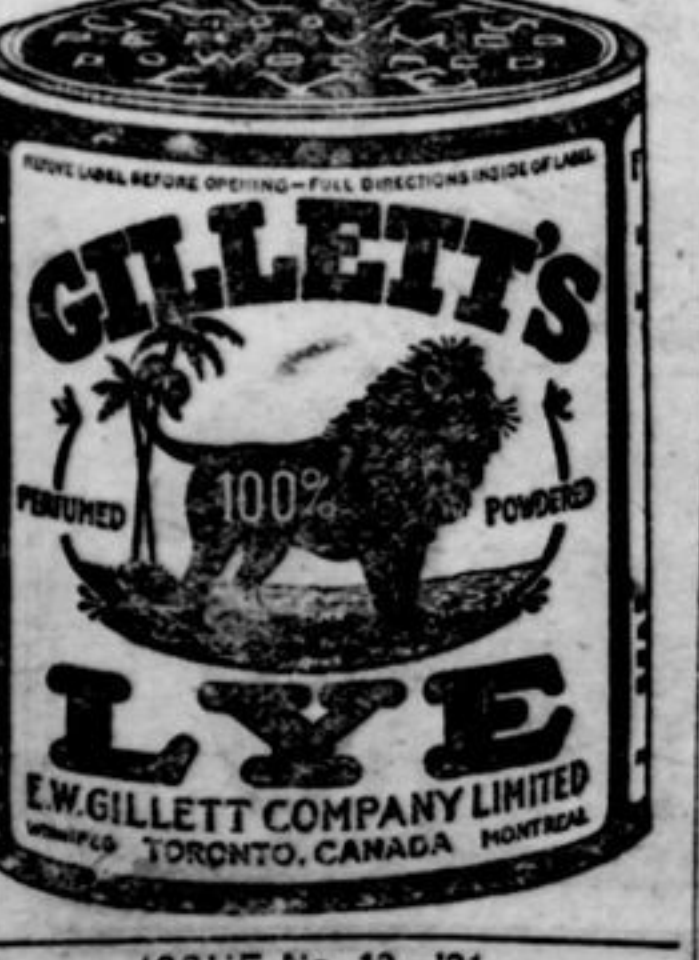
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