

CANADA'S HUNGRY YEAR

THE TIME WHEN U. E. LOYALISTS WENT EMPTY.

Three Years After the Pioneers Settled Down in Upper Canada There Was a Lean Year—Hungry Men Knocked Game Down With Poles—Ate Basswood Buds and Indian Cabbage—Next Year Plentiful.

A few days ago when, although May had come, the sun refused to shine, and the snow failed to stay away, for the sake of something to talk about besides the political scandal and the criminal sensation of the week, people asked one another what would happen if real spring failed to come; if the cold, rainy weather should continue for weeks, and seed-time pass without the seeding being done.

And yet our history tells of a "hungry year" in Canada, especially in that part which now forms the nucleus of the Dominion—the Great Lakes region of Ontario. But that year is long ago and Upper Canada was then a wilderness, except in a few places along the lakes where the recently arrived United Empire Loyalists were endeavoring to carve out new homes in the Canadian forests.

In the year 1783, writes C. D. G. Roberts, in his excellent history of Canada, "the great exodus took place, and the loyalists flocked across the border into the land which they and their descendants have made great. They divided into two main streams, one moving eastward to the Maritime Provinces, the other flowing westward to the region north of the Lakes."

Those who went west settled along the sunny banks of the Niagara around the head of Lake Ontario, in the peninsula, that lies between Lake Erie and Lake Huron, along the shores of Lake Ontario and down the banks of the St. Lawrence. They made little clearings in the virgin forest, with their axes constructed huge habitations, and between the stumps they planted corn and sowed wheat. Such was the beginning of Ontario. In 1783, three years after their arrival, and just as they were thrown on their own resources by the Government, "the stubborn soil rebelled against its new masters, and the crops on all sides failed."

The remainder of that year and the first half of the following one became "the hungry year" in our history. The condition of things, the year among the Loyalists of Upper Canada is described by Mr. Roberts, who writes: "The people had to dig those wild, tuberous roots which children know as 'ground-nuts.' Butternuts and beech-nuts were sought with eager pains. The early buds of the basswood were gathered and boiled with the weed called 'lamb-quarter' and pig-weed and wild Indian cabbage. Game of all sorts was fairly abundant—deer, rabbits, turkeys, pigeons; but powder and shot were scarce. Game was crept about with poles, striving to knock down the wild pigeons; or they angled all day with awkward, home-made hooks for a few chub or perch to keep their families from starvation. In one settlement a beef-bone was passed from house to house, that each household might boil it a little while, and so get a flavor in the pot of unsalted bran soup. A few of the weak and aged actually died of starvation during these famine months; and others were poisoned by eating poisonous roots which they grubbed up in the woods. As the summer wore on, however, the heads of wheat, oats and barley began to grow plump. People gathered hungrily to the fields to pluck and devour the green heads. Boiled, these were a luxury; and hope stole back to the starving settlements."

In the following autumn plenty was again showered upon the land, and from that time onward the settlers made steady progress. Of course, for years their lives were those of a frontier people in a wilderness. Their homes were log cabins, their farms patches from which the trees had been removed, but still bristling with stumps; their food was simple and limited in variety, and their clothing coarse and often scanty. Pork, beef and mutton were scarce because the supply of live stock was small, and increase in numbers was checked by the depredation of the wolves. A staple article of diet was Indian cornmeal, from which was made "Johnnie cake," the bread of the frontier. One of the delicacies of the cabin household was a pudding, made by boiling together pumpkin and cornmeal sweetened with maple syrup. Venison and wild turkey were plentiful, and so it was that to the musket and the skaggon, and not to the butcher, that each family looked for its supply of fresh meat.

The clothing brought by the Loyalists from the "States" was made to last as long as possible by means of working clothes being made of deer-skin. Nearly every woman wore a leather dress. It was very durable, but with constant use became glazed with grease. It was the practice to use strong lye in washing clothes, and it is told that a girl attempted to clean her deer-skin dress by washing it in such a liquid, when, to her amazement and great distress, it shriveled up to a bit of crisp leather. In her predicament she had to take refuge in the potato-cellar until her mother could fetch a blanket, with which the girl could cover herself. Most of the household articles were of wood, the white, fine-grained wood of the poplar being preferred. From this were made the forks, spoons, plates, and trays in use in every frontier farmhouse. Gradually these wooden dishes were replaced by pewter supplied by the pioneers by Yankee peddlers who, with packs on their backs, went from house to house, and from settlement to settlement. With much scouring this pewter ware was made to shine like silver.

Vive le Sport!

Paris, June 7.—M. Georges Clemenceau—no relation to the French premier—was arrested, on Monday night, for shooting at the bronze lions on the Place de la Nation, in Paris.

TOM DAVIS' STORY.

Senator From Saskatchewan Has a Patent Campaign Yarn.

"Whenever I think of that story I laugh," said the Hon. Jacques Bureau recently at a gathering at the House of Commons. The Solicitor-General laughs a great deal; his merriment, doubtless, being inspired by a multiplicity of things, of which Tom Davis' patent story is just one. "Oh, Tom will tell it," he said with a shrug. "He has the copyright, and I won't infringe."

"Tom" Davis, by the way, is the honorable Senator from Saskatchewan. "Yes," he admitted gracefully. "Is that the one about the con?" queried Mr. J. G. Turfiff, who was also in the circle, and he declared that he had told it thirteen times against R. L. Richardson, when the latter was running as an Independent.

Well, this is the tale as told by Senator Davis: A traveler got stranded in a town one day, with no train out for 24 hours. So he thought he'd go off and have a hunt. He borrowed a gun and away he tramped to the bush.

Luck was bad. He hunted and he hunted and he hunted, and all he got was one small coon. He tramped home with his one trophy, and when he got near the town it occurred to him that the people would laugh when they saw him marching in with his lone victim. Just on the outskirts he met three little boys on their way home from school. The urchins grinned when they saw the coon, and the hunter at once offered it to them, "but," said he, "I'll have to ask you some questions first, to see which will get it."

"Now, you on the right," he said. "I want to know what politics you are."

"I'm a Grit," said the youngster. "Why?" asked the man. "Well," explained the boy, "my father and all my folks are Grits."

"Good," commented the hunter, "and what are you?" pointing an inquisitorial finger at the urchin on the left.

"I'm a Tory."

"You are? Why?"

"Cause dad is."

"Good again," admitted the man. Then, to the little fellow in the centre, "and what are you, my lad?"

The child hesitated, his eyes bulging. "Sir-r-r," he declared, "I'm anything—anything for that coon."

Such is at least one view of political "independence."

EUROPE TO CANADA.

Pleasant Things The London Sphere Has to Say of Dominion.

The wheat corner is helping to boom Canadian-American farmers. About 70,000 of the farmers are expected within the year, and probably about 25,000 have arrived up to date. The American emigration to Canada does not mean that the Americans are all native born; as a matter of fact a number of these are Canadians returning, while probably one-third are Scandinavians from Minnesota and the Dakotas who have just been long enough in the United States to learn English and to appreciate the good things offered them in western Canada. The British emigration does not really start until about the beginning of March, but up to April 14 about 20,000 emigrants from these islands went to Canada. The Canadian Pacific boats going out just now are all packed full, about 1,400 per boat, and a large proportion are emigrants of farming class with capital.

If Canada is advancing materially she is not forgetting the necessity of a spiritual life, for she is producing much interesting literature and is also interested in art. An interesting lecture on this subject was given at the Royal Colonial Institution on April 20 by Miss Emily Vaughan Jenkins, who pointed out the cosmopolitan character of Canadian art. As a matter of fact, however, the first noteworthy artist was a native of Upper Canada. Paul Kane, born 1810, made it his life work to portray Indian life and customs, and his pictures have a ethnographic and historical value not yet duly recognized. One of his contemporaries was David Fowler, R.C.A., an English-born water-color artist whose best work was done in Canada, and whose draughtsmanship and power, fruit, and game pieces would have delighted Euskin, Otto Jacobi, R.C.A., was another brilliant painter of the same period, and Cornelius Kreighoff, a Bavarian by birth, did valuable service between the years 1849 and 1869 by preserving many aspects of lower Canadian rural life which are slowly changing or have already disappeared.—The London Sphere.

Ant Sauce.

"During the lumbering operations in the Canadian backwoods in the winter," said a lumberman, "the French workmen—you know the French eat cocks' combs and snails and bacon with ant sauce. Nearly every one of them, you know, discovers a great colony of red or brown ants. These, the French workmen say, have an acidic, agreeable taste. They tone up the food like tomato catchup or pickled walnuts. They dry the ants and eat them with a plentiful sprinkling of salt and pepper, or they steep them in molasses. Strange to say, ant sauce, taken moderately, seems to improve the health. Now and then, though, the Frenchmen take too much of it, when their eyes become bloodshot and they shake all over as with palsy, exhibiting the symptoms of a man recovering from drunkenness."

Great Find of Quicksilver.

A prospecting party on the north bank of the Saskatchewan, opposite Lost River, reports a remarkable find of quicksilver. Following up traces showing in the river bank they came to a pocket containing four quarts. A ledge rich in quicksilver was discovered running back from the bank, and the prospectors believe they have made a great discovery.

Warning To Centenarians.

Moscow, June 7.—A man in Moscow named Nestoroff celebrated his hundredth birthday by smoking a cigarette for the first time in his life. He died half an hour later.

CANADIAN HEROES.

Actions of the Winners of Carnegie Prizes in the Dominion.

The Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, which has just issued a report of its operations, mentions the following heroic actions having taken place in Canada:

Michael A. Doyle, aged 31, ship laborer, saved Charlotte L. de Kastner, aged 17, from drowning, Quebec, Ont., July 6, 1904. Doyle jumped into the St. Lawrence river which was running with ice, and rescued the girl who was intent on suicide.—Silver medal.

Arthur J. Gottschalk, aged 24, store-keeper, saved Phoebe Webster, aged 35, from drowning, Crystal Beach, Ont., July 6, 1904. Gottschalk's canoe was capsized in his effort to rescue Mrs. Webster, who was intent on suicide, and he then supported her in the water until both were rescued.—Bronze medal.

Samuel M. de Sherbinin, aged 20, jeweler, saved Alfred O. Burnham, aged 25, carpenter, from drowning, Langham, Sask., August 23, 1905. De Sherbinin swam thirty feet from shore and, after a struggle, effected rescue in Saskatchewan river, where the water was ten feet deep.—Bronze medal.

P. John Bibby, aged 29, mate, saved James Jamieson, aged 40, laborer, from drowning, Bracebridge, Ont., October 31, 1905. Bibby jumped from a steamer into Muskoka Lake, and swam to Jamieson, who had become benumbed and exhausted while clinging to a small boat, which had capsized during a heavy storm. It was impracticable to launch a lifeboat from the steamer. Supporting him until the steamer was brought nearer, Bibby then caught hold of a life-preserver thrown from it, and both were hauled on board.—Silver medal.

William Raymond, aged 38, teamster, saved Victor Henry, aged 10, from drowning, Lindsay, Ont., February 27, 1906. Raymond, although just having recovered from a long siege of pleurisy, went out on weak ice on the Scouog river to Henry's assistance, and after breaking through swam thirty-five feet to where Henry was in the water. Swimming back to the edge of the ice with him, they were assisted to firm ice by others who extended a board to them.—Bronze medal and \$300, to liquidate mortgage on his property.

William Gilmour, jr., aged 34, printer (Montreal Star), attempted to save John A. Moorhouse, aged 10, from drowning, Sorel, Que., July 1, 1905. Gilmour jumped from a steamer into the St. Lawrence river, and swam after Moorhouse, who had fallen from the boat and was being carried off by the current. He could not find the boy, and became almost exhausted attempting to swim back to the steamer, which was half a mile distant. He succeeded in reaching a raft, which had been thrown from the steamer, and was later picked up by a boat, which, after much delay, had been launched.—Silver medal and \$1,000.

The American Influx.

One of the most striking things in the history of the west is the influx of farmers into Canada from the United States. It has been said that fully 50,000 persons will cross the line this spring, bound for the rich wheat lands of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan. It has been less than 20 years since the rush to the wheat country of the middle States and a large part of this territory are being abandoned for the richer loam of Canada.

Recently seventy carloads of farmers assembled in Minneapolis with their wives, babies, pigs, cows and farming tools, bound for Saskatchewan. The settlers are not poor. Many have accumulated small fortunes in wheat and they are going after more money. One young man was asked why he wanted to leave the States.

"I like the proposition," said the young fellow. "The land is cheaper up there. One can get more for his money."

The aggregate capital in the party counting the cost of farm machinery and stock represented along with the money to be invested amounts to \$1,000,000 and the total output of crops per year has been estimated in advance at half that figure.

A Strange Story, But True.

Clergymen sometimes have strange experiences in their capacity as "joiners." A young woman called on a Church of England minister in an Ontario town a short time ago and said she wished to arrange to be married that evening.

"What is the groom's name?" asked the minister. "I don't know yet," was the reply. "Don't know! What do you mean?" "Oh, just that I haven't made up my mind which of two young men I will take."

Invested in Canada.

The late Rev. R. B. Maurice, Roman Catholic priest of the County of Flint, Wales, left an estate of \$79,605, the largest part of which consists of bank and other stocks in Ontario. These are: 128 shares Standard Bank, \$13,760; 62 shares Bank of Hamilton, \$11,780; 133 shares Dominion Bank, \$14,363; 24 shares Bank of Commerce, \$1,920; 230 shares Can. Perm. Mortgage Corporation, \$2,806; 20 shares Toronto Mortgage Co., \$1,050; 45 shares Consumers' Gas, \$4,275; total stocks and shares, \$49,955. Cash in Dominion Bank, \$1,408. In the United States there are assets amounting to \$4,212. The estate in England and Wales is valued at \$24,029.

Frightened To Death.

Munich, June 7.—A Bavarian peasant who had never before seen a telephone, was so terrified by hearing his son's voice speaking to him that he died of fright at Munich yesterday.

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