

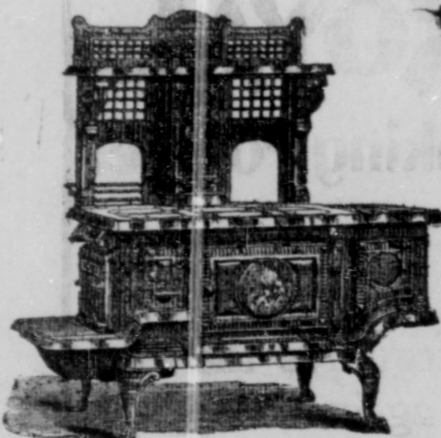
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LIFE IN THE WEST.

Another Interesting Letter From Dr. Jenkins.

The average temperature in winter in Southern Alberta is considerably higher than in Eastern Canada, an in summer not so high. There is at all seasons a great deal of sunshine. Winter weather is, for the most part, enjoyable though occasionally there are stormy times.

Out-door amusements are shooting, fishing and hunting. Ducks, geese and waterfowl are abundant. Prairie chicken and grouse of several varieties are plentiful. There are fish in the rivers, but not so very numerous at the present time. A good fisherman can get a dish of choice trout and graylings without difficulty; but a duffer will not do so well. I am, myself, in the latter class. In the mountain lakes, are found trout of immense size, fifty to sixty pounds weight, and whitefish. These are for the most part taken in nets. The large trout are not so good as the whitefish, which are very good eating.

There are three varieties of the genus lupus: the large prairie wolf, the small prairie wolf, and the timber wolf,—the latter found only in the foothills and mountains and, somewhat rare. The large wolf is more frequent but shy. The smaller, called coyote, abounds. This is the fellow we most frequently hunt; and it is not uncommon to have four or five runs of coyote and nearly as many kills. He seldom escapes, as the hounds are fleet of foot, unless he strikes a coulee down which he doubles and as the hounds hunt only by sight they miss him.

All wolves are cowardly but the large wolf, a powerful brute, makes a desperate fight when brought to bay, and the hounds get badly cut up and sometimes are killed in the encounter.

At one time, deer used to frequent the prairies but the advent of man has driven them to seek the solitude of the mountains, where, also, are to be found mountain sheep—valuable for the horns, which are of great size—goats and bears. To hunt these successfully sportsmen usually camp in the mountains for a month or six weeks in the autumn. A friend of mine got four bears a short time before I left. The Stouies are the only tribe of Indians who do any hunting, and they are making big game scarce by reckless destruction at all seasons. This must be put a stop to by the local government, or big game, as the buffalo will soon be a thing of the past.

Speaking of Indians, I was, on my return to the west, struck with the great advances in civilization made by the Bloods and Piegans. Instead of the old travois, which consisted of two long poles crossed in front of the saddle and trailing on the ground behind the cayuse, they have good farm waggon and covered buggies, and they are adopting the white man's costume. They are also far more industrious, putting up large quantities of hay for the ranchers and mounted police, and they are beginning to breed cattle as well as ponies.

Wolf hunting is capital sport, the gallop at racing pace over rough ground, with the danger of your horse going into a badger hole and giving you a nasty fall, lends the necessary excitement, stirs the blood and exhilarates the spirit as nothing else, not even fox-hunting can do. Though I will not say that the sport all round is quite equal to fox-hunting, the pace is so great that the fun is soon over, though the fight at the finish made by the wolf is more even against a few deer-hounds than poor little Reynard against his fifty-two enemies.

The life on a horse ranch, though very enjoyable, is not "all beer and skittles." To ride all day from morning till night and fail to spot the bunch of horses you are after, is anything but exhilarating. Again, if you find your bunch, and after five or six desperate attempts to get away, which they usually make, get them headed for home you meet a sudden storm, they will turn tail to it and nothing you can do will induce them to face it; you may just leave them till another day, and find your way home if you can, often a difficult task. Still you may say the life is one quarter work and three quarters sport to a man who is by nature a horseman.

Cattle ranching, on the other hand, is not at all to my taste. The beasts are slow to drive and contrary. They require riding after in stormy weather, and need so much feed that you have to work hard in haying and harvest to provide for them. But they have this advantage, beef is always in demand and they are sure money.

Agriculture in Southern Alberta, so far, has not amounted to much. A grazing country is not, as a rule, adapted to farming. But there are spots of wonderful fertility. I know a young Englishman who, after working about for ranchers for a year or two, took up a quarter section and last year broke 9 acres with one ploughing. This spring he seeded it with oats and in the fall threshed 1000 bushels of measured grain. Last year another man grew the same quantity on ten acres with one ploughing. But I must admit that in the last two seasons the rainfall has been unusually favorable to growth and there was no frost. Winter wheat has been grown by two ranchers with great success. One grew 600 bushels on 10 acres, and the quality was so superior that he took first prize at the Paris Exhibition competing against the world. The other claims to have grown still larger crops—but I cannot vouch for that. The first I know to be correct.

Manitoba, unlike Alberta, is entirely agricultural and is considered to be the best wheat-growing country known. The last three seasons were very favorable. Good crops and fair prices have caused the province to advance with a bound. The city of Winnipeg, feeling the prosperity of the country districts, is rising rapidly and steadily. Its streets are magnificent and are being filled with handsome and solid business blocks and fine private residences. Winnipeg will, I believe, become one of the finest cities in the Dominion.

I found many Islanders there, and was glad to see that all were doing well and taking prominent positions. From them all I received the utmost kindness and attention. I arrived in the city shortly after the local elections; and the great victory of the Hon. Hugh John McDonald, leader of the Conservative party, was being celebrated in the most enthusiastic manner. I do not know if their throats were dry from cheering, but I can vouch for the fact that their efforts to moisten them were indistinguishable.

A great change was looked for, but no one expected so great a turn over in public opinion as to convert a majority of 34 to 60 in a minority of 17 to 23! It indicates the state of the Liberals in the coming Dominion elections and it is confidently expected that a solid Liberal Conservative coalition when the struggle comes, will be sent from the Prairie Province.

I was pleased to see the hearty and unequivocal loyalty of the Manitobans, re the struggle in South Africa. Not a word there in sympathy with the enemies of the Empire. I regret to hear and can hardly believe that there are in this province a few pro-Boers. This feeling must arise from ignorance or a misconception of the cause of quarrel. It is natural to feel sympathy with a brave people struggling to maintain their liberties against a stronger power. But the present is not a case of this kind. The record of each day's events has proven, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that the Boers have been for years collecting war material and preparing to make a gigantic effort to, as they themselves put it, "drive the British into the sea," take forcible possession of the territory belonging to Great Britain, and form of South Africa a great Dutch republic. This, from the Boer point of view, may be a praiseworthy ambition. But no true hearted Briton can sympathize with such an object, and when he considers that his fellow subjects in the Transvaal have been not only robbed to enrich the enemies of England, but have been actually spat upon by low, ignorant clowns, his blood must boil and his fingers itch to wreak vengeance on such hounds. I am unwilling to believe that this loyal colony contains even one pro-Boer. But if such some does exist I would lend a willing hand to give him a coat of tar and feathers and ride him on a rail out of the country.

The issue of the war in which we are so deeply interested cannot be in doubt. The ultimate triumph of the British arms is certain; for an explanation of the reverses we have suffered we must look to headquarters. The sending of an untried man, such as Buller, to take command of our army, leaving behind Roberts and Kitchener, men proved to be well versed in the art of war, and both successful generals, shows either a want of ability or worse, an unworthy jealousy on the part of the commander-in-chief. Lord Wolseley has always been an over-rated man. As a leader of armies he has done absolutely nothing to entitle him to the important position in which he has been placed.

It is clear that in Buller we have a general in whom unflinching courage is unfortunately combined with an arrogant self-sufficiency which takes the place of resourceful intelligence and a knowledge of military tactics. Now that the magnificent courage of our men will be directed by generals of proved capacity we may hope there will be an end to useless slaughter of our brave soldiers and a speedy termination to a war that has already cost so much in blood and treasure.

The Boers, I think, must be coming to the end of their resources, and starvation, if we can stop their supplies will compel submission.

J. T. JENKINS.

THIN GIRLS GET PLUMP

while using Dr. A. W. Chase's Nerve Food.

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Mr Arthur J. Dellish

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