

THE WAR-TRAIL!

CHAPTER LXIX.—(CONTINUED.)

I had no apprehension for our safety; it was not of that I was thinking.

To the hasty dialogue between Rube and the Canadian I had scarcely given heed. Garey had advanced to meet me, and I listened with anxious ear to the tale of the tracker.

It was soon told. Rube and he had followed the trail, until it emerged from the chaparral, and struck out into a wide grass-prairie. The edge of the thicket was close by; but they had gone a considerable distance beyond it and across the plain. They were still advancing, when, to their consternation, they perceived that the prairie was on fire, directly ahead of them!

And the steed—what had become of him? Had they seen nothing?

I did not put these questions in words—only in thought did I ask them; and in thought only were they answered. Both the trackers were silent, and that was an answer in the negative; yes, I read an ominous negative in their looks of gloom.

We were compelled to halt; even the smoke rendered further progress impossible; but we could hear the fire at no great distance—the culms of the coarse reed-grass cracking like volleys of musketry.

Now and then a scared deer broke through the bushes, passing us at full speed. A band of antelopes dashed into the glade, and halted close beside us—the frightened creatures not knowing where to run. At their heels came a pack of prairie-wolves, but not in pursuit of them: these also stopped near. A black bear and a cougar arrived next; and beasts of prey and gentle ruminants stood side by side, both terrified out of their natural habits.

The hunter man alone preserved his instincts. My followers were hungry. Rifles were levelled—and the bear and one of the antelopes fell victims to the deadly aim.

Both were soon stripped of their skins, and butchered. A fire was kindled in the glade, and upon sword-blades and sapling spits the choice morsels of venison and "bear meat" were roasted, and eaten, with many a jest about the "smoky kitchen."

I was myself hungered. I shared the repast, but not the merriment. At that moment, no wit could have won from me a smile; the most luxurious table could not have furnished me with cheer.

A worse appetite than hunger, assailed my companions, and I felt it with the rest—it was thirst; for hours all had been suffering from it; the long hard ride had brought it on, and now the smoke and the dry hot atmosphere increased the appetite till it had grown agonizing almost unendurable.

No water had been passed, since the stream we had crossed before day; there was none in the chaparral; the trackers saw none so far as they had gone; we were in a waterless desert; and the very thought itself renders the pang-thirst keener and harder to endure.

Some chewed their leaden bullets, or pebbles of chalcodony which they had picked up; others had gained relief by drinking the blood of the slaughtered animals—the bear and the antelope—but we found a better source of assuagement in the succulent stems of the cactus and agave.

The relief was but temporary; the juice cooled our lips and tongues, but there is an acid principle in these plants that soon acted, and our thirst became more intense than ever.

Some talked of returning on the trail in search of water—of going back even to the stream—more than twenty miles distant.

Under such circumstances, even military command loses its authority. Nature is stronger than martial law.

I cared not if they did return; I cared not who left me, so long as the trappers remained true. I had no fear that they would forsake me, and my disapprobation of it checked the cheerless proposal, and once more all declared their willingness to go on.

Fortunately, at that crisis the smoke began to clear away, and the atmosphere to lighten up. The fire had burnt on to the edge of the chaparral, where it was now opposed by the sap-bearing trees. The grass had been all consumed—the conflagration was at an end.

Mounting our horses, we rode out from the glade; and following the trail a few hundred yards further, we emerged from the thicket, and stood upon the edge of the desolated plain.

CHAPTER LXX.

A BURNT PRAIRIE.

The earth offers no aspect more drear and desolate than that of a burnt prairie. The ocean when its waves are grey—a blighted heath—a flat, fenny country in a rapid thaw,—all these impress the beholder with a feeling of chill monotony; but the water has motion, the heath color, and the half-thawed flat exhibits variety in its mottling of white and ground. Not so the steppe that has been fired

neither color, nor form, nor motion. Its rooms over the limitless level in search of one or other, but in vain; and in the absence of all these, it tires, and the heart grows cheerless and sick. Even the sky scarcely offers relief. It, too, by refraction from the black surface beneath, wears a dull, livid aspect; or perhaps the eye, jaundiced by the reflection of the earth, beholds not the brightness of the heavens.

A prairie, when green, does not always glad the eye—not even when enamelled with fairest flowers. I have crossed such plains, verdant or blooming to the utmost verge of vision, and longed for something to appear in sight—a rock, a tree, a living creature—anything to relieve the sameness; just as the voyager on the ample ocean longs for ships, for celaceae, or the sight of land, and is delighted with a nautilus, polypi, phosphorescence, or a floating weed.

Color alone does not satisfy the sense. What hue more charming than the fresh verdure of the grassy plain? what more exquisite than the deep blue of the ocean? and yet the eye grows weary of both! Even the "flower-prairie," with its thousands of gay corollas of every tint and shade—with its golden helianthus, its white argemone, its purple cleome, its pink malvaceae, its blue lupin, its poppyworts of red and orange—even these fair tints grow tiresome to the sight, and the eye yearns for form and motion.

If so, what must be the prairie when divested of all its verdant and flowery charms—when burned to black ashes? It is difficult to conceive the aspect of dreary monotony it then presents—more difficult to describe it. Words will not paint such a scene.

And such presented itself to our eyes as we rode out from the chaparral. The fire was past—even the smoke had ceased to rise, except in spots where the damp earth still reeked under the heat; but right and left, and far ahead, on to the very hem of the horizon, the surface was of one uniform hue, as if covered with a vast crape. There was naught of form to be seen, living or lifeless; there was no life or motion even in the elements; all sounds had ceased; an awful stillness reigned above and around—the world seemed dead and shrouded in its sable pall.

TO BE CONTINUED.

A Brooklyn girl, daughter of Henry Halo, furniture manufacturer, suffering from nervous prostration, induced by the receipt of letters from an objectionable lover, named Alex. K. Falconer. The other day Falconer was arrested, and at his examination the father of the girl said she had received a half bushel of letters from Falconer, the most of which she sent back by express, making Falconer pay the charges. The father said Falconer also sent her a silk fringed valentine in February, which he tied up with hardware twice and sent back to him. Falconer was held for the action of the Grand Jury.



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A. A. McLEAN, Administrator.

Ch'town, 1st March, 1882.—3m law

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AN ANALYTICAL SANITARY INSTITUTION, 54, Holborn Viaduct, E. C., London, Aug. 8, '79. REPORT ON THE LORNE HIGHLAND WHISKY: "We have visited the bottling stores of Greenlees Brothers, and have selected from the vats, samples of their Lorne Highland Whisky, and have subjected them to careful examination and analysis. The samples were very fragrant, mellow, and of pleasant flavor, and possessed all the characteristics of pure and well-matured Scotch Whisky of the first quality."

"ARTHUR HILL, HASSALL, M. D. "OTTO HEINSE, F. C. S., F. I. C." Agent: OWEN CONNOLLY, Charlottetown, P. E. I. Feb. 24, 1882.

Removed.

MRS. W. W. IRVING begs to notify her friends and the public generally that she has opened her Fall and Winter Classes for Painting and Drawing in all their different branches. For terms, etc., apply at her Studio—residence of Mr. Peebles, South Side of Kings Street, Charlottetown, Nov. 29, 1881

MORE LIGHT!

THE Charlottetown Gas Light Company I have imported some of "Bray's Burners," which will supply and fit on Gas Brackets, etc., at a moderate cost to consumers.

These Burners are reported to be the best Flat Flame Burner yet produced, and will give a far greater amount of light than any other burner with the same consumption of Gas.

Dr. Wallace, F. R. S. E., F. C. S., Gas Examiner to the City of Glasgow, in a lecture delivered by him, calculated that £130,000 (\$650,000) a year are thrown away in Glasgow by the use of imperfect fittings. On the subject of Gas Burners he says: "Another and as I think a better burner is that called Bray's regulator, and as I consider these the best uniform Burners attainable at moderate cost, I have selected them for a series of experiments."

The Report of the Committee of the British Association of Science to enquire as to the best means for the development of light from Coal Gas of different qualities—comprising Dr. William Wallace, Professor Dittmar, and Mr. Thomas Wills, F. C. S., F. I. C. E., showed that Bray's Burner yielded the greatest amount of light of all the two or three scores of Burners reported upon, which included all the Burners of repute in the market.

In a pamphlet upon Light and Heat, published by R. B. Tait, A. M., he says: "The cost of Gas as compared with other illuminants is much more economical when rightly used, than many suppose. From experiments made for this purpose, the following results have been obtained. They were made by burning samples of Devos's Brilliant Oil and ordinary Oil, and testing their illuminating power. It was found that Coal Gas costing one cent at \$3 per thousand feet, gave a light equal to 18 candles, while Devos's Brilliant Oil consuming 27.4 grammes costing half a cent, gave a light equal to 9 candles."

A good Argand or Johnson's Burner, the Burner's used in the last experiment, will therefore give the light of 2 ordinary Oil Burners in direct comparison, at no greater expense in the case of the finer and safer grades of Oil. Lights, however, on the authority of Scientists, are not to be compared in direct proportion, but in proportion to the squares of their powers, and such a comparison with the case of the use of Gas, its cleanliness, freedom from odor and dangers, renders its use desirable wherever it can be introduced.

As the above experiments were made with Gas at \$3 per 1000 feet, and not consumed through Bray's Burner, it will readily be seen how much more economical it is to consume Gas instead of Oil, when its price is only \$2.63 per 1000 feet as now charged here when consumed, more especially through Bray's Burners.

Messrs. Goodwin & Co., of Philadelphia, the well-known manufacturers of Scientific Instruments for testing the illuminating power of Coal Gas, etc., say in their Circular to Gas Companies: "In presenting the Bray's Standard Patent Silt Union Burners and Lanterns, for which we are the sole Agents in the United States, to the attention of the public, we are convinced that we are filling a want long felt." They further add: "The yield of light from these Burners is 12 to 20 per cent. greater per cubic foot of Gas consumed than that from any flat flame Burner hitherto introduced."

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TRAINS INWARD.

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L. B. ARCHIBALD, Superintendent, Office Charlottetown, Nov. 29, 1881

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The above sale is made pursuant to the Power of Sale contained in an Indenture of Mortgage dated the sixteenth day of October, A. D. 1875, and made between Samuel Neworthy Earle and Esther Julia Earle his wife of the one part, and Thomas Heath Haviland, of the other part.

For further particulars, apply at the office of Eustace H. Haviland, Solicitor, Charlottetown.

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