

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1899.

A CAUSE OF INDIAN RUIN.

Long before the Louisiana purchase, before memorable expedition of Lewis and Clarke, the Hudson Bay Company had established its posts on the Saskatchewan River at the foot of the Canadian Rockies. From there the trappers and traders of the great corporation made annual excursions south to the headwaters of the Missouri River and even to the Yellowstone, all of which they pronounced British territory. When, in 1832, the America Fur Company built some forts on the Upper Missouri, the old concern at once sent several expeditions of Blackfeet warriors to demolish the forts and murder the intruders. These forays resulted so disastrously hundreds of the Indians being killed by the cannons of the Long Knives that the field was abandoned, and thenceforth the British companies confined its efforts to the southern tributaries of the Saskatchewan. In time the forty-ninth degree of north latitude became the international boundary but as no survey was made no one knew its exact location. The English saying that it would strike the Rockies upon the headwaters of Milk River, while the Americans asserted that Chiet Mountain, some thirty miles further north, would be on the southern side of the line when the survey was made.

Both of these great companies traded liquor to the Indians, but with such restrictions that it did them no harm. Only the great chiefs could obtain it, and that at rare intervals. These in turn did not give it to their warriors, but drank it among themselves, envied and admired by all the tribe, who gathered to watch with absorbing interest the antics of their leaders as the powerful spirits clouded their brains. In those days drunkenness caused no quarrels; the more they drank the more friendly the chiefs became to each other, and when, finally, the liquor completely overcame them, they lay down to sleep side by side, like brothers. They believed that this strange 'white man's water' was a gift of the gods; that their drunken dreams were visions granted them by the unseen spirits, enabling them to see into the future and regulate their actions accordingly. On the American side this condition of affairs was not desired to last. In the early 60's independent traders, whose sole stock of goods consisted of liquor, began to divide the trade, and soon forced the great fur company to wind up its affairs. Then began the whiskey trade among the Indians of the Northwest which was appalling in its effects upon the simple red men; it ruined them physically and morally; thousands of them died from the effects of their drunken quarrels.

At this time all the country in Montana between the Missouri River and the Canadian line was an Indian reservation, and the government prescribed severe penalties for any one found trading liquor upon such land, or for even having it in his possession in the Indian country. In looking about for a place to carry on their business beyond the reach of the United States marshals, the whiskey traders determined to invade Hudson Bay Company territory. Accordingly, during the years of 1870-71, 72-73, they built forts on the St. Mary's, Beely and Old Man's Rivers, named Whoopup, Standoff and Fort Tripp where they carried on an immense trade with the Blackfeet and Blood Indians. The Hudson Bay Company was powerless to deal with these traders and saw with dismay its annual take of robes and furs dwindle to almost nothing. It urgently requested its government to make negotiations for an international survey of the line. There was, of course, a lot of red tape to such an undertaking, but in 1873 the line was surveyed to the Rocky Mountains, and in 1874 a detachment of the Canadian mounted police came westward, caught some of the whiskey traders red-handed, and put a stop to the illegal business.

It seems surprising that a few men could have gone into a wild country, built forts, and carried on a successful trade with a horde of Indians who were constantly on the watch to take their lives, and who, when frenzied with bad whiskey, were uncontrollable. But this is just what the whiskey traders did, and they accomplished

their ends because they were as brave a set of men as ever lived. In was in the fall of 1870 that Joe Tripp, L. Spearson and several others arrived at the St. Mary's River, a short distance above its junction with the Belly. Their wagons were heavily loaded with liquor for the winter's trade, news which quickly spread among the Indians far and near. Several of the redskins had been allowed to come into camp, and had endeavored to buy a quantity of the much prized fire water, but the traders refused to sell a drop until they had built a fort. Enraged at this, and thirsting for the liquor, the Indians began a siege of the place, and the traders were obliged to work with rifle in one hand and axe or saw in the other. Time and again night attacks were made upon them, but they always repulsed the enemy without loss to themselves. In the daytime a band of the Indians would come swooping down and bullets would rattle like hail on the logs they were laying up. A few rounds from the old Henry rifles, however, would drive them out on the plain, and the powerful 45 110 Sharp's rifle owned by Tripp would raise the dust around in such a lively manner that they would hurry out of range and out of sight, to repeat the performance another day.

It did not take very long to build the fort, which for obvious reasons they named Stand-off. It was a long row of log cabins thatched with dirt, and having many loop holes through which rifles could be thrust. The few windows were so high up that one could not see through them from the ground, a very necessary precaution. Adjoining the living quarters were the stables and corral, also built solidly of logs. Here the horses and bulls were locked up, safe from prowling Indians and their bullets. The trade room was a small apartment about fifteen feet square, with a fire place in one end. A high counter, as high as one's shoulders, extended from wall to wall across the centre of the room and was made of hewn logs, bullet proof. It took up so much space that not more than twenty or twenty-five Indians could get in at a time. A shelf under the counter held a number of loaded revolvers and rifles within easy reach of the traders. At the end of the room opposite the fire place, but behind the counter, a doorless opening led into the warehouses where the liquor was kept, and where the robes and furs were to be stored.

When the last touches had been done on the fort, a lot of liquor was mixed and the Indians informed that they could come and trade. The mixing so as to get the largest possible profit from it was quite an art. To one gallon of alcohol five gallons of water was added, which made it rather weak and insipid, but still capable of making one drunk in sufficient quantity, say a couple of quarts. But it had no especial flavor and did not burn, which latter sensation the Indians regarded as absolute proof that the spirits were good. To provide this quality several ounces of extract of red pepper was added to five gallons of the mixture, and oil of Bourbon was put in to give it a whiskey flavor. Then burnt sugar was added to make it a dark, whiskey color, along with the juice of half a pound of tobacco for general effects, and the stuff was ready to trade. Every Indian who purchased any of it was obliged to drink it on the spot from the measure or bring some sort of a receptacle a keg or kettle, in which to carry it home. A good head and tail buffalo robe purchased a quart, less valuable robes in proportion. A good wolf hide was valued at a pint, a beaver skin the same. Antelope and deer skins were worth a drink each. Prime buffalo robes in those days were worth \$7 each, so alcohol really sold for about \$140 a gallon. It was sold somewhat cheaper to the whites. In one of Tripp's old memorandum book of the time Louis Chapelle, an employee, is charged with one gallon of alcohol, \$60. He always insisted, when making a purchase, that a fresh can should be opened so as to insure his getting it pure. A gallon measure one third full of water was always at hand, and while Louis was taking a drink, the shrewd trader filled this with the freshly opened alcohol, and the old man carried it off rejoicing that he had got

the pure stuff.

The Indians generally came to trade in the daytime, in groups of from four or five to fifty, and were quiet and polite until they had swallowed a few drinks. When they became violent they were forced out of the room and the heavy door was locked. More than any one else they had a grudge against Tripp, because several years before he had been a Government scout, and was the one who led Col. Baker's forces when he annihilated eighty lodges of their kindred. One night some one knocked on the trade room door, and as usual one of the traders threw it open, standing to one side as he did so, with drawn and cocked revolver, ready for any treachery. A lone Indian entered, threw a robe and keg over the counter and demanded some whiskey. Tripp measured it out and lifting the keg up on the counter, found himself looking down the muzzle of a revolver. The Indian had drawn it so quickly that none of the traders could prevent him, and they dared not shoot for fear that before he fell, he would press the trigger and kill their partner.

'White man,' said the Indian in his own language, which all understood, 'your time has come. You led the soldiers who murdered my wife and children, and I'm going to kill you.'

'Well, my friend,' Tripp replied, never moving but looking the Indian straight in the eyes, 'if you have made up your mind in this, I suppose you will have your way. But let us talk about it a little; take a drink first, though, and then perhaps I can show you how mistaken you are.'

The Indian couldn't refuse this offer to a cupful of whiskey for nothing, and while he was drinking it a dozen or fifteen more redskins were admitted. They saw his keg standing on the counter and insisted that he should treat which he refused to do. All were more or less drunk, and some of them suddenly fired a gun. At the flash every one began to shoot, the lamp went out, and for a few moments pandemonium reigned. Somehow or other the door had slammed fast shut, and such was the pressure of the mob toward it that for some time the foremost, who were trying to get out couldn't open it, and all the while they kept up the shooting. After they did get it open, they ran out in a instant, leaving the robes and furs they had brought to trade in their panic. During the excitement the traders had all lain behind the counter, never firing a shot, and they remained there for some little time after the Indians fled. Finally one of them got up, closed the door and lit the lamp. The light revealed five dead and dying Indians on the floor.

The traders did not always get out of a row so easily as this. It was here that Spearson met his death. One day the door flew open and an Indian poked his gun in, swinging it the right and left in search of a victim.

Look out someone shouted to Spearson, who was standing by the fireplace. 'Look out, he's going to shoot.'

'Oh, I guess not,' he replied, as he started to the door. 'I'll take the old fuke from him.'

Just then the Indian saw him and fired; the ounce ball struck his knee, shattering the leg in a horrible manner. Blood poison set in and on the fourth day after he died.

In their drunken rous the Indians fought each other, and even murdered their wives and relatives. At times the whole camp of more than four thousand would go on a spree at once, and at such times the number of deaths by shooting and stabbing was shocking. Nor did the carnage stop when the liquor ran out. Feuds were started. The relatives of a man who had been killed avenged his death; then the relatives of their victim did the same. In this way whole families were wiped out. Other crimes became prevalent; the Indians murdered each other for plunder. The first to lose his life in this manner was an old man who had been very friendly with the traders. After visiting them one afternoon he started homeward just at nightfall, and during the evening the robe he had worn was brought in and traded; every one recognized it by the peculiar design with which the flesh side was figured. The traders thought that he had given it to some one to trade for him, and did not

notice in the rush who brought it. The next morning shortly after daylight, there was a knock at the door and some one shouted:

'Open! Open! There's a customer with robes.'

Tripp swung the door open and the old man frozen stiff, a bullet hole in his breast almost fell on him. Some early risers had found the old fellow, leaned him against the door, and then called out that a customer had arrived.

The Fort Stand-off traders met with such success that winter as far to exceed their expectations. The following season another company built Fort Whoop-up, and in order to secure a better position, successfully to compete with the new fort, Stand-off was abandoned and Fort Tripp built up on the Old Man's River. It was at this place that the noted chief of the Bloods, Calf Shirt, was killed. He was a man of large build and undoubted bravery, having attained his position by daring feats in battle with other tribes, and with the whites too. As he grew older his manners changed in many ways to his people. When angry he would beat them or shoot them, as the whim seized him, and none dared lift a finger against him. For he said, and they believed, that a mysterious charm he wore prevented bullet and arrow, knife and club, from touching his body. Up to the time Fort Tripp was built he had killed in fits of passion, and especially when frenzied by liquor, more than than thirty of his people. Half the time he went about unarmed, but was as safe from his enemies, and all the tribe hated him, as if he had carried an arsenal. One day at Stand-off a North Piegan came into the trade room drunk, brandishing a war club bristling with knife points, and proceeding to have a war dance all by himself. Calf Shirt was standing by, and after listening to the warrior's boasts for a while calmly grasped him by the hair, wrenched the club out of his hand, and sawed it back and forth over the poor fellow's face, lacerating it in a frightful manner. The chief had many a time threatened to kill the traders but when he came around they were always so well prepared for him that he did not make the attempt. One day, however he came into the room of the fort and found Tripp all alone, the rest of the traders being in one of the living rooms playing poker for wolves hides. As soon as he saw the chief coming Tripp picked up a revolver, and held it just below the top of the counter, ready to raise it and shoot if necessary.

'Ha, dog!' exclaimed Calf Shirt as he saw the lone occupant of the room, and started to draw his pistol, 'I've got you now!'

Before he could raise the weapon Tripp fired, and probably gave him a mortal wound. But instead of returning the shot the chief turned and went out, walking slowly, as was his custom. Tripp ran to the door and fired again at him, and then the other traders rushed out and joined in. Calf Shirt looked neither to the right or left, but kept walking slowly away, until he had gone nearly a hundred yards, when he stumbled and fell; but, rising again, went on once more, but more slowly, and all the time Winchesters and pistols were hurling lead into his body.

At last he came to a deep hole in the ground where the soil had been excavated to put on the roof of the fort. Probably he did not see it; he must have been practically dead ere he came to it, for he walked into it as if he had solid ground ahead of him. The traders found him lying on the bottom quite dead, the revolver still in his hand, and they found that forty-four bullets had struck him, most of them in a mortal place. They stripped him of his fine war clothes, blood stained, though they were, and threw the body into the river. Needless to say that his people rejoiced at his death as well as the traders.

The other day a wrinkled, bent, and almost blind squaw went meekly to Tripp, and said:

'You took away my support and now in my old age, I am poor and hungry. Take pity on me.'

'Who are you?' the ex-trader asked.

'Ah,' she replied, 'Of course you do

not know me now. I am the widow of Calf Shirt whom you killed so long ago. I have come from the far north to ask of you a little aid.'

She did not ask in vain, but went away rejoicing, rich beyond her wildest dreams.

By the summer of 1874 a large number of whiskey traders had established themselves on the streams of what is now the province of Alberta. Opposition had lowered the price of their goods so that for a robe an Indian could get enough fire-water to keep him drunk a week. But robes were becoming rather scarce. The Indians were so poor, many of them parting with their last horse, and so demoralized from their debauches, that they could not hunt as formerly. One day in the summer of that year some of them who had been hunting to the eastward reported that they had seen a band of soldiers who wore red coats, travelling westward over the plains. To most of the traders this was sufficient hint of what was coming, and they lost time in catching their liquor, and getting their robes on the way to Fort Benton. But there were others who believed that the Indians were lying, and continued to trade as usual. These the newly arrive police caught, and sentenced to a term of confinement. And so ended the whiskey trade, a terrible and demoralizing industry but one which broke the Indians' spirit and made them unable to resist the tide of civilization that was to come.

ELECTRICITY IN CHURCHES.

The Most Modern Appliances Brought Into Use in These Edifices.

Electricity is put to various uses in churches; in no other buildings in fact it is more commonly employed. In this city all new churches are provided with electrical equipment; and many old churches, also, have been similarly equipped. The same is substantially true of all cities and towns in which are to be found electric plants. Some churches have complete plants of their own on the premises, but the greater number take the current from the street main.

Besides its use for lighting purposes electricity is now commonly employed in churches for running a motor to operate the organ bellows. This motor can be set in motion, or stopped, by the organist as he sits in his place at the keyboard, simply by the turning of a switch; and, in operation, it accommodates itself to the demands upon it; running slower when the bellows is full, and faster again as it is emptied.

In the newer churches—and such appliances have also been put into older churches—the organ itself is provided with electrical appliances by means of which the valves of the organ pipes are opened. Formerly this was done by means of mechanical appliances that were operated by the pressing down of the key. Now, each key is connected by a wire with the valve of the pipe to which it belongs, and when a key is pressed down its wire is brought into contact with a supply wire running along under the keyboard, the circuit is closed, and by means of the power thus transmitted along the wire from the key the valve is opened. It is, of course, kept open until the contact is broken by the release of the key. Organs set up in separate sections in a church are connected by wire in this manner and readily played from the same keyboard; and new organs, however situated in a church, are not likely to be provided with electrical keyboards.

Church chimes are now played by electricity from a keyboard like that of a piano or organ, at which the player sits with the music before him. Chime playing as formerly done by the pressing down of levers, to which cords running to the bells were attached, called for very considerable exertion on the part of the player; now the heaviest as well as the lightest bell is rung simply by pressing a key.

An Easy Cue.

'I wish I knew how to act when I meet a baby. I always feel like a fool.'

'All you have to do is to act the way you feel.'

He—There is one very strange thing I noticed while at the beach last summer.

She—And what is that?

'Why the old 'hens' seemed to take to the water quicker than the 'young ducks.'