

a few hours before me, and having a Blackfoot Indian as guide, I abandoned my intention of going to Fort McLeod by Cypress Hills, and resolved to take the more direct and much shorter course by which that officer came.

On Friday I had interviews with several parties on business, among whom were Red Pheasant, the Chief of the Battle River Crees, and a portion of his band. He desired explanations about the articles promised in the treaty of last year, and the reason they were so late in being forwarded. I explained that the unusually heavy rains in Manitoba and the eastern portion of the territories had made the travelling so bad that the freighters had not been able to overtake the journey in the time which they expected; that the Government were very sorry at the disappointment, as it was their desire to faithfully carry out all their promises. The officers here had done their best to meet the difficulty and satisfy the Indians, though at no little expense to the country.

The Chief appeared to be quite satisfied with the explanation, and after some further conversation about the reserve, which he desires to be located at Eagle Hills, he and his companions retired to their lodges, situated for the present close to the south side of Battle River, under the bank in front of Government House.

Inspector Walker having kindly given instructions to the non-commissioned officer in charge of the Mounted Police in his absence, that every assistance in his power was to be afforded to me for continuing my journey, I was enabled to leave Battleford for Fort McLeod with Major Irvine, on the 25th August. Besides us two, the party consisted of four police constables, my personal servant and the guide.

For the first day we followed a trail leading southward, but afterwards our course was across the trackless plains until we approached near our destination. On the third day out we first sighted buffalo, and every day subsequently that we travelled, except the last, we saw herds of the animals. Most of the herds, however, were small, and we remarked with regret that very few calves of this season were to be seen. We observed portions of many buffalo carcasses on our route, from not a few of which the peltries had not been removed. From this circumstance, as well as from the fact that many of the skins are made into parchments and coverings for lodges, and are used for other purposes, I concluded that the export of buffalo robes from the territories does not indicate even one-half the number of those valuable animals slaughtered annually in our country.

Antelope, though not very abundant, are widely scattered over the plains. The numerous lakelets abound with water fowl. Some of the pools contain alkali, but we experienced no inconvenience on the journey from scarcity of fresh water. The grass in many places is short and thin, but in the hollows feed for horses is easily obtained. Altogether, though the plains are perfectly treeless, not even a shrub being visible, a journey across them in fine weather, such as we experienced, when the "buffalo chips" are sufficiently dry to make a good camp fire, is not disagreeable.