

September

Asst Principal. In this school there are 44 Indian boys & girls who are taught reading & writing besides the various handicrafts & farming. It is voluntary on the part of the parents to send them & there are more applications for admission than can be accommodated. —

frat at night

Leaving Battleford we first pass this' sandhills & then this' rolling prairie, strewn with boulders mostly granite altho' some limestone ones were also seen. Fourteen miles out with stop & take in wood as in the following 45 miles there is none. — By evening we are amongst small hills reminding me of the Cobcain in the south. The trail is rather stony & not as good — on that account — as I was led to believe. We camp at the mail station 20 miles out for the night.

Wednesday 19
fine
warm

Continued our journey through rolling dry prairie. Water is scarce & what there is is nearly all alkaline. Several lakes that we saw had a wide snow white fringe of alkali — the efflorescence of sulphate of soda. There is a peculiar ^{small} red plant that abounds flourishes on the immediate border of these strongly alkaline ponds. On the surface of these ponds I noticed today a peculiar scum that looked exactly like rotten ice on a pond in the spring. — After dinner I drove ahead to our camping place in "The Bush"; were another letter inserted into the last word it would express the fact more strictly — brush —, although there are many trees amongst the willows, the whole being on a sandy ridge. We had come 20 miles today & were at another mailstation kept by an old French Canadian — Bernier all alone. — I enjoyed his kindness well both externally & internally. — After supper I chatted with my man Balleau. He says that when quite young he was aboard to Capt Colliser when making his exploratory trip thro' this country with Dr. Hector, Lieut. Sullivan, Bouyem & Blackstone (the last as he says fell out with Dr. Hector & returned to England). — Dr. left with Colliser from Winnipeg — thence to Pembina — thence west & north to Culebra crossing on the way the north

of the Red Deer. There were 28 in the party. Pallian returned for the winter to England, the others wintered at Culetae. In the spring they proceeded west to Old Bow Fort. They separated into two parties - explored - crossed the mountains + went to Fort Colville - this was Pallian's party. — I do not here wish to rewrite what may be read in Pallian's report. The only interest I have in noting anything is the fact of having the same man Ballendine who was with Pallian so many years ago now with me. — Years afterwards B. was scout for Gen. Sibley of the American Army against the Sioux in Dakota + Montana. — I think I know almost all the noted characters now who are identified with the history of this great Northwest. — Ballendine said that the man that was kicked by one of the packhorses when crossing the mountains was James Beads, which event was the reason that Dr. Hecter named the river along which it happened the Kicking Horse - along which now passes the C.P.R. railway. — On one occasion Dr. Hecter ascended a high mountain + amongst his men at the time was one Joe Brown. They determined to take a horse to the summit + succeeded, but it appears their horses were of a kicking disposition + on the summit kicked Brown, this mountain the Dr. christened Mt. Brown. —

— Before disposing of my St. Pitt Indians yesterday I should have related the preparation of their breakfast yesterday morning. — Eye-a-pik-wa-kow took Chuck's (my cook's) wash basin, which was from dust + otherwise very dirty, he washed his hands therein preparatory to beginning his baking operations - this was commendable. He threw hot water away, wiped or rather scoured the basin with the corner of his flour sack, then put in flour + water + made a batter or paste - no salt no baking powder. In his frying pan he had the grease or fat of the skunk killed the day before yesterday, into this he dropped grease he dropped

big basket, making pan-cakes totally unfit for a white man to eat, in fact it required a good stomach to eat recent food beside this operation. Fortunately I am inimical to all such proceedings.

— Bellemeine told me that at the time M. Com (M.W. Co) was killed many years ago at Battleford by the Indians there were 3000 Cree lodges camped there this would mean about 15000 souls, but two years later small pox broke out amongst them (as they suffered in punishment for the murder) & greatly reduced their number. Similarly a band of Stoney's (belonging to the Sioux tribe) were almost annihilated. — The Cree in former days (say 30-40 years ago) kept ^{from the east} encroaching on the territory of the Blackfeet. — The "Bush" where we are tonight was about the limit of Cree territory — near here some bloody encounters took place. Their arrows were Hudson Bay furs & bones & arrows, the arrows were made of iron — hoop iron. These used for warfare were so attached as to become detached when attempted to be extracted, whereas those for buffalo hunting could be ~~drawn out~~ ^{drawn out} with the head remaining on. —

An man Bemier in course of conversation said to me that we will have a late fall — upon my asking how he knows — he replied "because the moon doesn't go with the month" when I shook my head to this he continued "Why wasn't we had such a late & cold spring, the trees not budding before the 20th May — doesn't the moon steer everything — the sun certainly don't" and with an air of satisfaction he went on digging at his potatoes. — The belief of the influence or rather control of the weather by the moon is more deeply rooted amongst the common people than any other popular fallacy.

— As Bellemeine was with Gen. Middleton during the rebellion as scout, guide & cook in circumstances required, I heard many

September trails. It appears that Middleton thought he believed in the Democratic (U.S.) maxim "To the victor belongs the spoils." This refers to the furs captured. A cache which Balcanine found at Long Lake contained beaver, foxes &c of these Middleton took the pick of 27 beaver & 14 foxes. Major Boston took in one instance 40 Lynx. Major Reed now Indian Commissioner & other head officers getting their full quota, in some cases bales of furs. —

Travelling we see very little game a few ducks, some geese going south, an occasional fox (kit I think) & Sawbill cranes. Of the last we saw about 50 feeding not far off, & I first took them to be cattle or horses, so large they appeared, most of them were white or grayish the rest darker black. They are very wary & difficult to shoot. —

Thursday 20
fine

A drive of a mile took us out of the wood brush & we pass over rolling country with good grass but scarce in water. 25 miles brings us to Eagle Hill Creek on the south side of a valley about six miles wide. The water in the creek is mostly a succession of deep pools with but little current. The whole valley bottom is semi-alkaline. Immediately to the south & southwest lies the Bad Hills, named so by the Creeks as when there they generally have had weather - wind & rain. — We continue thro' the treeless & dry plains 15 miles, after dinner & camp for the night at a patch dried up marsh which however was very welcome. —

Friday 21
pleasant

Onward & southward with the rising sun through this uninteresting country. We find it today more rolling than yesterday & somewhat steeper, but the dry short grass as it is enjoyed very much by the