Imperfect Page

THE GREAT DAKOTA FLOOD.

Graphic Portrait of the Ruin Between Sioux City and Yankton---Sad Fate of Vermillion.

Special Telegram to the Pioneer Press.

YANKTON, April 26.—I have just landed from the Niobrara, which has consumed four days in making 125 miles. The current has been fearfully strong, and it is a wonder we are here at all. I find Dakota's capital seemingly little the worse for the fact that but a short time ago some of her streets were canals and her houses water-tanks. All around, however, are evidences in plenty of the ruin wrought. I have even sadder tales to tell than those of my previous dispatch. Between Vermillion and Yankton, on both sides of the river, except in that part of Nebraska in which lie St. James and St. Helena, far above the reach of any flood, the havoc is universal and widespread, complete and appalling. I cannot describe it, nor could any pen. It transcends words, and the eye fails to see but moities of the sickening whole! The Missouri ran through and over the lower part of Yankton, and the gorges below obstructing its course, turned southeasterly, crossing the James river four miles above its mouth, and for more than twenty-five miles

ROLLED ON ITS DEVASTATING WAY

over a plain from seven to twelve miles broad, covered with homes, and settled as densely as any I know in the West. Of trees, there were but few, and there was absolutely nothing to check the progress of the scourge. Over that area of at least 200 square miles, rest now either vast lakes of water, or huge deposits of ice, the latter so high in many places that only the peaks of the houses are discernible. At localities few and far between are meager spots of high ground, and on these the people are now clustered

THEIR ONLY MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

with those who fed them being boats and rafts, which come and go with difficulty and danger. I found on reaching Meckling yesterday that the people so long settled there had most of them been removed to the high ground in rear of Vermillion. But the Gunderson's mill inhabitants still cling to that locality. It goes without saying that all are suffering for clothes, though of food there is no terrible lack. During the first two weeks of the flood the 150 or more souls in and about the Taylor elevator subsisted on the few cattle Mr. Taylor had rescued from the water by means of pulleys, slaughtering them on one of the upper floors. That same Taylor, from a rich proprietor, the owner of hundreds of cattle and much other valuable property, is now reduced to a poor man, with only such clothes to cover him as he managed to scramble into on the night of threatened death. Our boat was not able to land near enough the sufferers, either to take them off or to place food where it would be accessible. It must go from here in yawls. I wish I could send you.

A MAMMOTH PICTURE OF THE SCENE.

On the Dakota side a dark line leads straight through where the railroad rests under the millions of tons of ice and mud. The far-away bluffs look like the natural banks of an inland sea—long lines of shimmering brightness. The glass reveals all too frequently the roof of some stately, comfortable and well appointed dwelling, or barn, or store, or church, and over all broods the silence of desolation. It seems like mockery to say that this was once a paradise for farmers, and that under the chaos lies a soil famed even here for its richness. Yet such is true, and the dwellers claim that, give them only present help and they will again make the plain smile with green grain and ripple with ripening crops. Though cast down, they are not dispairing, and show a better faith and pluck than many who suffered far less. The total population of the plain of which I have been speaking is shown by the last census to be more than 3,000. I don't believe that of that number one-sixth can say their loss is slight, while fully one-half may be regarded as

COMPLETELY DESPOILED

of all save the bare land. The total amount in dollars is placed at $350,000, and I find a desire to lessen rather than augment this total. The figures do not seem very large when compared with those arising from fires or floods in large cities, or the dense populations of the East, but remember it represents total values in improvements and personal property. On the Nebraska side of the river, the losses in the three bottoms known as Brooky, Green Island and Frankfort, in the order named as you come up the river, are also terrible, if not as total as those on the opposite side. In the first there are about fifty people who have lost fully three-fourths of their stock, nearly all their farm implements and machinery, many of their barns and outbuildings, and not a few of their dwellings. The same may be said of the other two, Frankfort and Green Island, but in a degree, for both are larger and each as fully peopled and as thoroughly improved.

THE LOSS OF THE STOCK,

and more particularly the horses, touched most nearly and keenly. The animals were their outward and visible signs of wealth. Some farmers lost from $8,000 to $10,000 worth, and many long years must elapse ere they can be replaced. In the bottoms last referred to the water came in the daylight and the ice afterward, as the gorge broke wholly, so that almost all the inhabitants had time to flee to the high ground, though so swift was the rush of the tide that few, if any moveables were saved. I do not want to worry you with instances of endurance; but what think you of three babes, one three, one eight, and one ten months old, who spent the coldest night after the flood (a night so bitter that ice of several inches thickness was formed), perched in the branches of the trees, their mothers holding them? That happened, as I know of, a verity, and the babies are alive, well, and in St. Helena to-day. John Nelson thought his brick house, which had sheltered sixty persons on its roof during the earlier floods, was surely safe and returned to it to try and effect some salvage; but the last rise has torn out one corner and the whole structure

WILL PROBABLY FALL.

I could multiply and remultiply instances of individual suffering, exposure, gallantry, danger and escape, but more general matters press for room. Opposite this city stood the flourishing village of Green Island, with stores, churches and dwellings in plenty. I can see the location now, and a solitary building is all that marks it. Swept out of existence are the buildings, every one, and the debris is buried fathoms deep beneath these jagged, shapeless, horrible piles of ice in which is congealed so much mud and sand that the prevailing color is black and the whole effect that of masses of lava ejected from some volcano. There are no ashes from which this town can rise, and weeks must pass before human feet can press its site.

VERMILLION.

The fate of Vermillion, a sprightly, busy, thriving little city of 900 inhabitants, is truly pitiable. Its glory has departed, and

HUGE SLABS OF SULLEN ICE,

looking like shining turtles of prehistoric size, usurp its streets and cover a majority of its buildings. The Vermillion river comes in above the town, and adds its cruel forces to the onslaught of the great artery. Of the 140 houses in the lower town, ninety-seven are utterly wrecked. Prentiss & Newton's handsome business block was so injured as to be worthless, and the large brick store of Lee & Prentiss threatens every moment to become an utter ruin. Shops, houses, banks and stores are a chaos, and the insatiable stream is eating away the very ground itself, gnawing huge pieces momentarily from the banks and threatening to leave not the faintest strip between bluff and channel. The loss is estimated from $125,000 to $150,000, and this is largely in reality, as time was given to move much of the portable property to the upper town, where are all the handsome residences of the business men. It is believed by some that even should the inroad of the waters be checked, the town will never be rebuilt, especially as it is now mooted that the Dakota Southern will abandon its present line and adopt one partially graded and running fifteen miles inland. Others assert that the importance of the place as an entreport and shipping point will insure its speedy rebuilding.

J G. Ho'land: It is well to have a theory you can stand in the center of it.

HOUSE AND FARM.

Selecting Breeding Stock.

Most farmers send their earliest and largest stock to market without regard to their value, or probable value, for stock purposes. This is a mistake. The very best of the flock should be selected from all the rest, and marked in some way so as to be preserved for future use as breeders. Only the culls should be disposed of in the early part of the season. Such fowls should be taken out as have obvious defects, as long legs, crooked breasts, wry tails, bad colored plumage, or other defects. When these are disposed of, more care should be exercised in choosing until all are sold or eaten, except what are wanted for keeping over. This may seem like an unimportant thing, but in a few years it will show a decided improvmeent in the general character of the fowls.

Too Much Wheat and Not Enough of Other Products.

"Twenty years ago," says the Wabasha *Herald*, "the prairies of Wabasha county were settled by men who nearly all had some capital, and most of whom had learned how to farm in New England. If they had worked here as they used to in their old homes, if they had been economical, and if they had raised corn, oats and barley, horses, hogs and cattle instead of an exclusive wheat crop, their farms would have been to-day more productive than when they first turned the sod, and they would have had good houses and barns, money in bank and no mortgages to trouble them. Instead of this, most of them have been sold out by the sheriff or have been compelled to sell out at a sacrifice to save something from the wreck, and have gone to Western Minnesota or Dakota to repeat the same stupid process. There is no better farming region anywhere than the larger part of Wabasha county, and it only needs a little capital and a fair amount of common sense to make the business pay large returns. As we look back twenty years, we can see that the men who raised wheat and nothing else are mostly bankrupt, while those who have placed some of their eggs into other baskets—have put in every year some oats and corn, and have always had a few hogs, two or three steers and a colt or two to sell each season, and have let whisky alone— have uniformly prospered. This is a mild statement of the case, and it will do the farmers of Wabasha county no harm to stop and think about it just a little, and see if they can afford to allow the history of the past twenty years repeat itself in the twenty years to come."

THE PORK QUESTION.

Uncooked Pork Dangerous—How Trichinæ May be Destroyed.

Raw salt pork with a little vinegar and pepper has long been a favorite dish in many a farmer's family in the Northern States during the cold winter months. Hunters, trappers, lumbermen, and woodchoppers also make use of slices of raw pork to make a sandwich for luncheon, and not a few persons who read this will remember the time when slices of cold raw pork and a piece of bread helped to fill an empty stomach on a winter day in the backwoods. Whether any of the thousands of persons who have partaken of such food in times past were injured by it will never be known, but we know that there are numbers of them still living, in the enjoyment of good health and a green old age. But of late it appears that the minute parasite known as trichinæ is found more frequently in pork than formerly; though whether this is due to the increase in number of investigators, and their vigilence in searching for such objects of natural history, or because the parasite has really become more common, it would be difficult to determine. The fact, however, that it is occasionally found in pork is sufficient ground for warning consumers of this kind of meat of their danger.

Trichinæ are very minute, varying from one-eighteenth to one-sixth of an inch in length, and yet they are the most dangerous of all the internal parasites known to infest the human race. The mature worms live in the intestines of the animals, but the immature, or what are called cysts, live in the muscles. They are found in the encysted form in the flesh of hogs and various other animals, but they can only reach maturity, or become fully developed and reproduce their kind, when the meat of animals which they infest is eaten by another, thereby being set free by digestion, or dissolving of the cysts. From the stomach they pass into the bowels, where they propagate very rapidly, and millions of the young bore outward and into the flesh and muscles of their victims. The symptoms are at first diarrhœa, then violent muscular pains like rheumatism, while the worms are boring through the walls of the intestines, and later fever sets in. After the worms reach the muscles and become encysted, they cease to irritate, which occurs in six or eight weeks, provided the person affected lives that time.

To speak of treatment is not our province, but prevention is a legitimate subject for discussion, and cannot be too strongly urged upon every farmer who raises hogs or person who eats pork. Cleanliness in the hog pen and yard is the first step, and the second is to avoid allowing hogs and pigs to catch or eat rats or mice, which are really the most prolific disseminators of these dangerous parasites. Slaughter house pork is the most dangerous of all, and it should never be used until subjected to a thorough microscopic examination.

Raw or half cooked pork should be tabooed under all circumstances as dangerous, and the cooking must be very thorough and complete or some of the parasites may escape destruction. Some recent experiments of M. Vacher of Paris, reported in the *Lancet*, shows that far more heat is required to kill trichinæ than has heretofore been supposed. He affirms that protection given by cooking is quite illusory, and that in the thorough cooking in an ordinary joint of meat the temperature in the center is not sufficient to insure the destruction of the parasite.

In preparing smoked bacon, hams, and shoulders the trichinæ are in a great part destroyed, and all may be if the smoking is thorough and continued long enough to enable the creosote or oil of smoke to reach the very center of the pieces; and we may say that thorough smoking and thorough cooking are among the best and most certain preventives of trichinosis. While we do not think there is any cause for alarm on account of the few cases of this disease recently reported in this country, or for eschewing the use of pork on on that account, it is just as well to be on the safe side by adopting well-known preventive measures, both in the case of swine and in the use of their meat.

For the Women of the Household.

Dear old Mother Hubbard of canine memory would be astonished if she could see some of the new evening cloaks that bear her name. They are almost entirely covered with embroidery and lace, and in some cases the entire sleeves and dollar are made of white ostrich feathers.

One of the peculiar fashions at present is the officer's collar worn by ladies. It is difficult to account for the present rage of the fair sex for the details of military costumes. First came passementrie epaulets and tags, and a later style was velvet collars and cuffs embroidered with gold. This year the collars are de rigueur; they match the remainder of the toilet, and are worked with jet, steel, gold or silver beads. Pieces to match this collar, cut in the same shape, on the lower part of the waist, in the open space of the jacket, on the vest and on the point of the waist.

Princess Louise is described by a correspondent of The Philadelphia Press as fond of housekeeping and the kindest of friends and hostesses. There was sickness at Rideau Hall almost from the day the Princess arrived there. Lady MacNamara was taken ill with scarlet fever and the Princess nursed her through it, then a young mother and her baby, guests at Rideau, contracted the fever; the baby died and the mother lay very near death; the servants would not attend to the sick woman, and the Princess nursed her night and day. Every meal, every cup of water or bowl of gruel, the Princess took to her sick guest with her onw hands.

THE STARVING SIOUX.

Sitting Bull Has to Surrender Because He is Out of Meat—The Canadian Policy.

A Wolf Point correspondent of the Bismarck Tribune interviewed Capt. McDonald, of the N. W. M. P., Wood Mountain, and learned from said gentleman that Sitting Bull had concluded to surrender. The circumstances leading to such a resolve on the part of Sitting Bull are as follows: First, he is starving; second, the continual desertion of the several surrendered bands from his camp have left him so weak that he is afraid to leave Wood Mountain to hunt, there being so many of his enemies on the watch for him. Third, "Low Dog," one of his chiefs, left Wood Mountain a short time ago with about twenty lodges, or thirty families, and came over to Poplar river to surrender. This last desertion was the straw that broke the camel's back. Capt. McDonald has Kyo Morra, interpreter, and three of the hostiles with him, they having been sent over to Buford with a letter from Sitting Bull to the soldier chief. In this letter to Maj. Brotherton, Sitting Bull says, "I am ready to surrender unconditionally." He asked that provisions be sent out to meet him, and that the Indians who are already at Fort Buford be held there until his arrival. In council at Wood Mountain Sitting Bull said that he would have sent his son with Capt. McDonald as an evidence of his good faith if the boy had been old enough to ride a horse. He told Capt. Crozier that he was going to take his advice and go over and peacefully surrender to the American authorities. He will move this way as soon as the snow gets off and travel is practicable. Capt. McDonald thinks that the surrender will take place some time in May. Sitting Bull wants to be assured that no harm will be done him after he has surrendered. His nephew is with Capt. McDonald.

Capt. McDonald says that the reports of Canadian police interference with negotiations for Sitting Bull's surrender are untrue; that the policy of the police has been in favor of surrender. Capt. Crozier has done all he could to break Sitting Bull's influence in the camp, and he has continually advised the other chiefs to leave Sitting Bull and go over and surrender. The renegade Thompson is in irons in the guard house at Wood Mountain for forging the name of one of the police to an order on the trader for $22. Sitting Bull has about sixty-five lodges at Wood Mountain, or about 125 families.

Quick Passage by Sail and Steam.

From the Boston Commercial Bulletin.

The steam-ship Arizona, which sails in the Guion line from New York to Liverpool, has made the passage between the two ports named in 7 days 23 hours and 45 minutes. The same vessel has made the trip between New York and Queenstown in 7 days 8 hours and 8 minutes. The quickest passage ever made by a sailing vessel between the United States and England was that of the ship James Baines, from Boston to Liverpool in 12 days and 6 hours. The famous voyage of the ship Red Jacket from New-York to Liverpool was made in 13 days 1 hour and 25 minutes. The ship Mary Whitridge, built and owned in Baltimore, made a voyage from that port to Liverpool in 13 days and 7 hours. One of the quickest passages on record is that of the ship Northern Light, owned in this city, and which made the voyage from here to San Francisco in 75 days.

S. Painter of Marysville, Cal., defendent in a suit now pending before courts of that town, recently applied to the post-office department to forbid the transmission of local newspapers publishing accounts of the trial through the mails, upon grounds that such reports obtained obscene and immoral matter developed in the testimony taken. The postmaster-general, acting on the advice of the law-office, has denied Painter's request holding that it cannot refuse the use of the mails to newspapers which print matter of the character discribed when the same is adduced in evidence during regular judicial proceedings.

In Durango, a new city of Colorado, about three months old, a contract has been made to put up an opera house, thirty-eight by 125 feet and it is to be ready for use in ten days from the time of commencing work. At the present theatre in that lively young town may be seen a placard which reads: "From and after this date all persons who wish to gain admittance to the auditorium must leave their weapons at the front bar, where checks will be given for them."

The number of cigars smoked in Germany in a year is estimated at about 6,504,000,000, representing a constant and daily consumption of two cigars per head for 10,000,000 smokers. Besides cigars, the Germans smoke during the same period more than 60,000 tons of tobacco which has undergone more or less preparation, besides using 8,000 tons of snuff and 700 tons of tobacco for chewing.

A lady graduate of medicine in Washington has been tendered the position of resident physician on one of the largest Indian reservations in the west. We hope she will accept and proceed there at once. We know of no cheaper or more certain method of satisfactory solving the Indian problem than by placing all the reservations under the medical charge of lady graduates. In about 10 years a live Indian would be a genuine curiosity.

Henry Ward Beecher's regiment, the Thirteenth, of Brooklyn, expected to go to the Yorktown Centennial as the escort of Governor Cornell; but, finding that the regiment expected the state to pay their transportation, Cornell infermed them that he would veto a bill to that effect, and he finally declined their services altogether.

Boston *Globe*: Jay Gould writes checks for $2,400,000 on old scraps of letter-paper, and the banks pay them; but if we should write a check for $24 on a sheet of vellum and plaster it all over with revenue stamps and gilt seals, the man who presented it would be handed over to the police. There is something wrong in our civilization. Where are our bombs?

A new Haven firm sends thousands of the red American fox skins, to Russia every year. These skins, which are used in the Muscovite country to line costly garments, are contributed, to a considerable extent, by Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire. That we should send furs to Russia is as odd as that we should send wines to France; and yet both these things are done.

The poor ye have with you always," but the rich go away in summer time.

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