LIBRARIES
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

Agricultural reconstruction period in Buffalo County and exodus to the west. [19--]

Ganz, Edwin Ferdinand, 1859-1946
[Buffalo County, Wisconsin]: [s.n.], [19--]

https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/XL7BQHSZ5CT7P8T

This material may be protected by copyright law (e.g., Title 17, US Code).

For information on re-use, see
http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Copyright

The libraries provide public access to a wide range of material, including online exhibits, digitized collections, archival finding aids, our catalog, online articles, and a growing range of materials in many media.

When possible, we provide rights information in catalog records, finding aids, and other metadata that accompanies collections or items. However, it is always the user's obligation to evaluate copyright and rights issues in light of their own use.

F902
.3GA
Pam 56-458

Agricultural Reconstruction Period in Buffalo County and Exodus to the West

And Other Articles

By E. F. Ganz

JUN 27 1952

When "Ule" and I Helped Build The Northern Pacific

Some of you may consider this quite a statement to make but remember I do not say "built" but "helped build" and if it is true that every little helps, then we certainly helped build The Northern Pacific. This article, however, is not to deal solely and entirely with that experience of ours but is intended to give a brief insight into a period that, in a way, spells a revolution in the affairs of not only Buffalo County but more or less, of every community of the Middle West, or at least that part of it east of the Mississippi.

At the time, in 1881, this county had been settled for over thirty years and fairly well populated for over twenty. People had come here from the southern and eastern parts of this state, from the eastern states and from Europe. Conditions as they found them here were vastly different from what they were in their old homes. They beheld the deep rich soil, covered with luxuriant vegetation and to decide that this must be inexhaustible was easy, when the abundant crops produced were contemplated. Those coming from Europe, of course, were accustomed to intensive farming but this was so different from anything they had ever experienced that the delusion appears natural, while many of those coming from the east were natural drifters, who whenever the soil gave out moved on. Then there were many who had never before farmed and readily took the opinions of their neighbors for granted. Thus they lived on from year to year, trusting to their good luck in having found this region of inexhaustible soil. All the people with whom, as a boy I came in contact, were immigrants from Europe and had never had any experience with virgin soil and often when a load of fertilizer was hauled away from our barn, I heard the remark, "In the old country this would be worth money" and I, knowing that it was hauled away only because it was in the way, wondered how so it could be worth money. Another motive for hauling it may have been force of habit, for in Europe fertilizer had to be hoarded. More surprising may it be to you that some farmers, who built basement barns, remarked that they were handy because the manure could be pushed over the bank. This, to you, may seem exaggeration but since the grain was always badly lodged in places where the fertilizer was spread, it was not so much in favor and considered unnecessary. This was true in the beginning, especially since wheat was the main, in fact, almost the only crop.

This practice led to a fallacious notion, namely that when grain was lodged the soil was too "fat", meaning rich and you would be surprised to learn how recently I have heard that opinion expressed. That certain elements which went into the making of the plant and gave stamina to the straw had been taken from the soil, occurred to very few for no information along these lines was being disseminated among the farmers. Then you must remember, as mentioned, in previous articles, there was absolutely no market except for grain and therefore very little corn and not much hay was grown, diversification of crops being a matter of little if any serious consideration.

Thus crop after crop of grain was being harvested and year after year the result became more discouraging. True, the grain grew tall and rank, especially so in wet seasons but before it could be garnered some calamity was usually visited upon it. Instead of the golden fields of grain, of yesteryear, before the heads were filled they would die off and the straw would crinkle down and become so brittle that it was nigh impossible to find any that was fit for a band to tie a bundle with. Black rust and blight took their toll. Grain being the only source of income many farmers could not hold out, in fact, none but those who were well established were able to weather the storm. Renters and farmers who had become involved through the purchase of land and equipment, were

hard pressed and little hope for redemption was held out to them. Add to all these troubles the fact that wheat was often around fifty cents a bushel, cattle around a cent a pound and dressed hogs about two cents, while cream often brought not more than ten cents and sometimes less, for a pound of butterfat, with other produce in proportion. Wages of harvest hands, owing to the scarcity at that season, remained high until the coming of the selfbinder and the price of that machine was three hundred dollars or more. The rate of interest was still from seven to ten per cent, largely owing to the fact, that some of the notes and mortgages dated many years back, retained the old rate of interest.

With their backs to the wall, many of these farmers became desperate and resolved to get out of this dilemma as well as they could. Like the survivors of Napoleon's disorganized hordes, after the battle of Waterloo, they exclaimed in desperation "Save himself who can". Their only hope lay in the establishment of a new home in the far West.

The Northern Pacific had penetrated as far west as Bismarck, Dakota, James J. Hill had built the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba up the Red River Valley and on to Winnipeg, in Canada, while a branch of the Northwestern had been built through the southern part of Dakota Territory, North and South Dakota having not yet been divided. Stragglers had gone into the Red River valley ,in Minnesota and Dakota, others into the James River valley, in Dakota, while still others located on the Cheyenne and near the Missouri in that state. Years before this period many had gone to Western Minnesota but invading hordes of grasshoppers drove them from a district that now embraces some of the best farms to be found anywhere. Then like a distant trumpet call, came a faint cry from the far West, announcing that far up the Columbia river in Washington Territory, lay a region that fairly teemed, if not with milk and honey, with crops of wheat that were unequalled, by even those raised in this county in pioneer days. Up in the Palouse and Big Bend country beckoned a region that would grow wheat and more wheat. To go thither overland, was almost out of the question as the nearest direct approach, by rail was on the Northern Pacific, now completed to the Montana line. The most feasible route to go there was, by rail to San Francisco, thence by boat to the mouth of the Columbia and up that river to the promised land. This cost money and many could not go but you would be surprised with how little some started out, got there and made good. These conditions of course, confronted only the very early pioneers of that region, access to which was made easy by the completion of the two great trans-continental railways into that fertile region.

Without the admonition of the venerable Horace Greeley to, "Go west young man, go west", there was sufficient incentive in prevailing conditions to stimulate that ambition, not only in the hearts of the young but also of the middle aged and oftentimes of those farther advanced in years. Is it surprising then that a general exodus took place. From country and town, from the Waumandee valleys, the Beef River, in fact from all parts of the county, whole families but especially the young, flocked to these beckoning wheat fields of the near and far west, for indeed wheat was still king.

Some of the conservative old timers, however, could not see it that way. They had come here to stay and hoped that some day conditions would re-arrange themselve. They believed in the good black soil and the rich chocolate colored sub-soil, the hills and valleys and the stately white, black and red oaks. Land was cheap and they figured that as an asset, worth an investment by anyone. I remember one time when "Ule's" father remarked to us; "Boys I think the Albertson farm could be bought for eight hundred dollars." This announcement met with less enthusiasm than derision and I am afraid that I was foremost

among those to turn down a proposition to invest in a neglected, hilly farm when the "Golden Northwest" was beckoning. The old gentleman knew of our rosy plans and although he never said a word to dissuade us, evidently put out that proposition as a feeler and when it met with such a cool reception never mentioned it again. I may remark here that a number of years later, "Ule" bought that same farm but paid a lot more than eight hundred dollars for it and later sold it for five times that amount. Of course it was then in far better condition, having been operated as a dairy farm, in the interim.

This gives you a picture of the condition that farming was in, during the late seventies and early eighties, the latter period registering the beginning of the turning point, when thanks to the Experiment Station, the Farmers Institutes, Extension Work and other much abused agencies, the farmers of our county and state were made to see the error of their ways and turned from soil robbery to conservative farming, such as their ancestors in the British Isles, in Germany, in Switzerland, in Austria, in Norway and in parts of the East had been forced to practice for centuries past. The chronic knocker was, of course then as now, ever present and as the County Agricultural Agent and his work are assailed now, these activities were by him, assailed then. His assertion that "Them fellows can't learn me nothing", was shouted as loudly then as it is now and it was as true then as it is now for "Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise".

I suppose that all of you, who knew him, have guessed who "Ule" was and to those who have not guessed it I will only say that he was the mail carrier who, years ago, used to speed down Main Street behind "The Black Prince", in an attempt to beat Train No. 52, to the postoffice and generally succeeded, for both that driver and that horse hated to be beaten. He was also, for about two decades, janitor at the County Normal and there made many friends. It is therefore needless to state that I refer to the late Ulrich Wald, who was always known to all of us as "Ule".

At that time, I was teaching in Mill Creek valley, his home, thus it happened that we planned on this undertaking jointly. There were, of course, incentives and inducements, besides those already mentioned. The Railroads were sending out circulars with glowing accounts of riches awaiting those who would heed the call of "The Golden Northwest". Then we had friends who had emigrated to the Red River valley and other Eldoradoes but we felt that we had to venture farther west still. All that winter and especially toward spring we talked this project over and finally decided to go.

We did not get much encouragement from home but there was not much opposition made manifest, for our folks were conservative and while they did not believe in ventures, seemed to think it might not hurt us to try. Oh yes, by the way, we had one fellow conspirator, who kept advising and encouraging us and he was neither young nor inexperienced. This was none other than the elder John Brethauer, who at an early day had come to Alma and established himself as a cobbler. By dint of industry and frugality he saved some money and bought what was known as the upper saw mill. This he traded to August Grams for the mill, in Mill Creek valley. Mr. Grams had built up the business of his mill, so that it was rather a valuable piece of property. He was not a practical miller, himself and therefore always hired a good and experienced man to do that work and thus the mill enjoyed a good patronage. Mr. Brethauer, although physically handicapped was so ambitious that he never seemed to even notice that defect but worked at any job alongside of an able bodied man and furthermore his ego was so abnormally developed that he not only thought but knew that there was nothing that he could not do as well as any other man if not better. He took the mill over and almost immediately

undertook to run it alone and unassisted. The result was that, after a few years it was in such shape that the flour that was turned out could not be used for bread. In those days the grain was crushed between two huge stones, one turning above the other. The faces of these stones had grooves cut into them which had to be re-cut or dressed from time to time. After witnessing this process a few times the new miller undertook it himself and finally he lost the mill but not for this reason alone for I really believe that he could have made it pay with what little custom he had grinding feed for the farmers. He however, had other troubles and leaving the mill to his family, he decided to go west and start in fresh. This he did and some years later returned to spend his reclining years here, having by dint of hard work acquired a competency which enabled him to do this.

I make mention of this for two reasons. First to show that we had a powerful ally, in this old and decrepit man, who did not fear to venture into what we were about to undertake and last but not least, to show what one with courage and determination can achieve, despite the handicaps of old age and decrepitude, by dint of will power, industry and frugality. Mr. Brethauer, who like myself, had a profusion of glowing literature, relating to our Eldorado, was eloquent on the subject and after disposing of some of his effects, netting him less than five hundred dollars, departed for the Twin Cities, preparatory to striking out for the West, in the spring, working in the mean time as flunkey, in a cheap hotel. No wonder he made money.

After my school closed in the spring—the term was six months only—I went home and made ready to go out west. I made a trip to Winona, where, among other things, I bought a revolver and an all leather bag, the latter being quite a luxury, carpet bags being still in vogue, while the former was considered a necessity by an adventurer into the Wild West, whether he knew what to do with it or not.

I took the stage to Fountain City, in the afternoon, leaving for Winona, per Steamer Robert Harris, next morning. On this "eventful" trip I had for a traveling companion, Sigmund Kammerer, of the Fountain City mill, formerly miller at Ochsner's in the Waumandee Mill. There was a very large crowd at the levee and on inquiry my friend informed me that the pastor of the local church and his family were leaving and their friends were seeing them off. I farther noticed among our fellow travelers, a young fellow who was very despondent, almost heartbroken and I wondered what might be his destination. This I did not learn until some months later. A trip from Waumandee to Winona meant more in those days than it does now or I might not have remembered all these trifles. Of course I had been away from home and even to Winona before. I had to stop there all night, on my three days' trip to Platteville, where I attended the Normal, one winter. So you see I was not quite as green as I might have been. Yet I recite this to call your attention to what was, at least, an event in those days. It not only gives you an idea of the extent of the travels of the average farmer boy but also of the time required to get from place to place. With a good team the trip from Waumandee to Winona and back could have been made in one day but the way I traveled it took part of three days. Now some do it in an hour.

Thus armed and equipped, I was ready to aid in the conquest of "The Wild and Woolly West". So one morning in early spring my brother, Casper, undertook to take me to Mill Creek. It was really not early spring but the frost was just about out of the ground, it being one of those retarded seasons. Our regular route to Alma would have been via Anchorage, Cream and Herold but that was not to be thought of, for a considerable stretch of the road immediately below Cream, was practically bottomless, while across the Belvidere Bluff, the stiff, red clay made progress almost impossible.

We therefore drove past the Anchorage school, turning at the little brick church, just below, into Jaeger's valley across the bluff into Rose Valley and thence by the regular road to Alma and Mill Creek. This was by no means a holiday excursion for the horses but at least we got through, thanks to a good team and a good driver. Thus we traveled in those days.

Twelve Mile Bluff was always an object of interest to me and as we approached it that day, I told Casper that the saying was that the steeple-like formation that jutted out from the main rock, shook in the wind. Casper watched it and remarked "By gosh, it does". There was a strong east wind blowing and the rock appeared to be swaying back and forth but I tried to explain this away, laying it to an optical illusion, caused by a clump of birches, that grew on the rock, swaying in the wind.

Galileo said, "The World do Move" and Casper said, that rock does move. It did and how? Few, very few of those who read this, will remember that steeple or pinnacle, on the face of Twelve Mile Bluff, for within an hour after we had driven beneath it, it did come down.

Thousands upon thousands of tons of limestone came thundering down the hillside and only the heavy growth of timber saved Laue's mill from utter destruction. Quite a number of men were then employed in the mill but the landslide or rock slide occurred during the noon hour, while the men were to dinner, otherwise some of them might have been injured or killed, since at least one big boulder stopped right above the mill. Most of them, however still cling to the hillside having become imbedded alongside of the trees that held them. It would be worth while for the Boy Scouts and others, on one of their hikes, to look over this scene of the rock slide, of 1881 and at the same time consult some of the few who remember how Twelve Mile Bluff looked before that tower slid away from it. It would farther prove profitable to learn more about this bluff, for Twelve Mile Bluff is a historic land mark. Ule and I went to town the next day and on getting here were informed of what had happened and went to view the result of this debacle. Some of the trees were broken and all of them barked and bent to the ground, while huge boulders strewed the entire hillside. It was a veritable scene of devastation and yet, to the casual observer, hardly a trace of it remains today. Young trees have grown up and shrubbery partly hides the boulders. Twelve Mile Bluff is still there, as well as the face of Count von Bismarck, plainly visible as you approach the bluff, coming north on Highway No. 35, but the tower, which was so close to the main rock, that venturesome young swains would exhibit their prowess to the gay lassies accompanying them, by jumping across the dividing chasm; is gone and no trace of it remains, but the huge boulders clinging to the hillside.

After having spent a few days in Mill Creek valley, during which time I remember, Ulrich and I practiced some target shooting with our revolvers, we left for Alma, where we were to board the Steamer Lion, for Wabasha, whence we took the Milwaukee train for St. Paul. The boat left in the afternoon and there was neither crowd to see us off, nor excitement at our departure. There is however one little incident connected with our departure, which I consider worth mentioning. Before we left, John Bruegger came to the levee and taking Ulrich to one side, handed him something, with explanations. Ulrich told me, after the boat had pulled out, that what "Johnnie", as he was familiarly known, had handed him was ten dollars, not as a parting gift but for business reasons. Ulrich had bought something from Johnnie, who was clerking in Tester's store and in payment handed him a gold coin—in those days it was not considered a crime for common people to handle gold coins—.Johnnie made change but on going to the till, later on, found that what both had taken for a ten dollar piece was a double

eagle or twenty dollar piece and to square things, he hastened to the levee to make the correction. This may not have been a remarkable thing to do, in fact, almost every business man would do it but not all of them. At any rate Johnnie Bruegger rated high with both Ulrich and me, ever after.

A story of this exodus to the far West would, however not be complete without brief mention of Johnnie Bruegger. He had come from Watertown, this state and was staying at the Massasoit House, the landlord, Emil Leonhardy, being the husband of his sister. He secured employment in Tester's store, where he soon became popular with the patrons of the place as well as with others in town and the surrounding country. He was of a rather quiet and unassuming disposition but friendly, in his modest way. He was a master turner and became a prominent and useful member of the local Turnverein. Some of the younger readers may have but a vague understanding of what a Turnverein is and I take the liberty to suggest that it would be worth their while to find out by consulting some of their elders, who may know, for turning and "Turnvereine" were worthwhile indeed and it is a pity that they have become obsolete.

John Bruegger did not go West during this mad rush, in fact, he remained here until the Great Northern Railway had been built well into or through North Dakota, when he located at Williston, in that state. Here he went into business and with wonderful foresight and business acumen forged to the front, expanding on every hand and soon becoming identified with every civic and commercial move in that town. In fact, the words Williston and Bruegger got to be almost synonyms. He gathered about him almost all, if not all, the members of the Bruegger family, including the Emil Leonhardy family, of Alma. Co-operating and co-laboring, they were leaders in building up the place and always Johnnie was in the van and the master mind. That part of North Dakota is deeply and everlastingly indebted to this enterprising pioneer.

He was no plunger but his activities to help in the up-building of the community, were extended to the surrounding small towns and the farming country and that meant extension of a vast volume of credit and when successive crop failures and resulting money stringency befell that region, he was caught with enormous sums on his books and sustained heavy losses, as was the case with others who were public spirited and open-handed. During his career, he was induced to become a candidate for the Democratic nomination to the office of United States senator. Although popular and deserving, he was no politician. He did not know the ropes and had he known them, I doubt whether he would have cared to pull them. At any rate he lost out in the primary. North Dakota, being strongly Republican, the Democratic nominee who had won out over Bruegger was defeated in the election but received balm for his wounds by being appointed Comptroller of Currency, by President Wilson. Nothing of the kind happened to John Bruegger, as might have been expected, for as later developments have shown, a fellow who returned a gold coin, although paid him by mistake, could hardly be considered fit (?) for political recognition. Yet many, very many, besides the two farmer boys herein referred to, unite in saying "Hats off to John Bruegger" and I am glad that on the occasion of a short stay in that state, during the campaign, I asked my friends and others whom I met, to vote for him and I could not, at this time refrain from paying a well deserved tribute to one of the real pathfinders of the Great West.

After a stop at Beef Slough, The Lion wended her way between logs and booms and through the "Cut-off" back into the main channel of the Father of Waters and finally landed at Wabasha. Here we had supper in Baumgartner's Hotel and while eating, I heard from the kitchen, the clarion voice of Mrs. Casparis. She

was the wife of one of my former teachers and for five years, of my school days, had lived in the teacherage above our school room but owing partly to my inborn bashfulness and partly to the fact that my mind was engrossed with the big things to come, I did not have the temerity to seek an interview with this old friend. After supper we shouldered our satchels and wended our way to the Milwaukee depot back on the prairie. It was back on the prairie, owing to a policy pursued by that road, of passing up every town that failed to come across with a bonus, required by its magnates, even La Crosse being given the same treatment, much to the chagrin of said magnates, who later spent large sums of money on stubs giving them access to these erstwhile spurned marts of trade, verifying again the old saying that, when the mountain refuses to come to Mohamed, Mohamed must go to the mountain. In the waiting room of the depot we sat and lay until after midnight, when a mixed train came along, taking us to the gateway of the Great Northwest, where we arrived next morning.

St. Paul, although far from being what it is today, was the first larger city that we had ever seen or entered and we passed through the Union Depot, then nearing completion, wide-eyed and open-mouthed. In and out, vast throngs were hustling and bustling and compared to the peace and quiet prevailing in the palatial present day structure this old landmark, whose destruction by fire, some years ago was hailed with acclaim and rejoicing, by the crazy mobs and even by the press, was indeed a busy mart. This unseemly demonstration in favor of a new structure, to me, always appeared an outrage and the "White Elephant" that replaces the erstwhile busy mart seems almost to be a just retribution to that unworthy outburst of joy, in the face of a calamity, for a destructive fire is always a calamity. Be this as it may, we entered St. Paul through the old depot, when it was not quite completed and then as well as often thereafter when I elbowed my way through the crowds. I considered it a wonderful structure.

Coming out of the depot, we climbed a sand hill and got into town and what a wonderful place it was. There were some four story buildings and the second story of one of them occupied by a fur trader, was decorated with a real stuffed buffalo. That was an inspiration, especially to Ulrich who, I always suspected was induced to go west more by a desire to hunt buffaloes than to take up land. At any rate the first thing we did, after finding a hotel, was to buy two repeating Winchester rifles and about a hundred rounds of 45-60 cartridges apiece. Thus fully armed we were prepared to help in the killing of the monarch of the plains. I must confess that this enthused me but little but with my partner it was different again, for he was a real hunter, while I had never even shot a rabbit. Our next job was to look up Mr. Brethauer for although we knew that he was not bound for the same destination as we, he was going west and we desired to farther consult with him. Finding him neither at the Green Tree House nor at the Wild Hunter, where he had previously been, we returned to our quarters at the American House for dinner. Mr. Brethauer had found even more remunerative quarters than he had occupied before, as we later learned from him.

The spring of 1881 was one of great floods, in the Northwest and "Old Man River" was at his peak on the day we reached St. Paul. From the brow of the hill, somewhere near where the Roberts Street bridge now crosses the river, we watched the floods inundating West St. Paul. The entire town was under water and ever and anon some barn, shed or other outbuilding began to wobble and float down river and we said to each other, "That town is doomed for good". Fancy our amazement, when coming back to town, we were greeted on every hand with placards offering for sale choice real estate in West St. Paul. We remarked if

we went back to Alma we might get some of it cheap when it floated by. That by raising the townsite above the high water level it might become valuable, did not occur to us. Yet, the bargains offered that day were no doubt, real bargains but we were not interested in anything on this side of the Mississippi and had we been, we could not have financed it. Thus the only interest we had in that flood was sympathy for the people in the stricken town, little dreaming that it would rise from this disaster, greater and better for the experience, for there was no loss of life. Often, on crossing the Roberts Street bridge have I looked down upon that town and tried to visualize it as it was in the spring of 1881.

Since we were not interested in buying any of those floating lots in West St. Paul, for reasons already stated, we started for the depot, after supper, lugging our Winchesters and satchels. Here we sat, awaiting the departure of our train and watching the well ordered coming and going of the crowds and listening to the stentorian announcements of departing trains by the train dispatcher and when he finally sang out, "The Northern Pacific; all aboard for St. Cloud, Great Falls, Moorehead, Fargo, Valley City, Jamestown and Bismarck, All aboard", we got up and boarded the west bound train for Bismarck. Soon after boarding the train, we went to sleep and daybreak found us in the Red River valley, approaching Moorehead and Fargo. Passing through Mapleton, we came to Dalrymple and got a glimpse of the gigantic operations on the great Dalrymple farm, where seeding was already in progress. As far as eye could reach, stretched the coal black fields, level as a floor. Here dozens upon dozens of seeders passed down the fields side by side, followed by harrows, every one of them drawn by four horses. This was a new sight for us, since at home all implements were drawn by one team only. It was a great sight but as we passed on, this was soon overshadowed by another, more spectacular. To the right of us and to the left of us the fields were literally covered with wild geese. You can imagine how this sight impressed a hunter like my friend, Ulrich, who was fairly itching at a chance to try out his new Winchester. This was, of course, out of the question and did not much bother me. This continued for hour after hour, whenever we passed a field that was being seeded. The geese were as numerous as the wood pigeons, at home, only they were not quite so nimble and I trust not so destructive to the seed grain.

For miles there would be neither fields nor geese but ever and anon we would pass a siding, or proposed station, where someone attempted to ape the great Dalrymple, in trying out farming on a big scale but often, as I learned later, with little success. The sidings were numbered in rotation, the naming of them awaiting the establishment of a town. Of course, places like Valley City, Tower City, Jamestown and others had been started and named. Others were known simply as fifth, seventh or tenth siding as the case might be. Small lakes or large ponds were visible on every hand and these too were literally covered with wild geese that made my friend's trigger finger itch and I did not blame him for never then or thereafter did he get a chance at this noble game, while here he actually saw and had to pass up millions.

Late that afternoon our train pulled into Bismarck and we had arrived, for here was "Where the West began". The depot was connected with a big hotel, a huge frame building with the imposing name of Sheridan House. This was too big for us or rather for our pocketbooks and we walked into the town looking for a hostelry that was more to our liking or rather that better fitted our circumstances. On entering the business section we saw, in front of a store, a dapper young fellow eyeing us and stroking his mustache. Looking from him to me, Ulrich exclaimed, "Isn't that Albert Utzinger?" I was about to make the same remark and was quite sure

that it was but first we were intent on getting located, then to go back and look him up. Arriving at the hotel we were required to register and on the pages of the hotel register the name of A. W. Utzinger, Crookston, Minn., stared us in the face. Now we were doubly sure for some years previous our friend, Albert, had left Alma for Crookston. While here he was the leader of that famous brass band of which P. E. Ibach, Ottmar Probst, the Furrer boys, Jacob Weinandy and others, whose names I do not now recall. were members. He was a master musician, music teacher and bandmaster and withal a hale fellow well met. We knew him well, especially I, since his uncle Henry Utzinger who lived near Bangor, was married to my mother's sister. We re-traced our steps at once, to look him up and found him still there. He grinned at us saying "It's a wonder you fellows wouldn't speak to a fellow". We retorted that the boot was on the other foot and he being an established resident in the burg, was in duty bound to extend its hospitality to us, which he of course would have done had he been as cock sure, at first, as he now pretended to have been. Were we glad though to meet him? Here, in a strange land, we met up with a friend and one who was not a tenderfoot but a seasoned sourdough. He worked for a baker, who had a grocery store in connection and it was his duty to attend to the latter. This store, owned by a Swiss, named John Jegen (He had become Americanized and spelled it Yegen) became our headquarters while in Bismarck.

The railroad which bad been built as far as Bismarck by the Jay Cooke interests, came to a standstill there when Jay Cooke went under, in the early seventies, on that eventful day known as "Black Friday". Financiers, connected with the railroad company had made it a point to secure possession of all prospective townsites, before locating a station. In the case of Bismarck, which was expected to become a railroad center and a more or less important town, a band of squatters had planned to beat the capitalists to it and the result was a fight to the finish. To deceive the squatters, the road was surveyed to a point, in the river bottoms about two miles below the present site of the town and building in that direction was in progress, in fact, the road was practically completed and the squatters had possession of the proposed townsite, when under the cover of night, the company started with a big crew, laying a temporary track to the present site. The squatters, however, were not caught napping but broke camp and squatted on the present site before the track reached it. This in fact, was the only feasible site, for the very spring when we got there the fake town, which was in the river bottoms, would have been under from twenty to thirty feet of water, while Bismarck was high and dry. To be thus outwitted by the plebes roused the ire of the land company and to spite these sooners, the company built its shops and round-house, in the bottoms across the river and called the town Mandan. Both towns grew and prospered, in a way but between them there was bitter rivalry. The Bismarck paper never printed the name, Mandan but instead persistently referred to the place as Fifteenth Siding, while the Mandan paper retributed by referring to Bismarck, as Fourteenth Siding. That feeling was general with everyone in both towns. The railroad company especially fought Bismarck to the bitter end but as is generally the case in a matter of spite work, they finally concluded that to cut off their nose to spite their own face was neither pleasant nor profitable and were forced to eat humble pie.

As above stated, the Cooke interests had built the road as far as Bismarck and there had to let go. Some years later a newspaperman, of German descent named Henry Villard (I was told that the name had been Americanized by changing it from Hilgert to Hilliard and then to Villard) took hold of the company and succeeded in raising sufficient capital to

complete the road. At that time he had continued it from Mandan to the Montana line but there was no bridge across the Missouri. Thus the company had its shops and roundhouse on one side of the river and its road on the other. Trains were taken across on a huge ferry, consisting of tracks laid between two side-wheel steamers. This was a means to the end but only a makeshift. Bismarck, farthermore, had the edge on Mandan, owing to the fact that it had a first class steamboat landing while Mandan was about two miles distant from the river and all the freight for the forts and trading posts on the upper Missouri and Yellowstone had to be transferred at Bismarck. This left the rival town high and dry, as we might say but that was not literally the case for in the spring of 1881, before our arrival, the Missouri had gone on a rampage. It rose to such proportions as to almost reach the depot at Bismarck and Mandan was practically inundated. Stacks of drift ice were piled house-high in the streets and all buildings besides being flooded, were filled with "Missouri mud" when the flood receded and no one who has never seen it can have any idea of what Missouri mud is. The boat landing, which had been close to Bismarck was now a couple of miles from the depot and new docks and warehouses had to be built but the railroad company lost no time in getting ready for the up-river trade.

Work on the N. P. extension had not begun and being forced to stay in Bismarck, we went to work assisting to raise a barge which had become imbedded in the silt during the freshet and here I learned what Missouri mud was. Two of us were carrying a railroad tie, when the leader fell and I was pulled over forward but being up to by boot-tops in the slimy silt could only crouch forward. Either I had to leave my boots behind or be extricated by my companions and the latter was done. This was Missouri mud. It is soft, smooth and sticky as glue. To get to this job we had to cross the river, and two men, who had sailed on the Great Lakes, rowed us back and forth. On landing us one day at noon, they positively refused to row us back, the whitecaps being high and with a dozen men in each boat, they considered it hazardous. In case of a spill the best swimmer would have been helpless for the water was so saturated with fine silt that it would have soaked into our clothes and weighted us down. When a pail of water was drawn from the river there would be so much sediment in it that more than a fourth of it would be mud, in the bottom of the pail.

We continued, for a few days, in the attempt to raise that scow out of the mud, by means of telegraph poles for levers and ties for fulcrums and as a foundation, but as soon as the ties were pushed under they sank into the slimy Missouri mud. One day, on our way home, Ulrich complained of being dog-tired and I remarked that he worked too hard. He bitterly retorted that the trouble was that just because some of us shirked, the rest had to do more than their share. I understood the implied meaning of this remark but made no reply. My partner had worked one winter in the pineries and before the season was over had come home, all played out, while I had spent all my winters either in going to school or teaching and therefore was rather soft and not fit to do two men's work like my over-ambitious friend. My summers had always been spent doing routine work on the farm while he had performed such arduous work as grubbing. For instance, on one occasion, on a job of clearing second growth timber. This, I think, he did in company with Rudy Mueller and Chris. Bardill and all of it by hand with the grub-hoe and shovel and their pay was twelve dollars an acre. No wonder I could not stand up alongside of a fellow who had made money under such circumstances for those boys had indeed done two men's work and today it would puzzle half a dozen fellows to do it. Those were real workmen and they never thought of going on strike but considered themselves lucky to

have such a job and were justly proud of having accomplished it.

We abandoned that job about where it had been begun and I know not nor do I care whether it was ever accomplished but I suppose that my partner always had a faint suspicion that with enough he-men at it, that job could have been done, Missouri mud or no Missouri mud, but he did not have his grubbing partners with him to help him do it.

Our evenings and off days were mostly spent in Yegen's store and both the proprietor and our friend, his clerk, were intent on persuading us to desist from going farther west and locating on lands near Bismarck. Mr. Yegen especially, was very insistent, showing us over his own homestead, near town and enlarging on future possibilities, going so far even as to remark, "There is no reason why those hills should not eventually be converted into vineyards like the hillsides of Switzerland". This remark was induced by the fact that there were wild grapes growing in the Missouri bottoms. But neither the Missouri bottoms nor Missouri mud had any fascination for us. My partner was intent on shooting buffaloes and I wanted to locate in the "Golden Northwest". One day while we loafed in the store, a lanky, haggard man, a veteran of the Civil War, (they were then not yet old men) entered the store stating that he had returned from the Yellowstone valley. On hearing this, Albert immediately asked him what he thought of the Yellowstone country, for our information of course. The prompt reply was, "She's an ante-deluvian hell-roaring devil". This retort, of course, pleased both him and his boss and was greeted by both with peals of laughter. However, it neither phased nor discouraged the buffalo hunter nor the homeseeker.

Mr. Yegen employed, as a helper in his bakery, another Swiss, a Bernese, who had been all over the west and spun all kinds of yarns for us. This store was the Mecca of the few Swiss, in the town and here we met two chums and Bernese cronies of the baker afore mentioned. They had been (Senns) cheese and buttermakers in their home among the Alps and thence had been transferred to Norway where they were to practice this art and instruct others in it. There they had spent many years and one of them had married a "Norske Jente" and had a large family. They had come to Bismarck from upper Canada where they had learned a smattering of English and thus acquired a jargon that was amazing. They talked but one language and whether it was intended to be Swiss, Norwegian or English, it was always the same, a mixture of all three, much to the amusement and confusion of Ulrich, who understood well, about two thirds of what they said, while the rest was guesswork and he considered them a couple of funny old chaps. I was not so considerate and generally reminded them to try and confine themselves to one or the other of these languages but with little success. They however gave us much information on conditions prevailing in the Land of the Midnight Sun.

Two younger brothers and a sister of John Yegen also lived at Bismarck. They were new arrivals from Switzerland and their brother tried his utmost to locate them on some of the hills around Bismarck. This did not appeal to them and their stubborness, as he called it, aroused the displeasure of Alderman Yegen. One of them, Chris., with whom I became well acquainted, told me that he did not see why there should not be as much of an opportunity for them in a new town, as there was for John at Bismarck. The prosperous business man resented this attitude and did not approve of what he called their high faluting notions. Why should those greenhorns aspire to undertake, at once, what it took him years to accomplish. It did not occur to him that they were not as green as he imagined and that even in the Praettigaeu valley, their old home, things had changed since he left. He insisted and they refused. This irritated him to such an extent that he, at times, referred to them, not only as greenhorns but as "Schwyzerchueh". I wondered whether this

compliment was not partially intended for two other fellows, from Alma, who could no less, than his brothers, see possibilities that awaited them among the hills around Bismarck.

Allow me to digress and give a brief account of the part that these so-called "Schwyzer-chueh" took in developing the West. Tired of this constant nagging and bossing of their prosperous brother, the boys finally decided to give him a rest and go west to try their luck. Alderman Yegen really meant well by the boys but went at it in the wrong way, forgetting that his younger brothers could be as independent as he. With a team they started west and I understand, stopped temporarily at railway workers' camps, supplying them with bakery products which they produced on a primitive outfit, carried with them. Be this as it may, they finally arrived at Billings, Montana, when that town was in its swaddling clothes and considering this an opportunity such as had been offered their brother, John, when he arrived at Bismarck, they went into business. I had not heard of them for years, in fact not until I had been in business, at Alma, for some time when, one day, my friend, Chris. Allemann, of the town of Montana, entered my office, accompanied by a stranger. Addressing me in his abrupt, frank manner, he said; "Edwin, this is my friend, Branger, of Lewistown, Montana, and since I have to go up to the courthouse, to serve on the jury and do not want to bore him with the routine proceedings of court, I want to leave him with someone who can entertain him intelligently and by whom he may perhaps be entertained in the same manner." Flattered by being thus distinguished, I assured him that I would be pleased to oblige both him and his friend.

How much Mr. Branger got out of this visit, I know not but if he got half as much out of it as I did, it was a most profitable and enjoyable occasion. In a roundabout way, I think from my friend, George Miller, I had learned that the Yegens, were established in that part of Montana and that the brother of Chris. had been in the Judith basin. On inquiring about the Yegens, of Mr. Branger, he replied by saying that he knew them indeed, since he and Chris. Yegen's brother were married to sisters. Their father-in-law, a Graubuendner "Landsman" of theirs had in an early day squatted in the "Basin" and become a prosperous ranchman and extensive land owner and together with his sons and sons-in-law, had established a regular little baronetzy, in a little Switzerland among the fertile valleys of the rockies. The Yegens, he said, were the first word in Billings, where they had valuable holdings of real estate and were the leading bankers. Chris Yegen was the mayor of that city and in that capacity had put the "Lid" on. In other words, he had put a stop to gambling and other orgies prevalent in frontier towns. In fact what the Brueggers had become at Williston, the Yegens had become at Billings only more so. Besides their interests at Billings they owned extensive horse ranches in charge of the brother, with whom, by the way, I had not become so well acquainted as with Chris. On this I got more definite information, from Martin Allemann, who, I understand, was for years in charge of a ranch, where their pure bred draft stallions were kept. This shed some light on a matter that puzzled me, when on scanning a map I had seen a station named Yegen and had wondered whether Alderman Yegen's "greenhorn" brothers might perhaps be, in some way, connected with this and it was, I learned, indeed their shipping point. I last heard of the Yegens, in 1927, when Mrs. Ganz and I, on our trip to the coast, met Miss Brandt former principal of our county normal, in the St. Paul depot. She informed us that she was state inspector of high schools for the eastern district of Montana. My first question, of course, was; "Do you know the Yegens?" The reply was; "Who, in Montana does not know the Yegens?" This was followed by an extensive account of their business activities, in short she spoke of them as leaders

in every laudable enterprise and as men of unquestioned integrity and ability. Being interested in a network of banks and extensive commercial enterprises, the depression, of course, must have had its effect on their business and although I have no details, I hope and trust that they may have weathered the storm, for you can not keep good men down.

This may not be helping to build the Northern Pacific but it is part of the history of the development of the Great Northwest and it may interest some of their Graubuendner countrymen, as well as others, to learn of the part that men like the Brueggers, the Yegens and that old pioneer of the Judith Basin have had in it.

The time arrived when we bid good-bye to Aldermen Yegen, to Albert Utzinger and the rest of our friends as well as to the old scow, still peacefully resting in the Missouri mud and for all the worry that I had on that score it may still be resting there, although my partner may have felt some compunctions at leaving an unfinished job behind. That was not his way of doing things. Grading crews were getting ready to pull out of Mandan, going by train as far as Track's End and thence on foot and by team. To join one of these we crossed, on the Transfer, to Mandan and found that one Lamey, of Wabasha, was getting a number of cars ready to be transported to the end of the road thence to drive to where his grading job awaited him. He had a full crew but took on as many as desired to go that way, as blind baggage. There was no objection to going that way, least of all from the railroad company, since the only thing for us to do after getting there was to go to work for them and the fare back was five cents a mile.

We climbed into a car towards evening and found dozens of others, mostly Lamey's employees there. There were not many settlers nor stations west of Mandan and as it was night we would not have seen anything anyway and when day broke we were west of Dickinson and the first thing to interest us, was a dog-town or prairie-dog village. This covered hundreds of acres and thousands of the little fellows were gamboling about in the early sunlight. Soon we entered the Bad Lands and the sight, offered us, was indeed most interesting. Round hills both peaked and with flat tops, rose like little islands from the prairie and some of them showed layers of both red and black on their sides. Then there were endless tracts of petrified forests that looked for all the world like dry windfalls. These have long disappeared the material having been shipped east to be manufactured into fancy table tops and other ornamental articles. These things were absolutely new to us for although we had heard of the Bad Lands we had not expected anything like this. When we reached the Little Missouri the road passed through a cut that looked as if its sides had been built up from broken crocks or tiling and we were told that this was scoria and that it made first class ballast for the roadbed. We heard much theorizing among those in the car, how these little hills were of volcanic origin as well as the scoria. The fact is, the red and black strata exposed on the sides of the hillocks, were alternate layers of bituminous coal and burnt clay or scoria. This was caused by the coal having been set on fire from prairie fires or some other cause and the resultant heat having burnt the clay into material that looked like tile or pottery. Some portions where the fire, for some cause or other went out, were left standing and by erosion those buttes were shaped. This theory, at least, looks more plausible than the volcano story.

Here the banks of the river were high and steep, forming low bluffs not sloping like our bluffs but sheer and almost perpendicular and, of course, utterly devoid of vegetation of any kind. On seeing these steep banks we realized where some of the Missouri mud came from and we learned later that the Yellowstone was an equally liberal contributor. On the banks of this river, I suppose about where Medora is located now, was Fort Little Missouri, an outpost

occupied by a couple of companies of infantry. Their quarters were mere barracks or log cabins built of cotton wood timber, cut in the river bottoms. Of fortifications, of any kind there was not a sign, unless the fact that the bark had not been removed from the logs, when the cabins were built, might be figured as fortification. The steep river banks, above referred to, were also lined with black streaks, strata of lignite coal and by the way, I read some time ago, an article in the American Magazine, stating that the coal, in this region alone, notably on Sand Creek a tributary of the Little Missouri, was sufficient to avert a shortage of fuel, in this country, for centuries to come. I hope that those who made this calculation were better mathematicians than the lumberjack, who some fifty years ago indignantly told me that the pineries of northern Wisconsin could not be exhausted in a million years.

Our train wobbled on over the rough new track and finally arrived at Sentinel Butte, which was in the main, merely a canvas town. Track's End or the base of supply from which the material for laying the track was forwarded by a special train, serving that purpose, was some distance farther on, I think somewhat farther than where Beach is now situated. Here we got off and started to walk toward the scene of operations. We had practically abandoned the plan of joining a grading crew, perhaps because it was hard to get my partner past a place where work was to be had. Rifles and satchels on our shoulders we trudged across the prairie and after some time, to me it felt like a day's march, we came to where a pair of majestic elk's antlers was nailed to a telegraph pole and I remarked to Ulrich. "We are now entering the Territory of Montana", or something to that effect. Toward evening we arrived on the scene of operations and were assigned to a bunk in one of the cars fitted for that purpose. This bunk was devoid of either blankets or anything else along that line. We had a blanket apiece and with the shafts of our boots for pillows, went to sleep. Pretty tough for a couple of fellows used to feather beds. Next day we bought two more blankets and foraged some empty gunny sacks that the teamsters had discarded and filled them with hay that the horses had left over. This made better pillows than our boots yet the latter had amply served their purpose and are really not so bad provided you know how to arrange them. In case you wish to try it out I will be glad to show you how to do it. We evidently slept well for it was not until we awoke next morning, that we noticed the snow that had blown in on us during the night, the ventilation slides having been left open.

The next day was the eventful one when "Ule and I started to help building the Northern Pacific". The workmen, numbering a couple of hundred, were a motley crowd, most of them "dead broke". Some had been taking a winter's vacation while others who had worked in the woods, were strapped during the period of waiting for the spring work on the N. P., to open and almost all the tokens used in poker games, were navy beans furnished by the cooks. Ever and anon one of the old timers would size up a greenhorn, remaking "That fellow is going to work for me this summer". This meant that we would be the victims in future games after coming into money on pay-day. This, of course, was one of their standing jokes.

The track-laying contract was held by Winston Bros., of Minneapolis, and while Phil. Winston, on horse back and clad in over-alls and duck coat, supervised the work, his brother Will; headed the office force.

There was, of course, a boss over every section or division of work and they must have sized us up right when they gave us our jobs. Ulrich was sent to the very front and given a pick, with which to drag or pull ties up onto the dump, while I was given a job to hold up the ties while the spikes were being driven. I do not remember what the technical name of my job was but I had to use a crowbar with a block of wood at-

tached as a fulcrum and bear down on the end of it. There were four in Ulrich's crew in the start but he told me that some of them did not amount to much and almost every day one or two quit and moved on while two of them, Ulrich and a deaf and dumb he-man (if not giant) held out and seeing that they liked their job, the boss soon neglected to fill the occasional vacancies and the two did alone what had been considered too much for four. This they did, of course, at the same pay that they drew before. They not only did the work but occasionally we would come to a cross-tie on which quite a conversation had been scribbled, between those two gentlemen of leisure, the deaf-mute, being able to read and write.

I will now attempt, as well as I can remember to re-construct a tale of life in a construction camp and the mode of track-laying, as practiced half a century ago. To one who is familiar with present-day railroad building, this will appear primitive indeed. Although I was never employed at grading, I know that most of it was done with scrapers, wheel scrapers having just been introduced but most of it being done with the old kind. Then there was station work. This was a one man's job with shovel and wheel-barrow and years later I saw traces of it in the Trempealeau and Chippewa bottoms along the Burlington. The ditches from which the ground was removed were equilaterally cut from the sod and the yardage from which the workmen's pay was derived was obtained by measuring these excavations, which was the reason for making them so accurately. Yes, even in the days of constructing the Burlington such primitive methods were employed. One scorching, hot July day when I took passage from Alma to La Crosse, on one of the first Burlington locals, in charge of Conductor Sullivan, I think, I saw on the prairie between Alma and Fountain City, a gang of men shovelling dirt onto a flat car and among the crew I recognized a grey headed, old friend of mine who was performing this menial labor to raise money to pay a debt incurred by signing a note for another who would have been far better able to do this work than my old friend. On many a morning, on our way to school, had we met his bent form coming up the road on his way to mass, with his hands folded on his back and well do I remember his cheery "Good marnin children, Good marnin". The facts in this case were revealed to me, when years later, he came to the schoolhouse where I taught, to exhibit to me the papers in the case and again when I called on him as census enumerator. I only hope that he may now be reaping the reward that he so fervently and hopefully looked forward to, for he certainly deserved it. But now back to my story of railway construction and I trust that my readers will pardon me for this digression.

The real "Bulls" of our gang were the fellows who handled the rails, for although the rails were not steel but iron and only part the size of present day rails, this was a gruelling job. The rails were brought from Track's End on a flat car and the gang had to transfer them onto a lorry by hand. This lorry was a huge pushcar with iron rollers on the ends. This car was pulled by a horse hitched to a long rope. This horse was, by a rider, galloped to the required place where the rails were needed, when the brake was applied and the men took hold of the ends and when the boss sang out something like, "Whoap Down" the iron dropped not with a dull thud but with a metallic ring and woe to the toes that were not in their proper place when it landed. In fact, one fellow did have his foot in the wrong place once. He was sent to the hospital but soon came back on crutches and hobbled around the camp. There was no such thing as workman's compensation, in those days.

After the rail was dropped the straps (without flanges) were bolted on and the end and center spikes driven home when the lorry rolled on until the last rail was unloaded and back the horse galloped for another load while the rest of the spikes were driven home. The track was then tem-

porarily lined up and the tampers followed with their shovels to work the ground under the ties. The road was now ready for travel by the construction train. The ties, mostly seasoned cotton-wood and elm and green tamarack were hauled up by team and distributed along the track. It was on the surface of the smooth tamarack ties that the deaf-mute and his partner scribbled their ccasional conversations, above referred to. When they found time for this no one but they themselves knew.

For our accommodation, as stated, there were huge box car kitchen and dining rooms with bunk rooms upstairs. Our bill of fare was simple but substantial. No fresh meat and no vegetables, not even potatoes, for they were four dollars a bushel, at Mandan. Cured ham (Pork you know, was two cents a pound) with navy beans was the staple. Then there was good bread and biscuits, puddings and custards, pies etc. and, of course, tea and coffee, with sugar but no milk. Then we always had stewed, dried blackberries. These came in gunny sacks without any lining and had been picked and dried by Indians. They were superficially washed but were always more or less grimy. We were given to understand that they were made part of the menu to counteract the effects of the alkali water, which we drank. One morning the cookee varied his usual call to breakfast by singing out, "Roll out, tumble out, any way to get out" by adding "Eggs for breakfast this morning". Did they roll out and tumble out and did they eat eggs? I took more than I usually eat but although they were not spoiled they tasted stale and I could not get enthused over them. Some fellows boasted that they had eaten a dozen or more. They were packed in salt barrels with chopped straw, for keeping them from being broken.

We could have stood the "grub" all right but the water was something else again, especially with Ulrich, used to that sparkling spring water, gushing out between rocks or bubbling up from the sand. The water was dipped up from pools on the prairie and had the color of strong tea and where it had receded the grass was covered with alkali crystals, for all the world like hoar frost and this is no exaggeration.

A "water-monkey" carrying two pails suspended on a yoke over his shoulders and a dipper in each pail made the rounds, starting in front and going down the line until he reached Ulrich and his partner. To counteract the alkali a pound or two of oatmeal was put into the bottom of each pail and whenever the supply ran out the pails were re-filled and the watering taken up where it had been left off. Often when the end was reached, the dipper had to be pressed down into the slop to produce something to drink and Ulrich remarked to me that it was just like slopping the hogs, at home and I might have truthfully added, only worse. One night we stopped at a place where a grading camp had been and there was a square hole with cool water in it. The next evening Ulrich proposed that we go back there to get a drink. On returning to camp he said he was about as thirsty as when we started for the water hole, which after all contained nothing but alkali water but Ulrich said it was at least not luke-warm. Every day we laid a mile or more of track thus we never camped in the same place more than one night.

Our water-carrier was a meek little German, from Milwaukee, who was not used to such environments but no one bothered him for it was beneath the rough-necks in the crowd to condescend to bother with a tenderfoot and we were all left severely alone. There was another German from Milwaukee, a husky, up-standing fellow. He was the water carrier's brother-in-law and by trade a cook and baker but had to do common work here, as the jobs in his line were filled. We got quite chummy with those two.

When we left Bismarck there was not a green leaf to be seen anywhere and since coming out onto the prairie there was not even a tree, to say nothing of a green one, thus one af-

ternoon when I espied ahead of us something that looked like green current bushes, I could hardly wait for six o'clock so that I might investigate. Supper was dispatched with celerity and off I rushed for my green bushes. They were the tops of box-elder bushes, growing along a creek. It was a sizeable creek of clear, cold water and after drinking my fill, off came my rags and with one bound I was in the clean, cold water. That was a real treat but on returning to the camp, Ulrich said, "Your boss was looking for you to help unload a car of ties, on over-time pay". Well that was that. I probably had incurred the displeasure of a grouchy boss but I had a drink of clear water and a good swim. Next day (Sunday forenoon) we laid the side-track for a station near Beaver Creek.

It was, I think, during the following week that measles broke out in the camp and Ulrich had never had the measles. Crowded into the bunk car and with about half a dozen drinks daily, of slop out of dipper that everybody from the iron gang down had used before it reached him, what chance did the poor fellow have? In the mean time, I had developed a beautiful case of quinsy and was confined to the bunk-car. I was not surprised when one evening my friend came in all flushed and remarked, "I guess I have the measles". There were some more remarks about keeping children away from the blanked stuff when there would be an opportunity to take care of them at home, only to cause them to be exposed to it in some wild, isolated place. Well, he was a very sick boy, who had kept at work as long as he could wiggle, of course. Everyone was solicitous, in a way, and the cooks furnished me with tin after tin of hot ginger tea, which I carried to him as hot as I could bear it but always he shook his head and remarked "It might be all right if it were warm". This alarmed me for it was not only warm but hot. My quinsy was, for the time being, forgotten.

Next Sunday morning one of the crew who wore buckskins but had, for some reason, neither gun nor ammunition begged me to let him have Ulrich's rifle and to go hunting with him. Ulrich said it was all right, provided I went along. I dragged myself away from camp but soon lost sight of the professional hunter, who fairly skimmed over the ground. I lay down in the sun, all in. when I heard a shout from some fellows, who had started out after us and on looking up I beheld, within close range, a beautiful black-tail buck standing in front of me. I was a fairly good marksman but besides being weak and shaky, I could not look into those velvety, brown eyes and shoot that beautiful animal and I have never felt real sorry since. I dragged myself back to camp, where an account of my valor had preceded me and I was duly razzed, for my inefficiency. The hunter, with Ulrich's gun also returned, in due time, but had had no such opportunity as I.

After dinner, it was noised about about that in a gully, close by, some bootleggers had a couple of barrels of whiskey and the unanimous verdict, in which our Milwaukee friends joined, was that this was just the medicine that my patient needed. I therefore set out for the bootlegger's camp and purchased a good sized bottle of the stuff, which after having received the O. K. of our Milwaukee friend, I presented to my patient. He took a liberal draught of the "medicine", and remarked that he needed some of that tea for a wash. On returning, imagine my dismay when he whispered, "I can't talk loud anymore". My first thought was, "His vocal cords are paralyzed". Here I was with a boy on my hands whom his mother could justly accuse me of having enticed into this wilderness only to become thus afflicted. Now I did really forget my quinsy.

The consensus of opinion now was that the patient had to be taken to a hospital and the nearest one was at Fort Abraham Lincoln, on the top of a bluff, near Mandan. Our Milwaukee friend whose name I never learned also advised this. Names were no object in our gang and Ulrich was known as a Frog (Frenchman)

while I went by the name of Turk (Swede) our complexions determining our nationality. How wise it was to keep one's own counsel, I learned early in the game. One night when we were in our bunks, a discussion arose as to whether Dakota and Montana were states or territories. The consensus of opinion was that while Dakota was a state Montana was a territory. Attempting to act as umpire, I was about to pipe up when I got a nudge with an elbow in my ribs (they were already much in evidence) and heard a hiss in my ear, something like "Halt's Muul" meaning "Shut up" in good English and shut up it was. Thus much for intimacies in that gang.

My Milwaukee friend offered to buy my Winchester for which he paid me, in cash, what it had cost me. To me it was good riddance and to him, I hope it proved a bargain. I went to headquarters and succeeded in wheedling out of them sick-passes to Mandan, although they intimated that I really was not very sick, although, as far as being able-bodied was concerned, I was really the worst off of the two, for Ulrich had recovered from the measles all but his throat trouble. I could talk loud enough but my weight had dwindled to a little over one hundred sixty pounds, from a normal of two hundred.

Before speaking of our return trip I must mention the fact that every day grading crews passed our camp and one day, my old school mate, Albert Binder, on passing waved at me and shouted '"Hello Edwin". At another time I saw a form limping toward camp and at once, made it out to be John Brethauer, on his way to Miles City, per stage coach. The stage fare hurt but the poor fellow could positively not make it on foot. Ulrich also met him after dinner. Then I must mention another thing which especially distressed my partner. Wherever we were out on the prairie, the landscape was dotted with white spots, one of them covering an acre or more and lo and behold these spots were made up of scores of buffalo skeletons bleeching in the sun. Thus, at times hundreds, aye thousands of these skeletons were in sight. Some of them had been killed only a year or two before and here was a passionate hunter, with a first class gun, only a year or two too late.

Some years later, I read an account in a magazine about two Boston lads, who were in this very territory and used their heads. They bought an old team and wagon and picking up these bones, shipped them east by the car load, to say nothing of the horns which were all perfectly preserved and within a few years brought fancy prices. So there would have been a chance that would have suited me, had I only thought of it but I fear it would have been poor consolation for my friend who had come out west too late.

One morning we therefore climbed onto a flat car, part of the construction train, that was to take us to Sentinel Butte. Here we had to stay until in the afternoon of the next day. Having a lot of time on my hands, I wandered out upon the prairie and just out of town hapened upon a pair of elk's antlers, which I raised up by the tips and standing between them they reached up to my shoulders yet they had been left lying by the one who had butchered the animal and by me also. After this exercise the swelling in my throat broke and I was rid of the quinsy. We had to stop all night but could not get a room so we were assigned the wash room for sleeping quarters. It was close quarters but better than out of doors. In the morning my bed partner happened to touch the floor with his hand and whispered "Is this where I have been sleeping all night?" I told him that although the floor was soaked from a leaky sink and we had to furnish our own blankets and our own boots for pillows, our night's lodging had cost us only fifty cents apiece.

After traveling all next night we reached Mandan early in the morning and I proposed to go and make inquiries as to ways and means of getting to Fort Lincoln and the hospital. My patient replied you may go if you feel like it but I do not see any need of doing so on my part. That ended my plans and as I had for myself

never needed any hospital care I agreed to go with him back to Bismarck. We got onto the Transfer and after landing climbed up the bank and trudged on toward the old town, that we had left not many weeks before.

We walked but a few blocks before we again espied Albert Utzinger, not in front of the bakery but in front of a saloon, where he served as part-time bar tender, leading an orchestra in a vaudeville show in the evening and also conducting a brass band. Glad again, we stepped inside and were soon engaged in a three handed game of "jass". Soon we heard a voice behind us, asking "What in the duce are you fellows playing"? and on receiving the reply "jass" the onlooker said "I'll be blamed if you are not all three from Alma, Wisconsin, for that is the only place where that game is played." He had worked on the Beef Slough Rafting works and knew what he was talking about.

To show how small a world this is let me relate another case in point not connected with this story but an incident concerning Easterners in the West and especially the game of jass. Conrad Wald, Ulrich's cousin, was sitting in a card room, at Aspen, Colorado with his prospecting partner, when the latter nudged him, saying, "Say Con. did you ever hear of a game where they say, nell, boor, stack, three cards sack and meld?" Con's reply was "Did I? Boy, I was raised on that. Almost every evening I went to my uncle's house and although I was never taken into the game, I sat and watched four old cronies play it. That's jass, but where in the world did you hear of it?"

"In a little town, called Waumandee, back in Wisconsin".

"Why that's just a few miles from my old home and one of my cousins is married to a Waumandee boy."

"What's his name?"

"Ganz".

"Pshaw, I was to his sister's weddin". I came up there from Illinois with a young fellow, named Jake Angst, who took over his Dad's farm and Sundays I used to go to the little town and play that game with a bunch of Swiss farmers".

Those two boys had known each other for years and worked side by side, prospecting and mining but never had it occurred to either of them to ask the other where he was from. That was the western code and still is among miners and cowboys. They had nothing to hide from anyone but lived up to the code until this slip revealed a glimpse into their past. This miner's name was Charley Hurlburt but inquiry from my old Waumandee friends revealed little but that they vaguely remembered such a man until I asked Pulaski Johnson, that star reminiscenser, who brightened up at once and remarked "Of course, do I remember Charley."

Some time after Con. had quit mining he met Charley in town and with a shout of joy the latter aproached him, saying "I've struck it Con., I've made a strike of fifty thousand dollars and am going right back to Wisconsin to buy the best ranch in Waumandee valley." Poor Charley, never again saw old Waumandee but I am glad to say that later on, he again struck it and this time for seventy-five thousand dollars, which he forthwith turned into a trust fund, placing it with the Pythian Lodge, to which he belonged. This insured him a safe income for life, the residue going to the order. Thus, at least one prospector finally came to his senses and both his Wisconsin and his Colorado friend, assured me that, at heart, Charley was a prince of a fellow.

Speaking of jass, I could not well omit this story which gives another close-up view of life in the "Wild and woolly West of bye-gone days." But now back to our game, at Bismarck. I lost the first one and got a horse laugh from my adversaries and it was audible on the part of both of them. Was I glad? Willingly would I have lost a dozen games to hear that rollicking laugh of my friend, who had again regained control of his vocal organs. Two more games were played with the same result and every time and at intervals during the games rang out that ringing laugh. When we left the place to look for a

hotel, Ulrich remarked "Heck, you didn't lose all those games. Albert jiggled the chips, taking some from your pile and placing them onto mine etc. My reply was, "What the deuce do I care where the chips went to or came from, as long as you got your laugh and your voice back." This was the second and perhaps the last game for me in a saloon but it was immensely gratifying and satisfactory to me and all I had to say was "Halt's Muul," and he did, outside of peal after peal of laughter. We stayed at the hotel that day but the next afternoon found us shovelling sand onto a wagon, for the road commissioner of Bismarck, who had picked us up, strolling on the streets. Half a day of this, in the sweltering sun, was enough and we again went to work for the N. P. R. R. Co.

Ulrich got a job helping to build that "S" curve approach to the N. P. R. R. bridge across the Missouri. It was handling a wheel scraper and the implement being a new invention and yet very crude it was hard to handle but that did not phase him. I got a job as section hand in the yards. which included the tracks near the depot as well as those near the levee

Here we again met our Swiss-Norwegian friends, one of them working with me and one with Ulrich. The one who had the family, commiserately informed us that during our absence, his oldest "Jente" had become enamored of a young German and our chances had therefore gone aglimmering. As a consolation, he continued that there was another younger one, still to be had and one day when we worked on the outskirts of town he remarked, "There comes my other Jente". What I saw, was a little girl pushing a baby carriage and mischievously I asked, "The one inside or the one outside of the carriage." He replied that he meant the big one of course and that next year she would be fourteen. I told him that I was not interested in cradle robbery and that the only Jente that I was interested in had been fourteen a number of years ago. Yet Ulrich and I always referred to him as "Schwiegervater", even though we were not interested in his Jentes.

Day after day the boats came down the river and all were loaded with buffalo hides to within a few feet of the tops of the smoke-stacks. All the boats were Nigger-boats and on every arrival the Niggers went on strike and their wages had to be raised before they started to unload. This they did by dragging the hides, which were stiff as boards, by holding them by the tail over their shoulder. They were then handed to an expert (?) stacker who stood on top of a pile, about the size of a big straw stack. While performing this work, the stacker always kept the top layer looking like a plate or dish, pitching the hides leisurely outward and upward. On watching them, one evening, I remaked to Ulrich, "Do you think it would pay the owners of those hides to hire us at the rate of ten dollars a day to do the stacking for them?" His reply was, I don't know, but he did know and I soon found out.

In order to lay a side-track, which was needed on the levee, we had to pull out the corner of one of these stacks and lo and behold, when we reached the second tier the hair came off the hides in big blotches and thousands of big, fat maggots wriggled all over them. The work was stopped then and there and next day a crew from Minneapolis was at work taking the stack apart and sprinkling the hides with a solution of Paris Green. When I asked the foreman, what they were going to do about it, he said they would patch them up with calf hides. To the question of how many hides were in the stack he replied, "Oh about fourteen thousand". How much do you think they could have saved by paying us ten dollars a day for doing this job in a workmanlike manner, which good grain stackers could have easily done?

There were other stacks like this on the levee. I do not remember how many but there must have been more than a hundred thousand hides at a time. We learned that a single hunting party had killed 28,000 buffaloes up on the Yellowstone the preceeding

winter. They would surround them, shoot them down and then move on. Another gang would follow up and perhaps cut out the tongues and with the aid of a pony jerk off the hides and leave the rest to the wolves and coyotes and the skeletons to bleach in the sun. The hides, the man from Minneapolis told me, cost them about $1.50 a-piece, including calf hides. This was not hunting. It was slaughter and I know that a hunter like Ulrich would not have gotten a kick out of it. Thus he really did not miss so much.

Another big event, during our second stay at Bismarck, was when the Steamer General Sherman docked at the levee, not with a cargo of buffalo hides but of Indians. The General Sherman was not a Niggerboat but a Government boat. She came in one Saturday night and had aboard Sitting Bull's band of Indians, captured in Canada. Among others with the "Big Chief", as I remember them were Crazy Horse, Low Dog and Crow Dog, with their squaws. Their captors offered to take them up town on the stub train that ran from the levee to the depot but the chiefs solemnly and defiantly shook their heads, refusing to ride behind a fire and smoke spitting "Devil-wagon". A requisition was sent to Fort Abraham Lincoln for canopy top, three seated spring wagons, each drawn by the regulation four mule team and in them the notables proudly rode up to the ball-room of the Sheridan House. Here they sat smiling and grinning along the walls, while the curious crowds inspected them. The "Bull" was a rather fat, unimpressive looking Indian and did not appear the killer that he was reputed to be. In those days bosom shirts, buttoned behind and with a stiff tortoise-like bosom, in front, were in style. Sitting Bull wore one of these but it was buttoned in front with the bosom behind, looking for all the world like the shell of a turtle, on his back. To cap the climax, the shirt, originally white was dirty and of an ashen gray color. All of the Indians wore correspondingly unique uniforms, none appearing clad in blankets. They all had their hair very neatly done up and braided. Sitting Bull's coiffure being especially neat. It was so nicely parted that the hairs seemed to have been counted and where his braid had been gathered there was left a circle so perfect that it might have been designed by a pair of compasses. All parts of his scalp exposed by the parting of the hair were dyed a brilliant red. Outside of this decoration none of the Indians wore any paint.

They enjoyed being in the limelight and seemed to have a good time. Sitting Bull, who could scrawl his name soon began to commercialize this as well as his popularity or notoriety. He signed autographs at a quarter per, while his numerous pipes etc. brought all the way from a quarter up. They spent the afternoon on the boat, which was laid up for Sunday, going down river after midnight. The rest is history.

One day it was announced that President Villard's special would pass through Bismarck and it did about 6 p. m. Landlord Bly of the Sheridan House, prepared for a grand reception. Albert Utzinger was hired with his band and the depot and hotel were decorated but it was a case of, "Smarty had a party", for although somebody came he paid no attention to either the blacklisted City of Bismarck, the band or Landlord Bly; remaining decorously and quietly in his private car during the half hour's stay. What kind of an ovation he got at Mandan, his own fifteenth siding, I do not know.

On the third of July, while working on the section, we heard a bass drum up town sounding like the tolling of a bell. An Irish friend of mine, in the crew, told me that they were tolling for General Garfield who had been shot. He meant the president, of course.

Next day there was a big celebration and a ball game between a nine from Fort Lincoln and some local players. Mandan probably had a ball team too but a game between such rivals was out of the question. I had for company my schoolmate, Albert Binder, who had returned from his

grading work out West. When we came to where the free ice-cream was being dispensed, it had melted and I thus missed my first taste of that delicacy. There were fireworks in the evening and Albert dramatized the affair, by attributing every pyrotechnic display to "Old Moeckel", who seems to have been at the head of such affairs in Albert's boyhood days, at Fountain City. Thus we celebrated the Fourth at Bismarck and I have never seen Albert since.

Soon after the Fourth, I left the section, for with the thermometer registering 110 above, at times, it got too hot for me. Albert Utzinger, who was a harness maker, now worked for two brothers, who came from Watertown, Wis., and of course, were friends of our own Johnny Bruegger. One of the brothers had a farm about four miles out of town and offered me a job. This was more to my liking and I bid the Northern Pacific good bye, for good. I got along very well without them and I know that no one missed me, for as a railroader I was short of being a howling success.

My new boss, who was rather odd in some ways, put me to work breaking the prairie, which would have suited me fine had it not been for the abundance of "niggerheads", which dulled my plow so that it had to be hammered and filed, at least once for every round that I made. My boss, who had spent much time in Western Kansas and claimed that he could smell water, then put me to work at pulling ground up from a well he was digging. One day toward noon, he told me that he could smell water. I got a gallon tin pail and letting it down to him shouted, "Prove it". He dug extra deep in one corner of the hole and sent up a pail of muddy water. After leaving it to settle, I got my first drink of good water, since coming out West. It was free from alkali, while up to then we got our supply from pools in a marsh. We now curbed the well, up to the top of the water level and from then on, lived high.

One day we drove five or six miles farther out into the hills, (John Yegen's prospective vineyard) where another harnessmaker from Watertown, who worked in the shop for my boss, had a homestead. Here we were to make hay and lo and behold, before supper, my "watersmelling" boss dug about three or four feet down to a ledge of rock and here too, we had a spring of good, fresh water. After making a stack of hay we returned to the home farm and one day, while we were nooning in the shade, my boss remarked, that the southwest wind which had been blowing for some days past, ought to soon produce some grass hoppers. He had, of course, seen them before but delighted in being mysterious. Pointing up into the air he remarked, "can't you see them?" On receiving a negative reply, he told me to close one eye and cup the other with my hand. When he again asked me what I saw, I replied that it could hardly be snowing with the thermometer at over a hundred in the shade. He replied, what looks like snow, is the hoppers, you greenhorn. I had guessed as much but would not rob him the pleasure of enlightening a greenhorn. When I asked, what now? He calmly replied that if the air was still full of them when the wind went down they would settle right here and they did.

On Sunday morning, July 31st, on my way to Bismarck, where I figured on taking a train for the harvest fields in the Red River valley, I passed his field of oats, still green and it was literally covered with the pests. Thus I saw vanish the oats that I had allotted to the four horse team I had been driving but I was not badly worried for I knew that my boss made enough in the harness shop to buy oats for his horses and meet other expenses on the farm. His oats were rather mediocre anyway. On the flat occupied by Bismarck there were however some fine, ripe crops of grain. One field of waving, golden wheat covering a section, owned by ex-President Hayes was exceptionally fine as was a large field of oats, running right up to the city limits. Here too, as I walked along, I saw these marauders at work and the

heavy kernels of oats dropped to the ground, as one by one they were severed from the stems. That beautiful field had always been to me what in the popular vernacular is known as, "A sight for sore eyes" and now it too was doomed to destruction.

I got to town and there Albert Utzinger informed me that my partner had left for Crookston the night before. This puzzled me as we had agreed to leave on that Sunday. Arriving at Yegen's store, I was given another surprise when the alderman held out a copy of the Pioneer Press to me, remarking "See here what one of our countrymen has been doing down your way." Down our way it was indeed, for the paper contained a detailed account of the Held tragedy in Eagle Valley. Mr. Held and family had come from Praettigaeu, in the Canton of Graubuenden, Switzerland and on the advice of one of his countrymen, he bought a farm in this valley, a veritable colony of his own country folks. He located on the place and made plans to operate the farm, when things began to happen. The broad fields of tall, waving grain began to turn white and gray instead of golden yellow, black rust and blight having taken their usual toll and to cap the climax, the draft with which he was to pay for the farm, due to arrive from Switzerland, failed to come. All this so worried him that he became insane but showed no sign of it, outside of being despondent, until he committed the rash act, related in the daily handed me. The previous Sunday, it stated, on his way to church, the neighbor who had advised Held to buy the farm, noticed the deathly quiet prevailing at the Held homestead and on investigating was met by a sight which so impressed him that he was never again the same man. In the yard lay the dead body of Mrs. Held with an ugly gash in her forehead, while other members of the family were found dead and dying all over the premises, Held with a bullet in his brain. Two boys had slept in the hay barn and while dragging herself to look after them, Mrs. Held had fallen dead in the yard. It was a ghastly tale ameliorated only by a recital of the heroic efforts made by Doctor Hidershide, of Arcadia, to save the lives of some of the wounded children.

Day and night without cessation he remained on duty and succeeded in saving the lives, of, I think, three of the children. At this I was not surprised, for had I not heard of his heroic work during a diphtheria epidemic, when for several weeks, he was on the road day and night catching snatches of sleep, while his driver took him from house to house where the scourge raged. This doctor may have been neither an eminent physician nor surgeon but he certainly was a true type of "The Country Doctor". At the very time that this rash act was committed that draft had arrived and was lying in the postoffice at Fountain City. Later on, I met two of the Held children and my friends, with whom they were visiting, told me that they said that the white scars above their temples were made by a stranger, who one night came to their home and killed their parents and sisters and brothers. They were fine children and may they never have learned the truth. I, much later, also learned that Mr. Yegen had real cause for being agitated, since he and Held had been schoolmates, in the old home. This he did not tell me but at any rate, they came from the same village.

Tragic as this story was, it was not all the calamitous news that this copy of the "Press" contained, from down my way. There was more. A span of horses had been stolen from my friend, Fritz Thuemmel, near Fountain City. He and his son-in-law, Mr. Clausen, who was a deputy sheriff, went in pursuit but the horses had been turned loose, owing to the fact that they were so heavy with foal that a rapid escape was impossible. The thieves, who were hidden near where the horses were found, however, forced the deputy sheriff to take them to the northern part of the county, in his two seated spring wagon, keeping him and Mr. Thuemmel well covered with their guns. This trip was made during the night, of course. In some out of the way place between

Mondovi and Durand they made him swear to not reveal their whereabouts and went toward Durand, on foot. Mr. Clausen, evidently and justifiably, did not consider an oath exacted in this manner as binding. At any rate when the horse thieves entered Durand, Sheriff Coleman and his brother, who was his deputy, lay in waiting for them, with their Winchesters but alas, the desperadoes were too quick at the trigger for them and both officers fell mortally wounded. The murderers fled and for weeks, were in hiding in the Chippewa bottoms, all efforts of desperate posses, to capture them proving vain, although I think, one of them had been wounded. Traces where a skiff had been pulled up on the shore, were found also the left-overs of a steer that had been killed. I do not remember whether or not one of them was finally captured, then and there or whether he was brought back from Nebraska, on requisition papers but I do know that he never again killed a sheriff or anybody else.

When he was brought into the Durand courthouse, for preliminary examination, a rope was unceremoniously slipped around his neck and he was dragged down the stairs and hanged to a tree in the yard, the enraged populace never stopping to tie the rope to the limb over which it had been slung but doing the job by hand. No questions were asked and to this day nobody seems to know or care who had a hold of that rope. I have forgotten the details of the other fellow's fate but do know that he too, soon came to a bad end. The story in the "Press", of course, dealt only with the murder of the Colemans, the rest of it, I learned as it developed and at that I may not have all the details but the story is substantially correct. The murderers went by the aliasses of Williams and Maxwell but the latter was perhaps their right name. The Colemans were former Buffalo County boys, having resided on Maxville prairie and whenever I drive past that farm with that lane of jackpines, running from the house to the road, it must needs remind me of the tragic end of the two courageous officers who lost their lives, in the performance of their duty.

I spent until train time with my friend Albert Utizinger, reminiscing about by-gone days and getting first-hand information about affairs, in and around Crookston. He advised me to look up his brother, Conrad, who kept a hotel at Crookston. I have not seen this genial friend since but learned that he later on left for Astoria, Oregon, where his musical talent found recognition and where he has been employed as director and leader of orchestras and bands continuously. It was but a year or two ago that I learned he was still thus employed, although over eighty years of age.

When the train entered the Red River valley, the jet black fields that we had seen in the spring were now golden yellow and on the Dalrymple farms, instead of seeders, binders were now marching down the fields in files of dozens and scores.

At Glyndon, I had to change to the Manitoba road for Crookston. The land here, as well as all the way to Crookston, was level as a floor and mile after mile there was nothing but virgin prairie covered by knee-high, luscious grass. Ada was a familiar name since many Buffalo County people had located in that neighborhood, along the Wild Rice River. Here the country was well settled but farther on there were again those vast tracts of wild prairie and I could not see why such land was not being cultivated.

Arriving at Crookston, I forthwith went to Utzinger's hotel and the landlord greeted me like a relative although we had met but once or twice before. I had never met his wife but she was a fine, motherly woman and made me at home, at once. After dinner I drove, with John Moser, out to a farm which Utzinger was operating, his brother Henry, being in charge. As far as we drove the crops were exceptionally good and I remarked to Mr. Moser, whom I had known quite well in Alma, on the fact that so much of that fine land up the line was not being cultivated. At first he was rather evasive but when

I could not understand, he told me that it was because it was too flat and would be hard to drain. I was surprised for I knew from the vegetation that it must be perfectly dry and not marshy. With one of his characteristic winks, my mentor replied, "You should have seen those flats about seeding time and you would have used a boat instead of a plow." This surprised me but I took Mr. Moser's word, for not only was he well qualified to render a decision but he was so loyal to the Red River valley that this admission was made with reluctance only but I really suspect that it was his way of saying, "Look twice before you jump." I was so used to shunning hills that I fancied that all level land was desirable, but now knew better.

On getting back to town I looked around for my lost partner going from one to the other of our Alma acquaintances but no one had seen him or heard of him. With some of our Buffalo County friends, I then went out to their farm but worked a few days only, the effects of alkali water, getting the best of me. Coming back to town on Saturday, Mr. Utzinger told me to hang around until Sunday, when some friends of his would come and take me out to their farm, where a stacker was needed. Snuday brought Father and Mother Wiedenhoefer and with them their son, Karl, or as I learned later the old folks came with Karl but that was something that the old gentleman would never admit and Karl humored him, although on the farm he was boss but told me that I should let "Father" have his way and do things as I knew best. Father had stacked the barley but it had rained and the barley was "sweating" after that hard rain and Karl wanted a stacker who could build stacks that would not "sweat" after it rained, so I went home with them in the evening, to their farm, near Fisher.

Fisher was a small town on a branch of the Manitoba, connecting Crookston and Grand Forks. Every forenoon the train would go west and every afternoon it would return. The track from Fisher eastward was perfectly straight and when the train came toward you the front of the locomotive would loom up before you and when it was past, all you could see was the rear of the last coach. A strange sight for one, who as the saying goes, was used to tracks with curves, on rounding which the engineer shakes hands with the rear brakey. This piece of road, I think, formed the nucleus of the Great Northern of today. Between Crookston and Fisher this road was never far from the Red Lake River and between its track and the river lay a stretch of farm land as good as any out of doors.

From a point a few miles west of Crookston to within a mile of Fisher, all this rich land was owned by thrifty Germans. A group of these had come from Manitowoc County, Wis., having arrived there a generation or two too late to be able to take advantage of the homestead act but they had struck it here. All these families were related and had originally come from Northern Germany. My folks, as I soon came to consider the Wiedenhoefers, were from South Germany (Schwaben) as were several other families, relatives of theirs. So I had struck a veritable German colony, out on the prairies of the Red River valley and in order to reveal to you something of the busy, happy life led by them, I am going to deal, at some length on my stay among these good people. This will also show you the difference, in the pioneering practiced by them from the experiences of Buffalo County pioneers two or three decades earlier. All these farms extended into the river bottoms and therefore everybody had an abundance of fire wood and most of them lived in log cabins although the price of lumber in the big saw mill, at Crookston, was reasonable and some of those farmers had good sized frame barns.

Besides the members of the Wiedenhoefer family, already mentioned, there was a younger brother, Jacob, who worked for Karl and called him "Boss" and as boss I will also speak of him. They also had a sister, Marie. On Monday morning the boss told me

that his father and I were to take one of their ox-teams and start stacking wheat. The rest of the force was to cut wheat with the horses and binder. Deliberately the old gentleman drove the oxen into a grand field of wheat shocks near the house, remarking that God's blessing rested upon that field and that it always yielded at least thirty-five bushels to the acre and I knew it would yield at least that. When I got down to pitch bundles to him he told me that when I had pitched six hundred bundles onto the load, he would tell me and we would start to unload. We finally accomplished this but not before I had been told that I did not know how to drive oxen. This I readily admitted, for although I knew the meaning of gee and haw, I knew nothing about swinging the whip, having never driven oxen before. We unloaded that load and when we had on another quota of exactly six hundred bundles, the old gentleman unhitched the oxen and wending our way homeward, we went to lunch but not before baiting the "Oexli" with a forkfull of prime hay. In the house we sat down to what looked like a regular meal and when I finally hinted that we ought to get back to work, I was told that when there was not time for meals anymore, it was about time to quit work. After unloading the load awaiting us and one other, our stack was finished and would you believe it, when the stack was threshed it yielded about a hundred bushels. Thus it appears we had done a fair half day's work, in spite of the elaborate lunch. After dinner it started to rain just enough to stop work and the boss suggested that I accompany him to "The Landing". This meant Fisher, that station, in the days of the flatboat, having borne the name of Fisher's Landing and to the boss, who had himself helped propel flatboats, it was still, "The Landing".

William Wiedenhoefer, a brother of the boss, in company with an uncle, kept the Northern Tier Hotel, at Fisher. This was our destination the boss having an assortment of choice vegetables to deliver there. These were the product of their father's garden which was a model of its kind. Here we met August Wenzel, a neighbor and one of the group that had come from Manitowoc. He was a stately man, outstanding in appearance and demeanor. He was an accepted leader in the community, although few if any were conscious of the fact. He was diplomatic rather than domineering and had a way of getting things to go as he wanted them to go by leading his followers to believe that he was taking orders from them. Whenever he could not make them see things his way he submitted cheerfully. Thus he was easily the leader in civic, church and social affairs.

Th boss and this neighbor visited until the train came in from Grand Forks. As it stopped, a young fellow got off and entering the hotel jumped upon the rail in front of the bar and reached across for the dice box. The two farmers stepped up beside him and without farther ado, a game was in full fling and lasted until we got ready to go home half an hour or so later. Next day, just before dinner, the landlord—the uncle of the boss—drove into the yard and with him was this congenial, young man. This intrigued me and I asked Jake, who that young fellow with his uncle was and the reply was, "That is our pastor." When I replied that on Saturday afternoon he had played at billiards in Utzinger's saloon and on Monday had shaken dice, at the Northern Tier, Jake simply said, "What of it, hasn't he as much right to shake dice as you have"? When I admitted that he undoubtedly had Jake continued by saying that if I still disbelieved him, I could go to the neighbor's next Sunday and hear him preach. I told him that I would, indeed and I did. I met him repeatedly thereafter and found him to be a fine fellow. He even helped out with threshing, in a pinch, when I sacked barley with a half bushel measure and he held the sacks for me. This was before the days of the automatic sacker. He adapted himself to his environment and some years later, when I returned to that community, Jake informed me that our mutual

friend had given up his sportive habits, because some of the people did not approve.

After attending church services at the neighbor's, Jake announced that there would be a dance in the granary at the same place in the afternoon and we went. The jolly swains and buxom lassies of the community were present without exception and dancing started without any preliminaries. Imagine my surprise, when during the dancing I heard the shout; "Hurrah for Fountain City". This apprised me of the fact that I was not the only one from down our way in that crowd and on looking about carefully I espied my fellow passenger on the Robert Harris, who last spring had been so downcast and despondent on leaving his home town. I asked him "What do you know about Fountain City?" and he replied, "She is the best little town it gives." When I farther inquired why he had been so sad on leaving home he replied, "You'd a'cried too if your mother was on the levee crying and your girl was waving at you from a window". When I replied that memories of his girl did not now seem to bother him very much he said, "There are others here" and indeed there were.

Cutting the grain was soon completed and stacking was then continued by the full force and there were no more six hundred bundle loads hauled although the oxen were sometimes used and Jake taught me how to drive them. Father Wiedenhoefer was busy in the garden and gave me no more advice on how to stack, in fact, his parting shot was fired that first day, when he remarked that really the bundles that I laid slanted too much toward the outside. I did not tell him that this was done to prevent sweating after a rain, for he was a grand, old scout and I would not have made him feel bad for anything. Even if he did not know how to build a stack, he could do many things that I could not, among them being the successful cultivation of garden "sass" especially giant cabbage heads. He supplied most of the Germans at Crookston and among them my Alma friends, with sauerkraut and fresh vegetables.

When we had almost finished stacking and I had taught my friend Jake how to do it, the boss in his brusque way, remarked, "When you are through here, you will have to go and do the stacking for the shoe man in town, who has a farm a couple of miles west and when he asks you what you have been getting, tell him $2.75 a day. I went there and the hired man and I had to do the stacking, with the aid of a couple of neighbors, the boss being in town to look after his business. Everything was all right but I missed Mother Wiedenhoefer's cooking.

When I came to town, on Saturday, the blacksmith asked me to do his stacking but as I used no fork and had worn no gloves, my hands were quite sore and I demurred but the the smith said he would give me $3.25 a day and that would buy me gloves. I went and bought the gloves.

Monday morning September 25th, we started for the farm about ten miles north of town. We had the first frost of the season and it was a severe one and when the sun rose the wind began to blow almost a gale from the northwest. We walked behind the wagon the greater part of the way, to keep warm.

When we got there the hired man and I put on a small load and started a stack. When the other team did not come he looked up and calmly remarked, "They are mired." This I could not understand since the field appeared neither wet nor soft. Then I got an explanation. On the fourth of June all crops thereabouts were totally hailed out. The fertile soil aided by favorable weather produced another crop and that had ripened in September. However about the time it was being cut, it began to rain and some of it could never be cut. We kept our coats on while we worked and were cold at that. A neighbor was cutting wheat and while riding the binder, wore a buffalo coat and fur mitts. When I remarked on the peculiarity of the situation the hired man told me that the neighbor had no other overcoat and had to wear his fur coat to keep warm. I wondered

what the folks at home would say when I told them that I saw a man wearing a buffalo coat while seated on a binder cutting wheat but when you are cold you must wear what you have.

It was really a remarkable feat for that wheat to sprout again from the roots after the entire plant, above ground, had been destroyed but fertile soil and favorable weather will work wonders. Farthermore the fact that the first frost was delayed until the twenty-fifth of September was another factor to be considered for it has happened that they had frost during almost any month, in that region. The quality of the wheat was good but the yield was around ten bushels to the acre. Wheat was over $1.25 a bushel, hence the crop was worth cutting although you had to wear a buffalo coat to do it.

One afternoon a strapping young fellow came riding up to the stack that I was building and after a conversation with the hired man, asked me to come over and stack his grain. He looked good to me and told me that he was up against it, for both he and his cousin had come from Ontario, where all the grain was put into the barn after it was cut, hence they knew nothing of stacking. I told him I would come and on the day I got through at the blacksmith's I started toward the east. I was about started when it got dark for twilight is short lived on the prairies. I walked along a road on the section line, in fact it was nothing but a wheel track, when suddenly I found myself wading in water almost up to my knees but there was nothing to do but go on and finally I came to the claim shacks of the Lee boys and in one of them which for the time being, they occupied jointly, there was a light and I walked in and was made welcome to the shack and the solitary bunk which the three of us occupied. When we went to work I found that most of their wheat had been cut with the reaper and not bound or tied. I stacked this loose stuff and topped it off with the few bundles that they had from a small field on which they had been able to use a binder. The boys were nice fellows and both named Jim Lee and they told me much about the primitive way of farming among the giant stumps of upper Canada, where no machines could be used and all grain had to be cut by hand and where Canada thistles grew as thick as hemp around the stumps. No wonder they were elated with this prairie country, in spite of hail and lack of drainage. One day, while up on a stack, I saw in a neighboring field a reaper, mired up to the axles and all around it acre upon acre of sheaves of wheat that had been cut but not tied, some of them floating on the water that had gathered on the low places. On inquiry, I was told that the field belonged to Charley Sweet and when I later related this story to Jake Wiedenhoefer, he told me that the man's name was not Charley Sweet but Melchoir Schwy but the fellows up here called him Charley Sweet, so without knowing it, I had been near the farm of Buffalo County's champion deer slayer.

Owing to another heavy rain, stacking was retarded and the Jim who hired me took me to town next afternoon. When I arrived at the Northern Tier hotel, Landlord Bill asked me to carry brick and mortar to a mason who was working on a chimney for him. On descending from the roof by means of an inner stairway, I saw hanging in a window, a newspaper with the columns turned and remembering that on the death of President Lincoln newspapers had such black columns, I concluded that President Garfield had lost out in his fight against the abdominal wound inflicted by an assasin more than two months before and when my Irish friend told me that the bass drum we heard on the third of July, was being tolled in honor of General Garfield, he was not far wrong. I was a great admirer of President Garfield and the first vote that I cast was for his electors and I not only voted that way but worked that way all day long. In the evening the boss and his brother Jake came to town and the former told me to come home with

them since there was no use hanging around the hotel. Jake told me then that there were others up there on the prairie besides Melchoir Schwy, whom I perhaps knew. Yes, somewhere on that prairie lived John Ristow, Fred Michaels, Toby Valaer, John Obrecht, Behlmer, Grosskreuz and others from Buffalo County but I met none of them during that summer. There were, of course, others whom I did not know or whom I may not recall just now. In Crookston there were quite a few Alma people also.

Next day was Sunday and August Wenzel came over and asked me to do his stacking since he had to pull out his threshing rig the next day. He had a way of making me feel as if I were conferring a favor on him, in spite of the fact that he offered me the same wages that I had been paid when working among the bachelors, while at his place I was taken into the home and accorded the same hospitable treatment as at Wiedenhoefers. With the hired man I stacked all his wheat and we did it as well and as quickly as we knew how although the boss was away threshing. That is what happens when your boss is a leader and not a driver, for every evening when he came home he was pleasant and satisfied and Mrs. Wenzel was always that way. What a difference that was from raising scows out of the Missouri mud.

You may, by this time be wondering what had become of Ulrich, well so was I. When he did not show up at Crookston, I wrote to his sister at home, to find out whether they knew anything about him there. I might have written to one of his brothers but for some reason, of my own, I wrote to his sister. They must have heard from him soon after that for I got a letter giving me a few bare facts but from reading between the lines, I was able to piece out the following story. Arriving at the division point, Glyndon, Saturday night, he was obliged to stay over until Monday to get the train for Crookston, (the very one that I came on). On Sunday a German farmer came in looking for a harvest hand and would Ulrich pass up a job, even though it up-set all his plans? At any rate he went out into the country to work for this farmer but did not inform either me nor the folks at home for some time Here he shocked all the grain single handed although it was customary to have two men to do this work. He also remained to help with the stacking where he pitched every bundle onto the stack from bottom to top single handed although, as he told me later, the fellow built nothing but big stacks. On one occasion, when part of a stack slid out for him, the fellow deliberately went to work laying bundles over the part that had slid out, making the stack that much bigger. This got the pitcher's goat and he sent the bundles up with that much more force, not particular as to where they landed and when one hit the stacker's head he would simply say, (Nicht so scharf, Heinrich, nicht so scharf) and "Heinrich" as the boss always called him, got a lot of satisfaction out of it, for was he not doing two men's work? However he told his sister not to send any mail to that address as he was not liable to stay but stay he did not only through stacking but also through threshing, although he often had to sleep in the straw pile and he never again wrote to either his folks at home nor to me and we knew nothing of his whereabouts until he returned home in November. He did not like his job but he would not be a quitter and hated to explain after writing that he was apt to quit. So while where I was, he might have been in clover, he continued to be a drudge, just because he would not quit. His boss told him that over toward Barnesville there was a big settlement of Germans coming from a place in Buffalo County, named Waumandee. He never took time to go there and when I told him that I knew those people and he should have gone there, he smiled wistfully, saying he had meant to go there but there did not seem to be time. I suppose that when he had time he was too tired. That was the way he always was, "Business before pleasure".

When, in the following year we

again went west to work in the harvest fields, he and his brothers again took the first job that offered and fared, if anything, worse. When one Sunday they came to call on me and partook of one of Mother Wiedenhoefer's dinners, Ulrich remarked, "Gosh you live like a prince". I told him that a man got what he went after and on returning home they told their boss that they either had to be served a square meal or they would quit. He did not want them to quit so he hired a "Norske Jente", for cook and gave her carte blanche and when we again met, Ulrich agreed with me that a man got what he went after and that it did not pay to let anyone ride you and yet I think that it was one of the others that put that ultimatum up to the boss. I knew however that they had a good cook, for she cooked for us the previous year when I did the stacking for the Fisher shoe merchant.

After doing Mr. Wenzel's stacking I followed his threshing rig but all the work I did was among those Germans and I always slept in a bed and always had good meals and plenty of it. Many amusing incidents happened among the threshing crew but to recount them would become too tedious and I will only mention that my job was sacking grain with a half bushel measure, which job I had accepted temporarily at the request of the Wenzels, three of whom owned the machine and at their request I kept it, for you always did what they asked you to do, just because they knew how to go about it.

The weather, during the few weeks that I helped with the threshing, was ideal and I enjoyed it. The machine was now nearer Crookston and we were out of the German settlement and therefore among strangers and the homelike atmosphere was a thing of the past and when a breakdown of the engine, necessitated a two day's layoff for repairs to arrive from Minneapolis, I decided to get ready to come home. I went back to Wiedenhoefer's and the boss told me that next day he had to take a load of "Kraut" to Crookston for his father and I could go along. During the evening Jake and I discussed another neighbor whom I had dubbed, "The Flying Dutchman" and the Flying Dutchman, he remained in that group. The nick-name came to being bestowed in this manner. Jake and I rode home from town with him one night, when on passing our cross road he whipped his team into a gallop and I asked him whether this was the train they called The Flying Dutchman and he replied, "I'll show you smart Alecks". There was then on the Milwaukee road a train by that name. It was fast but compared with today's Hiawatha described a snail's pace. Well, we got off by giving the end board of the wagon box a hard push while we jumped. The fellow had worked on the flat boats with our boss and then as now seemed to have a domineering influence over him and this was resented by his brother, Jake. He was a hard worker and fairly successful farmer and tried to be the big man in the community. He was a bachelor, not exactly by choice, for the girls did not like his domineering ways nor did anyone else. He was not one of the Manitowoc group nor one of the Suavians (Schwaben) and while he was tolerated, he failed to become a boss. He was a driver and what August Wenzel accomplished without any perceptible effort he failed to achieve with all his zeal. This illustrates the difference between a driver and a leader, not only here but everywhere.

In Crookston, I settled up with the boss and when he paid me $2.75 per day, I reminded him that we had agreed on $2.50. His reply was. "Did I not tell Olson, the shoemaker. that I was paying you $2.75?" I took the hint and did never again say anything to question his veracity. Those people sure had been good to me and before I left, the old gentleman asked me to come out again and help them garner their next crop and I did.

I stayed at Utzinger's hotel, off and on, helping with the threshing and with the chores, since they would not accept anything for board. The

helper around the hotel and part time on the farm was a Hoch boy from Wabasha and on returning from a trip to Wisconsin, Utzinger told him that things looked tough down his way, the Mississippi being on a rampage and everything being under water. After the ideal weather, we had been having, this was a surprise to me, as well as to him.

My objective, on coming west, had been to secure a homestead and our forced departure from "Track's End" frustrated my plans in that direction while around Bismarck the good farms, near the river had been taken and the stony hills did not appeal to me, although Alderman Yegen spent an afternoon, showing me the country. The railroad land, granted the Northern Pacific could have been bought very cheaply but where we were it had not been surveyed and we had not looked around. It could have been bought for a few dollars an acre, payable in common stock of the Railroad, which stood at about seventeen cents on the dollar, meaning a fraction of a dollar for an acre. Years later I bought some of this land but the price had advanced considerably.

I spent a day seeing the sights of Crookston, especially the modern saw mill. This was quite a sight on the open prairie but the logs were floated down the Red Lake river from the pineries to the east and of course, there was a good market for the lumber here.

There was land to be had to the east, so I was told, for Alderman Utzinger was as much a booster for the Red River valley as Alderman Yegen was for the Missouri valley. So I got ready to go to Red Lake Falls, then an inland town without a railroad. Early one morning I went to the hotel from which the stage coach started for the promised land and was told that Mr. Church would be ready to start at eight o'clock sharp. With eight o'clock appeared Mr. Church and on a three seated spring wagon, drawn by two sturdy horses we started out. The driver directed me to occupy the front seat with him, while the two rear seats were occupied by six Cannucks, or Canadian Frenchmen, three to a seat. It was a raw day, the wind blowing from the northwest. Soon after leaving Crookston the country became rough and hilly stones cropping out here and there, reminding me of Yegen's prospective vineyards, near Bismarck. It was a tiresome drive but Mr. Church was not bad company, while those in the rear seats parley voued in great shape. By noon we arrived at a small hamlet named Gentilly and the world seemed changed. My Mr. Church was greeted as Messieur La Chappelle and the English language appeared to be non-existent. The "Frogs" on the back seats, jumped off and entered a door and when we followed them in, we found them lined up against the bar, consuming canned sea food, lobster, sardines and frog's legs, with something on the side to wash it down or to stimulate the appetite. M. La Chappelle motioned to me to follow him and on stepping into a back room we washed and sat down to the table with the family where we were served hot soup with boiled beef and vegetables, a good substantial meal on a cold day and all for a quarter, not half as much as the "Frogs" spent on their mixed repast.

This country did not appeal to me and as I later learned was inhabited solely by French Canadians who eked out a precarious existence. But before proceeding on our trip to Red Lake Falls, I can not refrain from recounting an article, which I some years ago read in a magazine, with reference to this very region.

This community had built a church at Gentilly and to them was sent a young priest, direct from the vine-clad hills of sunny France. No doubt there was enough work for him to do both in a spiritual and in a material way but among these desolate environments the poor fellow became homesick and I do not blame him for had it not been for Mr. Church, I myself would have suffered a severe attack of nostalgia, during the brief hour that I was forced to stay there. I certainly could put myself in his place, when I read that article. The

poor fellow did what all other mortals do when in that plight. He wrote home and I suppose, there was a mother. At any rate, to ease his pains, they sent him a liberal portion of Gruyere cheese (or was it Roquefort, I do not exactly remember) and that was the salvation of not only the young priest but of Gentilly, as well. He was evidently a practical, yonug fellow, who asked himself, "Why should it be necessary to send to France or Switzerland for something that we could produce right here and why should the people waste their time and energy (they had no money to waste) trying to produce what the people on the fertile lands in the valley were producing, when here was an ideal dairy section going to waste?" He no longer had time for being homesick. He went about among the farmers talking cows, milk and cheese. He wrote home for explicit directions for making, curing and handling this cheese which was a sure cure for nostalgia. His efforts met with little response, in the start for the poor farmers wondered where the money for the cows was to come from but the man at the head overcame even this obstacle by personally securing the credit on the strength of the future output of Gruyere. He even established markets in advance so that when the cheese was being made there would be a sale for it. He made contacts in the Twin Cities to furnish this delicacy to epicures at a fancy price. In fact he did everything possible with such sagacity and foresight, as might have awakened the envy of a captain of industry. As is always the case when both brains and brawn are behind a movement, this venture proved a success in every respect.

The farmers got some returns for their efforts and in order to keep up with the program they had to be alert and doing, thus they were benefitted not only materially and economically but their mental attitude was influenced to an extent that changed the character of the community. No longer was shiftlessness and irresponsibility the watchword for the people had had a taste of prosperity and progress and they liked it. They were no longer content to be called or to be Frogeaters for they were respectable, selfsupporting Americans and felt that way.

When I read that article and gazed upon the picture of the church with rows of automobiles lined up in front of it, I felt mighty good and had a strong desire for a chance to shake that young priest by the hand and whisper into his ear "Blest be Nostalgia". Equally impressive was the picture of the factory and the trucks lined up before it. If he, who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before is blest, then this young man was certainly doubly blest. He aided his community in a material way and thus established in their minds higher ideals, encouraging them to strive after those higher things that are worth while. He may not have done much preaching on the subject but even in advancing Christianity this was one of the instances where acts spoke louder than words. I have never been back to Gentilly and before I read that article, never had a desire to be back and yet should I ever get back to Crookston, I would be sorely tempted to again make that trip even though I would not be privileged to occupy the seat of honor on Mr. Church's stagecoach. I would like to see that new church and the new factory and above all things I would like to see that priest provided he should still be there. Also would I like to witness the changes wrought in the country side, which at the time looked simply hopeless.

But back to M. La Chapelle and my trip to Red Lake Falls. The horses fed and dinner over, we again climbed into our seats on the primitive stage coach. The "Frogs" on the back seats were considerably heartened by their noon-day meal and had become rather hilarious but neither M. La Chapelle nor I paid much attention to them although they had provided themselves with a couple of large bottles that might have contained Seltzer but didn't. As we drove along, the hilarity increased in the same ratio that the contents of the bottles decreased and finally de-

veloped into a row. This ended by the fellows on the rear-most seat coming to blows. It was not a fight to the finish for the combatants were done for before they began. Almost all of the blows went wild not on account of dexterous dodging but owing to faulty aim yet a few landed and caused bloody noses. Without a word in either English or French, M. La Chapelle handed me the reins and unbuckling the halters which had been fastened to the dash board walked to the rear end of the rig. Buckling a halter to each seat, he drew the strap across the front and thus fastened his passengers down securely, without a word from either him or them. It seemed to be all in the day's work and perhaps it was. In this improvised ambulance we proceeded toward our destination. Before descending the hill into Red Lake Falls, I cast a furtive glance backward and the sight that met my eyes mocks description. Their blood smeared faces a ghastly palor, the bodies of the victims of that carousal hung out of the rig supported by the halter straps that held them onto the seats. The poor fools had probably earned some money by working on a threshing crew back in the settlement and were now bent on getting rid of part of it, before going back into the pineries for the winter.

Red Lake Falls was a typical frontier hamlet. A German merchant of Crookston, named Kretschmar, had established a branch store, which supplied the scattered settlement with the necessaries of life and I think there was a mill, a hotel of a kind and a few straggling dwellings. This was the place, which it took us a long day to reach but today the trip could be made in about an hour, even in an old fashioned flivver. Here I was "A Stranger in a strange land", indeed. During the entire evening I heard not a word of English and the French that was spoken, was a veritable jargon of Cannuck patois of which I could not make out even a word. I was seized with an attack of nostalgia, which I fear, could not have been dispelled by Gruyere or even real Swiss cheese. Luckily I was tired and went early to bed. Early the next forenoon a man came in, who I was informed lived across the river in a section where homesteads were still open to entry. His name, I learned, was Jeffords and he offered to show me about. I must say that my enthusiasm for becoming a member of that community had almost vanished but he spoke my language and I gladly accompanied him on his return. He was on foot for there was no bridge connecting the town with the other side of the river. By the way, the Red Lake River had a tributary near this town, which the maps designated as the Clearwater but of which the natives spoke as the Eau Claire, which of course, to use a homely expression, was the same only different. When we came to the Red Lake river there was a cable strung across it and we ferried ourselves across in a skiff which Jeffords guided by holding the crutch of a small tree across the cable. A rope went to each shore and by means of this the boat was available to passengers from both sides.

About mid-day we reached the home of a German settler who had the threshers at work. Here we had dinner and Jeffords had to stay and help his neighbor and I did likewise, feeling that I ought to pay for my dinner. The threshing rig was a primitive horse power affair, both horses and oxen being used in propelling it. Most of this farm was covered with young timber, poplar, cotton-wood and soft maple and the farmer warned me not to take any land of that kind since one who had to do grubbing was at a disadvantage in competing with the prairie farmers. Well, I hope he made a go of it for he appeared to be one who deserved it. Along in the afternoon, Jeffords sent his hired man to show me a certain quarter section up on the prairie, near his own home. The land was fairly good but nothing like what my German friends near Fisher had. Nevertheless I jotted down the description and was now armed to tackle the U. S. Land Office, at Crookston. During the evening, that I spent at the Jeffords home, I was

given detailed directions of the road leading to Crookston on that side of the river.

Next morning, after paying my bill, I started for Crookston and since my hosts had mentioned the big and little Black Rivers, as streams that I would have to cross, I began to look for bridges of some kind. On descending into a rather deep ravine, I came to a gurgling brook, about the size of the south branch of Mill Creek. At the same time a team came toward me down the opposite hill and when I asked the driver whether this was the BIG Black River he asked me where I came from and when I answered, "From Wisconsin', his reply was, "That explains it. Your Black River is a little bigger and at that it is not known as BIG." I trudged on and crossing another divide soon came to another rill which I now knew must be the Little Black River. There was no bridge across either but I had no trouble in stepping across them.

After ascending another rise, I saw before me the Crookston courthouse which then stood alone out on the prairie. All forenoon, as I trudged along, this landmark was before me, whenever I reached higher ground and finally it never vanished from my sight yet it was two o'clock p. m. when I finally walked into town. When I presented the description of my prospective claim, at the land office, one of the employees remarked to another, "Why this is the quarter that young "Blank" has filed on? He, to whom I refer as "BLANK", I learned was the son of either the receiver or register of the land office. That settled my homesteading and with little regret I departed from the office. To this day I do not know whether Mr. Jeffords had shown me a quarter section that had already been taken or whether the clerks at the landoffice put one over on me and I never seriously cared, for with the hills and dales of Buffalo county and the fertile section between Crookston and Fisher, in mind, that homestead had not greatly appealed to me as a future home. In fact, my plan had already been to proof up and pay for the claim after a year's ostensible residence, as many others did. A year or two later a railroad, coming from the east, cut through that section and the town of St. Hilaire is now located but a few miles from the quarter that I had intended to locate on but I never felt that I had missed much by losing out on that deal.

After partaking of a belated lunch at Utzingers, I visited with the people who had been so kind to me and whiled away the time with young Henry Utzinger and a cousin of both of us from Bangor, who was visiting there, thus missing the regular train for St. Paul. Fortunately I was able to take another train, which came an hour later. This necessitated a change at Barnesville and took me to St. Paul via Breckenridge instead of Fergus Falls, making my arrival at my destination a few hours later than by the first train. This did not bother me much for I was asleep almost all the time, in spite of the fact that the seat which I occupied in the smoking car was made of hardwood slats, something like the rear seats in a school room. It must be remembered that I had walked about thirty miles the day before and that ride to Red Lake Falls had not been a holiday excursion either, thus I was able to sleep without using my boots for a pillow, even.

On arriving at St. Paul, I espied among the throngs at the Union Depot, Professor Thayer, of the River Falls Normal but did not feel like butting in on him and figured on passing by un-noticed, since I felt a little the worse for wear after my night's rest (?). He had however espied me and accosted me with the remark "Say, you have been playing hooky". He was on his way home from Alma, where he had been conducting the annual Teachers' Institute. He gave me an account of the meeting and I was pleased to hear that he had missed me. This made me feel that my time could have been more profitably spent there than at land hunting, yet in a negative way the time thus spent was not entirely wasted for the experience may have been worth the effort.

It was still raining and misting

and the sand on the street leading up from the depot was literally reduced to slush. I now saw what Mr. Utzinger meant when he told young Hoch and me that things looked terrible down our way. I had to go and call on the Swiss Consul, Mr. Utzinger having intrusted me with a message to him. He was very cordial and much interested in the Red River country. He showed me maps and blue prints, relating to a project for establishing a drainage system for the prairies north of Crookston in order to avert conditions such as prevailed there this season, to which I referred in writing of my experience, while at work stacking up that way. You will remember that I mentioned the fact that in some places machines, used to cut grain had been mired. A canal with tributary ditches was built and it afforded some relief, as Mr. Schwy, who was interested in the project as a member of the town board, informed me, years later when we discussed this matter, at Alma. I had to spend the rest of the day in the city and I again went to the brow of the hill overlooking West St. Paul and there it rested tranquilly on the west bank of the river, as if there had never been a flood peril such as I had witnessed but a few short months before.

Late in the afternoon the Milwaukee train pulled out and I was on my way to Wabasha arriving there late at night. It was a dark, damp night and almost all the lights were out when I got into town, after having tramped across the prairie, from the depot. I stopped in front of a hotel and pounded lustily at the door, when someone looked out of an up-stairs window and asked, in German, "Who is here?" I answered, "Never mind John, just open the door and get me to bed". As usual, the first man to run across when getting to Wabasha, was my friend, John Jost and as usual he took care of me, the funny part being that he put me to bed without even recognizing me, for next morning when he got up he wanted to know where I had come from and I told him that I came out of the bed that he had put me into.

Here it was Sunday and I was at Wabasha and next morning my school, at Mill Creek was to open. The Steamer Lion did not run on Sundays but John told me that there was a fellow who would take me to Alma in a skiff, in the afternoon. We loafed around. John showing me through the store where he worked and after dinner was about to make arrangements to have me transported to Alma, by skiff. Just about then came, floating through the mist, a sound that was sweet music to my ears. It was the whistle of a steamboat and when we went to the dock to investigate, there was The Robert Harris, of Fountain City. I lost no time in asking Engineer Heck whether he could take me to Alma and the reply was, "You bet, we have to take on wheat for Paul Huefner there anyway". This suited me and I got on board at once. This was better than a skiff ride in a drizzling rain and fog.

In due time we got to Alma and I was now about to embark on the last lap of my journey. Leaving my satchel at a hotel I struck out for the bluff and the path to Mill Creek Valley, which started out from Olive street, between what is now Passow's house and garage. Thence it meandered up the hillside and past the present location of the beacon light and within a stone's throw of where I now live. Had on that Sunday afternoon, an apparition appeared out of the fog and said to me, "Young man, here is your homestead," I would certainly have replied by saying, "Dear ghost, thou art mistaken", or something to that effect. To my right and to my left, in front of me and behind me, loomed up in the fog the majestic boles of tall oaks. This was all right, in a way but I did not feel like starving while I grubbed those giants of the forest. Well, they were removed before I bought the place but by someone better qualified to do that kind of work than I was and thereby hangs a tale. The poor fellow who did it, did not earn his salt but that is another story again and I am here, all right.

This path was, in those days, a regular thoroughfare and hundreds

of dozens of eggs and hundreds of pounds of butter were carried to town from Mill Creek, via this route, by women and girls and one of them lives right by the side of the old path, now. About eighty rods from where the beacon is, the path forked, one branch leading down the valley toward Laniccas and the other along the ridge toward Josts. When I got to where I thought the path would lead to Laniccas, I turned into the brush to the right, expecting to strike the path that led down the valley. Imagine my surprise when after going quite a stretch, I again found myself in the same old path and there I discerned footprints in the moist path. I formed a theory that while I had wandered in the woods, someone had walked from Mill Creek to Alma and that it was someone from town, for he wore rubbers and country people, at that time, wore stout boots that needed no additional protection from the mud. I considered myself quite a Sherlock Holmes until I found myself out on the point where the high line now reaches the top of the bluff and below me saw The Robert Harris steaming down the river. The fog in the valley had lifted while on the bluff I was surrounded by dense clouds. Thus I was disillusioned and to my sorrow, found that I was not much of a Sherlock Holmes after all, for the tracks in the path were my own and did not lead from Mill Creek to Alma but vice versa and humbly I retraced them and kept to the path along the top of the ridge and finally heard some cow bells and then found a herd in a field. Knowing them to be Jost's cattle, I started them out, trusting them to lead the would-be Sherlock Holmes out of the wilderness. However I may explain that I had never traveled the path on top of the ridge before, hence my bewilderment.

The cows got home and so did I, in the eleventh hour for the opening of school was to be to-morrow. Mr. Jost, who was a member of the board, told me that the people were wondering whether school would start on time or not. Well, it did and the pupils were on hand, trusting that I would turn up in time. Remember that this was long before we had even heard of such a thing as a telephone. Among other things, Josts informed me that Ulrich had come home the day before and that pleased me immensely for I knew that I was being held responsible for his return although, it was no fault of mine that we had become separated and that he had not written home for months.

After supper I went over to Wald's place to see Ulrich and perhaps for another reason, which it is not necessary to mention, because it is not in any way connected with the building of the Northern Pacific, directly or indirectly. When Ulrich saw me he broke into one of those hearty guffaws, that some of you so well remember and I thought to myself, "If you think you fooled me, remember that you fooled yourself, for you certainly did not have as nice a place to work as you would have had where I was." We had much to tell each other and Ulrich's mother gently reminded me of the promise we had made to stay together and while I tried to explain matters, the guilty one took it for a good joke and laughed some more but I think that the main cause of his merriment was the fact that he was again at home, after the varied experiences that he had all around.

This is the end of our experience with railroad building and pioneering in "The Golden Northwest" and although some more things might have been said, while others might have been left unsaid my aim was to depict, to the best of my ability, conditions prevailing here as well as in the new Northwest, at that time. I trust also that the stories and anecdotes, interspersed in the article may not have tired you and after all many of them were illustrative, so that is that.

On two occasions I returned to the Red River Valley but only to help with the harvesting, as I had promised my friends. I liked the heavy sheaves laden with golden grain, I liked the rich, black virgin soil that

produced them but above all I liked those kind and hospitable people that lived there. The golden wheat fields are a thing of the past being supplanted by rows of sugar beets. My German friends, with the exception of a few stragglers of the third and fourth generation are no longer there and their fertile fields are being worked by Mexican peons. I had always longed to, some day, return to that country but when my friend, Theodore Averbeck who visits there occasionally, informed me of all the changes that have taken place, I had no farther desire to go where I knew no one and where I might not even recognize my old stamping grounds.

There is, however, one incident which not only interested me but greatly surprised me, which occurred during my stay in the Red River valley, of which I forgot to speak before and mention it now because I consider it worth while.

One Sunday morning, on getting up and looking out of the up-stairs window, a spectacle presented itself to me, such as I had read about but never dreamt of encountering here. No, it was not a herd of buffaloes nor a herd of antelopes, such as may have roamed over those prairies less than half a century before, but a mirage, yes a veritable mirage, such as we read of, in our schoolbooks, as occurring on deserts and this was certainly not a desert. I was sorely tempted to exclaim "Fata Morgana! Fata Morgana! This is what my school books told me the orientals did on such occasions. Instead I shouted to my friend, Jake, to get up and come to view the wonderful phenomenon. He came to the window and complacently viewing the spectacle, asked "What about it? We see them almost every year." Excitedly I exclaimed "It is a Mirage! Eine Luftspiegelung!" The reply was, "That, I guess is so all right but those are all buildings, some of them ten and more miles north of us, and the one that looks like an elevator a hundred or more feet in height, is Toby's granary". When I asked what was the wonderful bridge in the back-ground, with hundreds of huge pillars, that spanned the entire northern horizon, he told me that those were the trees along the Snake River, some twenty or thirty miles to the north. Those trees grew in the river bottoms and were not ordinarily visible to anyone traveling across the prairie but now seemed elevated a hundred feet above that level. I was duly amazed at seeing the prairie covered with sky-scrapers, with a back-ground of a huge bridge, supported by hundreds of stately pillars but the natives seemed hardly impressed. I have since seen many wonders both natural and artificial but nothing has ever impressed me like that mirage, occurring in a place where I would have never expected it.

Yes, even now I would like to again live through those experiences tangible and intangible but all that is left, is a fond memory and recalling the Mirage, I again repeat with the Orientals, the words, "Fata Morgana".

A VANISHING RACE

Some time ago appeared in the Journal an article on "The Forgotten Swiss" but the reason why they were forgotten was not explicitly stated and since I am cognizant of the main reason of this slight, I will before entering upon the subject in hand, briefly state it.

Switzerland was formed by a number of groups, who being sorely oppressed and mistreated, broke away from their parent countries and formed first a loose confederation, which later developed into the "Bund" and finally into the present day republic. These various groups that broke away from their mother countries, belonged to different nationalities and almost to different races, in a broad sense of that term. At any rate they spoke different languages and of all things cherished by a people, their language is perhaps the most important, aye sacred.

Thus the greater part of the inhabitants, former subjects of the Hapsburgs, spoke German, while that part among the Vosgeses that had seceded from France, retained that language and in Tecino across the Alps, the Italian tongue still prevails, although to call one of that group a "Dago" or even an Italian, provokes a fight, no matter how big or strong the aggressor may be. Then there is another group, interspersed among the German speaking people of the Canton Grisons or Graubuenden, which although insignificant in numbers is about as clannish as any of the rest, I refer to the Romanic race who have a language and many mannerisms of their own and withal their language resembles the Latin much more than does even the Italian.

Although the German language largely predominates, it became necessary to recognize both the French and Italian as additional official languages. This fact of the different languages is the cause of the Swiss being sometimes classed with the nation whose language they speak and notably is this the case with the German speaking class. Theirs being but a dialect many of them after acquiring the real or "High" German in school, shirk the dialect and unlike their Italian compatriots like to be looked upon as Germans and not unfrequently have I heard one of them speak of himself as being "Cherman" or collectively as "We Chermans". Under such circumstances it is not surprising that a nation be forgotten.

To some Swiss people and to some of Swiss descent, it may have been surprising to read the list of names presented in the article referred to but by most of them the article is, by this time, perhaps forgotten yet I will to that list add, at least two names, of prominent Americans of Swiss descent. Admiral Farragut, was evidently a descendant of the Veraguths, of Graubuenden, while ex-President Hoover, while traveling in Europe, made the statement that his ancestors lived on the shores of Lake Zurich and that their name was Huber. So much for the forgotten Swiss, who it seems, are to a great extent themselves to blame for this obscurity that, in a measure surrounds their past but the subject of this sketch shall be that really forgotten race, the Romanics, who for centuries have striven and struggled to preserve their identity and have not given up the struggle yet.

This struggling handful of sturdy mountaineers are a most interesting group and I am only sorry that I have missed out on the many opportunities that I had of getting inside information on this remnant of a vanishing race. As above stated, the language they speak is closer to Latin than any other living language, even the Italian.

The theory is, and it is generally accepted, that when the hordes of Caesar, retreated from the Teutons under Arminius, some of the survivers failed to return to Rome but remained among the fastnesses of the Alps. Not all may have remained for the same reason or from the same cause. Some may have been cut off from the main body while others, tired of the glories and hard-

ships of war, may, have intentionally deserted and sought refuge among the Alpine fastnesses of old Graubuenden. Be this as it may, here they are, here they have been for ages, partly in segregated groups in different valleys but often inhabiting a hamlet or village surrounded by German speaking neighbors but always they remained Romanic, clannish and aloof. They consider themselves the real "Graubuendners" and look upon their German speaking neighbors, who far outnumber them, as mere interlopers and when they raise their glass to the toast of "Viva la Grischa", the sentiment expressed includes no one of Teutonic or Normanic descent.

They are found in the Engadin, on the Hinter-Rhein and in other parts of the Canton but there was no group of them outside of the Canton of Graubuenden or as they call it Grisons.

Why should I want to speak or write of this group? For several reasons, the first and main one being, that among the early Swiss settlers of Buffalo County, this group took a prominent part in helping to make history. Second because they always appealed to me as a group apart, independent, proud and, to some extent clannish but always friendly and more refined than their associates and above all most of them were of a jovial disposition and on closer acquaintance became steadfast friends. Then two of my teachers were Romanic as well as, later on, several of my pupils. Thus I gained an insight into their mode of living but, as already stated, failed to gather more definite data.

How they struggled to maintain their integrity is proven by the fact that they maintained schools and even in the segregated hamlets and villages taught the Romanic language, using text books printed specially in that language. There was also and is perhaps yet a newspaper, published in that language. Looking at the practical side of the question, this was all a waste of time and energy but there is a sentimental side which can not be lost sight of and sentiment and romance loomed up big among those people. I understand that there was an attempt made to do away with this teaching of Romanic and in places it was tried out but recently, I learn, that there is a movement on foot to return to the old regime and revive old traditions and indeed they are many. They are great lovers of music especially the song both in their language and in German, some being masters along that line. Two of my intimate acquaintances, my teacher Anton Cajoeri and my old friend John Thomas Lanicca, that master basso-profundo, took part in quartets that participated in the program of the National Saengerfest, in the City of Bern. At this Fest are gathered the best singers of Switzerland and that means some of the best on the continent but these Romaners, easily held their own.

Of course there were authors among them, one of them, Nina Camenisch, having produced some rare literary gems. There were, of course, others but I neglected to get the information when I might have had it. I think, however, that the statesman and writer, Johann Gaudenz Salis von Seewis, was either Romanic or of Romanic descent. Suffice it to say that Nina Camenisch was given due recognition, although a woman, which was quite out of the ordinary during the nineteenth century.

Yes there is another case where women received recognition. In one of these Alpine villages the women sit on the right hand side of the church, while in practically every other Swiss church that honor is reserved for the lords of creation, or at least that was the inflexible rule in the days of those from whom I have the following true story. "All the men were absent from that village (I have forgotten its name) fighting an invading army, when it was learned that an enemy detachment was nearing the village. To get there they had to pass through a narrow gorge. To prevent this the women gathered on both sides of this gorge and made ready, piles of

heavy boulders, which when the enemy passed below them were released, thus crushing the invaders. Thus, to this day, the women occupy the place of honor in the church of that village,"

The isolated vales, long the abiding place of this sturdy race, are however, being invaded and neither courageous women nor heavy boulders suffice to keep out the invaders. They and their country have been discovered and tourists have taken possession of it coming and going all summer and all winter too. Modern hotels dot the hillsides, railroads follow the valleys and wintersports are the order of the day on the lakes and hillsides. The melting pot threatens to swallow up these primitive people. Contact with the outside world will make them forget their aloofness and finally they will become a part of the incessant maelstrom, that sweeps everything before it and everything with it. Their manners, their customs are being changed. Their idiosyncracies, their provincialism, aye their simplicity are being swept away and subconsciously perhaps, they lose their identity and become more and more like the invaders of their long cherished privacy. The towering Alps, the yawning gorges no longer serve as sentinels. They have become a part of the outside world. Nothing but the traditions remains. Their horizon is widened, their contacts are greater, but will they he happier? I have my doubts. It is hard to trim an old tree to grow in a different direction or to assume a new shape and I fear that these innovations may be hard on this sturdy race, being forced from its rut.

Why should all this interest us? As I have already told you the early history of our community, our county, is closely interwoven with names of people of that clan. Among the early business and professional men, farmers and mechanics members of that race stood well in the front ranks. Permit me to mention but a few of them and pardon me for possible omissions due only to my failing memory. Among those I remember are the Polins, Tscharners, the Fimians and Rubens and the Carisches of Alma and Fountain City. Then there were the teachers, Anton and Florian Cajoeri and Paul Casparis, of Waumandee and Anton Marchion, of Fountain City. Others were the Laniccas, Livers, Conrads, Castelbergs, Tavernas, DeCarisch, Durisch, Arpagaus, and others, in all walks of life, not to forget my old neighbor, Jacob Thoeny, the Waumandee blacksmith. Then some, not all, of the Ruedis and Leonhardys were wholly or partly of Romanic descent.

Here, they too passed through the melting pot and among new environments acquired new manners and customs but most of them remained true to the traditions of the land of their birth. Their descendants of the second and third generation can not be expected to live up to traditions of which they know little or nothing, hence the title that I have placed at the head of this article.

WHEN CRIME WAS RAMPANT IN A PEACEFUL VALE

The narrative that I am about to relate, with the exception of some minor details, that I may fail to correctly remember or that I perhaps never got correctly, is essentially true but the names of the persons directly connected with it, are fictitious, while those of the innocent bystanders are given correctly. There is nothing incriminating about it but one hesitates to refer to facts that might embarrass our fellow-men and especially is this the case when most of the dramatis personae are dead and gone.

One morning, in the fall of the early seventies, my brother, Casper, happened onto the road that passed our house at a distance of some twenty or thirty rods, when he espied the constable of the town of Montana, come galloping down the highway. "Hi Pete, what's the hurry?" shouted Casper, as the dignified Constable sped by him. "Can't stop "Cap": can't stop; Criminal case, Criminal case", replied the speeding officer of the law. His curiosity aroused, Casper either asked his neighbor Philip Runkel or went up the road a little ways to Helwig's store. to get the necessary information to help solve this mystery, I do not now remember which but he came home with a tale which ran about as follows:—

Murder, bloody murder, had been committed up in Danuser Valley and what was more the body of the victim after having been fouly done away with was consigned to a brush pile and incinerated. While diligent search had revealed neither the bones nor any other charred remains, the fact that young Tony Schlenker, a lad of twelve years or so, was missing and no trace of him could be found remained. The Schlenkers, who had the reputation of being a rather coarse and quarrelsome outfit, had not lived in the community very long and I did not know them. It seems that the boy, who was himself not a saint, caused them a lot of trouble and was often severely chastised. On one such occasion he was either driven from home or ran away, at any rate he arrived at the home of John Schindler, who lived near by and who was also a rather recent addition to the community. Here Tony was given sanctuary and a place to work and stay. This, of course, embittered the Schlenkers and although I do not know of any effort on their part to interfere, it is known that they resented the action of their neighbors. Then the rumor spread that Tony had disappeared and the Schlenkers, all at once, became very solicitous for the welfare of their child. Mrs. Schlenker, after exchanging some hot arguments with Mrs. Schindler, at the latter's home, was told that Tony had taken a ring, which Mrs. Schindler had left lying on a table and when this was discovered had been soundly whipped by Mr. Schindler, who told him that he ought to report him to the authorities. Her story farther ran that Tony went to bed and in the morning when they investigated they found the bed empty and the bird flown. To this Mrs. Schlenker hotly retorted that more likely, while flogging him, Schindler had killed her darling child and thrown his body into one of the brush piles that he had been burning. With this hypothesis established, in her mind at least, she went to the authorities with her version of the case.

Thus it happened that on that fateful morning, the constable of Montana had to see the justice of peace in the village of Waumandee. Both the constable and the Judge were ambitious young fellows, looking ahead to something better than their present official positions. The constable was a young farmer, who dressed a little better than the rest of the boys and withal had a good opinion of himself. The Judge, a married man, had come amongst us, some years previous and being a very good mechanic had successfully run a blacksmith shop and had his ambition been along that line he might have accomplished something worth while but with a bee buzzing under his hat, telling him that the office of

sheriff would be a fine job, he neglected his work and spent much of his time in the neighboring saloons, although he was not a heavy drinker. It was company he liked and to swap stories with the boys to make himself popular. Both were good fellows at heart and we liked them both, in a way but that was the way they were and not the way they wanted to be.

Well, on the Monday after we had heard this startling news, I went to help our neighbor, Joe., with his threshing. He together with Matt. and George, both of whom lived in Danuser Valley, owned a horsepower threshing machine. Joe. was married to Matt's sister and George had been married to another of Matt's sisters, who had however died some time before and now he was married to John Schindler's sister. When I came up to the machine, that morning, Matt. and George were attaching a new rope to the machine for holding up the straw stacker. Winking at George, Matt. remarked, "Do you think this rope would hold Schindler?" George who was a very mild mannered fellow replied, " I do not know, but I would not mind to help pulling at the end of it." This, coming from George, impressed me rather strongly but on the other hand, I reasoned that George was somewhat of a wag, anyway.

During the noon hour the mystery was discussed, at length but somewhat guardedly, for on that day the "Criminal case" was being tried, in the village but a mile away. During the afternoon, while George was "feeding" the machine, up came Robert Schindler, John's brother and stepping up on the feeder board, started to talk to George. George kept on feeding, wearing all the time, his little, crooked smile but when Robert finally put his arm over George's shoulders and spoke pleadingly, the latter gave Matt. the signal to relieve him and stepping off the board went with Robert in his buggy, to attend court. The idea of pulling at the end of that rope had left him, in fact, he had never meant what he said.

Court was in session with full pomp and dignity, in a hall, adjoining a saloon across the road from the Judge's blacksmith shop and a not overly large crowd, considering the serious aspect of the case, was present but then it was threshing time and in those days, it was business before pleasure. The trial was conducted, sans prosecuting attorney, sans attorneys for the defense and sans any officer but the Judge and constable, aforesaid. There was, however, a jury duly impannelled and the court did all the work that usually falls to the lot of the attorneys in the case. Whether or not the jury was supposed to have final jurisdiction, I know not and I suppose no one else, connected with the case knew. The prosecution presented its case, the star witnesses being the Schlenkers and the constable, who testified that having diligently searched, he could find no evidence of human remains in the ash piles of the burnt brush, while the testimony of the bereaved parents consisted mainly in abuse of the defendant and the calling down of imprecations upon his guilty head. Whether there were any objections made to these procedures, deponent sayeth not. The story of the defense was given by the defendant and his wife about as heretofore stated. The walloping had been administered by a belt which he wore in court and exhibited to the jury, stating that the buckle was always in his hand and never touched the boy. So that was that. An incident, worth mentioning and told me by one of the jurors, can not well be omitted. Before the case went to the jury, the priest of the local church who happened to be present, felt it incumbent upon himself to make a few remarks. He admonished the jury to seriously weigh the fact that a man's life and liberty were matters not to be trifled with and that unless there was ample evidence of guilt no one should be convicted, especially in a murder case where the corpus delicti or body of the victim was not in evidence. The jury then, I presume in compliance with instructions from the court,

bound the defendant over to the next term of court and the judge fixed the bail bond at Five Hundred Dollars. To sign that bond George was called away from that threshing machine and George did it, with a smile. So the case was disposed of, for the present and everybody went about his every day business, awaiting farther developments at the next term of court.

Now accompany me to another part of the county, in fact, in those days it was a day's journey to get there. Let us go to Bohri's Valley where Gottlieb Bohri kept a country store, tavern, and dance hall. Although "far from the maddening throngs ignoble strife", this hostelry was a most excellent place to stop for rest and food, as I myself experienced. Besides these functions, already mentioned, Mr. Bohri was postmaster at Bohri and also carried the mail from Fountain City to that place, the contract for that work being, of course, held by someone else but as Mr. Bohri had to go after supplies three times a week anyway, he also carried the mail and neither Uncle Sam nor anyone else was any the wiser for it, nor did it matter. Well, on the regular mail day Mr. Bohri, as usual, drove to Fountain City and there he read in the "Republikaner" an account of this crime and besides there was little else talked of, on the streets. Mr. Bohri being impressed with the enormity of the crime, on arriving at home related every detail of it at the supper table, never dreaming that he was solving a mystery. After supper he went into the part of the building, serving as store and saloon, to dispose of the merchandise he had brought home with him. After a little while he was followed by the boy whom he had hired a few days previous and on looking up, saw that the lad wanted to talk to him.

"Well Tom, what is it?"

"I gotta go home", replied the boy.

"Why, what's the matter with you. You are doing good work at digging the potatoes, husking corn and doing the chores, so why go home?"

The boy persisted that he had to go home and after being hard pressed, blurted out, "I am Tony Schlenker and gotta go home".

"Who is Tony Schlenker?" asked Mr. Bohri.

"Why the boy that was killed and burnt up, what you was telling about, at supper".

"Well what do you want to do at home?"

"Oh heck, I ain't goin home but I mean to go up to Waumandee, to tell them not to hang John Schindler, 'cause he never killed me nor never burned me up, nor never pounded me half as hard as they pound me at home, with a hickory stick. That's what I want to do".

"Better wait till morning and get a ride to town and from there out to Waumandee, Schindler is safe until court convenes."

"But I don't want them to hang him. The old folks sure will try to get them to do it".

"Well wait until tomorrow and I will give you a couple of dollars, so you will get to Waumandee, all right, in time to save Schindler's neck. But you are certainly a case and fooled a lot of people, including myself".

So "Tom", again became Tony and the murder mystery was solved and the great "Criminal case", was soon forgotten. I, later on, became fairly well acquainted with him whom I have chosen to call John Schindler and found him to be one of those easy going, inoffensive fellows who would not hurt even a cat. Often in reviewing this case, have I pondered what might have happened under different circumstances. Supposing that instead of ultra-conservative, level headed people, the members of that community had been hot headed, impulsive fellows and supposing farther they had been addicted to the excessive use of liquor and incited by some fire eater, had taken the law in their own hands. What then? I would then hardly have been induced to tell this story in a rather humorous vein. It must be farther remem-mered that about then, stories of the Vigilantes were fresh in everybody's mind and that the notion that an or-

ganized body could take the law into its own hands, prevailed very generally. Under such conditions it is a credit to the community that no excesses were committed. Credit is also due to that priest, who although he may not have been posted on proceedings in court, spoke words of wisdom and they bore weight, because he was respected not only by his congregation but by outsiders, as well.