

The Presbyterian Church of Courtenay

A SCORE and two years ago Courtenay's vicinity was a howling wilderness, without a tree in sight. The settler was on its borders and of a mind to occupy it. The ground's surface was traced with buffalo paths, wrinkled with buffalo wallows and strewn with buffalo bones. Bones were then marketable and had a cash value, which meant much to some of the on-coming precursors of colonization and civilization.

of noisy water fowls. The plowman advanced, and sang and whistled in merry mood as he turned the native sod up side down with his furling "gang."

The lowing herds and bleating flocks were not yet, but in good time they made their advent, grazed on unbounded acres of most nutritious grasses, and added their generous support in milk and butter and beef to the toiling settler. The



Presbyterian Church and Manse at Courtenay

The settler, once installed, in many instances, gathered them by wagon loads, and bartered them for fuel, clothes and provisions, evidencing in a realistic way, the pioneers' trials, discomforts and forced economy. The warlike Sioux were absent off the reservation. The buffalo had moved on. The deer, the antelope, the fox, the coyote, the jackrabbit and the gopher, possessed the prairies and were in evidence at every turn. The feathery songsters segregated and aggregated, flew and swooped, chirped and sang, until the air was alive with fluttering warblers and resonant with the sweet music of birds. From the wild, grassy hay meadows came the quacks and screams of myriads

frugal housewife, in her rough cabin, or "little sod shanty," always ready with a helping hand, busied herself with the scant household duties, the garden, poultry, and, in many instances, on the hay meadow, haymaking, and on the field cultivating and gathering cereals.

Such were the scenes on the plains, sparsely settled, in summer times, but in the winters the curtains shifted and other scenes presented themselves. Nature put on a sterner aspect. The mercury congealed betimes. Betimes the sun shone its clearest and brightest and the empyrean looked its loveliest, and old Sol drove his undimmed chariot across the southern firmament as if nothing out of