

The Knight of Ravenscrag.

The "The Celebrity at Home" Sketch of Sir Hugh Allan.

James street, Liverpool, the broad thoroughfare leading from St. George's Church to the docks, is a street among streets. From earliest dawn lorries laden with huge bales of cotton or larger hog-heads of sugar, light carts with their Irish drivers indispensable to the seaport but the terror of its inhabitants, and the four-wheeler with Jack ashore, and "his cousins and his aunts" toil up, or rather down, it. On the one side are grim and many-storied warehouses; on the other less impressive host-leries much affected by master mariners. Of the former, the central and principal building presents the facade of an Italian palace pierced with five windows on either side of the granite pillared entrance. This is the counting house of the "Allan Line," a name so familiar in Liverpool as the landing stage or the Town Hall, and to the Canadian more than a household word, since it represents the link that binds the Dominion to the Mother Country. And it is something more than name. Modest in its origin, starting with two vessels only, and at one time threatened with extinction through unparalleled misfortune. The Allan Line of steamships rivals in importance the Cunard or the P&O and Oriental, and differs from these companies in being the largest and finest fleet that is retained in private hands. It belongs entirely to the firm of Allan Brothers & Co., and has feeders in its complement of sailing clippers, and in the connecting lines of railways and of lake navigation, the control of which centres in the same hands. It possesses, too, a reputation for comfort and safety which induces many travellers to give it the preference as a route to the States. Its aim, however, is to benefit the Dominion, and thus it comes about that the names of Canada and the Allan Line are inseparable.

This vast carrying trade, like all other successful enterprises, has one directing genius. A man who does not obtrude himself on the public, yet unmistakably a man in a thousand and a man of the times, is Sir Hugh Allan, the founder of the line, and the head of the firm. He is at once the richest and most influential citizen of his adopted country, for Sir Hugh is, of course, a Scotchman, typically sagacious and indomitable. Within a year of the allied span there is about him the unmistakable air of power. Ago has scarcely impaired the elasticity and vigour of the massive frame; it has but emphasized the resolution expressed in the lines of the face. Physical power and mental capacity—this is the combination, rare as it is admirable.

Like all men who have seen the world, Sir Hugh is a practical cosmopolitan, as much at his ease in the Grand Hotel at Charing Cross, or in the Liverpool offices, as in the streets of Montreal, and thinking as little of a run across the Atlantic as a Londoner does of a trip to Brighton. Nevertheless there is something in the tone of the greeting which meets you on the broad terrace overlooking the mighty St. Lawrence that says unmistakably, "Here I am at home."

"Ravenscrag," a massive pile of roughly hewn granite, rises boldly from the side of the Royal Mountain which gives the city its name. The walls are of enormous thickness, and well calculated to withstand the extremes of temperature incidental to the climate. Its twelve acres of garden and shrubbery are surrounded by the celebrated Park of Montreal. The view from the terrace can scarcely be surpassed. At your feet lies the city, with its trees, shaded avenues, and streets, its handsome public buildings and innumerable spires. Beyond it flows the great river, here two miles wide, crowded with shipping of all nationalities, and spanned by the world-renowned Victoria bridge; whilst the fertile plains of Vermont stretch away to the distant horizon. Within the house a suite of drawing-rooms leads through a noble ball-room to extensive conservatories in which it is easy even in the depth of a Canadian winter to imagine oneself in the tropics. The great central chamber with its parquet floor of native woods is often the scene of triumphs in dress, beauty, and flirtation. It is the boast of the colony that the "Blue noses," as some would call them, or the Dominion belles as they are properly named—for the former term is rather local than generic—are the best looking women in the world.

But the library, with its dark, solid furniture, large open fireplace, and providing

air of quiet comfort, is the room of the house. Here, after the day's toil, Sir Hugh spends a couple of hours in relaxation, a game of whist with some of the members of his family—his children number a round dozen—or with the chance visitor. It is, too, the scene of work as well as play, for it has been for years Sir Hugh's invariably custom to return to his sanctum when the household has retired for some hours of steady, hard work, writing reports for some of the numerous companies over which he presides, scrutinizing the statements of managers, or sketching the possibilities of some new enterprise. To a man of his calibre, who is the motive power in everything with which he is connected, such labour is enjoyment only to be eclipsed by his delight in exploring some unknown bay, or in speeding on his yacht through the blue waves of Lake

Magog. "Belmore," the country house used by the family during the hot summer months, is on the edge of this sheet of water—one of the prettiest on the continent—the mountains rising around it to the height of four thousand feet, its surface lively with miniature flotillas of steam and sailing yachts, canoes, and boats in constant demand for aquatic diversions. It was here that Sir Hugh received the Duke of Connaught when His Royal Highness was with his regiment in Canada. The lake, which is thirty miles in length, is neutral ground, lying partly in the Dominion and partly in the States, the boundary line running across its centre.

As a host Sir Hugh is cordial without elation. He has his peculiarities which, however, are not allowed to interfere with the comfort of his guests. He has never smoked, he has wisely eschewed spirits altogether until quite recently, when he has been obliged to take a little for his health's sake. Fond of cards, he has never risked more than a shilling on any game of chance in his life. Yet he spends his money with an open hand, and is generous and discreet in gifts. He possesses in a remarkable degree the faculty of throwing off all business cares when his work is done, and avows that even in the most harassing times he has never allowed mental worry to rob him of an hour's sleep. His conversation aims at being sensible rather than brilliant. One who has seen and done much cannot speak without speaking well. There is a charm, too, in his manly accents which only reach enthusiasm when, Colonel to the backbone as he is, he talks of "the land of brow heath and shaggy wood."

When on the first of May, fifty-four years ago, the self-possessed Ayrshire lad stood on the deck of the vessel which was towed to the bank—in those days Montreal did not possess a wharf—by a small tug added by a team of oxen, he had no prevision that he was to be the chief agent in making the spot prosperous and busy. He had no thought of the great warehouses and steamships, the crowded wharves, all his own, which have grown up as if by enchantment. The lad's ambition rose no higher than to own a ship and command it, as his father had done before him. Yet his career was fixed. He was destined to create, and to maintain what he created. Difficulty could not deter him. He accepted what work he could get, and stayed in the new country until he was of age; then he came home and arranged with his brothers a plan of concerted operations. With this end in view he returned to his adopted home, became a clerk in a shipping-house, rose to be a partner, and then started for himself as a ship-owner and ship-builder. After several unsuccessful attempts to interest the Government on the project, Mr. Allan's firm at length obtained the contract for a line of steamers between Great Britain and Canada, and the "Allan Line" sprang into existence. At one time it appeared as though fate were against them. Ship after ship was wrecked. His brothers lost heart, but not so Sir Hugh himself. "Providence," he affirmed, "has not a special grudge against any honest enterprise, nor does it show it by bringing destruction upon innocent people. The fault is in ourselves in some disregard of nature's law. It is we who must find out what's amiss, and set it right." And he set to work. He traced the cause to the navigation at a high rate of speed of a dangerous gulf only partially surveyed and badly lighted. He induced the Government to grant an extension of the time for the performance of the voyage, and the danger disappeared, the "Allan Line" being to-day celebrated for its safety as for its regularity.

But Sir Hugh Allan has not been content with his ease in the home sphere of business. Enterprises of all kinds connected with the

colony receive his support, and are effected by his experience. Besides owning the principal share in his trans-Atlantic fleet, he is the President and chief shareholder of the Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Company, and practically the sole proprietor of the Halifax and Cape Breton Railway, constructed at a cost of nearly a million sterling, and of the greater part of the coal fields of Nova Scotia. He is founder and president of the Montreal Telegraph Co., and founder and a director of the Merchants' Bank of Canada; one of the largest shareholders in the Pullman Palace Car Company, and director of any number of other companies, including in uranium, cotton, woolen, and rolling mills, India rubber and tobacco manufacturers, and the owner of gold silver, and copper mines.

But though he might rightly be called the greatest all-round merchant in the world, Sir Hugh's chief claim to public attention is his absolute identification of his own interest with those of the Dominion. The one passport necessary to obtain a hearing from him is the statement that the proposal intends to benefit his adopted country. He has provided Montreal with a theatre, a magnificent concert hall, and assembly rooms. He has done more for the material progress of Canada than any other ten men. There is not an industry in the country to which he has not at one time or another lent both brains and capital, often when the prospects of a return have been remote, and of all his immense fortune not a penny is invested outside the Dominion except in enterprises intimately connected with it. Throughout his long career, far from abusing the enormous trusts imposed upon him, he has rigidly set his face against wire-pulling or speculation on the part of his fellow-directors. He has never let any petty or personal desire interfere with what he considers his duty. He marks out his course and follows it with little, perhaps too little, regard for the opinion of the public—for an attitude of the kind is not conciliatory, and in putting down incipient commercial wrangling with a strong hand he has not failed to make enemies, ever afterwards anxious to spy a crevice in the proof armour of his honesty.

But it is not necessary, for the justice of his action is now universally recognized. His massive intellect, his massive business capacity, and his iron will have ever been at the service of his fellow-citizens, and they know it. In his success he invites comparison with the great millionaires of the neighbouring States, but with this difference, it has been gradual and steady, and independent of lucky hits or ingenious scheming. He is in this way an admirable representative British colonist of whom the Yankees themselves would say, "If any man living can beat his record send him along."

Snow Bound on the Plains.

TRAVELLERS CAUGHT IN THE FIERCEST OCTOBER STORM EVER KNOWN IN NEBRASKA.

(From the Worcester Spy.)

We pitched our tents carelessly, intending to take an early start the next morning. But, alas, for our expectations! During the night a strong wind set in from the northwest, and about 4 A.M. it began to snow. None of us could judge well of weather indications in Nebraska, and our guide did not suspect anything serious, for the oldest inhabitant could not expect a blizzard in October, and it was now only the 15th of the month. The guide thought, and the drivers believed, that the storm would cease at 12 M., and we, of course, trusted to their judgment. But, instead, the storm grew fiercer, the snow fell more rapidly, and the northwest gale increased in fury. Before night so much snow had fallen that it had lain as it fell it would have been at least one foot deep, but now it had been piled into drifts so that our mules stood with their feet nearly as high as the wagon tops, and the stove and furniture in our cook's tent were completely hidden from view.

The night shut in upon us gloomy and awful. We had two light canvas tents, in each of which slept four men, with just blankets enough to keep them comfortable in ordinary weather. But now we must provide for the guide, two drivers, and a porter, who had usually slept in the wagons, and, as they were slimly provided with clothing, we must share our stock with them. There was but little sleep in the tent that night, the cold was intense, and

the wind was so terrible in its effects that we feared every moment the larger tent would fall, though we had strengthened it by cords in every conceivable way. With the morning light it seemed as if all the spirits of the air were let loose, and all day long the storm roared with ever-increasing fury. The snow had so beaten in that when we awoke we found ourselves buried beneath it, and now we were obliged to gather all our bedding into the middle of the tent to keep it from being wet through. No man could long endure the storm outside, and we stood huddled together from morning till night, stamping our feet to keep from suffering. Even then we could not keep comfortable. For hours together we stood with our backs braced up against the tent to keep it from giving way under the great weight of the snow and the terrific force of the gale. I know of no language which can be used to convey to any person inexperienced in such a time any adequate conception of the fury of the storm. During the second day we succeeded in digging our little stove out of the snow-drift, and, setting it at the entrance of our tent, we managed to keep a little fire through the rest of the day and night. But our store of wood was very small, and there was no more to be had within we know not how many miles. The other tent's company had no stove and no fire. During the second night of the storm it was impossible that all should sleep at once, even if they could sleep despite the cold, for what with the stove on one side and all our provisions brought in from the wagons on the other, there was not room for all to lie down. Besides, it was necessary to keep the fire going lest we might all perish together. So we stood bonding over the stove all night, two at a time, while the others tried to sleep. It was an awful night. To add to our anxiety, the guide and drivers declared that the horses and mules were likely to perish. They were a pitiful sight, indeed. Two of them had no blankets, and the others were little better off. At times it was difficult to conceive that the creatures before us were horses, so literally covered were they with a coating of ice. After two days and two nights the storm ceased.

It was now Sunday morning. We knew not where we were, and we doubted if the guide had more definite knowledge than we. Every man was desperate. Some declared it dangerous to attempt to move through the snow, and that our only safe course was to remain, and in case of necessity, use the wagons for fuel and the horses for food. Others declared their purpose to move at all hazards, and without delay. Finally we determined to move. We threw away all luggage that could be dispensed with, and a grim silence started in the direction which we thought would bring us to the nearest hut. It was difficult travelling through the drifted snow, and it was bitterly cold. But all day long we pushed on, never stopping to feed a horse, breaking through the drifts with our ponies so that the teams could follow, till about 5 p. m., when we came in sight of haystacks, in the vicinity of which we knew there must be a ranchman's hut. I never saw a happier set of men than were these when it became certain that what they saw were haystacks, and not the terrible sand hills which had so often deceived us during the day. Grave men, merchants of Worcester, swung their hats aloft and shouted for joy. It had been a march for life.

The Utilizing of the Tides.

A Philadelphia engineer has invented, it is claimed, a machine by which the power of the tides can be utilized. Numerous plans have been proposed for the accomplishment of this most desirable end, but only under exceptional conditions have they been practical or economical. If the new device can harness the tide in an open channel, so as to convert any considerable portion of the vast power into working force, the inventor will rank among the great benefactors of humanity. Emerson says somewhere. Hitch your wagon to a star. A device for utilizing mechanically the free tides, as they sweep along our shores, would come next to that, since it would enable us, through converters and carriers of electricity, to hitch our wagons to the sun and moon.

An exchange says: "Streams all over the country are running dry." This is a canard. When a stream is dry it can't run."

A Hamilton man with an ingrowing nail, chopped his toe off. This remedy never fails. For sale at all hardware stores. Beware of imitations.