

get in a well-placed kick and so settle the battle. They swayed this way and that, knocked over stools and began to interest the onlookers, when Jules in making an extra effort stepped back on the hand of Petersen. That worthy immediately arose, encircled both of them with his huge arms and with a mighty effort threw them both down and with his arms still around them dropped off to sleep.

Night came, and in a short time all was still in the camp and everybody was wrapped in sleep, except one figure which occasionally rose up from a bunk in the corner and looked cautiously around. The straight black hair and the dark complexion denoted the Indian. This was Pete Jackson, the Ojibway "bullcock" of the establishment. After the third cautious look around the Indian arose and with slow and soft steps, crouching almost double, started to where the three had fallen. A log cracked loudly with the frost and the stealthy one paused with one foot raised. Nobody stirred and he continued and after a short time came to where the gunny-sacks were piled and where Petersen, Jules and Jerry were sleeping. Now he stoops down and is hidden by the shadow. Now he arises, clutching in his hand the greatest boomerang that the Indian has ever handled, a bottle of whiskey. With his prize he slinks back to his bunk and after taking a long pull at the bottle hides it under the blankets and settles down to a restless night.

Dawn comes all too soon and the cook wakens the sleepers with a shout. Breakfast is partaken of and the men set out for South Bay. They arrive there at about four o'clock in the afternoon and some of them already feel the effects of the tramp. Sore muscles are rubbed and that evening the hilarity is noticeable chiefly by its absence.

The next morning, accompanied still by the team and sleigh, they set their faces to the north-west on the long tramp of over fifty miles across Lake Nepigon. The air was frosty and the sun was bright, and as they emerged from South Bay, and saw the large lake stretching ahead of them far to the north with here and there islands both large and small appearing on its surface, they all experienced a feeling of exhilaration and thought that it was good to be away from the cramped quarters of the town, from the noisome bar and the alluring bowl.

Suddenly 'Arry said, "Look at the bloomin' island ahead. It's movin'. I've been watchin' it for some time and I sees it get a flat cap on like you sees on the 'eds of the college students at 'ome."

One and all looked and there sure enough the island in question seemed to be moving. Slowly it seemed to get taller and then after reaching a certain height it seemed to spread out until it reached three or four times its original size. Others approached it, until the whole northern horizon, instead of being made up of ice and islands, seemed a continuous plateau with cliffs descending straight to the water's edge. This did not last long. A break occurred in the range of cliffs and through the gap was seen a changing landscape. At one time it would be all snow, at another time a well



wooded plain, and yet again a broken barren country with the rocks showing their rough black faces from the snowy mantle. The talk now centered chiefly on this strange occurrence of nature and when a halt was made for dinner at a bold cape projecting into the lake, it was continued. At this juncture the tall North American, who so far had held himself aloof from the others, had a share in the conversation.

"Boys," said he, "what we have seen is not a rare occurrence. It is known as a mirage, and scientists tell us that it is caused by refraction. I have seen it often and what we have seen this morning is insignificant when compared to some I have witnessed. On an African veldt while hunting I watched a fight between a lion and a rhinoceros and saw them disappear in thin air. They were miles away, but were made plain by the same phenomenon which we have now seen."

"Gee whiz!" said Jerry, aside. "His Nibs has woke up."

A general laugh ensued, and for the remainder of the trip the narrator of the foregoing story was known as "His Nibs."

Sitting on a log facing the fire, with his hands extended to the genial warmth, the man seemed to thaw out and to the willing listeners he told tales of peril and adventure by land and sea. He never figured as the hero, never claimed to have been a participant, but the clearness of the recital and the intimacy of the knowledge appealed to these rough men who appreciated a man, and Jerry Haines, if he had been able to analyze his feelings, would have been surprised at the admiration for "His Nibs" which had grown up within him. It was clear "His Nibs" had been a seeker of adventure. The gold-fields of the west, the battle-fields of Cuba and South Africa, and the building of "the big ditch" had all received attention. But the dinner hour came to an end and the party again trailed after the sleigh. Before nightfall they reached Gros Cap, where they camped that night. This was twenty-two miles from South Bay.

The next morning saw them again on the march and in no good humour either. The steady walk over a poor road had developed sore muscles and as they set out on the fifteen mile tramp to Blacksmith Island many of the men were limping perceptibly. This wore off after a time and they set their faces resolutely towards the island which appeared as a low, dark blot above the northern horizon. The weather, which had been very fine, showed signs of changing. A dull, leaden grayness was over the face of the sky and the wind blew from the northeast in fitful and fretful blasts. It was one of those days which have such an unaccountably depressing effect on one's feelings. After a time large snow-flakes began to fall: in small numbers at first, but gradually increasing until at last the air seemed full of them. The wind increased in velocity and seemed to bring a chilly, icy and penetrating quality which made the horses and men wish to turn away from it.

Such was the beginning of a terrible storm, and the end of it was not come for three days.

Jerry Haines liked it. He took off his hat and turning down

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First Election in Yale-Cariboo

An Incident Truly Western in Its Informality.

By R. B. BENNETT.

THERE are those in British Columbia who remember the incident in connection with the first election in Yale-Cariboo constituency, represented in the new federal parliament by Hon. Martin Burrill, Minister of Agriculture.

The incident was truly western in its informality. When the Pacific province entered confederation, Yale-Cariboo covered a territory much more extensive even than now. At present it is one of the largest ridings in the Dominion, but in the early days it stretched from the Fraser River to the eastern boundary of the province, a vast tract unknown except to the hardy horseman, the pioneer prospector or the railway engineer. In some of the interior valleys, in the Nicola, the Okanagan and the Similkameen, those inclined to the pastoral life had broken away from the army of argonauts bound Caribowards and taken up land. They were almost the only settlers in that portion of the interior of British Columbia. The route of entry was via Hope, just below Yale, at that time head of navigation on the Fraser River, thence over the mountains by pack trail.

At the government office at Yale, Mr. Bushby was in charge. The first flush of the Cariboo rush, begun in 1858, had worn off, but there was still much business with the miners and traders as they passed through, mostly bound north. Life, however, was not so swirling that an official lost his head in the giddy round. Instead there was plenty of time in which to take things easy. Important business cropped up but seldom.

Union with the other provinces had been talked of, and the decision to enter confederation had re-

ceived its due share of discussion. The arrival of a miner bound out with a competence of gold was a subject to put it in the background. So when the official proclamation of the first election arrived, Bushby passed it over to attend to more pressing matters, and instead of the document being duly posted where all and sundry might view, it was shoved into a pigeon-hole unnoticed.

Bye-and-bye along came R. B. McMichen, from Victoria. McMichen was inspector of the government telegraph line into the Cariboo, purchased by the government from the company that began construction on the great telegraph project overland from New York to Paris via Behring Strait. McMichen was an old friend of Bushby's, and the two hobnobbed, discussing the various incidents which enlivened life on the coast in the early seventies.

"How does the election look?" enquired McMichen. Questions then were not much different from now. The world goes on, but history constantly repeats.

"Oh, yes, election," Bushby recollected, and be- thinking himself hunted up the printed poster he had received. "Nominations to-day," he declared, looking over his spectacles at the recent arrival from the capital, hoping for a denial.

Both got busy, for it was realized that no formal notice had been given of the event. Evidently elections in those days were not received with the noise and clatter that we have grown accustomed to in these modern days.

Finally, Constable George was awakened from his somnolent stretch in the sun and sent down town to round up some of the residents and acquaint them

with the fact that the day for the preliminary exercise of their new franchise was at hand. He re- appeared with the blacksmith and an around-the-towner, the other electors being too busy watching the semi-weekly steamer arrive to bother about representation in a parliament reached only via San Francisco. It was too far away for second consideration. With the officials it was different. They had a duty to perform. Mounting on a chair, Bushby read the proclamation, and, as returning officer, declared himself ready to receive nominations.

The two electors discussed the probables, but could not agree upon a suitable candidate.

"What about Col. Houghton?" the around-the-towner suggested.

Col. Houghton looked likely. He passed through Yale frequently, and was of the kind to do the province credit at the seat of government. Col. Houghton was nominated. At the end of the prescribed time no other name had been received and he was declared elected by acclamation. An onerous duty had been fulfilled.

The nominee's consent was not considered. It was a month or two before he learned of the honour that had been literally thrust upon him, but he accepted. It was chronicled in a newspaper paragraph at the time that as Col. Houghton had not received notice in time, Yale-Cariboo would not be represented at that session of parliament.

Like all good stories this has a sequel. Breathes there a man who has not done some thing and later thought of how he could have done it better. It was even so with the around-the-towner. While escorting the blacksmith to the scene of his labour, after the important nomination had been officially dealt with, he was jarred into a statue-like attitude by a sudden brain evolution.

"Why didn't I think of it!" he ejaculated.

"What?" ventured the blacksmith.

"If I'd only thought of it," he regretted. "I might have nominated myself, and I would have been elected member."