

inconvenience, and old fishers have been caught with their bodies choked full of quills.

The average weight of the fisher is 8½ lbs., while that of the lynx usually exceeds 22 lbs.

Though really a tree dweller, the fisher is possessed of considerable speed, and

when occasion arises will course the rabbit, pursuing it over lakes, till at length the rabbit loses its head and falls an easy victim.

The fur of the fisher, like that of the wolverine, is used by the Indians for coat trimmings, as these are the only furs on which the breath will not condense and cake into ice.

## Indian Place Names in Western Canada

By Max. McD.

THE red man's contribution to place names in Canada, and particularly Western Canada, makes a considerable body in the aggregate. It is a sound policy and but a measure of justice to the original inhabitants, that seeks among the names of Indian tribes, some now almost extinct, for the titles of provinces and cities. Moreover on the score of beauty alone the debt is on our side.

The capital of Ontario was formerly known as York. By the adoption of the cognomen of an Indian tribe, Toronto has gained a name of sonorous beauty, scarcely to be matched among all the cities of the world. By a similar process, Ottawa has gained vastly by the change from its original name of Bytown.

Strong and virile, if not always euphonious names, are Assiniboine, Ontario, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Wisawasa, Niagara, Muskoka, Musquash, Mississauga, Metabetchouan, Kamouraska, Athabaska, Manitoulin, Okanagan, Temiscoutat, Washimeska, Asinanan, Restigouche, Nipissing, Algonquin, Awoju, and Shequindah.

Pleasing names to be found in the Canadian Gazetteer are Hiawatha, Minnehaha, and Nokomis, but these, perhaps owe allegiance to Longfellow rather than to the red man, from whose language they were taken.

But in the names which Indians have themselves given to places in Western Canada is the curiosity of the Easterner aroused. When such localities as Whiskey Cap, Leavings, Pincher Creek, Porcupine Hills, Robber's Roost, Stand Off, Slide Out, Slide In, Freeze Out, Bull Morn, Jumbo Valley, etc., are spoken, the stranger in the West begins to ask how the selection was made.

The most interesting stories connected with place names in Western Canada centre around "Whoop Up," an old trader's fort midway between Macleod and Lethbridge, in Southern Alberta. It was in the early seventies that the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company ceased, and the Dominion Government took over judicial rights in all that vast territory which lies between the International boundary and the North Pole. The ending of the monopoly was a signal for an inrush of adventurers. Gamblers, smugglers, criminals, of every stripe, struck across from Montana and other northern states into the Canadian territory at the foot of the Rockies. Without a white population, these raffish adventurers could not ply their usual wide-open traffic. The only way to wealth was by the fur trade; and the easiest way to obtain the furs was by smuggling whiskey into the country in small quantities, diluting this and trading it to the natives for pelts. Chances of interference were nil. The Canadian Government officials were thousands of miles distant without either telegraph or railway connection.

But the game was not without its dangers. The country at the foothills was inhabited by a confederacy of the Blackfoot Indian—Bloods, Peigans and Blackfeet—"tigers of the prairie" when sober, and worse than tigers when drunk. The Montana whiskey smugglers found they must either organize for defence, or pay for their fun by being exterminated. How many whites were killed in these drinking frays will never be known; but all about the Belly and Old Man Rivers and Fort Macleod, are gruesome landmarks known as the places where such and such parties were exterminated in the seventies.

The upshot was that the Montana smugglers emulated the old fur traders, and built themselves permanent forts; Robber's Roost, Stand Off, Freeze Out, and most famous of all, Whoop-Her-Up, whose name for respectability's sake has recently been changed to "Whoop-Up," with an innocent suggestiveness of some poetic Indian title. Whoop-Up was palisaded and loop-holed for musketry, with bastions and cannon, and an alarm bell. The fortifications of this place alone, it is said, cost \$12,000, and it at once became the metropolis of the whiskey smugglers. Henceforth only a few Indians were allowed inside the fort at a time, the rest being served through the loop-holes.

But the Blackfeet, who loved a man better than a buffalo hunt, were not to be balked. The trail by which the whiskey smugglers came from Fort Benton zigzagged over the rolling prairie, mainly following the bottoms of the precipitous coulees and ravines for a distance of two hundred miles to Whoop-Up. Heavy wagons with canvas tops and yokes of fifteen and twenty oxen, drew the freight of liquor through the devious passes that connected ravine with ravine. The Blackfeet were probably the best horsemen in the world. There were places where the defiles were exceptionally narrow, where the wagons got mired, and where oxen and freight

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