

CARRYING HIS MAJESTY'S MAILS.

Dogs are pressed into the service for carrying the mails in the North-West of Canada. One of the sights to a Britisher fresh from home, in a thriving town like Edmonton, Alberta, is the arrival of a dog-sledge from the wintry land beyond.

At Edmonton the great main line of railway ends, and it is the best "jumping off" place for the vast territory to north and west. Through that territory the mails must go, and the use of dog-sledges to convey them was no doubt adopted, and most wisely so, from the Esquimaux.

The dogs are probably four in number, shaggy and sharp-nosed, even wolf-like in appearance, of Esquimaux breed, or among them may be seen one or more of the St. Bernard type. Behind them is the sledge, light yet capacious, capable of conveying the mail bags, with the driver and ice. Quickly they pass over snow and ice, bearing fond messages to distant relatives beyond the seas. The dog train forms a most valuable and picturesque link in that wonderful chain of communications which helps to bind together the Empire and carries His Majesty's mails over the world.

When, therefore, you drop your letter in the post-box at home for your boy in the far North-West, it is first whirled fast to Liverpool by the mail train, then taken on board a huge mail steamship to cross the ocean; then again on railway postal cars, or baggage cars, into the interior; and finally by the dog-sledge miles and miles away, to one of the remotest corners of the British Empire.

And all for a penny! This is one of the triumphs of the Imperial Penny Postage, for which Mr. Henniker Heaton at home, and Sir William Mulock, when Postmaster-General of Canada, did so much.

Or suppose the letter be posted in summertime, and your relative lives not beside an ice-bound river, but on a prairie settlement further south. What then?

The Canadian postal service is ready with an answer. Here is a buckboard for it; a light waggon which is little more than a board on four wheels, and with one or two seats for coachman and passenger. Boxes and water-tight mail bags are piled on the board and away it goes over the springy grass to its destination far away.

Or, yet again, suppose that water leads most directly to your friend, a river which may be full of rapids, and yet—at spaces—flat flowing and swift—then canoes, flat-bottomed "York boats," and portage come into play.

Indians often bear a hand at this business. They know well how to paddle the mail canoe, and when the rapids rush and swirl ahead, they beach the frail craft and carry the whole load and the canoe itself round the danger-spot to smooth water again. This process is called portage. Or, if the mail bags and luggage be in a large flat-bottomed barge-like boat, it would be let down gradually along the rapids by ropes to the safe channel below.

Rapids, it may be explained, is the name given to a very swift flow of the river when, for instance, the channel slopes suddenly downward, but not so much so as to become a cataract or waterfall; the channel is often broken by rocks or tree trunks and sometimes descends in a series of slopes, or, maybe, levels, one below the other to the quieter flow beyond.

Pack-mules are also utilized in some of the remoter districts. The railway terminus on the long, long road which leads to Dawson City, in the Yukon territory, is at White Horse Rapids, and thence your letter pursues its way on the Dawson trail by pack-mules miles and miles along to the remote North-West.

Steamers, of course, are used by the Canadian Post-office. Canada possesses a wonderful system of waterways, the Dominion indeed containing much more than half the fresh water on the globe; navigable rivers have been deepened and canals constructed for inland traffic. Railways also are being rapidly built. Over twenty thousand miles of railway routes were open in June, 1906, and many more miles of railway were under construction, more than a thousand miles being opened in one year recently. Mail catching posts are also utilized in Canada as in Britain. Our Canadian fellow-subjects pride themselves—and not without reason—on being up-to-date. During the construction of a great main line, the "End of the Track" post-office was brought into use, and was found of great service. This was a railway van employed as a post-office, and pushed forward as the line advanced to the "end of the track"—a pioneer indeed of civilization, and a testimony to the organizing skill of the Canadian Post-office.

Australia also possesses a large number of railway lines, though the mileage is not so great as in Canada. They are largely used for the conveyance of the mails, while in New South Wales, in outlying districts, coaches are employed.

Throughout the vast extent of the British Empire almost every means of conveyance known to man is used in the postal service. We are so accustomed to receive our letters with regularity that we do not think of the native runner, the dog sledge, the camel, or the horse, that play their parts in the great service. But they all work together toward the desired end, and with the speedy mail trains and fast steamships, form a remarkable organization for the service of man.

THE TRIPLE INJURY.

Talking people down behind their backs is about as ingenious and far-reaching a kind of sin as the Devil has yet invented. For such a missile kills three birds with one stone. It injures the one talked about, the one talking, and the one talked to. A reputation is smirched every time we pass on an unnecessary criticism of a fellow-being. Our own character and self-control are weakened with every such word. And the mind of the listener is poisoned; he who ought to be helped to see and think about the best in others has been degraded, part way at least, toward the unworthiness of our own low level. Once in a while an almost knock-out blow is given to this unworthy and unfair kind of fighting by some one's quietly mentioning a good quality in the absent person who is being criticized. This almost invariably brings gossip to an abrupt close. We shall do well to end others' gossip by this means; and we shall do still better to end our own before it begins.

WOOD PULP FOR PAPER FROM SAWDUST.

"Science Siftings" says:—We lately commented upon the insufficient supply of wood pulp for the manufacture of paper, and in view of this fact the plans of a Canadian company, at the entrance of Rainy River, 20 miles from Vancouver, are of great interest. A large plant has been erected which will convert the vast waste from the saw and shingle mills, including the sawdust—which is now burned at large expense to prevent accumulation—into pulp for paper. The refuse from the local mills will be conveyed to the pulp plant, where the entire mass will be disintegrated into suitable fineness and then used to supplement chemical fibre in the manufacture of paper.

The man who deserves success is the only one who can afford to lose it.

HOT WEATHER AILMENTS.

A medicine that will keep children well is a great boon to every mother. This is just what Baby's Own Tablets do. An occasional dose keeps the little stomach and bowels right, and prevents sickness. During the hot weather months stomach troubles speedily turn to fatal diarrhoea or cholera infantum and if a medicine like Baby's Own Tablets is not at hand the child may die in a few hours. The wise mother will always keep a box of Tablets in the house and give them to her children occasionally to clear out the stomach and bowels and keep them well. Don't wait until the child is sick—the delay may cost a precious little life. Get the Tablets now and you may feel reasonably safe. Every mother who uses these Tablets praises them and that is the best evidence that there is no other medicine for children so good. And the mother has the guarantee of a Government analyst that the Tablets contain no opiate or harmful drug. Dealers sell the Tablets, at 25 cents a box or you can get them by mail from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

WHISTLING PIGEONS.

One of the most curious expressions of emotional life is the application of whistles to a flock of pigeons. These whistles, very light, weighing but a few grammes, are attached to the tails of young pigeons soon after their birth by means of fine copper wire, so that when the birds fly the wind blowing through the whistles sets them vibrating and thus produces an open-air concert, for the instruments in one and the same flock are all tuned differently. On a serene day in Peking, where these instruments are manufactured with great cleverness and ingenuity, it is possible to enjoy this aerial music while sitting in one's room.

There are two distinct types of whistles—those consisting of bamboo tubes placed side by side, and a type based on the principle of tubes attached to a gourd body or wood-chest. They are lacquered in yellow, brown, red and black, to protect the material from the destructive influences of the atmosphere. The tube whistles have either two, three or five tubes. In some specimens the five tubes are made of ox-horn instead of bamboo. The gourd-whistles are furnished with a mouthpiece and small apertures to the number of two, three, six, ten and even thirteen. Certain among them have, besides, a number of bamboo tubes, some on the principal mouthpiece, some arranged around it. These varieties are distinguished by different names. Thus, a whistle with one mouthpiece and ten tubes is called "the eleven-eyed one."

The explanation of the practice of this quaint custom which the Chinese offer is not very satisfactory. According to them, these whistles are intended to keep the flock together and to protect the pigeons from attacks of birds of prey. There seems, however, little reason to believe that a hungry hawk could be induced by this innocent music to keep aloof from satisfying his appetite; and this, doubtless, savors of an after-thought which came up long after the introduction of this usage, through the attempt to give a rational and practical interpretation of something that has no rational origin whatever; for it is not the pigeon that profits from this practice, but merely the human ear, which feasts on the wind-blown tubes and derives aesthetic pleasure from this music. And here, again, it seems to be a purely artistic and emotional tendency that has given rise to a unique industry and custom applied to nature-life.—Scientific American.

I am willing to work, but I want work that I can put my heart into, and feel that it does me good, no matter how hard it is.