

WHAT THE VALI SAID

A French statistician wrote to the vali of Aleppo, Turkey, and asked these four questions: "What are the imports of Aleppo? What is the water supply? What is the birth-rate? The death-rate?" The vali replied: "It is impossible for any one to know the number of camels that kneel in the markets of Aleppo. The water supply is sufficient. No one ever died of thirst in Aleppo. The mind of Allah alone knows how many children shall be born in this vast city in any given time. As to the death-rate, who would venture to ascertain this, for it is revealed only to the angels of death who shall be taken and who shall be left. O Son of the West, cease your idle and presumptuous questionings, and know that these things are not revealed to the children of men." And it has come to pass that the vali's gentle style has penetrated into some Canadian board rooms.

SOME EARLY HISTORY

Hitherto unpublished history regarding events leading to confederation in Canada and the building of the Canadian Pacific Railroad were given to the Caledonian Society at Montreal in an address by Sir James Grant, of Ottawa, a former member of parliament and a famous medical man. The influence of Sir George Simpson, according to Sir James, has not had its proper place in history. Sir George, who has been dubbed the Scottish Emperor of the fur trade, was at one time employed in the West India trade. Later Lord Selkirk appointed him superintendent of the Hudson's Bay Company's affairs, and after one year of successful service he was chosen governor of the company, which had a London board of governors, deputy governor and five directors. Sir George Simpson was the first governor and chief of Rupert's Land, with unlimited power in his hands. The North West Company and Hudson's Bay Company joined hands in 1821, after which Sir George resided many years in Lachine. He made canoe journeys from Montreal to the Red River more than forty times, and in 1828 crossed the continent in a canoe from Hudson's Bay to Vancouver. Notes of this trip are now in the possession of Sir James Grant. The development in Canada since the days of those canoe trips, has made Canada an important factor in the money markets, although as a borrower. The vast work accomplished since those early years is the best possible reply to critics of the large sums borrowed abroad by the Dominion.

In 1841, Simpson was knighted for important Arctic exploration. He was a director of the Bank of British North America, and the Bank of Montreal. Sir George frequently held council with Sir John Macdonald and on the shoulders of two empire builders rested the acquisition of the great Northwest, and the future of that important territory. According to Sir James Grant, this was, in fact, the foundation of confederation, and the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, both in the embryonic stage. In 1865 he delivered an address in Ottawa, on the desirability of joining the various parts of this country together, and placing an iron splint on them, to strengthen the union. Sir John Macdonald sent for Sir James, and asked where he obtained all the information contained in his address. He replied from Sir George Simpson, and the ex-chief factors of the Hudson's Bay Company. He at once said, "you must come into parliament," which Sir James did as representative of the county of Russell, in 1865. In 1872 Sir John Macdonald invited him in the Commons, through Sir John Rose, then finance minister, to take charge of the bill for construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway in his own name, and make the speech for the government. This he did.

Little by little, the pages of Canada's early history are being compiled. The more that is learned, the more is one impressed of what large volumes the Hudson's Bay Company's pioneers could have added to the historical library.

SMALL CHANGE

One can sit almost anywhere and watch the dividends pass.

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Forestry department says birch is wanted by woodworkers. If they persist, it can be had.

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New York ironworker got \$25,000 for broken neck while Tammany Hall cannot even draw life insurance.

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Windsor Hotel stock has been imitating the elevator, going up, going down, and now it's stuck between floors.

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To see Montreal office boys hustling, during this telephone breakdown, is a sight for the gods—or for the Humane Society.

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The motto over Sir Richard McBride's desk is probably "If you want to know who's boss around here, start something."

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Montreal paper speaks of "Toronto rumors on iron." The ones we hear are usually served on a silver platter, with taffy to taste.

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Shareholders of British Columbia Fisheries scarcely know whether to call Sir George Doughty, M.P., a whale of a financier or a giddy old kipper.

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St. Thomas, Ont., man died last week, aged 103. Short-term notes and long-term hobble skirts were on the top shelf at the time of his birth.

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Premier Borden is mystified as to how New York reporters know of all his movements. If he stays there long enough, they will do his next session's work.

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Montreal Herald has ceased to ask every day "Who owns ten thousand shares of Tramways stock?" substituting "Keep your eye on Quebec." Getting warm!

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Noisy London editor prints front page photo of his wife, as "the charm" of his paper. This leads the way for some of the quiet ones to publish portraits of their howling successes.

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Montreal Herald continues to ask every day "Who owns ten thousand shares of Tramways stock?" We suspect the answer "Santa Claus," is being held until December 25th.

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The misapprehension that the Canadian Pacific Railway would probably electrify its system, may have arisen from Canadian Pacific's desire to electrocute the Austrian government system.

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Two captains the other day reported a new island 30 miles northeast of Sable Island, and now another captain says the island has gone. We suggest that the only way to solve the mystery is to learn what was really in the bottle.

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Mr. Herbert Samuel, British postmaster-general, should not take seriously Hon. Rodmond Roblin's diatribe. It was merely a cyclone, and the Hon. Rodmond is probably laughing at himself now, just as the sun smiles at the hurricane.