

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Little Stories by Land and Sea, concerning the folk who move hither and thither across the face of a Big Land.

CANADIAN AUTHORESSSES AT LARGE.

MRS. JEAN BLEWETT has been badly traduced by an Edmonton newspaper which called her recently "Miss" Jean Blewett. She is now on her way to the Peace River country where she is to visit her only son, located there some years ago. On the way Mrs. Blewett will study folk problems in the eastern settlements on the prairie with the particular object of investigating the social conditions, especially of the women, with a dip into the problems of church union. This is Mrs. Blewett's first serious trip to the West away from the railway. She is one of a number of Canadian authoresses who have lately got the northward desire for travel. Last summer Miss Agnes Deans Cameron went clear up to the mouth of the Mackenzie and came back to lecture ably on wheat and whales. Miss Agnes Laut canoed down the Saskatchewan and wrote several articles. The Canadian authoress abroad is becoming almost a fad.

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"BIG MONTREAL."

"**B**IG Montreal" is the title of an editorial in the *St. John Telegraph*, and the *Montreal Witness* has been quoting statistics that bring the seaport city into the half-million class. No one has ever used the phrase "Big Toronto," which, however, judged by the editorial pages of the *Toronto Telegram*, is a whacking big place beside which Montreal would be a good-sized village. We are reminded also that very seldom does a writer of fiction mention Toronto, whereas Montreal is frequently worked in as a place big enough to have an American identity. The *Montreal Witness* has been digging up comparative statistics about cities on the American continent and discovers some very interesting facts—without even a reference to Toronto. Says the *Telegraph*:

"The big Australian cities, Sydney and Melbourne, still far outrank the biggest Canadian city, but Montreal seems destined to overtake and surpass both of them before many more years. By the latest reckoning Montreal is the ninth city in size on this continent. The *Witness* makes some interesting comparisons based on the appearance of the new directory which gives the city proper a population of 389,837. The St. Louis district, about to be annexed, will raise the total to 420,000. In the United States there are ahead of Montreal: New York, 4,222,685; Chicago, 2,572,835; Philadelphia, 1,491,161; St. Louis, 704,593; Baltimore, 650,000; Boston, 622,000; Pittsburg, 565,000; and Cleveland, 525,000, thus placing Montreal ninth on the continent. Some of these cities are growing faster than Montreal. Close behind, the following are roughly counted at four hundred thousand each: Buffalo, Detroit, Milwaukee, San Francisco. Montreal has still, however, a considerable immediate suburban population, making the total up to 476,334, or, if we include Lachine and intervening population, twelve thousand more, so that we are now close on the half million. Indeed, assuming the same rate of growth for the month or two since this census was taken, we may assume that Montreal, with its insular environs, now numbers half a million."

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WATER OF WESTERN CITIES.

EDMONTON has trouble with its water supply, which comes from the Saskatchewan, whereas Calgary has little or no trouble with water which comes racing down the Bow from the glaciers at six miles an hour right through the city. Calgary's water is better than Edmonton's; is in fact as fine as water can be. The Saskatchewan, however, is a good, healthy stream, sometimes rather more sandy than is needed for use, but free from microbes. The trouble at Edmonton is not, however, with the supply but with the pumping plant, which has not grown as rapidly as the city. A new pump has just been installed with six million gallons capacity; but this must be duplicated before the city can hope to get lower insurance rates. Of course Calgary, down in the bowl of the foothills, has the advantage of a gravity system fed from a height and not requiring such an outlay for pumps. Edmonton's water runs down a two-hundred-foot gorge and must be pumped to the town which is on the heights above. Hence the difference—which, however, the Edmonton people are bound to overcome just as fast as human beings know how. Edmonton has always been noted for the most unanimous enterprise on the part of her citizens. Edmonton was built up to a town of nearly three thousand without even a line of railway when goods had to be ferried and wagoned in from Strathcona. At that time the water supply was somewhat peculiar also. The waterworks of 1900 were three or four water-wagons with a pipe attachment. These wagons went to the river

and plied up the bank to the town supplying water at so much a barrel to the citizens who paid for it direct to the water-man. In winter when the mercury dropped below zero, the water-man had a small stove rigged on the back of his wagon and a system of pipes by which he hot-aired his load from freezing. Which—in the utter absence of any fire pressure system in those days—was worse than even an inadequate pumping plant.

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HUDSON AND HISTORY.

THE second St. Lawrence is becoming immensely popular as a subject of discussion and illustration in newspapers. The rivers flowing from Lake Winnipeg into Hudson's Bay are the system that make the new economic series of waterways and probable railways on the north shore. Just the other day a model of Henry Hudson's ship, the *Half Moon*, came into New York on a steamer and was sent to a dockyard for refurbishing on purpose to be the central figure in a celebration to be held this fall, commemorating the life and voyages of the man who discovered Hudson and Manahat, which afterwards became "Manhattan." Nothing is said, however, as to the bigger voyages that Hudson made to the bay that bears his name—where he was at length cast adrift by a mutinous crew and was never given a grave. But Henry Hudson is to have a big future yet in both the United States and Canada. He is more of an international figure than Champlain, who saw little of the United States but the lake bearing his name. Hudson seems to have been as much interested in discovering the site of New York and Albany as in locating the sites of Churchill and York Factory. But he lost his life in the latter job; not dreaming, very likely, that the imaginations of Canadians would within two hundred years or so be dreaming of great cities on that frozen bay rivalling New York and Montreal as seaports; certainly not dreaming whence it was that the bay got its water—for he never got inland to trace up the Nelson to Lake Winnipeg and beyond that to the Saskatchewan with its thousands of miles; the Red and the Assiniboine that rise in Dakota and empty into the lake at the southern end; nor the Rainy River and the lakes of that name racing in from the south-eastward. However, it all seems to be working out to a scheme in which railways and water-powers and big cities and elevators are involved; and perhaps by the time the tercentenary of Hudson's discovery of the big bay comes round, Canada will be able to organise a pageant at the new city of Churchill.

The *Winnipeg Free Press* has published some interesting information concerning this new traffic route that has been talked of as making Winnipeg a seaport. It says:

The Nelson classifies as one of the largest Canadian rivers. Though its waters have never been gauged, Dr. Bell has estimated that it has an annual flow five times that of the Ottawa at Chaudiere Falls, while, because of its tremendous storage reservoir, it has in the great western lakes district the spring freshets are not dangerous or troublesome. When Dr. Bell made his trip down the Nelson in the seventies, he was the first white man who had made the trip for half a century, and since that time there have not been a half dozen who have travelled the route.

But duty sent the Hudson's Bay railway engineers along the Nelson and they are bringing back reports which tell of the many advantages of that magnificent body of water. Its drainage area is almost as large as that of the St. Lawrence, which it resembles in some respects. The fall from Lake Winnipeg to tide-water is 710 feet. The river takes part of this fall in leaps of various heights, while for the balance it flows with great speed over miles of rapids. Some of the falls are 25 feet or more in height, which with the tremendous flow of water available, gives promise of tremendous hydro-electric energy available.

Then at the mouth the river again resembles the St. Lawrence very strongly. From Seal Island, the head of tide-water, it opens out gradually into an ever widening channel for 40 miles to Hudson Bay, which might be said to correspond with the St. Lawrence from Three Rivers to Quebec. One of the advantages of the harbour, if developed, would be that it would be almost impossible for a hostile vessel or fleet to approach the port, or do other than blockade it. By simply removing the buoys of the channel, cruisers or battleships would not be able to come nearer than to within 40 miles of the harbour proper, and the channel could be readily defended. One man who had been over the route said recently that the construction of the Hudson's Bay railway would be a greater benefit to the empire than the gift of a half dozen *Dreadnoughts*. It would give an additional route across the continent so that if the St. Lawrence were blocked supplies could still be handled from the Atlantic to the Pacific by a Canadian route.



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