

HARRISON'S SEARCH FOR POLE

Englishman Who Was in Edmonton Last Spring Proposes to Start from Banks Land, off Northern Coast, and to Travel Northward With Dogs and Sledges Through the Long Winter Nights—Tells of His Life Among Eskimos and His Experiences During Two Winters Spent in the North.

Harrison's Search for a Polar Continent, the vast, white, silent north continues to exert its magnetism upon the explorers of two continents. The past generation of Franklin, McClure, Richardson and McClintock has been succeeded by no less venturesome body of younger men, who, however, with the advantage of the clearly purchased experience of their forerunners, and the immeasurably superior equipment due to the development of modern science, are still vainly endeavoring to lift the veil of mystery which enwraps that intangible goal of their fondest dreams, the North Pole.

Mr. Alfred H. Harrison, F.R.G.S., to explore the most novel plan of reaching the Pole. Novel it is not perhaps, so far as the route is concerned, but it is distinctly novel in the methods by which he proposes to carry out his quest. Previous expeditions have been limited to the use of trawlers, large expenditure of money, chartering or building of special vessels, and enlisting of men among the hardier and more adventurous seafaring nations. Harrison's method differs radically from these. He proposes to start from Banks Land, off the northern coast, and to travel northward with dogs and sledges through the long winter nights of the Arctic, as has been customary, waiting for the chance of open water in the short summer. Further than this, he proposes, contrary to all preconceived notions of other explorers, to depend entirely upon the Eskimos for assistance in his project.

With this object in view he has spent two years, from 1906 to 1907, in the Arctic circle near the mouth of the Mackenzie river, living with the Eskimos, learning their language, familiarizing himself with their habits, and gaining their confidence and fitting himself for his object by living as one of themselves. Incidentally he has roughly surveyed a large tract of country lying to the east of the Mackenzie delta, and has recorded the results of his observations on a map which shows the contours and waterways of the hitherto incompletely charted country over which he travelled.

The account of his experiences in his published work, "In Search of a Polar Continent," published by Edwin Arnold, London, contains some 200 pages of interestingly written descriptions of Eskimo life and travel as well as of his theory regarding a future expedition for the discovery of the North Pole, which he proposes to undertake as soon as he is able to find means of doing so.

The fascination which the Canadian North has for the author comes to him by inheritance, for his father was in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Good Hope, at the edge of the Arctic Circle, at the time that the late Sir John Franklin was still in doubt, but two or three short years before the Anderson expedition to Buck's River via the Mackenzie finally settled the fate of that intrepid explorer.

Previous to this expedition, the author had already spent some time in the Slave Lake country, with the purpose of testing the hardships of the country and his own capacity of coping with them, and finding himself equal to the occasion returned, after an absence of eighteen months, to England, to plan the expedition of which his book is the record.

Of his trip down the Athabasca, Slave and Mackenzie Rivers to his ultimate starting point at Fort McPherson, on Peel's river, it is hardly necessary to enlarge in these columns, the details of such a trip, being more or less familiar to readers of the Bulletin. But at McPherson, his real troubles commenced, for though he reached that point in October it was not until February that he was able to obtain men to accompany him to Herschel Island in the Arctic Ocean, off the mouth of the Mackenzie river, which he proposed to make his base of operations at being the winter quarters of the Arctic whaling vessels, by whose assistance he hoped to gain Banks Land.

Piercing Winds and Blizzards. With two Indians, and two toy-sleighs loaded with provisions and instruments he set off over the ice down the west branch of the Mackenzie, travelling from ten to thirty miles a day, suffering from piercing winds and blizzards, but with no lack of fuel until the northern edge of the timber belt was reached. From here to the coast, the only fuel to be found was stunted willow from whose frozen roots a meagre fire was obtained. On reaching the frozen sea drifted with frozen ice the harbor was found plentiful, and a day's journey brought them to Herschel Island.

Here five steam whalers were found frozen in the harbor. All five were spending their third involuntary winter in the ice. Bound for San Francisco they had been frozen in a month earlier than usual, and two alone had been provisioned for a third year. Supplies had been pooled, and all were living on half rations, which would bring them to the end of February without relief. It had been the explorer's intention to have provisioned himself from the whalers for a two months' journey to Banks Land on the ice, but in the face of this stringency, all hopes of further ice travel had to be abandoned.

With ready resource the traveler volunteered the use of his dogs to transport deer meat from the Eskimo hunting grounds to the vessels, and his own services as hunter, in return for the keep and the support of the dogs should come in July. This was gratefully accepted, and Harrison

left for the mountains for a sojourn with the Eskimos. His dogs brought to the ships, in eleven weeks' hunting, 16,000 pounds of deer moose.

Concerning the Eskimos. Of his introduction to Eskimo life he says: "My meeting with the Eskimos impressed me very much. They were camped in four tents in a knoll under a lofty mountain. These tents commanded for many miles in both directions a view of the stream we had just ascended, as also of a wide portion of the surrounding uplands."

"The hawk-eyed natives saw us coming long before we could make out their camp, and accordingly they got ready a goodly feast of fresh deer meat, both for us and for our dogs. The four tents formed a half moon, the men being seated in one of them and the women in a second. In front of either party rose a vast pile of cooked deer meat, steaming hot, and this was the Eskimo's art of cooking. In one hand they held a large knife, in the other a huge chunk of meat, into which they fastened their teeth, cutting off a lump the size of which their hands were imbedded—a piece which was commonly as large as your fist, and which vanished with the most astounding rapidity."

"There were eight Eskimo men, each of whom devoured at least three of the joints, and after gobbling up the meat they invariably broke the bones to get at the marrow. When the robust was at an end the Eskimos all bestirred themselves to put up my tent."

Harrison made a practice of visiting one of the Eskimo tents each day, spending his time learning the names of everything he saw, and improving his knowledge of the language. Handling with the Eskimos was not always a bed of roses, however. Game grew scarce, and camp was moved from place to place, the hunters often being perishing near the starvation point, and ten dogs being lost from frost-bite and biting.

The Eskimos, finally coming across an ideal hunting ground with abundance of deer and ptarmigan, a man was despatched to the ships with the good news, and in due course returned with sledges for the weapons, freight, and Harrison left with them for the ships, a three days' heavy march. By April the little party had reached open water again, and the ships set out on the search for whales. The explorer accompanying them, who chaffered extensively with one another.

Awaiting the Supply Ship. The whalers returned to Herschel Island in July to await the advent of the supply ship. Instead of the expected vessel, an annual mail steamer from the San Francisco line, and the uncertainty as to the despatch of the boat from that city, in the confusion subsequent upon the disaster of the Titanic, the whalers, in the prudent course of lifting anchor to meet the vessel, if delayed, or to reach some port where supplies might be obtained in event of no landing here. Again the explorer's hopes were dashed, but, nothing daunted, he set out again upon the Mackenzie for Fort McPherson to obtain provisions for another winter, and to await the following year, supplies which he ordered to be brought by the whalers for his anticipated excursion over the northern ice towards the pole.

He took with him two Eskimos and their families. With these he lived and spent the winter, surveying a string of lakes stretching from the sea, through the Mackenzie northwesterly to the coast at Point Warren, a distance of some 20 miles. Five hundred pounds of sugar and fifty pounds each of rice, flour, oatmeal and tea, with small quantities of coffee and syrup, were all the food obtainable at McPherson, and on these fourteen people, to say nothing of the dogs, were to live for eleven months, killing out their fare by the daily catch of fish or flesh in the death of an Arctic winter.

Outlines of the winter will amply testify to the sufficiency of game, the hoarded stock was doled out in carefully measured quantities. Camp was changed with unswerving regularity as fish caught with hook or net in holes dug in the three feet ice—became scarce, or as word was dropped by a passing Eskimo of food to be found elsewhere. By April the little party had reached the coast again, far to the east, in its dogged pursuit of sustenance, and turned its steps towards the mouth of the Mackenzie with a view to reaching all at once the spot where it all left the whaler on the east branch of that river, ere the spring freshets should destroy or carry them away. This they succeeded in doing, and by this time, the end of May, wild fowl became plentiful, so that until the breaking of the ice the food question was no longer a cause for anxiety.

Days of Joy and Plenty. A joyous picture it made when the men came in with game. Fires were blazing, and everywhere the ground was strewn with feathers, whilst the men beamed down benignly, and the Eskimos, happy beyond measure, though it were no day, instead of eight o'clock in the evening. There were thousands of small birds all around, and in addition to their mates, countless wild flowers were coyly pushing up their heads from the snow, and from all the hillsides plentiful berries were peeping, of which the Eskimos gathered a large dish of every day. The days went on, and still food kept coming in. The fish which we took from our own net were long later the camp fire to dry in the smoke and in the sun. The burns continued to discharge their volume into the lake, from which the ice was now vanishing. These were happy days, but they can only be truly appreciated by those who have endured from the hardships of the winter.

Different, indeed, were they from the days of starvation of winter months of frozen fish, frequently eaten raw and often better both raw and frozen

themselves. The women eat on the floor. The stage at night is reserved for the master of the household, his family and guests. The window is in the ceiling and hermetically sealed. It is often a block of ice, which never melts or drips, but sometimes the skin of a fish called loche.

The dwellings of the Nunatana are igloos or willow tents, more suited to their migratory habits. In building these, a cylindrical hole is scooped out of the snow, which piled upon all sides forms a low wall. Into the sides of this wall are fixed eight bent willow staves, at equal distances apart. The tips of opposite staves are lashed together and four intersecting willow arches are thus formed. Over this dome-like structure is stretched an outer covering of canvas, the skirts of which are kept down by being buried in the snow in which the willow staves are fixed. The upper part, one for the window of loche-skin, the other for the funnel-shaped hole for the smoke, is made of walrus ivory simulating the body of a walrus, which are forced through the hole, and sharpened to a keen point. No hard work is done in building these. To ward off snow blindness they were ingeniously carved goggles of walrus ivory, which are forced through two holes, under the lower lip, one in each corner of the mouth, and which are fastened to the nose by a single piece of walrus ivory. These are fastened round the back of the head with rawhide thongs.

Business and Holiday Making. The Nunatana would bring Russian goods, were they by the way, and are also speaking of these in detail. It may be noted (1) that the soil here is as good as in other parts of the Dominion; and (2) that the winters are not more severe than those which are experienced in the northern portions of Canada. Six months, moreover, of open water may be reckoned upon—from the beginning of March to the beginning of November. The lakes and rivers abound with fish; there are salmon, herring, and Mackenzie salmon, whitefish and suckers, dog, trout and herrings.

Lakes Teem With Fish. The large inland sheets of water—such as Great and Lesser Slave lakes, Athabasca and Peace lakes—are teeming with fish, which forms today the staple food of the scanty inmates of the Eskimo tents. The Eskimos would of itself be no slight asset were there any means of shipping the produce out of the country. This brings me to the subject of transport. Population will not merely increase with the means of communication. Now we will advance, like a couple of boys playing at leap-frog, each by the other, and who advance with advantage like those youngsters, by leaps and bounds. As the settler becomes more numerous, the great waterways will be made navigable, and their banks, like the land abutting the railways, will make a tedious work of the country, and will be dotted with nobilities and with prosperous towns. Here are at the present day three unsheltered and unquarantined, unhabited were they invaded by the locomotive. A railway from Edmonton to the Athabasca river would give access to 210 miles of waterway, in one direction, up to Lesser Slave lake, and 165 miles of stream running down the Grand and Peace rivers to the Peace river, a distance of 300 miles of a river yet unfrozen, and running through a finer country than that approached by the first named line. The third railway to be sought for would connect the Athabasca river at Fort McMurray with Prince Albert thereby giving easy access to the namesake lake from this port. It might be objected that there are no markets in this country; but his objection we have already virtually refuted. Given the spread of railways and the inflow of settlers, the establishment of markets will follow as a matter of course. Let me conclude my statement of this country's capabilities by mentioning its lime and stone, its oils and asphaltum, coal and salt. In cherishing these sanguine hopes as to its future, I do not think I am alone.

One Man Knows the Country. They are shared by a few who have come off the beaten tracks, and made themselves acquainted with the country. When the community of these northern lands is realized, one cannot wonder that few men should be in the single apartment. In my hotel there I have met with only one man who knows the country from end to end, and he is a man of the old school. He is a retired member of the British forces in India, and has been in the country for many years, and has departed from the beaten tracks, and has in many places

penetrated far into the interior. However, in the absence of railways, men whose enterprise and qualifications are less eminent than his, obtain a life-time and adequate knowledge of this outlying region? In his last chapter the author reiterates his belief that the solution of the problem of reaching the north pole lies in a winter journey with dogs, and his intention, if funds permit, of proving his theory. If support is forthcoming he will leave Prince Albert's Point, Banks Land, in October, 1909, with 11 Eskimos, 18 sledges and 162 dogs; and will travel for 200 days over the ice, which at that season of the year is unbroken. The distance from his starting point to Spitzbergen, over the pole, is 4,500 miles, and given any travelling surface other than open water, which he believes to be impossible in an Arctic winter, he sees no difficulty in reaching Spitzbergen, after crossing the pole, in the time he has set, carrying his own supplies. He has made a close study of the amount and character of the provisions required, and claims that \$25,000 would finance the expedition, and has the courage of his convictions, and it may easily be a credit to author and publisher alike.

However that may be, there is no doubt that Mr. Harrison's explorations have given much information on a portion of the northern country which has never before been explored by white men, and his surveys, though roughly made, will be of great service in mapping that portion of country immediately east of the Mackenzie delta. The book is written in an entertaining manner, and contains much new matter on Arctic subjects. Mr. Harrison's observations on the Eskimos, their manners and customs, and the gradual way in which they are developing in the use of European tools and utensils, particularly their almost universal use of whalebone instead of walrus ivory, are very interesting. The illustrations are many of them new and exceedingly well reproduced, and the appearance of the book is a credit to author and publisher alike.

Northern Canada is booming larger and larger in the public eye, as settlements encroach upon the domain once stigmatized, by those who preferred to know, as the land of eternal ice and snow. It is not too much to say that there are those even now who are coveting the future of the northern country which has never before been explored by white men, and his surveys, though roughly made, will be of great service in mapping that portion of country immediately east of the Mackenzie delta.

Not least among the interesting things in the volume are a few concluding paragraphs on the future of the Dominion and the part which will be played in this by the development of the great northern hinterland. The Eskimos first visited Herschel Island, and the part which will be played in this by the development of the great northern hinterland. The Eskimos first visited Herschel Island, and the part which will be played in this by the development of the great northern hinterland.

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GENERAL LAKE TO REMAIN. Inspector-General of Canadian Militia, WILLIAM G. T. TUDOR.

Ottawa, Dec. 29.—Militia orders issued today announce that Major-General Sir Percy H. N. Lake, Inspector-General, whose term of service has been extended for two years, will, in addition, be chief military adviser to the minister of militia, with a seat ex-officio on the militia council. Major-General Lake was some weeks ago appointed Quarter-Master-General to the British forces in India. It is understood that he was disposed to accept, but was persuaded to remain in Canada to complete the re-organization of militia of the force, which has been going on under his guidance for years past. Other militia appointments being the following: Canadian Mounted Rifles "A" Squadron, to be provisionally major in organization, James Milne Harper; "B" Squadron, to be veterinary captain in organization, Veterinary Captain Bruce Russell Tuley; from the 14th Canadian Hussars, Provisional Lt. G. P. Thompson is permitted to retire. 3d "British Columbia" Regiment, to be provisional Lt. Colonel, Daniel Glenford Reid, vice H. D. K. Grimston, resigned.

ALIEN MUSICIANS BROUGHT IN. And the Foreigners are Also Cutting Prices in the U.S. Washington, Dec. 29.—The president today had a long talk with E. J. Gavigan, an attorney representing the labor interests in New York; Jos. N. Weber, president of the American Musicians, and Phillip Flawser, president of the New York Union of Musicians, who claim that alien musicians are being brought into this country in large numbers, under contract, to displace American musicians. The president was told that in New York city whole orchestras of aliens have been brought to hotels, the same was true as to Chicago and other cities. The president also was told that the immigration service of the department of commerce and labor, the invasion could be stopped. Not only were American musicians losing their positions, he was told, but the foreigners were cutting prices. The president gave his visitors a note to Secretary Strauss of the department of commerce and labor, asking that a full report be made to him as to the charges.

Record Aeroplane Flight. Lemoine, Jan. 2.—Wilbur Wright, the American aeronaut, this afternoon beat all previous aeroplane records. He remained in the air for two hours and nine minutes, covering officially a distance of 2 miles. Counting the wide curves he made over 20 miles. The flight was made in cold weather. Later he ascended with M. Barthou as a passenger.

Desperate Attempt to Rob Jewelry Store in Montreal Frustrated. Montreal, Dec. 31.—On one of the leading streets of the city, which was crowded at the time with people, a desperate attempt was made this afternoon to loot a jewelry store. Walking into the store of Farmer & Sons on St. Lambert's Hill, a man carrying a heavy hammer, knocked one of the clerks into unconsciousness and then started to clean out the store. Albert Farnes, one of the sons, grappled with the robber, and succeeded in checking the man into unconsciousness. The police were called to the scene and the man taken into custody. The desperado, as well as Mr. Farnes and his co-adjutor, had to be taken to the hospital to have their injuries attended to. The desperado was a man named Oliver Patis, but nothing further is known about him.

Sues Call by for \$20,000. Calgary, Dec. 2.—Yesterday a writ was issued against the city for \$20,000 by John Anderson, who as one time employed in the public works department. It appears that Anderson was working at the time on the city's sewer works, and was laid off because of some alleged irregularities of account, when the whole works fell up. Anderson was severely injured and since then has been unable to follow any employment, and it is unable to work for some time past. Anderson has for this reason been suing the city against the city.

Children in Attendance in the Methodist Sunday Schools of Edmonton, Strathcona and Clover Bar Gather in McDougall Church—Innovation is Eminent Successful—400 Children Present.

An innovation was introduced in Sunday school work in Edmonton, Strathcona and Clover Bar Friday by a New Year's rally in which the Methodist churches of Edmonton, Strathcona and Clover Bar participated. It was a great success for the first of the kind here. There were over 500 pupils and 200 parents in attendance at the rally, which was held in McDougall Methodist church. The chairman was Alex. Butehatch, the oldest of the superintendent churches, and the program was made up of hymns, pipe organ music, a quartet by Wesley church ladies, and a talk by Mrs. E. E. Marshall. Instrumental music was also furnished by an orchestra composed of musicians from the different churches taking part in the rally.

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TO RESIGN LEADERSHIP?

He Will Step Down from Party in Ontario—Mackinac, Editor of the Successor.

2.—Hon. A. J. Macneil has stepped down from his position as leader of the Ontario Conservative Party. He is understood to be the most influential member of the cabinet, and his resignation is a serious blow to the government. He is expected to be replaced by Mr. Mackinac, who is a well-known politician and a member of the Ontario Legislative Council.

UNDER AUTO CAR.

On Leaving Boy Victim on Road. A large touring car was filled with boys, crushed the life of a boy, a newsboy, on the road. The car was driven by a man who was not licensed to drive, and the driver was charged with manslaughter. The boy was killed on the road, and the car was found to be in a state of disrepair.

POKANE FLYER.

and a Curve and Killed Cock. A flyer was killed by a curve on the road. The flyer was flying over the road, and was struck by a curve, which caused him to fall and be killed. The cause of the accident was attributed to the flyer's lack of experience and the driver's failure to see him in time to stop.

Relief Found in U.S.

2.—President Roosevelt special message to Congress regarding the relief fund for the unemployed. The president announced that he had signed a bill to provide relief for the unemployed workers in the United States. The bill would provide for the payment of unemployment benefits to workers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

head pains, in fact many are completely incapacitated with one of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Ask your druggist about the formula, in the box and it can't be one dose and be cured by all dealers.

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