

PEOPLE, PLACES AND PROGRESS

A. M. BENZANSON, the author of "The Peace River Trail," has now made his most eventful trek into that northern land. His book was the result of his first two trips made before last winter. Last summer he spent at Edmonton wishing he were north again; for "Biz," as he is called by his chums, is a Norwegian who doesn't much care for the ways of a town. Last fall he went back in a buckboard with a team and a companion. But he soon came back to Edmonton. This time he stayed not so long, but to much better purpose. He got married and just the other day started back with his

and townsmen who want the lumber. The consumer does not feel equal to the price asked by the middleman; the middleman has the benefit of the low prices charged by the manufacturer. This is variously described as a hold-up and a deadlock. On the whole it looks like mighty poor business.

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ONE of the Detroit newspapers has published the first descriptive article on the great international tunnel now being bored under the Detroit River just below Windsor. It says for instance:



A. M. Benzanson and his friend off for the Peace River last summer

wife to the Peace River. He is the first man who ever got married on purpose to settle down in that land. He started from Edmonton in a sleigh with a tent on board; a sort of prairie schooner on runners. The last heard of him he had encountered a thaw that hung up the sleigh. Now he is waiting for snow again. If it does not come he will probably find it necessary to continue the journey on horseback.

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THINK of it! The littlest province in Canada is about to furnish seed oats to the farmers of the great and golden West. It is intimated that in pursuance of its seed-grain policy, the Government may buy oats in Prince Edward Island and ship them out to Saskatchewan and Alberta. Now you could put Prince Edward Island down on the map of Saskatchewan or Alberta, and it would look like a fly on a big hand. We have talked about the golden glow of the prairie, until we have Yukons on our tongues; we have had visions of miles upon miles of box cars trailing out the glorious millions of bushels of grain from the granary of the Empire—and all that sort of thing. Probably if any farmer from the two-by-four fighting little island down by the Atlantic had nudged us and said, "See here, neighbour, there'll come a time when we'll send seed oats to the prairie," we should have asked him if he had ever seen a real railroad; because this little island is so tiny that to look at it on the map it seems as though a good-sized freight-train loaded with oats would have a hard time shunting without running off into the sea. But all the same the seed oats of Prince Edward Island are likely to go to the golden granary of the Empire; which makes us sit up and think that carrying coals to Newcastle may not be so much of a paradox after all. Prince Edward Island is all right. The farmers of Alberta and Saskatchewan will now be pasting maps of the island in their hats.

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IN Saskatchewan the farmers have applied to the Government for more than 700,000 bushels of seed grain. The grain which these applications represented was divided as follows: Wheat, 359,387 bushels; oats, 370,712 bushels; barley, 44,472 bushels; total, 774,571 bushels. This means that from the seed grain loans not less than 500,000 acres will be sown this year which with an average crop should yield 15 million bushels.

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LUMBER in the West is being tied up by the high prices exacted by the prairie retailers. In the mill yards of Vancouver and Victoria are millions upon millions of feet of lumber on which prices have lately been reduced, as noted previously on this page. On the prairie are thousands of farmers

"Just ahead of the timbered arches stands the rear edge of the steel shield. About its circumference are distributed 21 hydraulic jacks, great metal shoes capping the ends of their powerful pistons. With the piston shoes bearing on the forward course of the arch timbers, the mere turning of a valve can distribute the tremendous pressure of 70,000 pounds to any one of the shoes.

"Come up on No. 10," shouts the shield foreman. "Easy, there!"

"A valve in the hydraulic keyboard is given a turn, and a great steel foot kicks out from the shield rim with almost human accuracy.

"Steady, now; give her 12—14—17!" shouts the foreman.

"Three more feet spring into life, and with a grinding, snapping, rending sound the arch timbers support the pressure with groaning fibers. The huge mass of the shield moves forward ever so slightly. Its sharp, knife-like forward edge has cut into the solid clay. A few more inches of tunnel have been gained. The workmen spring at the clay wall with their hand knives. The slicing process begins anew, and is continued until an additional foot or two of earth has been shaved away ahead of the shield. Another course of timbers is added to the wooden arch, and the jack pistons are ready for one more 'kick' toward the river."

It has long been felt by Windsor that Sarnia has no right to a monopoly of subaqueous connection with the United States. Windsor has for a long while been a butt for the rude jibes of Detroit. About the only use many Detroiters have for Windsor is to race horses on the Windsor tracks and to get married by Windsor preachers. Not long ago some Detroiters on the ferry were busy making fun of Windsor in the hearing of a Windsor citizen who if he were properly known would rank as one of the readiest wits and highly constructive minds in Canada. "So this is Windsor!" said one. "George! it's a beauty spot. I wonder what it's good for, anyhow?" "Well, not very much good for some things," suggested the Windsorite. "But I notice that Windsor is celebrated for one thing at least; more idiots from Detroit come to Windsor every year than to any other city in Canada." Now that the big tunnel is under way it will be some satisfaction to Windsor to reflect that at least as many trains will have to pass through at one end as at the other.

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THE Alberta Government is talking of a Government road to Hudson's Bay. The distance from Edmonton to Port Nelson is nearly one thousand miles which is more than two hundred miles less than the distance to Port Arthur. The Canadian Northern, however, has for a long while been busy on this short haul proposition and may be expected to push the Hudson's Bay project to completion just

as soon as it may be necessary in the interests of the grain growers of the interior. The present outlet for western produce is by a curious analogy the trade route maintained by the old Northwest Fur Company with headquarters at Fort William which in those mediaeval days was the most cosmopolitan place in Canada or the whole of America. The proposed Hudson's Bay route, now so much talked of, is mainly the reversion to the route projected and maintained for the best part of two centuries by the Hudson's Bay Company, who, however, had to substitute York boats on the rivers for the short-haul railways which are now being talked of two centuries later.

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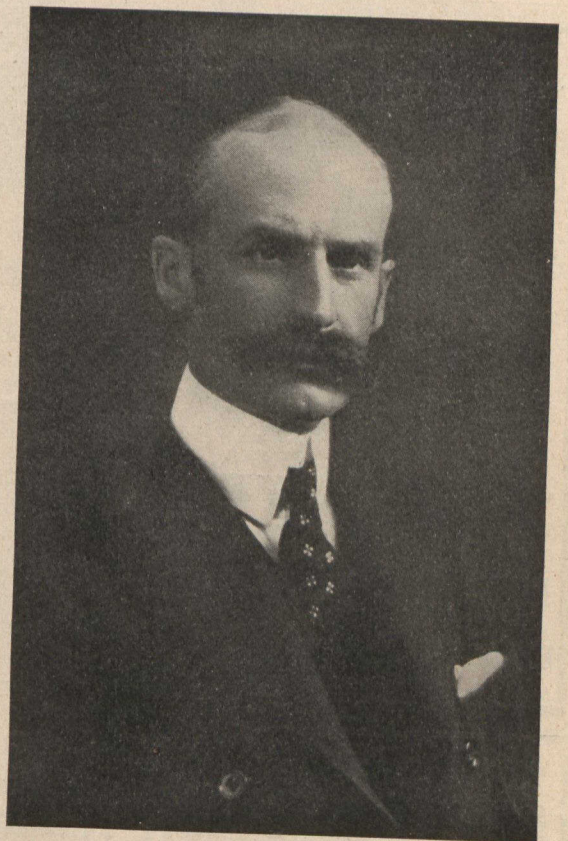
ALL records of coal output have been broken by the Nova Scotia Steel Company's collieries during the past month. The total of 50,760 tons was taken out in February. This for a total of 23 working days is an average of more than 2,000 tons a day. This beats the record for February, 1907, by nearly 8,000 tons. In the blast furnace the daily output was 800 tons; total for the twenty-nine days 5,800 tons. All the coal from Colliery No. 3, the biggest of the company's furnaces, has been shipped to the plant of the Dominion Steel Company at Sydney.

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WESTERN cities nearly three thousand miles from Quebec City are strongly enthusiastic over the nationalisation of the Plains of Abraham. The Canadian Club of Edmonton has guaranteed to raise \$500. The school children of Brandon are into a patriotic scheme to raise as large a sum as possible. Regina is stirred up; at a prospective meeting of the Canadian Club there Mr. William Whyte is expected to address the club in favour of the scheme to be followed by an energetic canvass for funds. Saskatoon is taking hold of the project. Port Arthur also has the fever.

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THE new secretary of the C.P.R. is an Englishman—Mr. W. R. Baker, who succeeded Mr. Drinkwater in that position. Mr. Baker has been exactly thirty-five years in railway work in Canada. His first try at the big game was on the old Canadian Central Railway at Ottawa. He became assistant to the superintendent of the road when the C.P.R. took it over; afterwards general manager. In 1883 he went west as general superintendent of the Manitoba & Northwestern Railway; remained in that capacity till 1892, when he became general manager of that road for eight years, after which he went back to the Canadian Pacific as their executive agent at Winnipeg. Seven years later he became assistant to the second vice-president, which position he left to become secretary.



Mr. W. R. Baker

Recently appointed Secretary of the Canadian Pacific Railway