

LAYING THE PACIFIC CABLE

Much Greater Undertaking Than Many Suppose.

In Places the Pacific Ocean Is Fifteen Miles Deep—Enormous Cost of the Work.

From Monday and Tuesday's Daily.
For more than 25 years the project of a Pacific cable which would give us direct communication with the Orient has bobbed up periodically in congress. Routes have been planned, companies formed and bills without end introduced, but the Pacific islands are still isolated, for the copper cable on which they are to be strung has not yet been laid.

The present prospects are, however, that the long talked of cable laying will be begun in the near future. Lieutenant Commander H. M. Hodges has just returned from a six months' cruise in the collier Nero, during which time he has made a survey of the ocean's bed. He followed the route recommended by Rear Admiral Bradford and reports that it is a practical one.

Briefly described, this route begins at San Francisco and extends straight to Honolulu, from there to Midway island, thence to Guam, with one branch going to Manila and another to Yokohama. While this is by no means such a straight line as you could draw with a ruler between San Francisco and Manila, it is the most direct route practicable. The relay stations at Midway island and Guam would be necessary to the effective working of the cable.

The difficulties which confronted previous projectors of the Pacific cable enterprise were many. Until recently the United States owned no Pacific islands, and consequently we should have had to obtain concessions from other governments. But now that Hawaii has come under our flag and we have gained the Philippines and Guam we have a clear cable road from the Golden Gate to Corregidor island with way stations where Uncle Sam is supreme.

The first survey of the Pacific's bed was made in 1873 by Commodore Belknap in the Tuscarora. He was instructed to find a cable route between the United States and Japan. The navy department told Commodore Belknap to start from Cape Flattery and to keep as nearly as possible on that parallel of latitude. The secretary of the navy invited circle sailing and was unaware that the shortest way across is sometimes the longest route around. He fulfilled his task, but he likewise satisfied himself that no ocean cable could be laid on that route.

Having reported this to the department he was ordered to survey a new route from San Diego to the Hawaiian Islands, thence to the Bonin islands and thence to Japan. This he accomplished in the early months of 1874. Now comes Commander Hodges to endorse his views. He has some interesting matter in his report. There are two Midway islands, it seems, the larger of which is known as Sand Island. This desolate and isolated spot in the Pacific, which is destined to be inhabited by homesick cable operators some fine day or other, was minutely described by Assistant Surgeon McCullough, who wrote part of the report. He says of it:

"Geographically the island is of very recent elevation. On the highest portion of the island and not more than 20 yards from the beach a one-room house was constructed many years ago by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, at a time when they intended using the island as a coaling station. A placard within announces that the writer thereof, the commander of the schooner, had been wrecked on the island in September, 1838, and had remained there until February, 1890; that during that time he had buried 'his crew.'"

Surgeon McCullough thinks that a garden big enough to produce vegetables could be made on this island and that with a distilling plant established to insure a water supply it could be made habitable.

But the project of a Pacific cable does not become an assured fact merely because a practical route has been surveyed. Great risks are involved in laying and maintaining an ocean cable. How many persons know that four Atlantic cables have been abandoned on account of old age and that each of them cost \$5,000,000?

When you remember that there are holes in the Pacific which are 15 miles deep and that the stretch from San Francisco to Manila is over 12,000 miles, you can appreciate the difficulties which the new Pacific Cable Company must contend with.—Lieut. H. R. Gahan.

Progress Is at a Discount.

A writer in a London paper thinks that Washington Irving's story of Rip Van Winkle's long sleep would have been more probable if its scene had been laid in the African islands belonging to Portugal instead of in the Catskill mountains. After three centuries of white domination those islands remain pretty much in the condition in which Da Gama and his bold successors left them. In the year's report of the British consul for Angola these Portuguese peculiarities stand out strongly. Thus, from Loanda, the capital, to

Cape Town is about 1600 miles, and the journey should take about six days. What actually happens is this: You first take a trip of 3000 miles to Maderia, where you waylay the next mail steamer, and then complete the excursion by another journey of 4800 miles to Cape Town. In short, 7800 miles have to be traveled to cover a distance of 1600 miles. A letter between Cape Town and Loanda takes about two months.

Here is a picture of what trade means in the favored region of Cabinda bay, where there is a single white trader, who occupies a house of three rooms, with a "shop" of 208 feet attached. The place is stocked with puncheons of some vile stuff called "rum," which are exchanged for palm kernels.

Knots of natives from the interior villages with loads of kernels begin to present themselves at the shop at 6 a. m. and when the trader at last makes his appearance there is a noisy crowd of kernel sellers and thirsty hangers-on.

The exchange of rum for kernels is quickly effected and by 9 o'clock in the morning the entire population may be seen lying under the shelter of the cocoanut palms, either stupidly drunk or noisily quarrelsome.

The mingled uproar and snoring lasts till about noon, when there is a sudden return to sobriety and the crowd clears away to the villages to collect the means for another carousal.

On a "koog" day, which is often enough Sunday, the trader at Cabinda bay gets rid of about 190 gallons of rum. And he avers that the scene described is repeated every day in the year.

Next to rum and "civilization" the greatest curse of West Africa are smallpox and the sleeping sickness. From this last no case of recovery has ever been known, and so contagious is it that in the native Christian communities every communicant has a separate vessel from which to partake of the sacramental wine.

It is true there are labor arrangements which look uncommonly like slavery—but, then, so there are in Rhodesia, and some are gleefully anticipating the time when Johannesburg will be no better.

Tollers of the Air.

The workmen on the cables follow closely after the builders of the iron roadway. These men are engaged in more perilous employment, if anything, than the former. They climb hungrily up to the very summit of the huge towers, and then without flinching proceed to descend the inclined cables. It makes the spectators below tremble for them, so dangerous is the descent, but the workmen have no fear, else they would be unfitted for the duty required of them. After sliding down the cable a dozen feet they stop and turn around and face the towers. The men work the derrick slowly swing out to them the end of a cable about three inches in diameter. Another man carries into to them by means of a small hand pulley and rope a red-hot band of steel, which the cable workers seize with their pincers and clasp around the large cable on which they are resting. Then while the steel is still hot and malleable the small cable, with its end secured in a thick bolt of steel, is brought into position and the end welded into the red-hot steel band circling the main cable. The workmen pound and forge away, hammering, twisting and bending the metal, before it cools off. The welding must be done rapidly, and the workmen have no time to stop and think of the dangerous position in which they are placed. Probably the only support they have comes from their legs, which they wind tightly around the cable, as they swing their arms and upper part of the body with violent exertion.

When this cable is forged into its place, the workmen take a few moments of rest, and then slide down to the next joint, where the same operation is repeated. Cable after cable is attached in this way, until there is a regular tangle of steel work and dangling cables, looking for all the world like a spider's web. But there is order in this colossal spider web, such as never existed in the home of the insect that weaves the webs in our houses and woods. Gradually one part of the bridge after another is finished, and when the "false work" of scaffolds is removed the structure stands out in all the beauty of its finished state.

The bridge builders must not only be skilled in their work, but they must have the hardihood and daring of the sailor, for most of their work is performed at an altitude higher than the topmast of any sailing vessel. They labor in all kinds of weather—when the sun is pouring down its torrid rays in midsummer, or when the mercury registers zero in winter.

To them their dizzy height is no more than the 15 or 20 feet to the ordinary carpenter or house painter. They seldom use ladders. They would be constantly in the way. If they want to reach a higher frame work they climb nimbly up the steel works or jump lightly across from one truss to another. A jump of three feet from girder to girder is a commonplace occurrence to them.—Godey's Magazine.

Tonight's Entertainment.

The entertainment at the Orpheum tonight will be an innovation in theatrical history in Dawson in that, while being held on a week night, it will be of an order to which no one can object, every feature of it being clean and above censure. The performance will open with a one-act sketch entitled "The Happy Pair," in which Mr. and Mrs. Honeyton will be impersonated by Mr. Montague Martin and Miss Marion Tracie. After which will appear in specialties the Wilson Tots, Miss Tracie and Messrs. D'Aunais, Wilson, McConnell and Boyle. The performance will begin promptly at 8:30 o'clock.

MEMBERS HAVE BEEN NAMED

On the General Committee for the Public Museum.

All Portions of the District Represented—Arrangements are now well Under Way.

The second public meeting of the citizens of Dawson and the Yukon territory was held in the Public Library building at 8 p. m. on the 14th to receive the reports of the provisional committee appointed at the first meeting held on the evening of the 1st inst. Commissioner Ogilvie occupied the chair.

Moved by Dr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Purchase, and resolved that the list of places named in the report of Messrs. Ogilvie and Brown, as previously published in the Nugget, be gone over seriatim and the members of the committee be chosen; and that this general committee when formed have power to add to their numbers.

The following names were then submitted and agreed upon as members of the general committee for the management of the museum:

Dawson—Messrs. Ogilvie, Tyrrell, Purchase, Ritchie, Brown, Galpin, D. Pattullo, Cantwell, F. X. Gosselin and Herbert.

Bonanza creek—Messrs. Power, (N. A. T. Co.), Colley (T. & E. Co.), Neville Armstrong and Orr (Orr & Turkey).

Hunker—Messrs. Preston, Hayden, Johnson, Wilkins, Cuthbertson, and Kooley.

Eldorado—S. Mitchell, Putro and Stanley.

Gold Run—J. A. Chute (Chute & Wills), Andrew Robinson and A. I. Sola.

Sulphur creek—Alex McDonald, Mr. Sprople and Mr. Rockwell.

Fortymile—The mining recorder and Mr. Seymour.

Selkirk—Mr. Henri Martin.

Dominion creek—Mr. Cantley, Mr. Anderson (A. C. Co.), Mr. Newton and Mr. P. Reid.

Whitehorse—The postmaster, Mr. Bethune, and the Rev. Mr. Wright.

Capt. Galpin and Mr. MacDonald addressed the meeting, each expressing the wish that the museum should be closely associated with the public library. The meeting then adjourned.

The Ass and the Theory.

Upon a time some mechanics of a far country with whom business had grown dull; agreed between them that they would go to a place of desolation where there were not so many people and therefore not so many mechanics, and because of these things they would prosper and become swelled up with substance.

"Verily," said one to the other, "the people in the place of desolation which men call the Klondike, know not of our fine work, and they will look upon us as wonders of our generation, and employ us to build theories to fit each thing which happens, and of which they do not know the way, and we shall surprise them by the wonders of our art, and supply a long felt want in the land which is afar off and which is even now without theories."

Said the other mechanic spake, and said: "Thy words are words of wisdom and they sound good to me. Get a gait on thee and we will journey afar, even unto the place of desolation called by men the Klondike."

And they journeyed far and met upon the way many things before unknown even unto them, the wise mechanics of the far country, where wisdom had ceased to be of value, and they came at last to a fair city in the place of desolation, which men told them was the chief city of the land, and they were glad and their hearts warmed, for even as they entered the city they saw that no theories had been built there.

For long they sojourned within the city before an acute need of theories arose, for the people were simple in taste and knew not of the joys to be had from magnificent theories. But at last there came a time when a person was slain, and the servants of those who sat in high places knew not the cause of it, and they became convinced that some theories would be of great value and exceeding good, and the mechanics from the far country labored hard and were delivered of thoughts which grew and prospered and became in time amazing theories.

Then the mechanics went forth among the people, and they said, "Behold, we have builded theories, and they fit the case which hangs over the land even as a black cloud. Accept one

of them and cease from troubling about the case, for verily the theory will fill all your time."

Then it came to pass that the people named two from among them whom they said would be experts and choose for them the most fitting theory. The experts were disagreeable people, and they found fault with all the theories till at last the wise mechanics became down-hearted and said between them that they would become blacksmiths and nail shoes upon the feet of asses, and the people could build their own theories.

So taken were the people with the belief that they needed theories that every man who lived in the land of desolation straightway builded a theory and the mechanics who shod asses were filled with business and prospered much.

He Will Be Missed.

The man who is preparing to go to Nome over the ice will be a rare avis at the time this winter in which he was so numerous at a corresponding time last. The grocer will miss him; he will be conspicuous by his absence from the dry goods store and the clothing store; but more especially will he be missed by the second-hand dealer who sells scraps of dog harness, fragments of tents, crippled sleds and moth eaten stoves.

The man who is preparing to go to Nome will not be in evidence this winter. Like shirt waists, straw hats and canvasback shoes, he is out of season. He has had his day, but his star has gone to rest.

Analysis of Water.

Dr. Isadore McW. Bourke recently made an analysis of the water taken from a hydrant of the Dawson Water Company with the following result:

Color, free; turbidity, perfectly color; iron, none; residue left on evaporation, moderate, white and did not char; free ammonia, no appreciable quantity; chlorine, about 1 grain per gallon; equivalent of common salt, about 1.6 grains per gallon; nitrates, a trace; nitrates, .5 grains per gallon; hardness, about 23 per cent; lead, none; iron, a trace; oxygen absorbed in 15 minutes at 212 degrees, Fahrenheit, .3 grains per gallon.

Dr. Bourke found that the possibilities of the water being contaminated from the Klondike river are apparent, but at present no such contamination exists.

A Mild November.

Thus far the month of November has been almost as mild as was the corresponding month of last year when the weather did not become very cold until about the 10th of December. In 1898 the coldest weather of the winter was in the month of November. Thus far the mercury has been down as low as 30 degrees below zero only one time this winter.

Creek Notes.

There was a big dance at Magnet roadhouse on the 13th inst.

Mr. A. A. Northrup, of Magnet hill, introduced an innovation last Sunday morning by inviting his numerous bachelor friends to a waffle breakfast. The affair was such a success that Mr. Northrup has promised to repeat it in the near future.

Frank Mills, of 12 Gay gulch, has reached bedrock on his new claim and says "things are looking good."

The big dance at the Elby was the talk of the creeks last week.

The dances on Bonanza are becoming very numerous and consequently a common affair, so Charley Croymen, of 29 below Bonanza, has decided to go them one better by erecting an opera house. Mr. Croymen will erect a building 30x30 adjacent to his roadhouse. Once a month a regular troupe will be brought up from Dawson, and the boys on the creeks can have the benefit of a Dawson opera without going to town.

The bike of the latest invention is the one just purchased by A. A. Northrup. It is a machine of wonderful mechanism and called the "coast-er-brake," guaranteed to "coast" you safely down the hill "er-brake" your neck.

The boys on 10 Gay gulch have purchased a new engine and boiler and will take out the largest dump of any claim on the gulch.

The Aurora No. 4 at Grand Forks had a big opening last Thursday evening.

Monte Cristo can boast of the only lady engineer on the creeks. When her husband is short of help she can let him down the 70-foot shaft with just as steady a hand as any engineer on the creek. She will hoist and lower buckets, fire the boiler, turn on the injector, throw either throttle with as much unconcern as any man.

Mr. S. Fassbender, of upper half 6 below Bonanza, left limit, has rented a large plant and is putting on a large force of men. Two dumps will be taken out at the same time.

ANOTHER MURDER REPORTED

Man Named St. Cyr Kills Another Named Davis.

Killing Took Place Sunday at Hootalinqua—St. Cyr in Custody and En Route to Dawson.

Major Z. T. Wood, commanding officer of the N. W. M. P., for the Yukon district, yesterday received a telegram from Hootalinqua conveying the information that a murder had been committed at that place on the preceding day, Sunday, the 18th. No particulars were contained in the dispatch further than that a man named Davis had been shot and killed by a man named St. Cyr; that the latter had gone to the Hootalinqua police station and surrendered himself, and that the case was then being investigated. St. Cyr, the prisoner, is being brought to Dawson in the custody of Inspector McGibbon of the Whitehorse police post.

Nothing further is known of the case or of the circumstances leading up to it. It is believed, however, that St. Cyr and Davis were both residents of that part of the district and were probably engaged in wood cutting, which work is the principal industry at that place.

An Embryo Town.

Mayo Marich and Fred Hood left Saturday with an outfit for a roadhouse which they will open on the left fork of Clear creek and which will be called No. 1 roadhouse. As there is a large number of men wintering in that section of the country, there is no reason why the venture should not pay from the start; and even if it is not quiet this winter, the enterprise will be there ready for the spring rush which is bound to be a big one. As there is almost certain to be a town spring up somewhere in that part of the country, No. 1 roadhouse will be a nucleus around which others will gather.

Champagne Will Flow.

An election bet will be squared at the Magnet roadhouse on Bonanza Friday night of this week and by Johnny Doyle who bet a champagne supper and \$50 on the side with Mrs. Rotherwell, proprietress of the above mentioned hostelry, that Bryan would win in the States, the lady to pay in like if the silver apostle was victorious, her faith being pinned to McKinley. Doyle is to make good his obligation at the date mentioned. Twenty invited guests will be present to enjoy the good things of the occasion.

Sugar as a Stimulant.

The Swiss guides fully appreciate the value of sugar as a stimulant, and always carry it in their kits, preferring lump sugar or highly sweetened chocolate. The muscular lumbermen of Canada consume an extraordinary large amount of sugar during the season in the woods, taking it in the form of molasses. They sweeten their milkless tea with it, make cakes with it and even add it to their tried salt pork, which is the only meat they get during the time they are in the woods cutting lumber, and this is practically half the year. In the "black belt" of Alabama the staple articles of diet are also molasses, salt pork and cornmeal. These simple articles form the diet day in and day out, year about, and yet the negro seem to thrive on them. But it is on the sugar cane plantations, perhaps, where the value of sugar as an article of diet is most apparent. A pamphlet entitled "Sugar as Food," recently issued by the department of agriculture, referring to this fact, says: "For months the chief food of the negro laborer on the plantations is said to be sugar cane, and they are seen to grow strong and fat as the season advances. They go through the hard labor of harvesting the crop and come out in fine condition, although they began it weak and half starved."

It should be added, however, that the entire juice of ripened cane is more complete food than sugar, containing, as it does, other food constituents besides carbohydrates.

Children have a natural craving for sweet things, and the sugar of milk, which makes up from 4 to 6 per cent of it, forms an important part of baby's first nutriment, taking the place of starch until the child's stomach is able to assimilate it, so that a 2-year old child drinking two quarts of milk a day consumes in this way about three ounces of sugar.

A lump of sugar contains as much nutriment as an ounce of potato and is far more easily assimilated. In times of great exertion, as are likely to occur in army life, this feature is particularly valuable. In warm countries sugar takes the place of fat and either sugar or sweet fruits, as dates, figs, etc., are eaten in large quantities in tropical climates. As a source of muscular energy, sugar is rapidly becoming recognized, so that training diets are sometimes made to include large quantities of it, as, for instance, in the rowing clubs of Holland.—Philadelphia Record.