

## From the Far Away West

A Capital Chatty Letter From F. W. Tobey to The Planet—Some Interesting Experiences and Thrilling Scenes.

To the Editor of The Planet:

Mr. Editor,—It is a long time since I left Chatham, so long that my hair has grown to a girlish length and my whiskers have passed the downy stage and become feathers. In beginning now to write a description of my western trip, I show myself to be up to last week. However, if you have no objection to printing pre-historic narratives I would submit the following for your widely read paper. I see Mr. Martin has written a description of his trip and spent some space on places I just passed through. Knowing this I feel somewhat backward at writing this. However, as I promised to write you a letter I will do so, leaving you to decide whether or not it will be published.

As I had never travelled a hundred miles from home before, many things were of interest to me that would not be noticed by most people.

I spent Sunday, March 29th — the last day in dear old Chatham — visiting a few relatives and friends, and about one o'clock, after bidding goodbye to those at home, I left for the station. At three o'clock the midnight pulled in and in a few minutes I was off. Not accustomed to sleeping on trains I spent the first restless night in my life, and as soon as the grey dawn began to appear I viewed the passing country. I shall leave out this part of my journey, but not before saying that I saw no agricultural district to equal Kent, except, possibly, the belt east of Halton. Furthermore, I have seen none better since except Jack Fish Lake district, where we are located.

Arriving at Toronto at 9 a. m., I was somewhat hungry—as I usually am—but soon found my way to a restaurant run on the European plan. They must have lots of money in Europe or are small eaters. However, as I thought it would be a treat to have an Oriental breakfast I examined carefully the menu and began to order. Of course I astounded the waiter, as anyone would know who knows me; but she returned the compliment when she presented the bill.

The rest of Monday I spent with my brother Hugh, of C. Boisseau & Co., and together we visited some relatives and friends, finally finding our way to the beautiful parliament buildings, where we spent some time listening to the Gagey-Stratton controversy. On Tuesday I set out to see the city, and in the course of my wanderings met Chubb Merritt going to school a little after the bell had tolled. I managed to find my way through the wholesale district, the Metropolitan Life and Confederation office, two colleges and the museum and operating room of the Toronto University, where the students were picking and tearing at human bodies like crows or vultures at a dead horse. I spent a long time, as it was to my narrow mind the triumph of architectural genius in imposing grandeur and interior picturesque beauty in detail of finish. At noon I was joined by Alvin Moore and Milton Ball, and together we strayed through that ant hill of industry, namely, T. Eaton's store. The post office, Simpson's, the Bell line and all were attracting to a number like myself, but at three o'clock we were obliged to board our train for North Bay.

I took little notice of the scenery along the route to North Bay until we reached Davenport, on the hill, where, a few beautiful houses attracting my attention, I began to watch for the stations. Of course there was some cause for my not-

icing the scenery at first, as you will afterwards learn. The next stop was at Allandale, pretty then, but how much more so now! A level, sloping sward of grass stretched from track to lake shore. Ahead of us you could see a prettily situated town along the lake bank, which we soon learned was Barrie. The town is built on the sloping banks and the first buildings are but a short distance from the lake shore. The scenery on all sides was such as to please the eye and heart of a nature-lover even then. From the lake was wafted a cool, refreshing breeze.

At 7.15 we found our train had stopped at Gravenhurst just as the sun was sinking below the western horizon. From the station and on all sides you could see massive hay-stack rocks and numerous lakes of every size and description. The scenery was one of rugged picturesqueness even then, and its charm would be greatly enhanced by the true arrival of spring, with all its natural draperies and many-colored decorations. Gravenhurst Sanitarium was beyond our ken, but having seen the Chatham Sanitarium I knew I would be disappointed. Consequently I decided not to take a run over, although I am sure there was ample time between the revolutions of the wheels, as the train seemed to be tired. The buildings in Gravenhurst were not crowded on to one acre of ground and so the town spreads over a large area of country. The houses were a comfortable distance apart, and thus I suppose the residents could have a little pow-wow without any danger of their next-door-neighbor hearing it all. Besides, some cool breezes could find their way through the streets to cool some feverish brow in the tepid heat of July and August. The lakes and hills were on all sides and as we rattled slowly along we could see behind us the town well lit by electric light.

My seat-mates were Milton Ball and a young lady about 28. Mr. Ball, being somewhat backward, quickly decamped, and left me to find out that my seat-mate's name was Miss V. and her destination was Minodosa, Manitoba, N. W. T. I enjoyed her conversation very much and was so impressed by her winning ways and witty remarks that I offered her the lower berth. Mr. Ball and I having taken out an accident policy with Chatham's popular insurance agent, Mr. Atkins, and desiring if possible to make something out of our investment, took the upper berth. The porter was a new one, and being also a former school teacher, was very slow. Seeing that at the rate he was moving there was small chance of getting a map at all, I got permission from him to assist. After making a few unimportant mistakes in the way the covers were turned, etc., which he took pains to correct in a most polite way, I got very apt at my work, and by twelve o'clock the berths were all ready.

At daybreak we found ourselves in the berth, strange to say. We also found that we were in a very mountainous country and the weather was decidedly colder. Snow and ice filled all the hollows and I there and then decided that we had reached the Arctic Circle. A few struggling poplar trees of diminutive size sprang up here and there nourished by what soil had been formed from the rocks. Here and there could be seen a small Jack pine looking as though it might spend a summer to advantage at Gravenhurst.

In many places the rocks rose perpendicularly above our heads. Here and there were massive boulders which had rolled down from the heights above. The sight would make the timid quake with fear as in many places wide crevices forlorn future wrecks. Possibly it was one of those same boulders that came tearing down from the cliffs and crashed into the west bound express when Mr. Morrison, a neighbor of ours, came up.

A large grove of dwarf pines was seen in a first valley where, on high rugged rocks on every side, on their summit in long circular lines a row of pines stood like sentinels on duty. The veterans grays were in Northern Ontario, but if any of them were here the settler would surely starve.

A new grove of stunted pines and a tall rock cliff could be seen.

Gigantic boulders, that had broken off and rolled down as playfully as children off a sawstack, piled themselves in heaps along the track. The sun was alternately seen and lost to view behind the hills. It soon became rocky but one long boulder, the largest seen, was left as though deserted by its companions. It looked about as sad as I would imagine the Chatham Football Club looked when they returned from Sandwich.

We now seemed to be travelling directly north and passed through a district of high sand hills only to be again ushered into the land of stone and sky scraping cliffs. Tiny streams and busy cataraacts were seen here and there tumbling down the hills. The lower streams and some of mountain origin were frozen over except at the waterfalls. Even these were sometimes frozen in the form of crystal drapery. This whole district for miles and miles seemed as barren as I imagine Sahara Desert to be, still there was growth even where the telegraph poles were placed in place of trees.

The train ran for a long distance along a river all frozen over and dotted here and there with islands. What charms summer would bring! Farther up you could see a rapid clear of ice and also fish poles set along the shore. In my mind I seemed to see the ghosts of the noted trinity, E. J. MacIntyre, A. C. McKay and V. Goudreau patiently strolling to attract those fish that give them new matter for a new fish story. It was a winding, twisting, angled course with water in centre and ice on both sides here and there. Next came a very pretty valley with a thriving little wigwam settlement. I gazed fixedly at their humble abodes for I knew that soon I would be the occupant and owner of one similar.

After passing this settlement we soon came to a station called Bisseton, a busy lumber village. Here were billions of feet of lumber piled up which spoke well for that district.

is any here. There are three parties of surveyors north, east and west of the lake sub-dividing townships. There are no settlers there but Americans are landing here every day to homestead for next year and if the N. W. T. has a good crop this year remember what I say and see if I do not speak the truth when I do say that those homesteads will be taken up as fast as the ones open this year. There is a certain amount of chance to run as there is in every business, the railroad survey is not a sure guide as they change it at their will to settle new districts about where they intend going and then they have a large country to freight for as soon as they get through. The railroad C. N. R. is surveyed about eight miles from us. It may run eighteen miles or more and possibly but two miles, no one knows. We must take our chances and live in hope or die in despair. I don't wish to start a locating bureau or anything like that, but for a small amount to repay me for the time, I can and will willingly get nice quarters for anyone who desires to come out, and thus you will be saved the \$100 to \$200 that we and others have spent hunting for land in a dozen different localities to get a choice quarter or two together. Fully believing that all I have said in the latter part of this letter is true, and knowing that the first part is so, I sign myself, your western friend and embryo farmer,

F. W. TOBEY.

Battleford, Sask., N. W. T., July 9.

No man believes the mistakes he makes are inexcusable.

Absent minded? I should say he is! He did something this morning that broke the record.

What was that?

He was standing in front of that big French mirror and tackled himself for a fiver.



A waist of white pongee, with big pearl buttons, embroidered medallions. Note the hair net. The tailored hat has a rough straw brim.

I shall attempt to continue the description each week if this be not rejected, and will make a good attempt at giving your readers and friends an idea of the general aspect of the country, the pleasure of travelling on a tourist car, the difference between hunting for land in the C. P. R. books and in the N. W. T., the pleasures and pains of roughing it on the prairie, the Barr Colony in its many phases, the rapidity with which a western town springs up, and hundreds of miles of seemingly waste land become productive, the advantages and disadvantages of living in the N. W. T., the climate since I have been here, my experience with the two groves, the unexcelled beauties of Jack Fish Lake and my advice to eastern boys. The last is, come west boys, as thousands of intelligent farmers from Ontario, Dakota, Minn., Michigan, etc., are doing to get free homesteads in the finest agricultural district in the world, but don't come broke or you will find it discouraging and up hill work. However, the most wealthy here as elsewhere are the ones who started with cents and not those who began with dollars. I have found that to be true in hundreds of cases. The hill was hard to climb but the reward or treasure on top was their getting and thus appreciated the more. You will notice that most Americans homestead one year and come back the following spring to settle, and it is a most wise plan. Send me your names, my friends or enemies, and I will find homesteads for you as close to a railroad as we are. We are but 110 miles from one but expect one in the course of a few years. Don't expect to get two miles from a railroad as those homesteads were taken up long before the railroad ever came through. The railroad follows the people and the people follow the railroad in the same way as electricity follows chemical action. When we made our entry for land at Jack Fish Lake there were but six or seven entries in the ten townships surveyed and representing 64 homesteads each. To-day there are not a dozen homesteads open for entry and they are the refuse of there

### BABY'S VITALITY.

The vitality of infants and young children is as its lowest point during the hot weather. More children die in summer than at any other season. This is because the little ones suffer more from bowel trouble, are nervous, weak, sleepless and irritable. Prompt action often saves a valuable little life, and troubles of this kind can be promptly met and cured by giving the little ones Baby's Own Tablets, which should be kept in every home ready for emergencies. These Tablets speedily relieve, and promptly cure all stomach, bowel and other hot weather ailments, and give sound, refreshing sleep. Mrs. P. Ferguson, 105 Mansfield St., Montreal, says: "My baby was attacked with dysentery and was hot and feverish. I gave him Baby's Own Tablets and they promptly cured him. Before this he had been rather delicate, but since using the Tablets he has been better and stronger in every way."

The Tablets can be given with an absolute certainty that they will do good to all children from a new born upwards. They contain no opiate or poisonous "soothing" stuff. Sold by medicine dealers or mailed at 25 cents a box by writing direct to Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

Hatits, soft and pliant at first, are like some coral stones, which are easily cut when first quarried, but soon become hard as adamant.

"Blood will Tell," of its own impurity when blotches and incrustations mark the skin. Weaver's Cerate and Weaver's Syrup make short work of blood and skin troubles.

Some people seem to think they fall into luck when they fall into debt.

Monkey Brand Soap makes copper like gold, tin like silver, crockery like marble, and windows like crystal.

Many women become tiresome by trying to appear ingenious.

## Charms of Historic Rhine

Dr. Holmes Writes a Delightful Descriptive Letter to The Planet—Picturesque Scenes and Alluring Associations.

To the Editor of The Planet:

The beauty of the Rhine and of the adjacent country has been the theme of all travellers, and certainly no description can adequately convey an idea of this charming part of Europe. The river itself is very beautiful, but this is greatly enhanced by the fine scenery along its course, especially that part from Mayence to Coblenz. We left the former handsome city on the morning of May 29th, by steamer, and soon found ourselves gliding between rich vineyards, delightful valleys and picturesque bluffs that followed in rapid succession and constantly delighted the eye by the ever changing beauty of the panorama. Hills on each side of the river rise from the water's edge, and their steep sides are terraced to the very summit and planted with vineyards, for it is along this part that the famous Rhenish wines are produced in such perfection. Soon we came in sight of Bingen, a name rendered familiar by Mrs. Norton's fine, pathetic poem, "Bingen on the Rhine," and as I sat apart with Mrs. Holmes and Edith reciting the story of the "Soldier of the Legion," we soon became the centre of a little circle of listeners, who were evidently familiar with the "mournful story" of this dying soldier, and pleased to hear it told as we viewed the very scene of his sad recollections. At frequent intervals, perched on steep bluffs, are ruins of ancient castles that have a very imposing appearance, and speak plainly of bygone times, when feudal rule was the order of the day and when every feudal magnate maintained his rights by the sword. How many tales of bloodshed, rapine and injustice, interspersed with revelry, wine and wassail could these old walls relate! And doubtless, too, they could tell of love and sacrifice, and of deeds of daring and days of happiness. These good old days, if good they were, are gone forever and the places that knew them have donned the garb of 20th century civilization, and instead of grim, mail-clad barons, one meets only polite, well clad, well educated, and comfortable looking Germans, ever

ready to explain places of interest as our elegant steamer glides by, and all feeling a commendable pride in the history of the past and in the united fatherland of to-day. British and Germans may be pardoned a friendly rivalry in all that is worth striving for, but every friend of either must regret that such a spirit of rivalry should ever assume the character of jealousy or bitterness, and so mar the prospect of a nobler and higher civilization that surely lies in the future for both.

When in Paris we had stood on the very spot where Louis XV. and his charming queen had been sacrificed to the cruel spirit of the French revolution, and now as we came in sight of Coblenz and memories of that awful and bloody period of French history arose vividly to my mind, for it was to this place that the king and queen made their fruitless attempt to escape from the reign of terror, and when almost in sight of this haven of refuge they were seized and taken back to meet every indignity at the hands of the mob and to die by the guillotine with so many others of the noblest and best of France.

Below Coblenz the scenery becomes less picturesque, but the country more fertile, and everywhere one sees evidence of industry and thrift, so characteristic of the German people—qualities that make them such desirable citizens wherever their lot is cast. A Canadian cannot help wishing that the tide of German emigration going on every year might be directed to our shores, where their zeal and industry, their technical skill and their general uprightness of character would ensure their prosperity and would aid so much in the development of this our beloved heritage.

Our trip down the Rhine was one of the pleasantest experiences of our European tour, and the beauty of the scenery, the polite and refined manners of the people we met in the various cities where we stopped, and the beautiful works of art that adorn the squares and enrich the galleries, will remain in our minds an enduring source of pleasure, and I am sure will lend added interest to all we read and hear of Germany, and especially of this delightful part of it.

T. K. HOLMES.

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