

# PEOPLE AND PLACES

LITTLE STORIES BY LAND AND SEA, CONCERNING THE FOLK WHO MOVE HITHER AND THITHER ACROSS THE FACE OF A BIG LAND.

CALGARY and Regina seem to be the biggest letter-writing cities in the whole West outside of Winnipeg. A recent report of the post-office department gives a lot of figures to show that the letter habit is growing at an enormous rate in that country. The post-office has come to be as important as the school and in some cases a good deal more important than the city hall. Calgary has to its credit over ninety thousand dollars' worth of business done at the post-office—including stamps, money orders and postal notes. Regina comes next with sixty-one thousand; Edmonton next with nearly fifty-nine thousand. Moosejaw, Prince Albert and Saskatoon together make up about the same total as Brandon, which has forty-five thousand.

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A GOOD many fellows nowadays who think they are delicate in civilisation take to the wild places to get robust. Many of these chaps who in the city have been for years as fussy as an old maid with a pet cat and as full of ailments as an almanac—when they get out with a surveying party or bossing a railway construction gang, or even keeping a cache, encounter some real old-fashioned primitive experiences that take all the kinks out of their sensibilities. Yet once in a while under the most uncivilised and unconventional circumstances a chap outward-bound retains his fastidious notions. Mr. Dougall McDougall—sounds dour and strenuous enough—son of a Winnipeg broker, has been writing his experiences with a G.T.P. survey party up in the wilds in the winter. Here are a few of the things he says—highly interesting to any people who contemplate that kind of life between now and balmy spring.

"At noon our lunch is frozen solid and the noon camping-place takes a lot of labour to prepare. We first cut lots of dry wood and secure birch-bark, if possible; then cut brush and carpet the ground to keep our mocasins dry; cut a pole to hang our tea-kettle on and hunt for water. The deep snow keeps the water-holes from freezing, but they are hard to find, and when found the water usually smells pretty bad, but tastes all right in tea. Often as a last resort we use snow. Those times I don't drink tea, for the snow burns, and the tea has a taste very similar to carbolic acid. We place the lunch around the fire until it thaws out, but often a sandwich is burned on one end and still frozen on the other end. I can tolerate frozen cakes or pie, but canned roast beef *frapped* is distinctly unpalatable. After lunch we always enjoy a good smoke around the fire, for in severe weather away from the fire, smoking is a rank failure. Your pipe freezes up between puffs, matches give a feeble blaze, and go out before you can get a light. Even the axes refuse to work; chopping green wood makes the edge bend or chip off, according to the hardness of the metal. Ours looked like tin the other day."

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POETICAL writers of news in the form of fiction are fond of saying that the climate of Peace River in the winter is balmy with chinooks and orange grove zephyrs and all that sort of dreamy business. But when it comes to the hard facts of the case as told by Mr. Fletcher Bredin, trapper and trader from the Lesser Slave—and being member for that body of water he will not lie—it seems a little different and more Canadian. Mr. Bredin took a little jaunt out to Edmonton the other day. When he hitched up his team to the caboose with the stovepipe in the top, the thermometer out in the banana grove registered fifty-three below. Twelve days driving and burning wood down that trail to Edmonton failed to bring the mercury up much. But of course they have chinooks and balmy weather in that country; oh, yes, and beautiful, crisp diamond days when the sunlight is as full of exhilaration as a bottle of champagne.

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THE most unusual ball ever held in Canada since the days of the early Governors was held in

Renfrew last week. This ball which was attended by three hundred folk was not held in the town hall; neither in the fire hall; nor in the lodge room over the post-office. It was held in a knitting mill. The mill is a new one; was not yet equipped with machinery; and the management conceived the brilliant idea of inaugurating it with a ball—no doubt remembering that yarn sometimes finds its way into balls. It is said that some spinsters were present. Some of the married women brought their knitting. There were also a few yarns told. Altogether they had a good time.

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MR. STEPHEN LEACOCK has been speaking out again. Nobody speaks oftener without repetition than Mr. Leacock. He is as versatile as a March wind. Political economy is supposed to be his main business in life. He is said to be able to write as dry books on that subject as any other man in the world. But Mr. Leacock is a man of humour. He is a satirist—rather a rough-and-tumble type. He writes squib stories for *Life* and *Truth* and other comic weeklies. He delivers orations. He speaks before Canadian clubs. He has views. Sometimes he seems to think it doesn't matter whether he

NOW that Longboat has beaten Shrubbs it is perhaps some consolation for Mr. Shrubbs to reflect that once upon a time Mr. Shrubbs came near to beating a Canadian horse, which is in some ways as bad as beating Longboat. It was in Winnipeg, at the fair; county fair it seems; though how Shrubbs got there is not explained. He was new at the racing game and was taking on anything with feet. Somebody at the fair stumped him to run a race-horse. He accepted. He had beaten English horses at ten miles before. This Canadian horse was called Rifle Ball. He was hitched to a buggy and the race began. For the first five miles Shrubbs let the horse pace him. Then he tried a sprint. But the horse got wise to that and broke into a gallop—which of course Shrubbs was unable to do without getting down on all fours, which was not professional. However, he hung to the race and might have beaten the rifle ball, but for the fact that some bucolic gentleman hung out a bunch of oats in front of the horse and Shrubbs was beaten thirty yards in the ten miles.

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COMPARISONS between Montreal and Toronto are usually considered bad form, but now and then they occur. Lately, a Toronto man has been airing his views about the commercial metropolis. He was for thirty-five years a Montrealer. The other day he came across a little editorial in one of the Montreal papers that made him rush into print with a defence of Toronto. He signs his name "Andrew Jackson." The thing that roused Mr. Jackson reads, in part, this way:

"Newspapers throughout Canada are republishing a statement showing the building returns of the larger cities of Canada for the year just ended. In this table the total cost of buildings erected in Montreal during 1908 is given as \$5,062,326, as compared with Toronto's \$12,417,467, while Vancouver and Winnipeg are given greater totals than that of Montreal. Such a presentment is naturally surprising to anyone acquainted with the growth of Montreal. It must be remembered that the figures in question do not include Montreal's many suburbs, in which a great deal of building was done during the past year, that of Westmount alone being over \$1,000,000, a greater amount than such thriving cities as London and Calgary are credited with."

With the vigour of a backwoods preacher Mr. Jackson hits back with a few jabs. He is not impressed by a name; neither with history. He is after what he considers facts and figures: Here are a few of the things he says:

"So you try to bring in Westmount. Now, Toronto has far more suburbs than Montreal. I wonder, for instance, how would Westmount compare with West Toronto (Junction). Why, I should say that it would be sheer nonsense to compare them, as I venture to say that West Toronto's building for the past year—or any year for that matter—is not far short of Montreal. I am sure that the amount of building going on in the suburbs of Toronto is still greater than that of Toronto proper itself. Another thing, Toronto can find money and time to do half the building done in Montreal itself, for nearly half the good buildings in Montreal are being put up by Toronto and, in fact, if you don't look sharp they will own your city. Canada Life building, Canadian Bank of Commerce, etc., etc. Go anywhere in Montreal and take a run through office buildings and be convinced. Over half of them are occupied Toronto agents."

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THERE is a grist-mill in Kenora, Ontario, that is capable of grinding 5,000 barrels of flour in a single day! This is a mill that was burned down a year ago and has lately been reconstructed. A year's capacity output of this gigantic wheat-swallower would be 1,500,000 bushels which at an average of about 35 pounds of flour to a bushel of wheat would be in the neighbourhood of eight million bushels.



The Handsome New Armoury at Hamilton, to be occupied by the 13th and 91st Regiments.

has or not. His latest view is on the dual race problem in Canada. Speaking before the Canadian Club in Montreal he said, for instances

"The presence here of these two races is our greatest national asset. I say that, not in fulsome adulation of one or other of these races, but in view of what the two have meant in the history of the world. The civilisation of Europe has been built upon the greatness, enthusiasm and patriotism of the two great races represented in this country. We have a legacy absolutely unparalleled in the history of the world. We have two histories and two civilisations upon which we can draw; we have the basis laid for us by two of the worlds' greatest peoples, upon which we can build a great and unparalleled country."

Once upon a time too Mr. Leacock wrote an article called—Boarding-House Geometry. In that he proved Q.E.D. that the bedclothes of a boarding-house though produced ever so far in any direction will not meet. Now he has proved that Mr. Leacock and Mr. Henri Bourassa, sundered poles apart in manner of thinking and personality, are able to agree on the race question.