

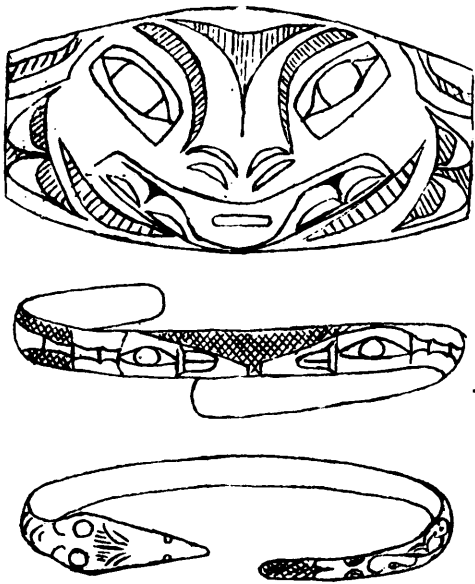
ALASKA.

A trip up the Pacific Coast to Alaska makes a pleasant terminus to a run across Canada by the Canadian Pacific Railway. The round trip takes from 16 to 18 days, and life on the waveless arms of the ocean through the numerous archipelagoes is crowded with interest.

Sitka is the capital of the Territory. It is a pretty little Indian village, with a Greek Church, built by the Russians some years ago, and one of the most beautiful island-studded harbours in the world, over which hangs a perfect cross, formed by the perpetual snow clinging to the mountain summit.

Juneau, however, is the chief settlement, and is the headquarters of the mining business. Opposite on Douglas Island is the Treadwell Gold Mine, where there is the largest quartz mill in the United States. It has 240 stamps, and has turned out about \$70,000 a month, free gold. Back of Juneau there are more indications of gold, and the gold fever rages all along that coast.

The natives all belong to a single great tribe, called the Thinket. They might be called the artistic savages of the world. In front of their log houses they erect "totem poles," which are merely logs on end deeply carved with the heraldic designs of their different families, and have nothing to do with their religion. Every utensil they have is sculptured with some diabolical but well executed design, and the pretty silver bracelets they make out of American dollars are much coveted by tourists.



INDIAN SILVER BRACELETS FROM ALASKA.

The wonderland of the north is reached at Glacier Bay, into which flow a great number of these frozen rivers of ice. The largest is the Muir Glacier, which surpasses anything nearer than the polar zones themselves. The front of the glacier is 2 miles in length, and from 300 to 500 feet high, while it moves forward on an average of 40 feet a day. Professor Wright, of Oberlin, Ohio, says that during the month of August its progressive movement daily is 70 feet at the centre and 10 feet at the margin. The clear waters of the bay, reflecting the Alpine scenery of the shores, are constantly ruffled by the breaking of the icebergs from the front, with a noise like the firing of artillery, and a force that sends the waves across its whole breadth.

Salmon abound in the rivers in such quantities that the numerous "salmon stories" told on the return of travellers are scarcely credited. There are a great many canneries all the way up the coast, even as far north as Chilcat, which is the farthest point at which the steamer touches, and where, during the whole night, a faint light lingers in the sky.

E. L. MERRITT.

The formation of his character is not, as it ought to be, the chief concern with every man. Many wish merely to find a sort of recipe for comfort, directions for acquiring riches, for whatever good they aim at.

THE BURNS CULT.

Burns, it seems, is still a name to conjure with in Scotland, and, indeed, among Scotsmen everywhere. As surely as the 25th of January comes round, enthusiastic votaries of haggis and whiskey and "Auld Lang Syne" meet together around the social altar, to perform the appointed rites in honour of the saint of the day. Probably the ceremonies begin with the well known Burns grace, spoken, if possible, by a clergyman:

Some hae meat, and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it;
But we hae meat, and we can eat,
And sae the Lord be thankit.

The dinner consists, for the most part, of Scottish dishes, set forth in the menu-card with appropriate quotations from Burns and other Scottish writers. There are, of course, "cookie leekie," "Sheep's head and trotters," "haggis," "great chieftain of the puddin' race," not forgetting the corrective dram, "how-towdies," "marrow-bones," "roast bubblyjocks," and other dainties familiar to the readers of Burns and Scott. The worshippers consume these with a relish born of the occasion, and of faith in their tutelary deity. The service, it must be said, not infrequently involves a measure of martyrdom. Good digestion does not always wait on appetite when it seeks satisfaction in haggis washed down with whiskey, and followed with marrow-bones and the other delicacies that have been mentioned. The evening's recreations do not invariably stand the test of the morning's reflections. Nevertheless, the consumption is accompanied with a great show of gusto, which is probably to some extent real. A variation was this year noticeable in the Glasgow menu-card, which can scarcely be considered an improvement. The several dishes were analyzed and defined. Thus, haggis was explained, with doubtful accuracy, and in more questionable Scotch, to be "sheep's pluck, ait meal and ingans bilt in a clout." Glasgow might surely do better than that.

If we may judge by the newspaper reports, there is no falling-off in the extent of the Burns cult. The *Scotsman* contained over five columns of reports of Burns dinners, concerts and club meetings held in more than fifty towns and villages in Scotland, and there were London and Belfast besides. The meetings seem to have been well attended and enthusiastic. There was, however, a noticeable falling-off in the quality of the guests and in the status of the prominent speakers. There is a great change from the time when the late Lord Ardmillan filled the chair at Edinburgh with grace and dignity. Not only Lords of Sessions and members of the professional classes generally, but more particularly literary men, are conspicuous by their absence. It seems to be difficult to get a really worthy representative to reply to the toast of the literature of Scotland. Greenock was exceptionally fortunate in securing the services of ex-Professor Blackie and Sheriff Nicholson, and Edinburgh did very well in having as its spokesman "John Strathesk," the author of some provincial classics. But where were David Masson, and John Skelton, and John Veitch, and John Nichol, and Andrew Lang, and Donald MacLeod, and, above all, where was A. K. H. B.? The speeches on these occasions follow a stereotyped course. They consist chiefly of copious quotations from Burns's poems and songs, strung together with a thread of complimentary criticism. To change the simile, a sparkling stream of poetical extracts ripples through a flat meadow of comment. The Edinburgh orator of the occasion had no fewer than fifty quotations in his speech, ranging from one line to twenty-five. It seems to make no difference that the quotations have been made scores of times before, in the same connection, and at similar meetings. Heavy contributions are levied on "Tam o' Shanter," on "The address to the unco' guid," on "Auld Lang Syne," on "Scots wha hae," on "The Cotter's Saturday night," on "A man's a man's for a' that," and on a score or two of other well known lyrics. The speaker would make an unpardonable mistake if he did not quote, with special reference to the bard's own character, "Oh, gently scan your brither man," and "Wad some power the giftie gie us,"

and "The best laid schemes of mice and men," and "The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip." The more familiar the quotation, the greater the applause with which it is received. Lord Neaves had a well known recipe for the construction of a modern novel. The Burns orators might adopt a similar prescription for the manufacture of their speeches. It would be to take a page or two from Bartlett's "Familiar Quotations," to add their own reflections with a modicum of apologies for Burns's shortcomings. For, of course, something must be said on the latter subject; and in that connection Prior's couplet comes in handy:

Be to his virtues very kind,
Be to his faults a little blind,

and the apologists of Burns are generally very eloquent in both directions.

One might innocently suppose that the best way to do honour to Burns, and to show his power and enduring influence, would be to produce some evidence that the spirit of Burns is still living to animate and inform his successors. But, in good sooth, the poetry produced on these occasions is very poor stuff, painfully stilted and vapid. Very rarely, if ever, is a line produced at these banquets that is worth remembering, or a verse that deserves to live. There can be no doubt that the men who make themselves prominent on these occasions, and all who participate in them, are sincere admirers of Burns; but it is difficult to avoid the feeling that there is a good deal of self-glorification in the demonstrations. It is also a pity, for the sake of Burns's reputation, that the rites celebrated in his honour partake so entirely of a convivial character, and that so much prominence is given to the "barley bree," devotion to which was the source of all the troubles and miseries of his unhappy life. —*Times' Edinburgh Correspondent.*

CAMEL'S HAIR AND WHERE IT COMES FROM.

Camel's hair has been employed in eastern countries during many centuries for the production of durable, though somewhat coarse tissues; but its introduction into European manufactures is of comparatively recent date. The colour of the hair varies considerably according to the climate of the country and the breed of the animal, and ranges from a dark brown to pure white, the latter, however, being very scarce and fetching comparatively high prices. The hair is not obtained by clipping, but is combed off the camel when it is changing its coat, and presents anything but an attractive appearance in its natural state. It is brought from the interior on the backs of camels in small bales to the Arabian and Syrian ports and to Egypt, whence it is mostly forwarded to Bradford, which is the most important market in Europe for this article. Camel's hair affords two kinds of material, namely, the hair properly so called, which is often used in its natural state in the list of cloth, and the short down or noils employed in the north of England, France and other countries for manufacturing *nouveautés* and fancy materials for ladies' dresses. Great difficulty was experienced in utilizing camel's hair as long as the fashions favoured felted and fine materials, but since cheviot goods have become the vogue it has been employed successfully in several countries. —*North British Mail.*

QUESTION.

"Joys have three stages. Hoping, Having and Had.
The hands of Hope are empty, and the heart of Having is sad;
For the joy we take, in the taking dies, and the joy we had is its ghost.
Now which is best—the joy to come, or the joy we have clapsed and lost?"

—John Boyle O'Reilly.

ANSWER.

"That Hope is sweeter than memory, we all by experience know;
What thought do we give to the argosies that landed a year ago?
Our hearts are not with the ship in port, but we gaze across the foam
And watch with eagerly longing eyes for the vessel that's coming home."

—Anon.