

Whether owing to their isolated position or not—that is, from machine shops of large capacity—their motive power appeared to be in somewhat dubious shape at the time of the writer's visit. Our high-priced excursion had to wait some time for an engine, & when it came it was a Vauclain compound with a broken L. P. cylinder, so we made the trip with one side only. Luckily it was a consolidation.

The location of this line is apt to strike one as pretty far north, as from the northwest corner of the U.S. one steams about 1,000 miles further north, creating the impression that one must then be pretty well up toward the Arctic regions. But although one could cut ice up at Skagway & thereabouts, at least during a considerable portion of the year, this would be a much less ice cutting location both literally & metaphorically on the other side of the world. Skagway is in about the same latitude as St. Petersburg & Christiania, so some of Russia's railways, including the entire system of Finland & the line to Archangel on the White Sea, as well as half of Sweden's & four-fifths of Norway's systems, are north of this point. The systems of the two latter countries extend generally about three hundred miles north of Skagway's latitude, with detached bits further north, topping off with a line from the Gulf of Bothnia across to the ocean that is partially within the Arctic circle. —Railroad Men.

A Sketch of Sir Wm. Van Horne.

H. R. Lewis contributes to Ainslee's Magazine an interesting sketch of the Chairman of the C.P.R. Co.'s board. The writer of the sketch takes his readers to a scene in the heart of the Rockies while the C.P.R. was still under construction, where the General Manager's makeshift private car was an object of awe & reverence to the army of Siwash & Chinese railway laborers, summoned from far & near in anticipation of a catastrophe.

Rising winds & the melting snows of spring had revived a score of mountain streamlets, changing them almost in a breath from purling brooks to menacing torrents, & causing them to bear impetuously toward a certain locality given on the map as Stoney Creek.

It was here in the very heart of the Rockies that the giant trestle of the new road had stretched its wooden legs across from bank to bank like some great spider. And it was because of the fear that the costly framework, which formed a necessary link between two important sections of the road then building, would be imperilled by the rising waters, that armies of laborers had been moved by night, that officials of every degree, & that even he, known familiarly as the "old man," hastened on foot, on construction trains & by private car to the scene.

The work, the hurry, the bustle of these pigmies with their rough costumes, rougher speech & queer machines, were strangely out of place in this spot. The silent mountains

closed in about them as if to hide their iconoclastic work. Interminable stretches of snow & ice glistened above them. Forests of pine & spruce & masses of hardy brush carpeted the lower levels of the great canyon. Gusts of wind sweeping down from above sent the smoke of the locomotives swirling in arabesques.

There were men felling trees & men drafting great logs, men building trestles & braces & wooden bulwarks, men laboring to the utmost of their physical powers & men directing their labors, & one man there was, sturdy, plainly dressed & calm of bearing, who directed the directors. He seemed to be everywhere, giving his personal attention to each detail of the work. He found the spots claiming immediate attention & measured accurately with his eyes the speed of the rising waters.

He superintended the unloading of rock brought by puffing engines & assisted with his own hands in placing the heavy blocks of stone. He told the carpenters how to secure the huge wooden braces, the smiths where to fasten their iron clamps & with it all never lost for one moment his cool, authoritative demeanor.

All through the day he drove the men & drove himself, & when the light of the fading sun vanished beyond the western peaks, he saw that the bridge was saved.

The Chinese laborers & the Siwash construction hands limped slowly to their little camps built here & there in the crevices, & along the ledge wrought for the tracks. As the shadows darkened into night, the General Manager made a final tour of inspection & withdrew, soiled & worn, to his car.

A few moments later the groups of tired men huddled about the camp-fire heard a strain of music mingling with the voice of the torrent, & the sigh of the winds in the pines. They exchanged wondering glances, & asked one another the cause of the unexpected melody. They got up to find out. Presently the Siwash & the Chinese, the foremen & the skilled mechanics were standing at a respectful distance from the private car, gazing wonderingly through a window, at a toil-stained man seated just within. Tucked under the bearded chin was a violin; a bow, grasped tenderly by a hand still bearing the stain of work, passed slowly across the strings. An aria from Gounod floated out into the night.

"Say, fellows, it's Van Horne himself," commented one of a trio of engineers in the group surrounding the car.

"Yes, & it's a sign that he's satisfied with the day's work," replied another. "The old man plays that trembly sort of a piece when he's pleased, & he plays it like he works, & like he paints pictures, & like he manages men—a little better than any one else on this here earth."

In February, 1843, a boy was born in the Van Horne family, then living in a small cross roads settlement, called Chelsea, 14 miles from Chicago. The farmer was a law-

yer of some local repute, but failing fortune compelled his son William to enter the service of a farmer at an early age. William hoed potatoes & curried horses, & is said to have done both very badly indeed. He was as a lad a dreamer of dreams & a seer of visions. He read every book he could lay his hands upon, & drew crude maps of engines & of ships. One day he took up the study of telegraphy. It was an inspiration, one of those trifling acts in a man's career which sometimes forms the turning point in his career.

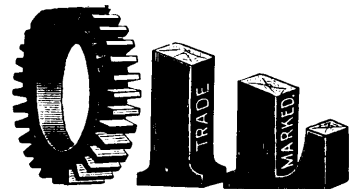
Wm. Van Horne soon withdrew from the farm & entered the service of the Illinois Central as a cub telegraph operator. This was when the road was under the management of General McClellan & Ackerman, & other

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