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EXPLORING WESTERN CANADA.

The Northern Rockies Not So High as Was Thought - Some New Passes Found, Suitable for Railroads.

In no part of the world except in Alaska, has there been more rapid progress in geographical exploration in the past few years than in British Columbia. The latest facts concern a number of new passes through the Rocky Mountains.

Some readers may be surprised that there should be anything left in British Columbia to discover. The fact is, that the Government surveys are yet far from covering the larger portion of that big region. The fine geographical work that a missionary has recently been doing shows that there are still opportunities for discovery in this part of the Dominion.

Father Morice, whose mission station is on the shores of Lake Stuart, nearly in the center of the province, has been traveling many hundreds of miles in a canoe, mapping all the streams, lakes, mountains and valleys in the upper basin of the Netchakohob River. A fine map of his discoveries, which has just been published by the Neuchatel Geographical Society of Switzerland, shows many details that have been seen on no previous map. Lake Morice, for example, which is not found on the latest atlas sheets of British Columbia, is fifty miles long, and 77 feet deep.

The new passes in the Rockies have been studied by a party of Grand Trunk Pacific engineers who have been engaged in the work about a year. A newspaper has reported that this party has discovered the Smoke River, Porcupine, Red Deer, Wapiti and Pine River passes, but this statement is not quite correct.

All these great passes through the Rockies to the north of the Canadian Pacific Railroad have been known to exist for some time, but the engineers have been the first to study them in detail, and they now report that they are all available for railroads, that the gradients on the east are very gentle and that some of the passes are wide enough for double tracks.

The scheme of the Canadian Pacific Railroad was laughed at as impracticable until the great gateway through Kicking Horse Pass was discovered. It is now known that further north there are several other passes lower than those which the Canadian Pacific uses and that they will amply suffice for all of Canada's railroad needs through the mountains.

Explorations of the past few years show that the old ideas of the heights of the leading peaks of the Canadian Rockies were much exaggerated. Peaks still appear on some of the maps as from 15,000 to 17,000 feet above the sea.

Dr. Hector recently wrote that probably none of the mountains of British Columbia rises above 13,000 to 13,500 feet. Outram, Collie and about a dozen other men have within the past ten years ascended many of the high peaks of the Canadian Rockies and made observations to ascertain their altitude. The result is a decided decrease in the previously accepted altitude of a number of the highest mountains of these ranges.—New York Sun.

TWO NEW CLAIMS PRESENTED.

Franco-Venezuelan Commission Adjourns Until Friday Next.

Northfield, Feb. 9.—The Franco-Venezuelan arbitration court, which has not been in session for several days owing to the indisposition of the umpire, Hon. Frank Plumley, and the secretary, Charles A. Plumley, met yesterday, when two new claims were presented. Adjournment was then taken until next Friday at 10 o'clock in the forenoon.

The claim submitted by French citizens against the Venezuelan government are in French and Spanish and must be translated into English.

EDUCATIONAL.

President Eliot of Harvard university has been elected a corresponding member of the Academy of Moral and Political Science of the Institute of France.

Professor Charles F. Tawing, president of the Western Reserve university, explains the tardiness of college students, as due to the reaction which every man feels from obedience to prescribed rules and regulations.

Viceroy Sheng of the Pechili province of China has provided five scholarships for Chinese students now at the University of California. This is the first instance on record that scholarships have been given by a Chinese official to the students of any American or European university.

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PROFIT IN A SKUNK FARM.

How Yankee Farmers Turn Melodorous Creatures to Account.

In the northern part of Connecticut, close to the Massachusetts line and near a settlement of Shakers, is a skunk farm which is run by two young farmers with profit to themselves if with discomfort to their neighbors. This locality had always been greatly troubled by skunks, and after warring against them incessantly, these two farmers, John and Joseph King, decided to make a blessing out of evil, and capture the skunks for market. As skunk skins are worth from 40 cents to \$1.50 apiece, they decided to trap the animals and market their pelts. So they set their traps and waited, but in a considerable time only a few of the little black and white creatures were caught, so the method was deemed too slow a one to be remunerative, and the King brothers decided to hunt them.

The plan that they follow is this: Just as it is growing dark they go forth into the fields with a courageous but discreet dog. A number of skunk holes are visited in succession. The dog sniffs around each, and it does not take him long to decide whether the skunk is at home or not. If the skunk has gone out he starts on its trail until he comes within a safe distance of it. Then he bays long and loud and the two farmers creep swiftly up and usually find the little animal sitting up on its hind legs, meditating humiliation to the dog.

While the skunk is thus occupied one of the farmers sneaks behind it and drops a net over it. The net is made of a barrel hoop over which is stretched a bag, and the whole fastened to a short handle. As soon as this net is dropped over the skunk it jumps into the top of the bag and the hoop is scooped carefully under it, and it is lifted into the air in the net. Then the neck of a meal bag which the other farmer carries is opened and the small bunch of fur slipped into it. There the animal curls up and gives no further trouble. After the hunt has lasted about three hours the men return home, generally bringing several skunks with them, and as a good-sized animal weighs from ten to twelve pounds, the burden of carrying them is not an easy one.

The pelts of these animals are only valuable in cold weather. If killed before the skin will be blue on the under side. Later it will become white and bring a much higher price in the market. But it is not always easy to hunt them in the fall and winter months, so the Kings hunt them in the summer and keep them carefully until it is cold enough for them to be slaughtered. When these men first caught the skunks they were turned into a home made of an old hen coop, with a yard inclosed with wire. Boards and tin were sunk into the ground to keep the creatures from digging out. This was an acceptable home to the skunks, but persons living in the vicinity of the skunk farm claimed that at no time was the air fit to breathe, so the animals were removed to the barn.

Into this barn the skunks are shaken from the bag when the farmers return from a hunt. In boxes in the center of the floor and in corners skunks are to be seen piled in heaps fast asleep. They are fed every evening, and eat nearly everything that is meat. They are given bits of muskrat and rabbit and the carcasses of all small animals. The skunk brothers have a fondness for the carrots and say that each one has an individuality of its own. When the men go into the barn the skunks rub against them and squeal and tumble about like pampered kittens. The Kings "monkey with the buzz saw" by picking the animals up by the tail. It is said that this is an easy thing to do if it is done quickly, and with a jerk, but most visitors are willing to take the Kings' word for it without trying the experiment for themselves.

The fur dealers send agents throughout the country each fall to obtain skunk pelts and the Kings expect to make about \$50 on their pets this season. In a few weeks they will be killed by shooting them with a revolver and their skins will go on the walls to dry and wait for the agents.—New York Tribune.

Swords in Japan.

Although wearing swords has entirely ceased for years in Japan, the old esteem and reverence for the weapon and its use still exist among the gentlemen of the country, and many of the nobility have at their houses regular establishments where fencing is practiced.

Tyrol Mail Carriers.

Many of the rural letter carriers in the Tyrol are women.

Less Smoking by Oriental Women.

Smoking is an innovation in western female circles, says Mary Covanagh in Rosary Magazine, but a fast dying custom among orientals.

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"A STATE FOR SALE."

Lincoln Steffens on Corruption in Politics.

SYSTEM OF RHODE ISLAND

How a commercial Aristocracy Corrupted the Good American Stock of a State and Laid Foundation of Financial and Political System.

"Aren't the people themselves dishonest?" asks Lincoln Steffens in an article in McClure's Magazine for February entitled "Rhode Island—A State For Sale." The "grafters" who batten on us say so. Politicians have excused their own corruption to me time and again by declaring that "we're all corrupt," and promoters and swindlers alike describe their victims as "smart folk who think to beat us at our own game." Without going into the cynic's sweeping summary that "man always was and always will be corrupt," it is but fair while we are following the trail of the grafters to consider their plea that the corrupt political system they are upbuilding is founded on the dishonesty of the American people. Is it?

It is in Rhode Island. The system of Rhode Island which has produced the man who is at the head of the political system of the United States is grounded on the lowest layer of corruption that I have found thus far—the bribery of voters with cash at the polls. Other states know the practice. In Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois and Pennsylvania "workers" are paid "to get out the vote," but this is only preliminary; the direct and decisive purchase of power comes later in conventions and legislatures. In these states the corruptionists buy the people's representatives. In Rhode Island they buy the people themselves.

The conditions are peculiar. As the Rhode Islanders say, their state is peculiar in many ways. But it is American. The smallest of the states, it is one of the biggest in our history. Poor in soil, it is rich in waterways, and the Rhode Islanders, turning early from agriculture to manufacture, made goods which they sent forth from their magnificent harbor to all the world in ships that brought home cargoes of wealth. One of the New England group of colonies, Rhode Island was founded as a refuge from the Puritan intolerance of Massachusetts. One of the "original thirteen states," it was the first (May 4, 1776) to declare its independence of Great Britain and the last (May 29, 1790) to give allegiance to the United States. So the American spirit of commercial enterprise and political independence has burned high in Rhode Island. There is nothing peculiar about that, and there is nothing peculiar about the general result of the corruption of the state.

Rhode Island is an oligarchy. But so were Wisconsin and Illinois and Missouri, and so are New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The oligarchy is the typical form of the actual government of our states. There is one peculiarity about the Rhode Island oligarchy, however. It is constitutional. The oligarchies of other states were grafted upon constitutional democracies. Rhode Island never was a democracy, and in that peculiarity lies the peculiar significance of this state to the rest of us.

Rhode Island has a restricted suffrage. Many a good American thinks that if we could "keep the ignorant foreigner from voting" and otherwise limit the suffrage to persons of property who would have a direct personal financial interest in government we then should have good government. Should we? Rhode Island can answer that question. Again, many "thinkers" have thought that it was the wicked cities with their mixed populations which have degraded and disgraced us and that if we could but devise some scheme of representation by which the balance of power could be given into the honest hands of the good old American stock out upon the healthy countryside we then should be saved. Rhode Island has such a scheme. The significance to the rest of us of the story of Rhode Island lies in the fact that its essentially typical condition was reached under extraordinary circumstances which some "leading citizens" in other states think would correct their evils.

"Leading citizens" have made Rhode Island what it is. They always have ruled there. I have called the state an oligarchy. It used to be an aristocracy. "Freeholders" and their eldest sons alone participated in the colonial government under the charter of Charles II., and after the Revolution, when all the other states adopted constitutions, Rhode Island went on under its royal charter of 1663 and an "unwritten constitution" till 1842. I cannot stop to describe this "landed aristocracy" in an American state. It is sufficient that it closed with the Dorr rebellion. The abuses were so intolerable that the people, the patient American people who have submitted to Croker, Quay, Cox and other despots, rose in open revolt.

The next experiment was a "commercial aristocracy." The constitution of 1842 "extended" the suffrage from holders of real to those also possessing of personal property—if they were native born. The "foreign vote" was

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restricted, as before, to real estate holders till 1888, when personal property qualified a foreign born as well as a native voter. The "mob," which owned nothing and paid no taxes, was allowed to vote, but only upon registering four months before election and then not "upon any proposition to impose a tax or the expenditure of money." These registered voters, for example, cannot vote for members of city councils.

The most effective restriction of the suffrage, however, was established in the constitutional scheme of disproportionate representation. The governor, elected by a majority (now by a plurality) of the voters of all classes, was made a "pure executive"; he has no veto. All legislative powers were lodged in the general assembly of two houses. The lower branch, the house of representatives, is limited to seventy-two members, no matter what the population may be, and while each town shall have at least one representative, no city may have more than one-sixth of the membership. This is undemocratic enough, but the senate, says the constitution, "shall consist of one senator from each town and city in the state."

Here is the crux of the situation. A town in Rhode Island is what is known to most of us as a township. There are thirty-eight "towns and cities" in the state. Their population in 1900 was 428,551. Of this total 30,027 lived in twenty towns. Thus less than one-eleventh of the people of the state elect more than five-tenths—a majority—of the senate. Providence, with 29,030 qualified voters, has one senator; Little Compton elected one one year by a unanimous vote of 78. There are fourteen such "towns" with less than 500 qualified voters; there are twenty with less than 2,000 each. Thus was the sovereignty of the state put into the hands of the "good old American stock out in the country."

What happened? The "best people" continued to rule. The "best people" of the period after the new constitution were manufacturers, but their fine old houses stand today as witnesses not only to their wealth, but also to a refined taste. There can be no doubt that they came as near forming a real aristocracy as commercialism can produce. They certainly were just the kind of men that many theorists say should have control of Rhode Island. How? With money. Aristocrats though they were, they were business men first, and they went after the key to control in a businesslike way. They bought up the towns. The "best people" sent offers of bribes to the good people of the countryside, and the good people took the bribes and let the best people run the government. It was a commercial aristocracy that corrupted the American stock in Rhode Island and laid the foundation of the present financial and political system of corruption in the state.

A Bit Disappointment.



Mae—They were disappointed in love, weren't they? Heien—Yes. Each thought the other had money.

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The Times' Daily Short Story.

THE END OF IT

[Copyright, 1904, by Richard B. Shelton.]

Vandyne stood very stiff and straight, with folded arms. Outlined against the background of dull sky and gray water his figure seemed almost herculean. Despite his clothes of conventional cut, there was something suggestive of the bronze age about him—some hint of rugged, primitive strength. Miss Desboro realized suddenly that the mask of conventional restraint had been thrown aside and that there stood before her all of the rugged, primitive man that lay beneath that mask.

A moment ago she had been inclined to laugh. Now there was a strange sensation tugging at her heart, but whether it was pity or fear she could not tell. This was the stage of the game she generally found most enjoyable—this climax, where she always expressed her surprise and sorrow and bound up the wounded heart with the balm of good sisterly advice. She had particularly enjoyed the anticipation of giving this sisterly advice to Vandyne, but somehow the realization bade fair to fall short of the anticipation. Vandyne's eyes seemed to search the secret corners of her soul, and beneath that calm, stony scrutiny she was stunned and helpless. She seemed to feel rather than hear Vandyne's deep voice saying, with quiet bitterness:

"I congratulate you, Miss Desboro. I have seen the game before, but never played like this. You have thoroughly mastered all its fine points." She looked up with an appealing glance. That same appealing glance had saved the situation for her many times before this. But for once it failed. The primitive man before her was unmoved by its eloquence.

"Do you think you are quite fair to me?" she asked, with an attempt at hauteur that fell pathetically flat. Vandyne smiled slowly. "Do you think you have been fair to me?" he said.

The girl pulled her gloves nervously. "I don't know what you call fair," she said. "You grasp at straws. You take possibilities for certainties." Vandyne laughed harshly. "In other words, I have made the ghastly mistake of thinking you imbued with all the qualities of the perfect woman, when in reality you are a heartless trifler."

The girl sprang to her feet, her eyes ablaze. "You are going too far, Mr. Vandyne!" she said heatedly. "You are saying things quite beyond bounds of courtesy or decency!"

Vandyne was unmoved by the outburst. He looked at her with a calm that was almost contemptuous.

"I am not speaking with the intention of being courteous or decent. I am simply stating the truth as I see it. If it hurts, I am sorry, but you deserve it."

The girl flushed.

No man had ever before spoken to her in this fashion, but beneath her anger was a wholesome respect for the courage and candor of the man.

"Of course you have the right to say all this," she said bitterly.

"You have given me the right," he returned.

"Oh, it's always the girl's fault, of course," she said. "A man mistakes her motives, and then she must suffer for his mistakes."

"Motives, I think you'll admit, are rather hard to understand sometimes," said he.

The girl turned from him. "I am going back to the house," she said. "I had hoped we might be friends; but, since we can't, perhaps it's best not to try."

She started to walk away, but Vandyne's voice stopped her.

"Wait a moment," he said curtly. "You shall hear a few things I have to say before you leave."

She turned. "Well?" she asked wearily.

"I want to say that it is such women as you that make misogynists—women who lead men on to laugh at them and make sport of them." He paused.

"Is that all?" she asked coldly.

"I have known little, very little, of women in my life," he went on, "and I have always placed them mentally in a shrine as something holy and sacred. Perhaps I should thank you for undeceiving me."

She turned away again. Vandyne could not see the tears in her eyes.

"It's an ill wind that blows no good," he went on cruelly. "At least you have taught me that what seems to be and what is are very different matters. That is all. Permit me to congratulate you again, and—good-by."

He turned on his heel and strode down the bank toward the water. The sound of unrestrained sobbing made him turn back. The girl was standing quite still, with her hands over her eyes. He hurried up the bank and stood before her, repentant and helpless before her stormy grief.

"Good Lord!" he gasped contritely. "What have I done?"

"You—you have made me love you; that's what you've done," she sobbed. And the bronze man suddenly became very human.

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