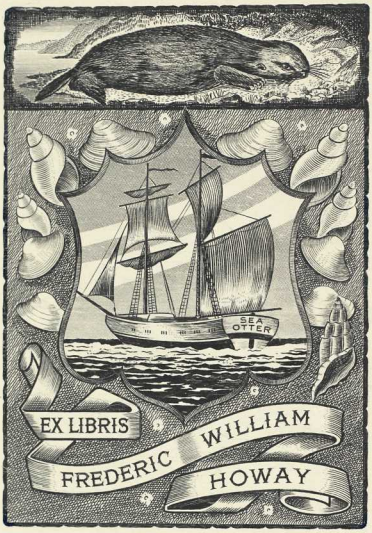
# CANADA'S GREAT HIGHWAY: FROM THE FIRST STAKE TO THE LAST SPIKE.

J. H. E. SECRETAN

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# CANADA'S GREAT HIGHWAY

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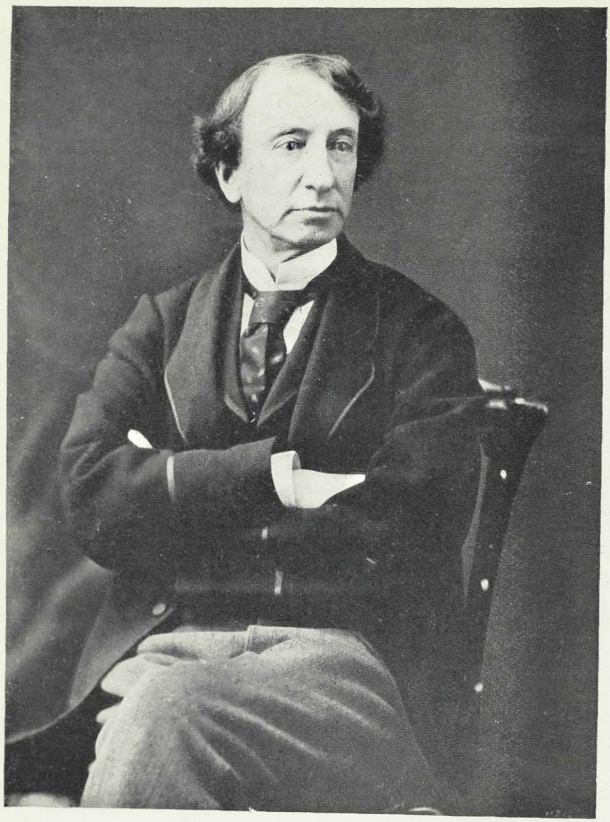

THE RT. HON. SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD, PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA, 1872.

# CANADA'S GREAT HIGHWAY: FROM THE FIRST STAKE TO THE LAST SPIKE. By J. H. E. SECRETAN, C.E.

With 16 Illustrations from Photographs

Crew of the transcontinental on C.P.R. in 1877- See Guide to B.C. 1877-8, p. 255

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# *INTRODUCTION*

THIS book is not intended to be a serious history of the evolution of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which has so often been written by more fluent fountain pens than mine. Nor is it a collection of dry statistics, extracted from official blue books, with a series of quotations from other people's diaries, such as I have often read; but rather is it meant to be a true narrative of my own personal adventures and experiences as an engineer from the driving of the first stake in 1871 to the driving of the last spike in 1885. And, with all its faults, it has at least the audacity to be authentic.

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## *CHAPTER I*

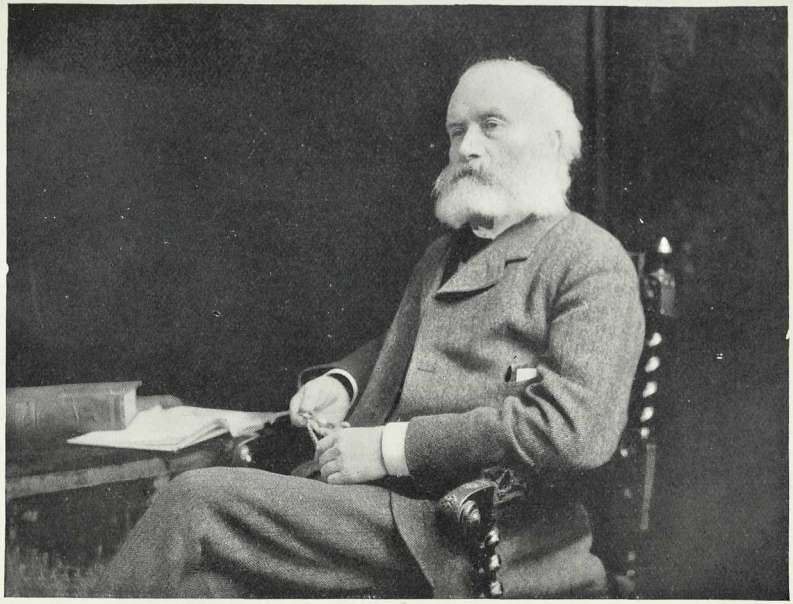
### EARLY DAYS

THE traveller of the present day is whirled swiftly along over the smooth shining surface of 100-pound steel rails, housed in palatial vestibuled cars by day and night behind a big 220-ton iron horse. The track over which he glides is carefully patrolled, and all dangerous spots well watched and guarded. He will find the most modern railway equipment and civil and even courteous attendants on all the trains. These luxuries are provided by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, now no doubt the greatest transportation Company in the wide, wide world.

Such perfection was not attained in fifteen years without great cost, much suffering and

misery, and with the loss of many a brave man's life, as I shall attempt to describe, from my own personal experience.

I must hark back to 1871, when, a beardless boy, I first joined the C.P.R. as an Assistant Engineer. As Artemas Ward said, "Them was the halcyon days of youth!" Sir Sandford Fleming, then Mr. Sandford Fleming, was the Chief Engineer of the original Government surveys and I had the honour to serve under him for ten years. The grand idea of a great railway line from ocean to ocean, through an unknown wilderness, across hundreds of miles of undulating plains that were inhabited only by Indians and buffaloes, thence piercing the rocky fortresses of many chains of lofty mountains, was first *conceived* by Sir John A. Macdonald, but it was Sir Sandford Fleming who had to plan the actual work. He was a Scotchman of the finest type, handsome, rugged as a block of his native granite, determined and sometimes obstinate, but of a kindly disposition to his subordinates and first, last and always, a



SIR SANDFORD FLEMING, THE PIONEER ENGINEER OF THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

*gentleman.* The task imposed upon him as pathfinder for this tremendous trans-continental trail would have overawed most men, but it did not daunt Sir Sandford. He quickly surrounded himself with a large staff, efficient and otherwise, and proceeded to organize the original surveys.

The offices of the Headquarters Staff were located in the old Imperial Barracks on Parliament Hill (totally destroyed by fire in 1874), where the Victoria Monument now stands. Two District Engineers were appointed, Mr. Marcus Smith, M.I.C.E., and Mr. James H. Rowan, C.E., in charge of the Western and Eastern Districts respectively.

Few people, as they lazily and comfortably recline in the luxurious day cars, and sleep peacefully in their snug staterooms at night after a splendid meal in the gorgeous dining cars, can realize what had to be done in those fifteen years before all this was " un fait accompli,"—a phrase that I am told is excellent French in the Province of Quebec. Think for a moment of putting a handful of

men into the bush to hack their way through an impenetrable forest,—these men to pack all their supplies and equipment on their backs for many months, far away from all civilization or help. Sickness and often death occurred that could not be reported until some communication could be established with the outside world by an Indian messenger, generally unreliable, or by the appearance of some officer of the Commissariat with fresh supplies. But Sir Sandford was not the kind of man to be easily discouraged or dismayed. He proceeded to organize, and intricate organization apparently came naturally to him. He was built that way.

We were formed up in Divisions from A to Z, from East to West, in order to distinguish the different survey parties. The Divisional Engineers received printed instructions signed by the Chief Engineer and also a form of Church Service, I remember, for Sundays, put together specially by many learned divines of different denominations so that it would suit any old religion, and

anybody could worship with anybody else unless he was busy patching his overalls or doing a week's washing.

LIKE WORTHY CAPTAIN REECE, R.N.
" He was adored by all his men."

## FIRST SURVEYS
## 1871

I was appointed by my old friend, the Hon. John Henry Pope, who somehow had taken a sort of fancy to me, partly I believe because I used to amuse him by making a fourth at euchre in his quarters at the old Russell House Room No. 78. I can just remember the Hon. Peter Mitchell often being one of the party and some others, mostly old enough to be my grandfather.

I always looked upon " John Henry " with awe and admiration and invariably considered him to be the Abe Lincoln of Canada, another of my heroes whose life I had devoured with great gusto. [Abe and Mark Twain, I still

believe to be the greatest men America has produced. I hate to offend Chauncey Depew, but he may never know it.]

The repellent rocky shore of Lake Superior was not considered at first in the search for a practicable route for the great overland highway, but a more northerly line was to be explored with lighter work and easier gradients. Thus it was that I found myself, one bright Spring day, en route from Collingwood to Red Rock, Nipigon Bay, on board one of the old-time side-wheelers, armed with a brand new little English Dumpy level on my shoulder, a full fledged Leveller of Division H under a nice old gentleman named Johnson, with orders to run from some point about twenty miles North of the North end of Lake Nipigon in an Easterly direction to meet Division G, under an Engineer named Armstrong, running West, to link up our line with his and return home unless otherwise ordered.

So far all was sunshine and happiness. My immediate senior officer was a long lank Nova

Scotian named Schurman, whose duty it was to take charge of the crew, run the transit and make the observations—subsequently I made a few myself!

I remember we had a splendid time at Red Rock on the Nipigon River, about thirty odd miles from Lake Nipigon, with many heart-breaking portages, some of them many miles in length. The Hudson's Bay Company had a post at Red Rock in charge of Mr. Crawford, the Factor, and there we were camped several days waiting for boats to arrive for what little navigation there was on the Nipigon River. These came up in the shape of Ottawa River Lumberman's Batteaux, and they were forty or fifty feet long if I remember rightly, and I *do* remember that they were heavy enough when we commenced to drag them over the numerous portages.

Arrived at the Lake, we transhipped into a big sailing boat, thirty-eight men and a dog, and headed for the head of the Lake, seventy miles distant. "Standing room only" was the sign on that boat, and for some reason

or other we never went ashore until we reached our destination.

There was a certain amount of novelty about this trip and there was, too, quite a lot of discomfort, but all's well that ends well, and at last we reached our initial point. Here we blazed the first tree that had ever been blazed in that locality and certainly planted *one* of the first stakes ever planted marked zero, of that particular Division for the future line of the great C.P.R.

The regular routine of a survey party would probably not interest my readers, and it is enough to say that we turned out very early in the grey morn, worked hard all day in all weathers, ate three times a day regularly (on the principle of Josh Billings, who wrote to his wife, " Enclose please find ten dollars, *if you can !* ") and then slept the tired and dreamless sleep of the weary. Every day was precisely the same, and the routine was the same for months on end.

The country assigned to us was most uninteresting, consisting, as it did, of a series

of muskegs occasionally intersected by high rocky ridges; the timber was small scrub spruce of a most funereal aspect with long pendant weepers of black crepe—no birds, no beasts, no fish, no life, no nothing! Millions of poisonous black flies by day and mosquitoes at night. It seemed to me that a convention of all the flies in the world was being held there.

We were no doubt the first human bipeds that had ever traversed that God-forsaken country,—although perhaps we didn't fully realize the honour and glory of all this at that time. Wading knee-deep through muskegs all day and fighting mosquitoes all night, and living on salt pork of the Crimean period and beans, with dried apples for dessert, was our daily routine, until at last early morning frosts warned us that October had arrived. We were nearly one hundred miles from our starting point and supplies were almost exhausted. Our pack animals, mostly French half-breeds, had returned from the base with the fatal announcement that

no fresh supplies had arrived. Well, here we were, thirty-eight men and one dog, about two hundred miles from where we knew there was plenty, "Flat Rock Portage," on the shores of Lake Nipigon.

So the nice old gentleman, previously mentioned, our Chieftain, in the proverbial language of the prize ring, "threw up the sponge," dressed himself up in a long black coat, put on a black necktie, and resigned himself to his horrible fate.

## THE WOLF AT THE DOOR

The elongated Schurman and I now had a committee meeting of two and decided that something had to be done, and that quick action was absolutely necessary. One of us should take the crew out over our line, now about 110 miles long and the other take his chance of meeting the party that was supposed to be coming from the East, finding his way through the bush on a compass bearing as well as he could.

We tossed up for it. I don't think there was much choice. Anyhow, he won and decided to take an Indian boy and go East to try to find Armstrong of Division G, while I was to take the men down over our line in the hope of meeting relief or at least of finding it in the shape of supplies at our initial point.

We shook hands and parted next morning, he with a compass and a few pounds of split peas, and I with thirty-eight men and a dog, about half a day's rations of flour but nothing else except the hope that "springs eternal in the human heart." I cached everything that weighed anything, and without tents, blankets or grub, we started our long tramp back over the hated muskegs and rocky ridges. It was getting cold at night as we huddled round our fire, but during the bright frosty October days, the sun shone on us and took the frost out of our clothes and put some warmth into our hearts.

The only luck we had was finding any amount of the little buds that grow on rose

bushes, full of seeds, which washed down with plenty of swamp water kept life in us and enabled us to do nearly thirty miles a day between daylight and dark.

### WE ARRIVE AT OMBOBIQUA RIVER

About four days and nights after I parted with the lengthy Nova Scotian, we arrived at last at our starting point and found—*nothing!* There were a few foot-sore stragglers, whom I sent back for next day.

At noon a bunch of Cree Indians stole softly down the river in their canoes and were much surprised to discover my ragged and hungry mob of white men. We had money, but they did not seem to understand the rate of exchange.

But they had white fish, and we had undershirts of a gorgeous scarlet hue which appealed to their simple tastes just as the fish appealed to ours, so exchanges were rapidly effected. After much haggling, we also secured a few of their birch-bark canoes and proceeded down

stream to the head of the lake, where I pictured a magnificent depôt of supplies and in my mind's eye, goaded on by the promptings and suggestions of an empty stomach, I saw vast hoards of succulent provisions, the much despised iron-bound barrels of Crimean pork in the front row, flanked by barrels of flour and other luxuries.

It did not take long to discover that a busy but inefficient Commissariat Department had been conscientiously transporting hundreds of barrels of *sugar* all summer. And that was what we found—but nothing else.

At this stage of my disappointment, I suggested to the aged Chieftain before-mentioned that somebody had better try to reach the known depôt at Flat Rock, where stores must be found, and modestly volunteered for the venture.

So I left that night in a fathom and a half bark canoe with one half-breed boy in the bow. Nipigon Lake has a number of deep bays many of them ten or fifteen miles

across from point to point, impossible for my little craft in rough weather. So wearily we tightened up our dinner straps and paddled round these bays as far off the land as we dare. After a couple of days and nights of this work, I remember, we landed on a rocky shore and my "crew" proceeded to fell a tall, stately dry ram pike to make a fire, as the nights were not too sultry.

With a crash about thirty feet of the stately old pine top came down and went through the bottom of our last hope, the little canoe, which had been hauled up on the flat rock. This looked like disaster, if not death, but we had done so well and got so far without meeting the grim Reaper face to face, so we simply looked at each other and then proceeded to look for gum and birch-bark, also cedar for ribs. We found all these necessary materials before daylight and began shipbuilding.

About noon we sighted an ancient aborigine of the female sex, who, after much waving of shirts as S.O.S. signals on our part, bash-

fully came within hailing distance and informed us we were only six miles from Flat Rock Portage!

Our troubles, at least for the present, were over.

It did not take long that morning to paddle our little patchwork round to Flat Rock Portage, where we found a big camp or depôt full of supplies and my party, all now well fed and happy, they having been rescued by the Commissariat boats busily transporting more barrels of sugar to the head of the Lake.

I was joyously received, having been reported as missing.

Next day our outfit moved down stream to Red Rock on Lake Superior to await a home-going steamer.

But what about my friend Schurman? His experience was perhaps worse than mine, although he chose what he considered the easiest way out.

In a few days the old steamboat *Cumberland* hove in sight, bound up to Port Arthur

and then home to Collingwood, and the first man to come ashore was my long lean friend Schurman, looking leaner than ever. He soon told me his adventures since we parted. As I said before, he left me with one Indian boy, a bag of split peas and a pocket compass.

The first day he travelled through the bush in an Easterly direction, hoping every hour to get some tidings of the on-coming party under Armstrong, but without finding any sign of them. The second day he was rather exhausted from lack of food, and as there was still no sign of a human being at night, he began to fear he might be travelling either North or South of, and parallel to, Armstrong's line. On the afternoon of the third day he struck a big lake right across his course and then began to despair and abandon all hope of ever being rescued.

In this cheerful frame of mind he was considering the desirability of blowing his brains out when towards evening he saw a canoe containing an ancient squaw who was

out fishing. The Indian boy, nearly crazy with fear at first and now delighted, soon attracted her attention, and before dark the old squaw had taken them to Armstrong's camp on the Pic River where, very weak and exhausted, they were nursed back to life and later taken down to Lake Superior and so on to Red Rock, where we met. It appeared that Armstrong had run out of supplies and was on his way to civilization, having been unable to finish his line and join up with us.

Thus ended my first experience on a very small link of the great chain stretching across this vast continent.

During that winter in Ottawa, I had the honour of shaking hands with Sir Sandford Fleming, who kindly enquired whether I had not had " a rather hard summer " ? When I told him we were four days without being troubled with food, he simply said, " And were there no *squirrels* you could shoot ? "

## *CHAPTER II*

### ORGANIZATION

THE organization of survey parties to run trial lines through the wilderness was now in full swing.

The Headquarters Staff was increased and even the highly inefficient Commissariat Department was attended to and there was less shortage of the necessaries of life. Main depôts of supplies were established at all principal points accessible by water. Thunder Bay, on Lake Superior, was a great distributing point, and Fort Garry, on the Red River, was another important place where provisions could be obtained from the Hudson's Bay Company. The Headquarters of this vast organization, as I previously remarked, were established up on the hill in

the old stone barracks overlooking the Ottawa River, and it was from there that the master mind issued his orders.

I must now pay a tribute to the Divisional Engineers and all their officers and men engaged on these surveys. In my humble opinion, based upon many years of service in various capacities, there was never known a more loyal, conscientious, thorough-going set of men than those on the Engineering Staff of the C.P.R. Far removed from the watchful eye of their chief, only occasionally inspected by the District Engineers whose duties extended over enormous areas, these men conscientiously performed the work allotted to them, keeping a daily record of events, always striving to reach the goal to which they were ordered, often under most hazardous and heartrending conditions. Patiently enduring sickness, often on short rations, exposed to every known kind of weather, conscientiously giving a man's work for a poor day's pay, keeping regular hours with no holidays except Sundays (and not

even those for the officers), they religiously plodded along through Summer's heat and Winter's icy blast till the line was finished and they were ordered home.

I merely point this out to show how easy it would have been for a " slacker," hundreds of miles from his base, to have taken things easily and loafed on the job, allowing his men to idle, himself enjoying any fishing or shooting there might happen to be in the vicinity. Instead of which these men, with truly loyal instincts, followed a deadly dull daily routine of duty day after day, week after week, month after month, until they once more reported at Headquarters on the hill.

What was there to prevent one of these men, isolated as he was from the outside world for many months, with no check on his movements, from leisurely taking his own time, turning out when he felt like it in the morning and knocking off whenever he chose at night ? He could falsify his daily diary, fudge his observations and then,

like the celebrated Doctor Cook, return home a hero and declare he had been to the North Pole. There was no Peary to discredit him.

It was in 1873, I think, that I went out with a jolly old Irishman as second officer. His name was Henry Carre, C.E., a well-known engineer from the Inter-Colonial Railway. My immediate senior officer was good old Horatio F. Forrest, a man much older than myself, of particularly precise and correct habits and extremely methodical; he neither smoked, swore nor drank, which was somewhat of a novelty in our profession, besides which, I believe, he was a devoted Christian and used to say his prayers before turning in.

As we were running through a heavily timbered country I had an easy time and did not have to turn out in the mornings with Forrest, but waited till he had some line cut through the woods when I could easily catch up with the levels.

I remember how Horatio used to annoy me in the dull grey mornings, when I would

feign extreme fatigue and sleepiness and take some time to wake up. At last, goaded to desperation, I perpetrated the following "Pome," addressed to Horatio:

The Summer's sun was rising fast
O'er lakes and rivers of the past,
When H.F.F., the transit man,
Sprang from his couch and thus began:
"Oh, Secretan, turn out, I pray,
"And don't lie sleeping all the day,
"'Tis half-past five: You say, 'What bosh!'
"Come, come! Get up and take a wash,
"For breakfast now will soon appear,
"The sound of knives and forks I hear."
The cook sings out in accents clear,
Which grate on my awakening ear.
And yet that transit man still cries:
"Oh, Secre*tan*, arise! arise!"
I peep from out my blankets green,
Sit up, and on one elbow lean;
At my warm bed take one fond look
Then make a bee-line for the brook,
Where quickly I my head immerse
And everything in general curse,
Murmuring the while at my hard life
Wishing I'd never left my wife
Or little ones who looked at me
And clung so fondly round my knee,

It may be right, it may be wrong,
There's no redress at Nipigon.
So as I sing this plaintive lay
The time is up, I must away;
The sun darts down his fiercest ray,
Those awful flies commence to play
Beginning thus—Another day!

This much amused old Henry Carre, whose soul was not without some poetry, which—alas!—was totally absent from the soul of Horatio, who looked at me more in sorrow than in anger and wondered what would be the ultimate fate of such a promising and yet frivolous young man. I suppose he thought that I was destined to be hanged some day and no doubt prayed for me that night accordingly, while the jolly old boss and I were having a good game of cribbage until the early hours.

While we were "doing our bit," many other Divisions were distributed from the head waters of the Ottawa River West, (the District under James H. Rowan, C.E.), towards Fort Garry on the Red River, now the great City of Winnipeg. In the Rocky Moun-

tains, I believe, about that time, my old friend Walter Moberly, C.E., belonging to a distinguished family of engineers, was prowling round examining many different alleged passes some to be commended and considered, and others condemned and rejected. The old Moberly log-huts where he wintered on the Columbia River, somewhere near Golden, are, I believe, still in existence. On the Pacific Coast, harbours were being examined with regard to their suitability for a Western Terminus. Engineers' offices were opened in Victoria, B.C., about 1873 or 1874, for these parties from the Coast. All the Eastern Divisions reported to Headquarters in Ottawa —except those that were kept in the field all Winter, which often occurred, as in many districts Winter was a favourable season for making rapid explorations, dog-sleds being used for transportation or toboggans hauled by men.

Those of us who were lucky enough to get home in the Winter came to Ottawa and worked on the plans showing our Summer's

work, until navigation opened in the Spring. These plans and profiles were very elaborate and thorough, the ordinary working plan being 400-feet to an inch, while a small scale general plan of 4,000-feet to an inch was made showing the whole line.

In 1874, the old Barracks were burned down one cold Winter's night, and when I arrived at my office next morning I found nothing but icicles and firemen. Most of these valuable plans were destroyed, but some few were saved and with the help of notes, diaries and memory, we started to make new ones in temporary quarters apportioned to us in the Senate and Commons.

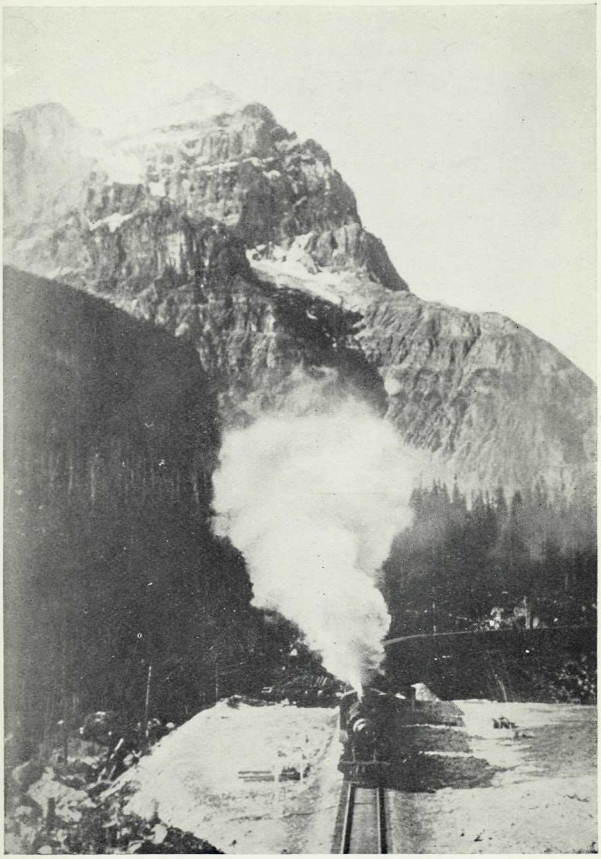
The Capital in those days was exceedingly gay, and young husky returned engineers were always in great demand at balls and fêtes, having no difficulty in competing with the pallid yet persevering bank clerk for the favours of the fair sex in the mazy waltz.

## *CHAPTER III*

### BRITISH COLUMBIA

IT was in 1874 when the first regular large survey parties were sent out to British Columbia. It was also the ambition of most of us to be ordered to that unknown country, and a place on the staff of a B.C. Division was considered quite an honour.

Very few people appreciate the enormous distance we had to travel before arriving at the starting point of our work, and to give my readers an idea of this, I will relate my experience in 1874. It was my good fortune to be appointed first officer or transit man under H. P. Bell, M.I.C.E., (another Inter-Colonial Engineer), on Division W, bound for the wilds of British Columbia to run an exploratory line from the vicinity of Fort George



MOUNT STEPHEN, FIELD, BRITISH COLUMBIA.

towards Tete Jaune Cache, on the Upper waters of the Great Fraser River.

In those days we had to travel over the Grand Trunk to Chicago, then by the Union Pacific and Central Pacific to San Francisco, *via* Omaha and Salt Lake City, a delightful journey, with ever varying scenery and climate.

The distance would be approximately as follows :—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ottawa to San Francisco | - | 3000 miles. |
| San Francisco to Victoria, B.C. | | 800 ,, |
| Victoria to New Westminster | - | 100 ,, |
| New Westminster to Yale | - | 100 ,, |
| Yale to Quesnelle - | - | 300 ,, |
| Quesnelle to Fort George | - | 100 ,, |
| TOTAL | - | 4400 miles. |

Therefore, it will be seen, we travelled *four thousand four hundred miles* before even grinding our axes to sharpen the first stake to be planted on the line that we were ordered to run, with a short Summer before us and often a first-rate fighting chance of being

caught by the Winter before we could return to civilization.

From San Francisco at that time there was uncertain communication with Victoria by a line of ghastly old hulks called by courtesy steamers. It was not a very enjoyable passage even in a real ship. There are no harbours of refuge in case of accident and along that Coast you often wonder who had the audacity to call such an ocean "Pacific."

The first ancient scow I had the pleasure of sailing in was called the *Prince Albert* and was commanded by a sausage-eating skipper with an unpronounceable Teutonic name which sounded like "Von Hammaneggsburgher." After borrowing enough life-boats and accessories from other ships sufficient to pass the supposed steamboat regulations, and returning them immediately the Customs Officer had gone ashore, he would glide through the Golden Gate headed for the far North—wind, waves and weather permitting.

In those days, I took a whole lot of interest

in navigation, it being a branch of our profession, but this was really too simple. When we got outside, the dear old German pirate in command merely set a course for Cape Flattery Light at the entrance to the Straits of San Juan de Fuca, whispering in a sort of gin and fog voice to the wheel-man, and then he retired to his cabin, turned into his berth and pulled down the blind. He was never seen again until, by the grace of God, we arrived four days later, when the wheel-man, I suspect, woke him up with the information,—"a beeg light it iss right in der vay." Then all he had to do, so far as I could make out, was to cover up his lights, to save pilotage, stagger up the Straits and bump up against the dock at Victoria as gently as possible without being discovered by the police. God knows what would have happened if we had ever met anything.

"Ye gentlemen of Ottawa who sit at home at ease,
How little do ye think upon the danger of the seas."

I sailed in many of these tramps, which all went to the bottom eventually. Perhaps the most painful and saddest disaster was that of the *Pacific,* an old side-wheel tub plying between Victoria and San Francisco. I had come up one Spring in that antiquated ark and that Fall we were ordered home in her. I well remember going down to the shipping office of Welsh Rithet & Co. to buy the tickets and being told the ship was " full up," much to my delight ; but the agents offered to make up beds on the saloon tables to accommodate our party. We mutinied at this and absolutely refused to go in the ill-fated vessel, which was to sail next day, and we decided to wait for the next one, which would also give us three weeks more to enjoy the hospitalities of the Victorians.

I knew a great many passengers going on the *Pacific,* anxious to get home. Amongst others, there was one Sullivan, Gold Commissioner of Cassiar, a jovial Irishman who had not been out of the mountains for twenty years and was looking forward to the trip.

That night I dined with a family whose eldest daughter, a beautiful young girl, was sailing on the morrow to join a married sister in 'Frisco. We were a merry party and I promised to be on hand in the morning to take the young lady on board. We drove down to the dock and having introduced the lady to the Captain and put her in his charge, I said goodbye to poor old Sullivan and many other friends.

Amidst tears, cheers and the waving of many handkerchiefs, the wretched old coffin steamed slowly out of the harbour in a lop-sided sort of way as her hundreds of doomed passengers lined the rail. It was then about noon, and before ten o'clock that night, the *Pacific* was at the bottom of the ocean after which she was named. News came slowly in those days but I think there must have been a cable from Seattle or somewhere across the Sound, as we got the appalling news of the horrible disaster in the small hours next morning. "Ship foundered with all hands off Cape Flattery," but no details, of course.

We could not believe it.

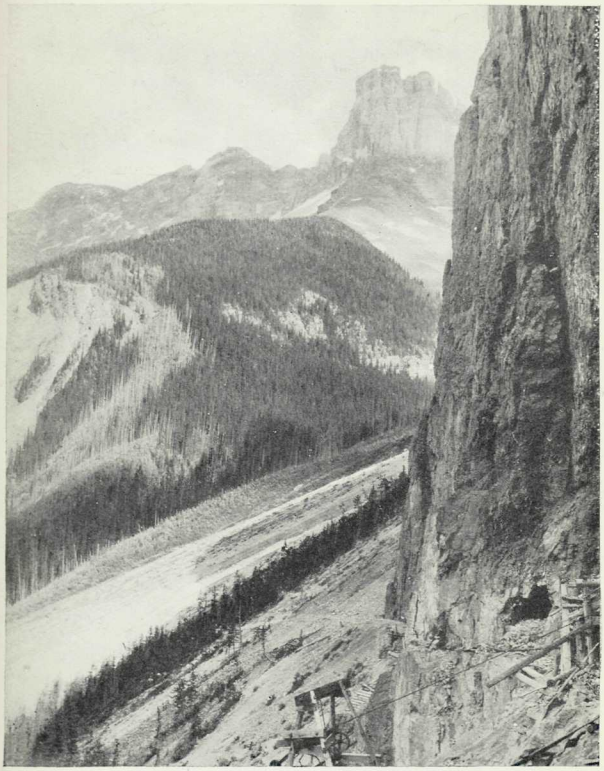
It seemed so short a time ago, less than twelve hours, that we had chatted with our many friends and wished them 'bon voyage,' and now to think they were all in a watery grave.

It was too horrible.

At last the fatal details of the disaster began to filter in. To sum it up shortly from subsequent reports, it appears that the wretched rotten old tub came to her fate by being run down by a sailing ship, which struck her amidships, and in less than ten minutes she collapsed and went to the bottom with all her human freight. There was no time even to launch a life-boat, always supposing she had one.

There were but two survivors out of over three hundred souls. One was a C.P.R. survey man whose home was in St. Thomas, Ont., by the name of Jelly, and the other was a hardy Scot named Macdonald, one of the ship's quartermasters.

The people of Victoria who nearly all had



CATHEDRAL PEAK, NEAR FIELD, BRITISH COLUMBIA.

either friends or relatives on board were at first stunned and dumbfounded, but soon got to work and next day tugs, revenue cutters and other craft, both American and British, flocked to the scene, where midst wreckage of all kinds, the dead bodies of men, women and children, together with many horses, were found floating about. The bodies were all brought up to Victoria and reverently laid out in the City Hall for identification.

It was a sad sight—women with sea-weed entangled in their hair, some of them dressed and others only half clothed, and some whose features were unrecognizable owing to their mutilation by voracious fish. Think of the feelings of the bereaved parents and friends as they gazed upon their dead who but a few hours before had smilingly kissed them good-bye!

This ghastly horror has no doubt been long since forgotten, but not by me. The two survivors were, of course, subjected to much cross-questioning when they were brought up to the Driard House at Victoria. I talked to

them both. At first, our man Jelly, who was not a sailor, was incoherent and wandering, but gradually we managed to extract particulars of all he knew about the catastrophe. Being warmed and fed, about the second day after his rescue, he said he thought it was about nine o'clock on a perfectly clear moonlight night when the sailing ship hit them. There appears to have been still time to burn some blue lights and send up a rocket or two, when he said he thought her engines *fell through the side* and in a minute all was consternation and panic. Many of the female passengers were either undressing or undressed on their way to bed. Most of the returning miners, of whom there were many, were drinking and generally helpless. After a few awful moments the end came and the wretched ill-fated old hulk sank out of sight for ever, leaving her hundreds of passengers struggling in the water. Jelly said he found himself at first on a section of the deck planking which had broken away, but subsequently, several hours after, he thought,

as daylight was appearing, he managed to collect the roof of the pilot house as it floated past, and pulled up a drunken miner on it to keep him company. This man had several thousand dollars in gold dust tied round his waist.

In the morning light, Jelly was horrified to find that the man he had rescued was dead. He had lashed him securely on to the roof of the pilot house ; but now he cut the lashings and the poor chap sank like a stone.

We all naturally asked with one breath why he didn't take the " dust." " Ah," he said with a sad sigh, " I wasn't thinking of no money that day." Next we interviewed the little Scottish quartermaster, who had never lost his nerve or his memory. He, it appeared, had got some sort of a raft together out of the wreckage with a dry goods box which he managed to secure and then crawl into. He floated away from the wreck and went out on the ebb tide, keeping well hidden in his box out of the wind and weather, popping his curly red head out now and again

to see if there were any signs of rescue. He told me that he went in and out with the tide, he didn't know how many times, but was very often in sight of Flattery Lighthouse, and then out he went to sea again on his frail little raft. He must have been drifting about for forty-eight hours without food or water and was much scorched by the sun, when they found him, more by good luck than anything else. A Yankee revenue cutter was just about giving up the search on the second day after the wreck, when they saw this piece of flotsam, but thought nothing of it until a head bobbed up out of the box. So the poor little quartermaster was rescued when the tide was turning and he was certainly making his last trip seaward. His account of the wreck tallied pretty well with Jelly's, but was given in sailor man's language and was full of nautical terms.

We heard afterwards that an Enquiry was held, when it was discovered that the master of the sailing ship was trying deliberately to wreck his vessel for the insurance, counting

upon the fact that if he ran her into a steamer he and his crew would surely be rescued. His reckoning was wrong, however, as he proved to have the stauncher ship and so sank the steamer.

I must not forget to relate as a sequel to this sad tragedy of the sea that the body of my poor little friend whom I had taken on board that morning was washed up on the shores of San Juan Island seventy miles from the scene of the wreck.

## *CHAPTER IV*

### BRITISH COLUMBIA (CONTINUED)

VICTORIA is a lovely spot to live and die in. It is also a delightful place to be quartered in even temporarily. I will not go into rhapsodies over its heavenly climate and describe how it lies so peacefully, sleepily basking in the sunlight, overshadowed by the icy peak of Mount Baker sixty miles away, because this has been so often done by other more gifted scribes.

In 1874, British Columbia, but especially the Capital, had scarcely awakened to the fact that she had been taken into the matronly bosom of Confederation. She still fancied herself as a British Crown Colony and rather resented the first invasion of the Eastern Canadianism. This meant *us* to a great extent. The inhabitants of Victoria were nearly

all British or of British extraction, old Hudson Bay officers and their families, like the Warks and Finlaysons, etc. ; half-pay officers—Navy and Army—who loved the mild climate, so much like some parts of England, the fishing and shooting to be had on the Island and the flowers that bloomed all the year round. There were a few Americans from across the Sound who had drifted in with an eye to business, but they were barely tolerated. Anything in the shape of a " hustler " was detested.

The *dolce far niente* methods of the ordinary Victorian shopkeeper were unique and most confiding, for they hated to be bothered with business, especially if there was a cricket match on, and they would all shut up shop in the event of a horse race.

I remember quite well going once into one of the principal shops to buy a hat when the proprietor and some of his assistants were busy playing a game of cards in the back office and were not to be disturbed. I made my wants known, but the boss merely looked

over his shoulder with a yawn and told me to " see if I could find one that fitted me."

I heard of an occasion when a very busy deputation of Yankees came across with the idea of establishing a great shoe factory in the heart of the city, and having submitted the proposition, most likely to the Town Council or some other civic body, and represented its huge financial advantages to the dear sleepy old town, the thousands of men they would employ, and the enormous pay roll this industry would involve, etc., etc., they were simply asked if they couldn't go away and hunt up some other place for their darned old factory and leave the Victorians alone in peace.

Theirs was a happy, peaceful, somnolent community, bathed in sunshine midst the fragrance of flowers, when we first rudely disturbed the serenity of their slumbers.

They had one of the best hotels in America but I don't think they ever knew it. The old Driard House was a perfect hostelry in those days, and was presided over by my

friend Louis Ridon, an ex-Parisien chef of wonderful ability. The food and cooking were sublime. You had only to give your order for dinner to Louis and then to leave the rest to him :—fresh salmon, small coppery oysters like English natives, a few hours out of the sea, English pheasant, beautifully cooked, splendid crabs, every known vegetable, a real masterpiece of a sweet by Louis himself, all washed down by the very finest vintages that ever came "round the Horn," and then such cigars and such coffee! There never was anything like the dear old Driard! It was here we were quartered for a week or so while busily engaged all day signing on our crew. This took some time as every man was medically inspected.

The Commissariat Department was busy getting the supplies together and the merry hum at the C.P.R. offices was the loudest noise to be heard in the land.

Our next move was on board the steamer *Enterprise*, which plied between Victoria and New Westminster, near the mouth of the

Great Fraser River. From there we were transported up the river to Yale, on board a stern-wheeler, a flat-bottomed craft in command of the well-known Captain Johnnie Irving, who was a celebrated character in those days and the best of pilots, and who is, I believe, still living.

### BARNARD'S EXPRESS

From Yale we took to the land once more, bound for Quesnelle mouth, 303 miles distant, by the celebrated "B.X." line (Barnard's Express). The stage line was owned by F. J. Barnard, a Canadian, who came into the country in the early days and evidently had enough foresight to see the necessity of rapid transportation as well as the possible profit in moving miners up country to the diggings and bringing them back with their nuggets. It was a great stage line running over a wonderful waggon road and was excellently managed.

They had a splendid equipment of Concord

Coaches which ran regularly from Yale to Baskerville, in charge of skilful whips, who, strange to say, all hailed from New Brunswick. There was Steve Tingley, the pioneer and prince of them all, and Jim and Johnny Hamilton and Bill Johnson. It was a delight to see these artists handle the ribbons. Two, four, five or six horses in a team were all the same to them, and the wilder the better.

"B.X." had large horse ranches somewhere near Kamloops for breeding purposes, possibly a thousand head, mares and stallions running wild together and getting fat on the succulent "bunch grass" that grew there then. Periodically these were rounded up and many members of this happy equine family cut out, broken, or about half broken and brought down to be hitched up on the stages. It was quite current gossip amongst the stage drivers that when they had a team of extra wild horses they always "tried" 'em on *them engineers.*

The late Mr. Barnard had two sons and a daughter, the latter the wife of the late

Senator Mara. The two sons are both living, Sir Frank, who was Lieut.-Governor of British Columbia, and Harry, who is now a Senator.

### THE WAGGON ROAD

The road from Yale to Barkerville, about 400 miles long and some fourteen feet wide, was constructed by the Imperial Government, during the exciting times of the gold rush to Cariboo. It was a gigantic undertaking in those days. The lower part, up the Fraser Canyons, being blasted out of the solid rock, is sometimes a mere *shelf* with an overhanging *roof*. The grades were steep to avoid extra heavy cuttings and at one place, a local summit was reached called " Jackass Mountain," where the narrow path of the waggon road hung on the edge of a precipice 1,300-feet above the rushing, roaring white waters of the Fraser River.

We were ordered to disembark before approaching this grade by the curt remark of the humorous driver: "Now, boys, git out and push ! "

Many long forgotten good stories were told about these stage drivers.

When the Canadian "tenderfeet" began to immigrate into the country they were not particularly welcome; their ideas were too small and parochial to suit the man in the mountains, whose ideas were vast and soared away up in the clouds like the peaks of his mighty mountains. He could not understand them at first. The smallest coin in the country then was a twenty-five cent piece, which was known as "two bits"; half a dollar was "four bits," and nobody had ever heard of anything so small as five or ten cents until the Canadians arrived, and so I suppose these lordly pioneers looked down in pity on the lowly emigrants when they mentioned such currency, and called them "North American Chinamen." They thought them mean.

One fine day Jim Hamilton was driving a party of Canadians up the road, when they passed through a grove of huge Douglas fir trees. The bark of these trees was stripped

off for about twenty or thirty feet from the ground, the work of the Indians, who, when they make a cache of salmon, dry in the branches to prevent squirrels and other animals from getting at the fish. This was quite a common thing along the Fraser but was a novelty to the " Chee-chakos," or new arrivals.

" Hullo ! " said one of the tourists, " What did that to them trees ? "

Old Jim Hamilton, without a smile on his weatherbeaten face, replied: " I drove a Canadian outfit up here last week and that's the place where *they had lunch !* "

The road in the most dangerous places was very narrow and there was scarcely room for two teams to pass, but the " Royal Mail " always had the right of way, although we frequently met many " bull teams " and mule teams, the former often consisting of twelve to fourteen and sixteen yoke of oxen, and the latter of ten or twelve pairs of mules, guided by one Mexican, riding the leading nigh mule. They were always made to take

the *outside,* overlooking the scenery below. One enterprising firm tried a string of camels as pack animals, but the experiment failed as they scared all the other quadrupeds off the road. These bull punchers did about sixteen miles a day and camped wherever they found a flat place and feed for their animals. They were a fairly happy set, and after supper gathered round their fire and generally gambled half the night. I heard a good story of hard luck that was related by one of them. He said he had been playing very unluckily last trip and had lost all the ready money he had: "Then," said he, "I put up my mules and lost *them;* after a bit, I put up the harness and lost *it;* then I bet the cargo and lost *it;* I had nothing left but the waggons and I lost *them.* The last thing I did was to put up my *wife,* when all of a sudden my luck *changed* and *I lost her!*"

Often when I think of some of the appalling precipitous places we had to pass, it reminds me of a very original observation made by a weary worn-looking Yankee packer from

Seattle when I was crossing the Chilcoat Pass on my way to the Yukon in '97. I had read many heartrending descriptions of this Pass and asked him on his return trip what it was really like. He had a tired drawn thin face and said with a sigh: "Wal, Capting, I was *pre*-pared for it to be *per*-pendicular, but by God, Sir, I never thought it would *lean back!*"

I retailed this conversation in my book, *Klondyke and Back*, and amongst the many newspaper reviews the book received in England, generally quite flattering, nearly every one of them quoted this incident. Some of the more sedate papers, the *Manchester Guardian*, and others, preached quite a jolly little sermon, with this as a text, pointing out that intending English prospectors would find out that most things would "lean back" in the wilds of that "inhospitable region," and so on and so forth.

Arrived at Quesnelle mouth, we were still one hundred miles from Fort George on the Fraser River, our initial point. A pack

train of about eighty mules was assembled at Quesnelle, and about fourteen head of fat cattle were to be driven along and executed when required for food. I took charge of this outfit because after swimming our animals across the Fraser there was a trail to be cut to Fort George. My boss was to join me at the Fort later on.

This job was interesting but arduous. A good deal of the country had been burned over and there were many bad swampy spots that had to be bridged in a rough primitive fashion in order to get the pack train over.

I first tried a sort of "Corduroy" with four logs abreast laid longitudinally and securely pinned down, but soon discovered that the mentality of the pack-mule did not rise to this elaborate causeway. He or she invariably preferred to walk on one or other of the *outside* logs, and were sometimes successful, but if not they went over into the swamp, pack and all (about 200 to 250 pounds) and so delayed the rest of the proceedings until we dug them out.

I then adopted a two-log system and found that the mules, in their native cussedness, could do the balancing act much better on this, always selecting the smallest log to walk on. After deep thought, I concluded that *one* log would have pleased them even better. They seemed to despise my precautions for their safety, such, I suppose, being the independent nature of the mule.

My chief was now H. P. Bell, M.I.C.E., another Irishman (Trinity College, Dublin), an eccentric, original and very clever engineer. He too, like Carre, had been on the construction of the Inter-Colonial.

He had many peculiarities and one of his weaknesses was that he lacked judgment in ordinary matters, but he was a well-read man, highly educated and a master of his profession. I remember he had many fads, and when I was engaging the men in Victoria, although he did not interfere in the proceedings he told me he could always tell a good man by looking at his eye. He brought a man into the office one day and advised

SPIRAL TUNNELS NEAR FIELD, BRITISH COLUMBIA, ON KICKING HORSE RIVER.

me to hire him as he had looked into his steel-blue eyes and knew he was a first-class trustworthy man, so I signed him on at once.

When we were on the trail-cutting job to Fort George, my crew continually reported the losses of personal effects such as clothes, boots, tobacco, and other valuables. So one fine day when there was no one in camp but the cooks I played the Sherlock Holmes and had the men's kits searched, discovering the missing articles amongst the belongings of the gentleman with the cold steel-blue honest optics. I paraded him next morning and handed him his walking ticket for Victoria. Yes, little bright eyes was the culprit and had the swag right enough, and he turned out to be a lately discharged convict. So much for Bell's "eye test."

It reminded me of that ancient yarn of the man who said he could hypnotize wild animals by staring them fixedly in the eye. One day a bad tempered bull-dog got hold of him from behind and was tearing the

seat out of his trousers, when a pal who did not believe in the optical illusion sung out, "Fix him with your eye, Bill! Fix him with your eye!"

Bell was undoubtedly a faddist in many ways, but he was always original and hated to do things in the old stereotyped manner in which we had been more or less all brought up. When in 'Frisco he bought two ships' chronometers and mysteriously announced to me (he was always darkly mysterious) that he was going to have things run this trip on a nautical basis, and that it was up to me to work on these lines, taking the latitude daily by solar observations and the longtitude by keeping those old chronometers set on Greenwich time, checked up occasionally with an elaborate observation known as "clearing the lunar distance." This, no doubt, was all very interesting to Bell, but it would have kept me out of bed all night shivering behind a big astronomical transit, with pages and pages of foolscap fool calculations next day.

However, this fad, like many others, failed to work out in practice, as, en route to Fort George one day, a most considerate she-mule, with no respect for ships' chronometers, fell over a rather precipitous cliff and rolled down a couple of hundred feet. It was she, luckily, who had the honour of carrying those precious chronometers in her pack, and a chronometer is a very delicate instrument and apt to go wrong if it loses its balance, so that this sudden trip down the cliff did not improve those chronometers, and they soon degenerated into an unreliable cook's clock and I was saved from sitting up all night to " clear the lunar distance."

At Fort George there was nothing but a Hudson Bay Post. Bell joined the party here, mounted upon a good little mare, an Irish hunter which he had picked up somewhere. He was very fond of showing off her jumping powers over the fences round the Fort and fallen logs, etc., but it was a poor place for a thoroughbred and she just had to follow along the trail in the wake

of the unsophisticated homely mule, who looked upon her with suspicion.

After establishing the latitude, and altitude above sea-level by a series of boiling point thermometrical experiments, we planted our initial zero stake and started next morning to hack our way through the gloomy forest in the direction of Tete Jaune Cache. The country was heavily timbered, principally with big Douglas Fir and Cedar, and I think it rained there night and day continuously—until it snowed. I remember quite well that our blankets and spare clothes were mildewed from constant moisture. There was also a charming novelty in the shape of underbrush known as "Devil's Club." This huge cabbage, when in its prime, grows to be ten or twelve feet high, the muscular stalks and the under side of its immense leaves being armed with formidable spikes. After slashing your way through a mile or two of these all day, you generally sit up all night picking the festering spikes out of your knees—an innocent amusement but

very painful. There are many people, I suppose, in Canada who have never heard of this interesting vegetable.

And now I was at work with the new skipper whose mind was obsessed with ideas of nautical navigation to be applied on dry land, bound for Tete Jaune Cache on the Upper Fraser River. As I have said, this country was generally heavily timbered down to the water's edge ; graceful little saplings from eight to twelve feet in diameter and a couple of hundred feet high decorated the landscape. There were few open spaces. We had not only to cut out the line but also a trail for the pack-train.

We reached the Willow River, which flows through a delightful valley, before entering the Fraser, and as it had a fine pasture of grass and pea vine for our animals, we halted there for several days. Our mules improved and the cattle simply rolled in fat.

A pack-train of mules is real society and most entertaining. We had seventy-five or eighty of them, including the saddle animals

and a few horses. It took only four men to handle this bunch, a "cargador," who is the boss, and three assistants with a cook. Our "Cargador" was an Irishman (which is unusual) named McAvoy, and the others were Mexicans.

The methods of these experts are most interesting. No matter how many mules there may be, they are all christened, and it was often a puzzle to me how they could possibly be distinguished by their names, as "all mules looked alike to me"; but so it was, and it seemed to come quite easy to the men, and also to the mules, who appeared to answer quickly when addressed by their proper name. They seemed to be nearly all named after the Apostles. I remember there was Saint Paul, Peter, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, with quite a number of Spanish notables, mostly saints, in our train. The Mexican gent who officiated as first mate to the "Cargador," whose official title I forget, rejoiced in the name of "Jesus Merino." The daily proceedings when on the move were weird and wonderful.

The usual march was never more than sixteen miles, but long before daylight, the "Matador" whose duty it was to round up the mules sleepily arose and disappeared in the morning mist, returning in an hour or two with the whole band. They always have a "bell mare" which is ridden at the head of the column, and the others religiously follow, jealously pushing and shoving each other in their frantic endeavours to reach the tinkling bell. So the first thing to do in the morning is to catch the "bell mare" and ride her into camp, when all the rest follow like sheep, which makes it easy.

The "aparajos" or pack saddles are always formed up into a large circle, upon arriving at camp, and the cargo neatly piled in the centre. When the train was rounded up in the morning, each and every mule seemed to know his own place instinctively and solemnly faced his own particular "aparajo" on the outside of the circle, when all were linked together with a "hackamore," a kind of rope halter. Then Saint Paul would be

led into the centre of the ring, blindfolded with a small board hitched behind his long ears, and loaded with a couple of one hundred pound sacks of flour on either side, topped off perhaps with a chest of tea for luck.

The mysteries of the "diamond hitch" were then swiftly performed by a couple of packers, when Saint Paul, tightly sinched up until his stomach looked like an hour-glass, grunted, and was dismissed with a kick, and another victim selected to take his place. All this was done with bewildering rapidity, amidst a few cursory remarks from the Mexican packers, such as, "Come here, Saint *Peter!* Ho, *Pete!* You lop-eared descendent of an apostolic son of a wall-eyed ancestor! Hey, Luke! You miserable offspring of a female coyote, where in hell do you think you are going, to San Francisco?" or words to that effect but more picturesque, until at last they were all "packed." The bell mare, generally ridden by the cook, jingled gaily away on the lead, and the whole train followed, flanked on

either side by the Mexicans, well mounted on pet mules, while the lordly "Cargador," smoking a cigarette, brought up the rear. Day after day this might go on, and it is still a mystery to me, after all these years, how on earth those men knew one mule from another, and how the mules knew their apostolic names.

A mule is certainly a wonderful study when you are intimately associated with him for any length of time. He is absolutely unlike a horse. He is not properly constructed; his ears are too large and his feet are too small, consequently when he attempts to cross soft places he invariably sinks out of sight and nothing saves him but his ears, but if he tries to swim, his small feet are against him, and if he gets any water in his ears he gives up all hope and generally drowns. Thus the mule is severely handicapped. I often wondered if they understood the remarks made to them by the packers and sometimes thought that I detected a furtive smile on the apostolic

countenance of the poor beast of burden, as the blind was removed from one end and he received a parting kick from the supercargo at the other.

After leaving the Willow River valley, the line of course naturally followed up the Fraser, sometimes quite close to the water, at others cutting off points when practicable, but always in the shadow of the forest of giant trees and rank undergrowth. It was useless stopping because of wet weather and so we were absolutely soaked to the skin all day long, as we hacked our way through the wilderness.

The pack-train was used to transport our supplies so long as feed could be found for the animals, but after several days browsing on boughs and leaves, and when some of them began to gnaw the succulent bark of the trees and did not hesitate to chew up the gunny sacks that had contained bacon, it was time to send them back where the grass grew, and after that we had to use boats and canoes for transportation. A large sail

boat which had been hired at the Stewart River, near Fort George, was being slowly "tracked up" the river for the return of our party in the Fall.

Sometimes we were short of men from sickness, desertion and other causes, and late in the season sent out to Cariboo and engaged four miners as axemen at $100 a month. These old miners are a splendid type of manhood, inured to hardship all their lives, full of ingenuity and initiative, sturdy and reliable.

We found these four men ready for any sort of hard work, willing, self-reliant, very independent, and none too tractable, but they were equal to eight ordinary men and could do almost anything, especially with an axe.

They had all been more or less wealthy in their day and often spoke of past experiences, quite innocently and modestly relating the history of their better days. They always worked together, and one morning I remember hearing a tremendous crash ahead on the line they were cutting and upon going forward found one poor devil

lying there speechless with the trunk of a mighty Douglas Fir pinning him to the earth. He and his three pals had felled the tree, which had "lodged," and in releasing it poor Bill Heron had failed to get out of the way quickly enough and had been caught.

I sent to the camp at once for brandy, and when my messenger returned they had cut the branches away that held down the fallen man and had him sitting up, but in terrible pain. They thought his back was broken. We opened his mouth with some difficulty and I poured half a bottle of "Three Star" down his throat.

He soon revived and looking me in the face, opened his eyes, and winking with one of them, said in a low, weary voice, "Old Jim Hennessy's the boy, you bet!"

He was afterwards sent down by boat to a Victorian hospital, but I do not think he ever recovered.

Poor Bill Heron was said to have cleaned up *eighty thousand dollars* in the Cariboo diggings, but like many another miner, he

was reported to have patiently occupied the bar-room of the most popular hotel for about a year, treating all comers promiscuously but equally until he had squandered the whole of it. Champagne was only about ten dollars a bottle!

The richest man we heard of was, of course, "Cariboo Cameron," who hailed from somewhere near Cornwall, Ont. It is said that when his wife died up at the mines he packed her body down to Yale on a mule over that long weary trail, and also had ten or twelve other mules loaded with golden nuggets.

In a few more weeks we reached our objective and connected lines with the other party under E. W. Jarvis, M.I.C.E. (another old Inter-Colonial man). I remember they were nearly out of "grub" but had plenty to drink, while matters were exactly the reverse in our case. We fraternized overnight with "Three Star" Brandy, besides taking an observation of "Polaris," the North Star, to get a meridian.

Next day, the Jarvis party left in boats

built by themselves. We had the big boat from Stewart River with carrying capacity for our whole outfit.

There were two alleged pilots, one an old French Canadian, who thought he knew the river and the other a one-eyed Indian (I christened him " Cyclops ") who was sure he did not. At the mercy of these two beauties we were to make a start next day which was Sunday, but my Chief, Bell, who was not entirely without superstition, refused to sail on the Sabbath because he considered it unlucky. However, I eventually prevailed upon him to risk it, and when we arrived at the head of the " Grand Canyon," Mr. Bell thought he would walk and allow me to take the boat through, as I was making a " track survey " of our route going down.

This was what they call a " Box " canyon, i.e., it had perpendicular walls, perhaps eighty or one hundred feet high, but although very swift I did not consider the water at all dangerous. There was, I think, about a mile and a half of it. About half way it

developed a right angle and at this juncture, a young half-breed, who had been told off to assist the ancient pilot in the steering, suddenly fell overboard and was never seen afterwards, nothing but his cap floating down to tell the sad story. When we arrived and tied up at the flats below to take Bell on board, I was greeted with that well-worn old remark, "I told you so." He was thoroughly convinced that sailing on Sunday was the cause of the disaster.

We floated down peacefully upon our homeward way toward Fort George without any further exciting adventures until we struck the "Giscombe Postage Rapids" and here our ancient mariner was indeed "at sea." He could not remember the channel although it was less than forty years since he was there before.

The river here seemed to be miles wide and the rapids about ten miles long. With Cyclops in the bow and poor old Methuselah at the stern sweep, we rushed into the foaming angry current and soon discovered an

enormous boulder about the size of a house, and upon this we perched for five or six anxious minutes with much swearing in French, English and Indian by both pilots.

Eventually we got off by good luck and after much pumping reached the vicinity of Fort George and there we camped.

That night it blew a hurricane and my little leveller, McLellan, a cautious Scotchman, who slept in my tent, when the tops of the tall cottonwoods were snapping off all round us, beseeched me with tears of fright in his eyes to go down and sleep on the boat, which he himself subsequently did, but as I was fairly comfortable in my blankets I told him that in my humble opinion if Providence was really interested in us that day there was a better chance to have made an end of us in the Giscombe Portage Rapids than by falling a tree on us ; so I remained where I was and slept the sleep of the innocent.

Next day my worthy chieftain proposed that I should take the boat on down to Quesnelle, running the Fort George and

MOUNT STEPHEN, NEAR FIELD, BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Cottonwood Canyons, but I declined the honour with thanks, preferring the "hurricane deck" of the harmless mule.

Our Summer's work was over and we were now bound for home. I cannot help reflecting upon the thorough, accurate and complete manner in which all the surveys were made for the great Canadian highway. No matter how remote and inaccessible the district to which we were sent, the procedure was just the same. The regulations laid down by Sir Sandford Fleming were always religiously observed to the letter by his District Engineers, Divisional Engineers and their subordinates. Sometimes there would be a lonely explorer with a compass and aneroid and a couple of Indians, to determine the height of a reported feasible pass, and then these would be followed perhaps by a survey party, running a trial line, with continuous sea-levels, and the next year by a locating party, who would finally locate the line, running in the curves, etc.

Many of these lines were of course aban-

doned when the final decision was made, but I am certain that absolutely nothing was neglected by Sir Sandford Fleming during his career as Chief Engineer, and when the time came to hand things over to the C.P.R. Company, in 1880, the immense volume of information collected by him was absolutely accurate. Nearly everything was known and very little had been left undone.

To test the truth of this assertion we have only to look at subsequent events. The C.P.R. Company changed the location of the line from Winnipeg West for reasons which I shall attempt to explain later on, but the Yellow Head Pass selected by the Government, upon the recommendation of Sir Sandford Fleming, was afterwards adopted by the other two Transcontinental lines, the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific, many years afterwards, and both of them, as I happen to know, ran over our *old original stakes* in many places.

This ought to establish the fact that Sir Sandford's judgment was sound and his foresight remarkable.

## A LITTLE TRAMP OF EIGHTEEN HUNDRED MILES

In order to emphasize these opinions of mine I must not forget to remark that in the Fall of 1874, when on my way home, passing through Quesnelle, I shook hands with E. W. Jarvis and C. F. Hanington and wished them good luck. They were fitting out for a winter trip through the Smoky River Pass, which had been reported as feasible.

They had got together some Indians and about thirteen dogs of different denominations. Although suffering untold hardships they accomplished that long trek across those icy barriers and having eaten their last dog arrived at Edmonton in the Spring of 1875, very emaciated but alive. And I have no doubt the report of these gentlemen eventually found its way into the blue books of Canada, but their personal loyalty and bravery can never be over-estimated.

## *CHAPTER V*

### BUTE INLET

MY next appointment was as first officer under a gentleman named Gamsby who came from Perth, Ontario. Our destination was Waddington Harbour, at the head of Bute Inlet, and our orders were to run a line up the Homathko River which breaks through the Cascade Range of Mountains and empties itself into the sea at the head of Bute Inlet. This was no child's pastime, I can assure you, but a real man's job. The summit of the Cascade Ridge is in many places within thirty or forty miles from the sea and therefore the descent is naturally very abrupt and the waters a roaring torrent, rushing madly through many a dangerous canyon.

The history of the first explorer of this picturesque region, Alfred Waddington, a surveyor, has long since been forgotten, but we found traces of his work. It seems he was engaged in the construction of a waggon road and did actually blast out some of the rock and build some crib work round the bluffs, etc. We found evidences of this, also the tracks of his mules down on the flats.

The story told in those days (1875) related how Waddington's men very unwisely fraternized with the Indians and their wives rather too familiarly, the result being that thirteen of them were massacred in one night. The work then seems to have been abandoned. Waddington came to Ottawa and died of the smallpox. A strong posse of British Columbia Police went after the murderers and about a dozen of them were strung up at Kamloops after trial. Thus the legend goes. We actually had one of the murderers with us. He rejoiced in the name of "Cultus Jim," which in Chinook means

absolutely useless, good-for-nothing. Managing to prove an alibi, this gentleman was fortunate enough to escape the general hanging, and was quite proud of it, and often related to us the bloodthirsty doings of the others and how near he came to "Klatawa Kopa Sagaalie Illahie," which is Chinook for going up to Heaven—in English, for being hanged. He was a picturesque scoundrel, but an excellent pack animal.

These Homathco Canyons were very difficult to negotiate and many a time I was slung up with a line under my armpits laboriously trying to find room for the tripod of a transit on a narrow ledge of projecting rock often many hundred feet above the foaming whirling white waters of the stream below. I spent two years on this route, and the last season we actually *located* the line, carefully running in all the curves, sometimes a very hazardous occupation, accomplishing only about forty miles of line.

## GARDNER'S INLET

I think it was in 1876, when we returned to dear old Victoria and were enjoying the generous hospitalities of the inhabitants of that charming city, when a wretched attaché of the Government Staff, in the shape of a photographer named " Horetzki," burst upon the scene in Ottawa and announced that he had discovered a low practicable pass through the Cascade Range and a fine harbour at Gardner's Inlet, many hundreds, perhaps a thousand miles, north of what is now Vancouver.

We were the only party available and were ordered out on February 3rd to proceed North in a little Government Lighthouse Tender called the *Sir James Douglas*, to Gardner's Inlet, to explore this imaginary pass.

This was no picnic at that time of the year and many were the prognostications of disaster by experienced old Hudson Bay officers, sea captains and others ; first, that

we would never get there; and secondly, that, if we did, we should never get back.

We were supposed to make a rapid reconnaissance and return in about six weeks. The little steamer was loaded down to the rails with a deck-load of coal for the trip, packed in sacks, and when a sea came on board and filtered through the coal, it was far from pleasant in the little saloon below. After bucking up against wintry northerly gales and crossing Queen Charlotte Sound, and then taking the wonderful inside passage, now so well known, we arrived at last at the Mouth of Gardner's Inlet, which, like most of those Fiords, was about fifty miles long and some eight or ten miles wide, its sides being absolutely perpendicular.

Twenty-five miles from the entrance we struck ice, right across, good solid ice about two feet thick. This settled it, the little ship could go no further. We "toggled" on to the ice that night, but before morning, a gale of wind sprung up and cut us adrift, attached to a few acres of ice, and we had to hunt for a harbour.

Captain Morrison, our skipper, nosed into a sheltered bay and we were soon snugly at anchor. I thought I had seen it snow before then but I found I had been mistaken. We lay at anchor in that unknown bay for *twenty-one days*, and it snowed, really snowed, all day and all night, I remember, for the whole of our enforced stay.

It was a good thing in one way, for it provided exercise for the men, who shovelled the decks clear, night and morning. We were quite close to the rocky shore and every night there was a wonderful orchestra provided by a pack of wolverines who lined up like a nigger minstrel troupe and howled out their welcome to us, keeping up the ghastly chorus all night and disappearing in the morning.

We passed the time as best we could, waiting for the weather to moderate and the drifting ice flows to get out of our way. We lost one anchor, chain and all, sawed off one night by incoming fields of ice two feet thick.

At last, one fine morning, we pulled up our remaining hook and once more steamed up to the edge of the ice barrier. There we unloaded men and supplies and took to our *feet.*

We made a rapid survey on the ice up the river to its source. I had charge of the party and my leveller was T. H. White, C.E., who has been for many years past the Chief Engineer of the Canadian Northern Railway.

It did not take long to discover that the alleged pass was impracticable. The river we were following up suddenly developed into a perfect cascade, coming pouring out of the mountain side. I stopped the survey, and three of us proceeded to explore this waterfall, which, after some strenuous climbing, we found came from a lake a mile or two in length surrounded by mountains, nine or ten thousand feet high. The snow up there was by actual measurement twenty-one feet deep on the level shores of the lake where we camped that night without tents or other shelter.

Terrific avalanches had occurred and were still in progress, not only reaching across the lake, probably a mile wide, carrying immense timber, huge boulders and everything else before them, but actually "backing up" when they struck the other side and leaving perpendicular walls of snow and ice forty or fifty feet high. The scene was a perfect inferno and defies description.

In the morning, our huge fire of enormous green logs had sunk out of sight and we frizzled our bacon on the end of poles twenty feet long.

After taking barometrical observations for altitude, next day, and establishing the position of this awful *proposed pass* for the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, I was glad to escape alive and next night rejoin my party on the main river. It was quite evident that the photographer had been deceived, and that this particular pass was impossible; and yet, as I said before, no stone was left unturned to examine any suggested problematical route.

Our duty done, it was our business to get home. We did not know where our ship was, but hoped when we again reached the head of the Inlet we should find the ice all gone and perhaps our little vessel lying there waiting for us. But—alas!—although it was now about the first of May, there were no signs of a ship and except for a mile of open water the ice was still there.

A few native Indians at the mouth of the river furnished a few canoes and at 1.0 a.m. one dark and gloomy morning, saluted by the howling farewell of their half-bred husky dogs, we embarked in the canoes, paddling in the open water and dragging them over the ice when we came to it. The ice by this time was very rotten, and dozens of times that day, when hauling the canoes over it, the men would break through, until at last about dark, we came to open water and saw the most welcome sight I can ever remember, the lights of our little ship.

Soaked through and tired after our twenty-five miles alternately swimming and tramp-

ing, scorched by the May sun, many half snow-blind, as we wearily climbed up the ladder over the side we were welcomed and congratulated by the good old skipper, and soon forgot our troubles and felt rewarded for all our hardship and suffering, under the benign influence of a good tot of Hudson Bay Rum. The next day we weighed anchor and, with no particular adventures, followed the comparative calm of the " Inside Passage " and arrived at last safely in dear sunny sleepy old Victoria on *May 16th*, three months and thirteen days since we sailed.

We reported " all present," and then heard for the first time that we were supposed to be lost. Two Hudson Bay steamers, the *Otter* and the old *Beaver* had been sent out to look for us, also H.M. Gunboat *Boxer*, and we also had the honour of being prayed for in the Episcopal Churches. A tired and weather-beaten band was once more let loose on a long-suffering yet sympathetic community.

The " Inside Channel " which I have mentioned was a remarkable piece of navigation in

those days. Unlighted and unbuoyed, sometimes very narrow, but always protected from the sweep of the billows of the broad Pacific Ocean, it was a pleasant passage up North.

I often wondered how these mariners managed it, especially at night. There was an ancient pilot I once sailed with, old Captain George, who had been about twenty odd years on that route, and once I ventured to make enquiries about his methods of navigation. He was a hard-faced, weather-beaten old Englishman, very morose and decidedly averse to conversation.

One night on board the *Mexico*, an American ship he was taking up to Inneau, Alaska, the other pilot being "Dutch Bill," I waited till midnight when old man George relieved his mate, and being much interested in this navigation business and thirsting for real reliable information at first hand, I ventured to interrogate him at the door of the pilot house, just as "Dutch Bill" was retiring, remarking to old George as he passed in a

kind of *sotto voce*, "Noath Ease bease arf ease."

I said: "Captain, tell me how you navigate these narrow straits at night, without any lights. Is it entirely by compass bearings, and time courses? How else can you do it?" He glowered at me and evidently did not like being bothered with such idiotic questions. Then he condescended to say: "Oh, you want to know that, eh? Well, I'll tell you. You know down in Victoria, there's a whole lot of people, some on 'em is blacksmiths, some on 'em is watchmakers, some on 'em is parsons and the balance is *Pilots!*"

He then went into the wheel-house and I retired below to meditate.

## *CHAPTER VI*

### HOME VIA PANAMA

ONE more survey in British Columbia ended my experience in that Province. In 1877, I was sent with Charles E. Perry, C.E. (son of the old City Engineer of Ottawa) to locate about one hundred miles of line down the North Thompson River to Kamloops. We split the party, Perry running the trial line ahead, while I took charge of the location.

This was the one and only soft job I ever had in the Service. Everything went smoothly. It was not a very difficult matter to pick out a line down the valley of a river, and we made rapid time, arriving at Kamloops much sooner than we were expected. George Brunel, C.E., of Ottawa, was coming

up from Savonna's Ferry to join lines with us and when that was completed we returned to Victoria in the Fall.

Having applied for a month's leave, Perry and I with a young Scotchman, an Assistant Engineer named Wallace, returned home via Panama and New York. Arriving at San Francisco from Victoria, we took passage on the good ship *Grenada*, Captain Connolly, bound for Panama. We put into a few ports en route including Manzanilla and Mazatlan on the Mexican Coast. The skipper was a good little fellow and he and I became quite friendly on the long hot passage of twenty days down the coast; in fact, so friendly that he made what I thought quite a favourable bargain with me, agreeing to furnish all the whiskey on the trip, if I would provide the ice and limes. This sounded reasonable to my unsophisticated soul and I promptly jumped at it.

I found out later, however, that whiskey was comparatively cheap, whereas my ice bill was $22.50 the very first week, as they

charged $1.00 a pound for that commodity. He had me there.

However, I scored on the lime question. We were in a sweltering hot, land-locked Mexican harbour one day, when I was told we were running short of limes. There were dozens of big canoes filled with natives round the ship and with the aid of a silver Mexican dollar, worth about forty cents, I chartered a whole family with their fleet to supply me with limes for the rest of the passage. They had literally filled my state-room to the roof when the first officer interfered and said the ship was getting too much of a "list" to starboard. All for forty cents in our money!

The landing at Panama was picturesque and unique in those days; the ships lay off about five miles, then the passengers took to the boats and, upon getting into the coral shoals, were transferred to canoes, the last stage of all being on the broad back of a big nigger arrayed as one of "Nature's noblemen," which was quite embarrassing to the ladies.

Phew! It was hot and humid in Panama. There was a war or a revolution going on, we were told, and we saw a few nigger regiments parading the streets. We inspected the oldest cathedral in America, the gaol, and the Botanical Gardens during our short stay, and then crossed the Isthmus on the dinky little railway, forty-two miles long, for Colon, where we found a ship awaiting us bound for New York and soon got cooled off as we neared Cape Hatteras, where it always seems to blow.

## MANITOBA

The following Spring I was sent up to Fort Garry (now Winnipeg) on the first one hundred miles West. It was not yet a city and I think contained only about 750 people, including the Indians. I went up with Wm. Murdock, C.E., and subsequently had charge of parties under Marcus Smith, M.I.C.E., District Engineer. The main line of the C.P.R. was originally intended to cross the

Red River at Selkirk, twenty-four miles below the present site of the City of Winnipeg. Thence the course was directly West and North-West, South of Lake Manitoba, heading for Edmonton and the Yellow Head Pass in the Rockies. The location and construction of " The First One Hundred Miles West " had been constantly delayed and postponed by political pressure and other influences. Eventually the line was deflected from Selkirk to Winnipeg, directly South, and thence West to Portage la Prairie which became the main line of our great railway.

This narrative so far has consisted of preliminary surveys, adventures by " flood and field," interspersed with anecdotes, but let it be understood that during the last few years construction under Government supervision had been proceeding steadily if not rapidly. Contracts had been let from the Great Lakes at Fort William to Manitoba, Contracts 14 and 15, Sections A and B and Contract 42, covering a distance of about four hundred miles.

The heaviest rock work was on Section A and B. Macdonald and Isbester were the Contractors, and the explosion of Nitro-Glycerine and giant powder was now echoing through the primeval forest, blowing out a pathway for the great Transcontinental trains. Contract 15 was in the hands of Joseph Whitehead, a sturdy old Englishman, who it was said in his young days had the honour of "firing up" Stephenson's first locomotive in England. A contract of one hundred miles East from Yale, up the Fraser River Canyons, had been let to Andrew Onderdonk, and was undoubtedly the heaviest piece of work on the whole line.

## *CHAPTER VII*

### THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY COMPANY, 1881

IN 1881, after many negotiations with the Government of the day, sometimes, I have heard, of a most heartrending nature, conducted by Lord (then Sir George) Mount Stephen, the present C.P.R. Company was formed.

The first Chief Engineer of the Company that I served under was General Thomas L. Rosser, a distinguished Southerner, and a most lovable man. He was a tall, handsome, swarthy Southern gentleman of the real old type, had fought in the "late unpleasantness," a Colonel of the Guerilla Confederate Cavalry Force, and at one time, he told me, was opposed to his old college chum, General Custer. They were at West Point together.

LORD MOUNT STEPHEN, THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

In one engagement, both Rosser and Custer, together with their wives, were *staying in the same hotel,* such were the peculiarities of that war, and Custer frequently warned his old class mate to be more careful and not expose himself so much to the Northern fire. General Rosser had been Chief Engineer of the Northern Pacific and possibly on that account was selected for his present position.

I had the luck to be appointed by him to take charge of the location of the Western lines of the C.P.R. I shall never forget my first introduction and interview with the General in his office at Winnipeg. After asking me several questions with regard to the geography generally, he waved his hand across a map of the Continent and said in that most charming Southern drawl of his, "I want you to go out and develop this Western Country."

This was quite a large order but it was about the only one I ever had from him. For several days we discussed "ways and means" and he was kind enough to generally

fall in with my views as to men and equipment, but when it came to transport, I found he was violently opposed to the use of the horses and carts to which we were accustomed in that country.

"No, suh! he had too much experience on the Northern Pacific," as he used to find himself going into Winter quarters with a thousand horses on hand, eating their heads off, etc.

No horses for him. What then? *Oxen* and prairie schooners!

I shuddered at the idea of making a rapid survey with such transport, as I knew nothing of their management or their habits. We argued the point until lunch time. The reason he favoured oxen was that if you were short of provisions you could always eat them—and could always sell them after the survey was over. I contended, but in vain, that a Red River "Cayuse" was just about as succulent and far handier.

It ended in my first party being outfitted with ox teams, but it did not last long. The

flies nearly drove them mad, they strayed away for miles, delayed the work, and were generally a nuisance, until at last General Rosser saw the error of his way.

The Chief also refused me any saddle horses, which I thought queer for a cavalryman and a good one, too,—but I bought one for myself. I was on foot and met a half-breed mounted on a decent looking black mare about eight or ten year old. I asked him, "How much for the lot?"—horse, saddle, bridle and blanket. He hesitated and said that this was his Buffalo runner, much prized by them, and then dismounted and asked me to try her, which I did and after a short gallop asked him again, "How much?"

He seemed puzzled about currency and replied, "*Nine hundred dollars.*" I had $180 in new bills which I promptly flashed before his astonished eyes. I do not believe he had ever seen so much money all at once.

He promptly accepted the roll and dismounted. Here was a horse, which I much

needed in my business and a real good Mexican saddle and bridle, so I lengthened out the stirrups, tightened up the sinch and got on board.

Just before I started, while he was counting his money, he looked up sorrowfully, patted the mare's head, and said "Au revoir," but catching sight of a short piece of rope hanging round her neck he said, "You don't get the rope," so I willingly gave it up and rode away, leaving him a pathetic little black dot on that vast plain. I rode that Buffalo runner hard all that year and she died within a few hundred yards of where I bought her, when I was returning in the Fall, but we had run over four hundred miles of trial line for the C.P.R.

The name of the French half-breed was Jerome St. Luc and I subsequently hired him to go on my party. This turned out to be a good stroke of business on my part, for Jerome was almost priceless. He had been one of Riel's lieutenants in the 1870-1871 Red River Rebellion, but was now

converted. He was a perfect guide, could track buffalo, or any other wild animal, spoke English, French and a few Indian languages. Give him an axe and an auger and he could make a cart, wheels and all.

He was with me for about three years and although sometimes excitable and very hot-tempered with others, was always absolutely faithful and loyal to me. Going West upon one occasion, the end of the track being near Brandon, the train conductor came back and told me that one of my men forward was " fighting drunk " and raising a disturbance. I asked him " Why he did not stop the train and put him off," which he finally did, the pugnacious gentleman being deposited in the ditch.

We arrived that night, and the next evening my friend Jerome presented himself at the door of my tent. He never " Mistered " me, it was always " Sekkertan." He appeared to be much annoyed about something and said in an aggrieved voice, shaken with passion : " Sekkertan, who give l'ordre for put me off de train las night ? "

I looked up and remarked, "*I did.*"

He simply said, "Oh, ver well, dats *all right* if it was *you!*"

After a few hours' sleep in the ditch, with the whiskey all gone, he had arisen and walked over forty-two miles to the camp!

I put all the other half-breeds under Jerome and gave him charge of the transport, and only once had any trouble.

We were many hundred miles West when, late one night, these fellows were making too much noise, fiddling and singing down at their camp, while I was vainly trying to write a report. I ordered their lights out, which offended my friend Jerome, as he was perhaps the chief offender, and next morning he announced his resignation and wanted to be paid off. I refused this arrangement, at which he threatened to take one of the horses and desert.

I had a brand new Smith & Wesson revolver that somebody had presented me with, lying on the table, so I told him that if he took one of my horses I would shoot him

as I would a "train dog." He refused to believe this at first, but after thinking it over, he said, "Sekkertan, every tam you tole me someting, you do it, and by God! I tink you do it now!"

The matter ended there, and Jerome was, if possible, more faithful than ever. They have a great respect for a man who always keeps his word.

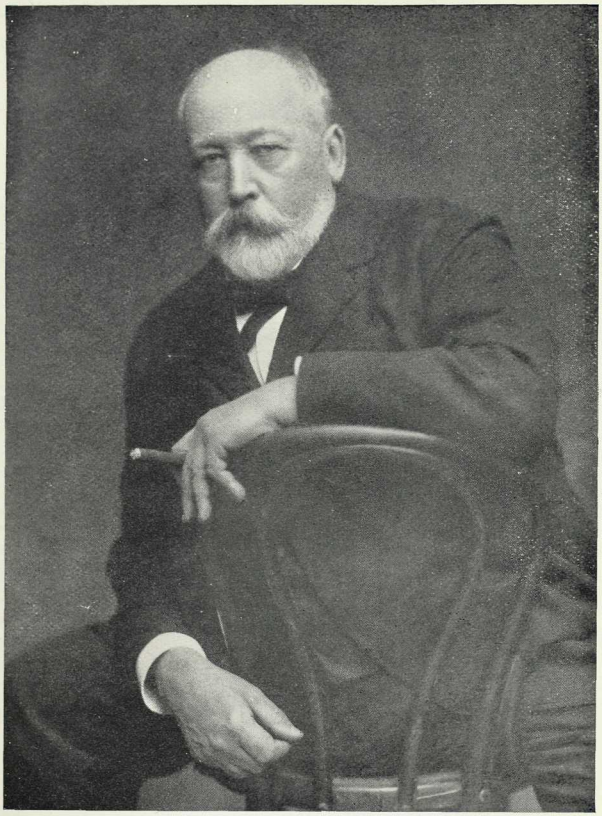
I found the French half-breed the most useful man in that Western Country, but you must handle him gingerly and often let him have his own way in little things. He resents discipline, but if he likes you, will follow you faithfully as a dog follows his master. He cannot endure the monotony of continuous work and requires to be humoured by an occasional holiday. Jerome, who was perfectly at home on the plains, had the greatest admiration for me because I could find my way with the aid of a compass, which to him was always a most marvellous mystery.

## *CHAPTER VIII*

### SIR WILLIAM VAN HORNE

NOW bursts upon the scene the bulky form of W. C. Van Horne, "The noblest Roman of them all"—the Czar of the C.P.R.

This great magician was a true railway magnate. His biography has already been ably written by Vaughan, but knowing him intimately "on the work," I cannot help contributing my little quota of admiration for so remarkable a person. He was the most versatile man I have ever encountered. There was hardly any subject upon which he was not well informed. He had a sharp piercing eye and very little escaped his notice. His manner was very abrupt and his methods peculiar, but everything was



SIR WILLIAM VAN HORNE, THE SECOND PRESIDENT OF THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

to the point. The word '*cannot*' did not exist in his dictionary. He was a born artist and often when he was talking to me, made sketches on his blotting pad, well worth framing, but which he tore up as fast as he drew them. His oil-paintings and water-colours were numerous and of no mean repute, and he was, too, a wonderful black and white artist.

He was a lover of Art and a great judge of ancient pottery, china and all things beautiful. He could tell you their history, and how, when and where they were made. And, it goes without saying, if there was anything about a railroad that he did not know, it was not worth knowing. What always puzzled me was how in the world, in one lifetime, he had managed to accumulate so much information upon so many subjects. One way I accounted for it was that he never seemed to require any sleep. He used to say to me, "Why do you want to go to bed, it's a waste of time; besides, you don't know what's going on." He knew

every game of cards and played them all well. I can remember after an all-night session of poker, when the rest of us were "dead to the world," at 7-0 a.m., Van Horne simply rubbed his eyes and went down to the office, to begin a long day's hard work. He had an iron constitution and did not seem to require any rest. It appeared to me that he was unacquainted with sickness of any kind and could not understand it in others. He was a tremendous worker and expected everybody else to be the same. Although he was always busy, he appeared to have lots of leisure time, but I suppose a perfect organization was the secret of this. He detested all sycophants, and people who were afraid of him; and when it came to engineers, he rather admired the man who had an opinion of his own and the courage to give his reasons for daring to have it, when he appeared before him "on the carpet."

Van Horne always resented our "professional" interference when it happened to

clash with his dictatorship, and upon one occasion, after some discussion about the location, he said, "If I could only teach a section man how to run a transit I wouldn't have a single damned engineer on the road."

The first year, under General Rosser, I had about four hundred miles of preliminary line run, as far as Moose Jaw Creek, when Van Horne sent for me and announced in a most autocratic manner that he wanted "*The shortest possible commercial line*" between Winnipeg and Vancouver, also that he intended to build *five hundred miles* that Summer, lay the track, and have trains running over it. In discussing the projected location I pointed out that such a line would often run through an infertile country, and made many other objections; but he was adamant and said he did not care what it ran through. He was evidently bound to get there. This determination was no doubt the reason for the more southerly route being adopted, through the Kicking Horse Pass, which afterwards turned out to be so expensive though

no doubt of great scenic value. I doubted if he could possibly construct five hundred miles in a short Summer (it was then probably about April), but he scowled at me fiercely, and before I left " the presence " he informed me that " nothing was *impossible* and if I could show him the road it was all he wanted and if I *couldn't* he would have my scalp." Thus ended a short but characteristic interview with the great magician! As a matter of fact he did lay about four hundred and eighty miles of track that Summer.

I could almost fill a book with different amusing anecdotes of Van Horne during his reign in the West but will only relate two or three, so eminently characteristic of the man.

They had a Purchasing Agent named Burdock from St. Paul, who came into my office one day unannounced in his shirt-sleeves. He had a fountain pen and three or four pencils in one waistcoat pocket and a toothbrush in the other. In his hand he had a sheaf of my requisitions for our Summer's

supply of provisions. In his mouth he had a blue pencil and part of a plug of tobacco. He rapidly checked over my long list of supplies for three large survey parties for six months, blue pencilling everything he did not approve of, murmuring the while *sotto voce*—"Beans, 3,000 pounds: 2,000 plenty." "Bacon, 2,000 pounds: Nonsense, 1,000 enough." "Butter, never heard of such a thing," and so on down the list. When he had finished he remarked, "There ye are, Mister, I have cut that down about a ton and a half." When this gentleman seemed to be satisfied with the improvements he had made in my menu, I calmly ventured to ask who he was. He replied that he was the chief Purchasing Agent for the Western District. I then enquired on what standard he based the late rapid calculations? He said "he figured 'em out according to the *U*-nited States Army rations." I remarked that we had no warriors of the United States' Army on the C.P.R. surveys.

After a short discussion I suggested that

if that was the way my men were to be fed, perhaps Mr. Burdock would go out and take charge of them, but to this he objected, saying "I aint no engineer"—I offered to overcome his modest scruples by teaching him all the engineering necessary in about twenty-five minutes, if he could spare the time. This suggestion seemed to puzzle him and he gathered up his papers and hastily withdrew. A few days later I met Van Horne in the corridor who asked when I was going to start West? I told him that I understood a Mr. Burdock was going to replace me and take charge of the location. At first he did not see it, but after I had described Burdock's visit, he said, "Where is that fellow, send him to me, you clear out to-morrow morning and I will attend to *him.*" I went West next day and it was several months after when I heard the sequel.

The supplies we received that Summer were never better; every luxury kept coming up, and one fine day I met a man driving a pair of horses and a brand new buckboard who

stopped me and asked for Secretan's camp. I told him who I was and took him to the camp nearby. He got down and without a word hauled out all the latest English illustrated papers, two boxes of prime cigars and a keg of old Hudson Bay Rum, which he deposited on the floor of my tent. Then he said, " Oh, you are Secretan, eh ? " (I hadn't changed much) " My name is Burdock. Well, how did you find the supplies this Summer ? " " Everything very satisfactory," said I. He took a good look at me and then, heaving a heavy sigh, he said, " Wal, you are the man that got me the gol darndest settin out I ever had in my life. That man Van Horne sent for me and he said, ' Are you the God-forsaken idiot who buys the provisions ? If so, I'll just give you till six o'clock to-night to ship a car-load of the very best stuff you can find up to Secretan, the engineer at the front ; and see here, you can come back at six o'clock and tell me you have shipped it, you understand, but if you have not, you need not come back at all, but just

go back to wherever you came from.' "

Van Horne was always lucky and often blundered into the right thing by sheer bull-headed luck, when everything seemed against him. I remember an instance of this when one day he sent for me to his office in Winnipeg and rapidly revolving his chair squinted at me over the top of his pince-nez, at the same time unrolling a profile about one hundred miles at a time, saying, " Look here, some damned fool of an engineer has put in a tunnel up there, and I want you to go and *take it out!* " I asked if I might be permitted to see where the objectionable tunnel was. He kept rolling and unrolling the profile till he came to the fatal spike which showed a mud tunnel about 900-feet long—somewhere on the Bow River at mileage 942. I mildly suggested that the engineer, whoever he was, had not put the tunnel in for fun. He didn't care what the engineer did it for, but they were not going to build it and delay the rest of the work. " How long do you think it would take to build the cursed

thing ? " he asked. I guessed about twelve or fourteen months. That settled it. He was not there to build fool tunnels to please a lot of engineers. So perfectly satisfied that the matter was settled and done with, he whirled round to his desk and went on with something else, simply remarking, " Mind you go up there *yourself* and take that d——d tunnel out. Don't send anybody else."

I asked for the profile, and when I reached the door, paused for a minute and said, " While I'm up there hadn't I better move some of those mountains back, as I think they are too close to the river." The " old man " looked up for a second, said nothing, but I could see the generous proportions of his corporation shaking like a jelly. He was convulsed with laughter.

Not being a wizard in the art of changing the topography of the country, I did not even leave Winnipeg, but wired up the particulars of the offensive tunnel to one of my Divisional Engineers who was almost on the spot, and personally, I took care to

avoid Van Horne. I found the engineer who had located that fatal tunnel and asked him if it was possible to avoid it or if there was any alternative line. I put many leading questions to him but he was very certain of his facts and assured me that there was no possibility of taking out the tunnel, and ended up by offering to bet his year's pay against mine that neither I nor anybody else could shift his line.

After this interview, it looked rather hopeless, until a week or two later I got a report from my Engineer on the ground, describing how on the previous Sunday, while smoking his pipe and sunning himself on the side hill, he thought he saw a little silvery cascade coming into the Bow River about half a mile below. He explored this crack in the foothills, followed the little creek, found it opened up into quite a decent valley, sent for his leveller, ran a hasty trial line over the summit, found the grade was practicable, so kept on till he rejoined the Bow River further up and not only took out the objectionable

tunnel but shortened the main line some mile and a half. Such was Van Horne's luck!

## *CHAPTER IX*

### INDIANS

DURING the Van Horne epoch we were frequently troubled with Mr. Lo, the poor Indian. I don't mean the more Easterly aborigines—that wretched old unsanitary insect repository, who trailed along after us through the woods, picking up the crumbs that fell from the White man's table—but the more picturesque scoundrel who flourished on the plains in those days, Horse Indians—Sarcees, Blackfeet, Bloods, Pagans, Stonies, etc. Not only had we to contend with these in our own country, but also we had a legacy left by "Sitting Bull" Indians who wandered about in little war parties North of the line seeking what they might devour, including any poor little engineers' party

that they might happen to come across. I had some rather interesting experiences with these dusky children of nature.

I was running a rapid trial line West from Moose Jaw, when it was reported to me that Mr. Dewdney, the Indian Commissioner, had taken it into his head to transfer a band of Cree Indians, numbering about six hundred, from their reserve at Cypress Hills, where they were perfectly happy and content, to the vicinity of Qu'Appelle, which they hated. This procession was in charge of a couple of mounted policemen. The Indian Chieftain rejoiced in the name of "Pi-a-pot," and when I heard they were passing Eastward a few miles South of me, I sent for the old savage chief, who presented himself next day with a wife or two and some of his court.

The usual interview occurred. After much mis-interpreting I managed to explain to this ancient mendicant what we were doing there, asking him as a personal favour to keep his ragged rabble away from my line and not use my stakes for firewood, etc.

After much ceremony, which always used to make me tired, but was often effective, pipes of peace, presents of tobacco, tea, sugar, and beads for the ladies, this noble old wall-eyed warrior shook hands and solemnly promised to do everything I had asked and not to allow his young men and maidens to disturb the little wooden monuments of the future great Transcontinental Railway.

Not many days after this, a red-hot mounted courier arrived in my camp with frantic messages from Headquarters wanting to know where in God's name the main line of the C.P.R. had gone to. Construction engineers and contractors' grading outfits arrived hourly on the ground, but *no line!*

I then discovered that those wretched ill-conditioned, lying sons of aborigines had calmly pulled up about forty miles of my line to show their contempt for the white brother, and incidentally had taken a bite out of the hand that fed them.

I had, of course, to back up and re-locate

all this line and explain to the powers afterwards, offering to shoot all Indians on sight in future if necessary and save the Government the expense of feeding them. My letter to Dewdney, the Indian Commissioner, produced a decided sensation, and was duly numbered and went through different Departments, thereby giving Civil Service clerks something to do. No end of correspondence ensued. Eventually it arrived at Riviere du Loup, where Sir John Macdonald was staying, with his secretary, Fred White.

I was looked upon by the Indian Department as a desperate murderer and not fit to be trusted to command anything, all of which was solemnly put on file with many annotations, not very favourable to me, and reported to Sir John Macdonald. I knew nothing of this tempest in a Civil Service tea-cup until months afterwards, when I wrote Van Horne that unfortunately " Dewdney's only experience of Indians had been derived from the calm contemplation of that wooden image outside Roos's Cigar Store on Sparks Street, Ottawa."

One remark I remember on the margin of the report by some wiseacre in the Indian Office was this: "The threat to murder the Indians if they destroy any wooden pickets is simply atrocious. It is this spirit amongst the white men which has caused the numerous Indian wars in the United States and it must not be allowed to show itself in Canada."

Oh dear, poor old boy!—how he must have warmed up that office stool! Dewdney used to describe his Indians to the Government as harmless agriculturists. I often wondered why they wore a couple of bandoliers of 144 cartridges during their farming operations.

My friend Pi-a-pot ended his career in the Stony Mountain Penitentiary where he died while serving a term after the Rebellion in 1885.

We came across better types of Indians than this old vagrant. The best type of the noble red man that is left is the plain Horse Indian. I struck some of them, to my horror, once when I was on the Souris

Plains. We had just escaped the tail end of a mountain cyclone and all my tents had been blown down and a few of my waggons had been blown into a lake that was nearby. It calmed down in the night and we got straightened up a bit. Next morning as I was indulging in dreams of home and beauty, I was awakened by a subtle perfume which emanated from a pipe at the end of which was a right noble handsome red man, who, squatting on the floor of my tent, was quietly waiting for me to wake up. They are sometimes quite polite, even if they are going to murder you. I sniffed, and soon awoke, sent for a half-breed Sarcee interpreter and ordered the haughty warrior to get outside. Soon afterwards I was informed that this distinguished visitor was no less than "Rising Sun," closely related to "Sitting Bull," who requested an audience with his eminent white brother. This was granted and the usual silly Indian Pow-wow had to be endured. This Chieftain was a tall, statuesque figure, clothed mostly in his right

mind with a few simple emblems tattoed on his manly chest, over which a buffalo robe was coyly slung.

He simply remarked through the interpreter that I had no business in that country and would probably spoil his Fall shooting, and he would much prefer me to get along and go somewhere else where the game was not so plentiful.

I invited the handsome old humbug to breakfast and then having stuffed him full, told him to fill his pipe and listen to the words of wisdom which were about to fall from the lips of probably the greatest white chieftain in this hemisphere. I was certain he did not know what that meant. I then proceeded to tell this uninvited potentate what I thought of him generally, though the interpreter embroidered the text, with many grins; I said I was intimately related to the great white mother, who possessed more red-coated soldiers than his old dog did fleas and who would not hesitate to blow him off the map if he was not good. With

these assurances of my everlasting, undying love for him and all his tribe, I wished him good-bye, saying I never wanted to see his ugly face again.

Having presented him with much flour, tobacco, tea and sugar as a peace-offering, I was much gratified to see him depart with a haughty stride, mount his cayuse and ride slowly away. I was congratulated by the smiling half-breeds upon the diplomatic manner in which I had got rid of the noble chieftain, but—alas for all human calculations—when one comes to dealing with the wandering nomad of the plains. The next morning at dawn I awoke to find this gentlemanly savage once more squatting by my bedside.

This time I was excessively peeved, but discretion triumphed and sending for my interpreter I first denounced him as the greatest unwashed, hand-painted, lying imposter on the American continent, including Texas and Mexico, telling him he had broken our sacred contract by daring to show his

forbidding countenance again. I also remarked, with, I hope, judicial dignity, befitting one so closely related to the Royal family, that the great white mother would be greatly distressed at the wayward manners of her red-skinned children and would probably disinherit the whole bunch, etc.

This speech, being interpreted to him with any amount of half-breed embroidery, seemed to have a soothing effect at first, but after thinking it over carefully, with many grunts he told the interpreter that he, too, came of a proud and haughty race and was not nearly such a rotter as I had depicted. He did not want any favours from me, and what was more, would not accept them, in fact he did not admire my style anyway and much preferred his own.

All he sought was permission to bring the ladies of his harem into camp that they might gaze upon the classic features of the Caucasian ere we departed.

This being granted, that same afternoon a loud jingling of spurs mixed with suppressed

giggling announced the arrival of the female element in " Rising Sun's " entourage.

For feminine curiosity, they could give their fairer sisters cards and spades and then beat them at their own game. They poked their noses into everything, chattered continuously and asked all sorts of fool questions. I suppose that many of the younger damsels had never gazed upon the fair features of a white man before. They were particularly interested in the culinary department, and after being fed, hung about the cooks' tents examining every detail.

A particularly beautiful bean-pot struck the fancy of one old fat chaperone, who came over to my quarters accompanied by her sixteen year old daughter, who was attired in one single garment, generally advertised by the Department Stores as " white wear." After manifesting much anxiety and making many violent gesticulations, the old horror had her daughter in one hand and the bean-pot in the other, and so I gave my consent to anything for a quiet life, and at sundown they departed, bean-pot and all.

Imagine my—well, consternation—upon returning to my tent later to discover that the wretched old russet-coloured chaperone had missed her count and had forgotten the dusky daughter, who, seated upon the ground, appeared to be perfectly satisfied with the proceedings. My young interpreter, in broken English punctuated with many grins, informed me that marriage contracts in that particular tribe were often entered into through the medium of some such wedding present and in my case even a measly bean-pot would be considered quite legal.

Here was I hooked up for life to a dark damsel whom I had never seen before, whose language I did not understand and to whose family I had not even been introduced, and what was more embarrassing, the Chief Engineer was expected any day. What a predicament for a modest, innocent, unassuming church member to find himself in. There was my wild, unkempt, picturesque bridelet, the untaught daughter of a savage race of warriors, coyly enjoying every moment of

my consternation, while I could only explain the awkward situation to her through an interpreter.

This gentleman was immediately despatched to the Indian camp and came back with a brother of the maiden, who was then returned to the paternal "Tepee" with my compliments and regrets.

In the early days of the C.P.R. surveys, through forests, across plains and over mountains, the Aborigine was always a factor to be reckoned with and sometimes a serious one. The harmless Eastern brand of Indians had been reduced to a tribe of mendicants. When they were not too lazy to breathe, an occasional muskrat or mink skin gave them a precarious existence, and when the white man came along, the crumbs that fell from his table were not despised by his red brothers, who would often camp alongside of him and laboriously move with him. With their well-known instincts of true gallantry they would kindly permit the squaws and a small retinue of dogs, never absent, to carry heavy loads of

their belongings, while the haughty Chieftain strode along in the van with nothing heavier to carry than an old musket.

Of course, this class of Aborigine, principally of the Cree tribe, " cut no ice." He was simply regarded as an indolent, improvident, dirty, unreliable, lying son of the forest. All Cooper's fairy tales fade into oblivion when you encounter the real child of nature, so different from the tall, lordly savage portrayed by the novelist, marching along, arrayed in a bunch of feathers and a coat of red paint, with his lovely consort by his side, whose simple toilet, inexpensive, but effective, consists of a string of beads, a coiffure made up with the aid of bacon grease, buckskin leggings and embroidered mocassins. Alas ! how all is changed.

On the Western plains, of course, different tribes are encountered, and Horse Indians are invariably superior to the other decaying specimens. Many a fine, tall, straight, upstanding, unreliable savage have I encountered, clothed simply in his right mind and

mounted upon the self-supporting little wall-eyed cayuse. The "Stonies" inhabited the Rocky Mountain ranges and seldom if ever came East of Swift Current Creek; then there were "Sarcees," "Blackfeet," "Bloods," "Pagans" and many other hardy varieties.

According to the old Missionaries' and traders' stories, many fights have taken place between the rival tribes. I remember well some years ago, when camped at Swift Current Creek, where I had just finished the location of the C.P.R. main line, discovering three or four bodies of Cree Indians recently murdered and scalped by some hostile tribe. A particularly perfect skull struck my fancy, and as I was returning East next day I annexed it for a souvenir. When the cook had cleaned and sand-papered this head-piece, I scribbled the following verse upon the dome of thought and put it under the seat of my buckboard:

"Long have I roamed these dreary plains,
I've used up horses, men and brains;
And, oft from virtue's path I've strayed

To find a fifty-two foot grade.
But now, thank God, I'll take a rest,
Content, I've done my level best;
To this green Earth I'll say farewell
And run a Railway line through Hell."

That night there was an alarm of "Indians Coming," and upon turning out we found a bunch of Crees crawling through the long grass into camp, all thoroughly scared by "Blood" and "Stonies" who they said were chasing them. They asked for our protection, which was afforded, and the whole cavalcade, men, women and children, moved down next day with my party. We saw nothing of the hostile tribes.

Being anxious to get down to the end of the track as soon as possible (about 250 miles), I took one man and several spare horses and jogged along ahead of my transport, making between sixty and seventy miles a day. The second day out I met a stranger, a typical down-East Yankee trader, a long-haired, lantern-jawed specimen, driving an express waggon, piled up with all sorts

of merchandise to trade with the dusky savages. He was driving two ponies and leading four others.

He stopped me and fired a volley of questions at me at once. He enquired particularly about the Indians, wanted to know if I had seen any, whereabouts would he meet them, if they were bad, etc. I told him that they began to get real bad at Swift Current and that they had killed several Crees at that point to my certain knowledge.

This was the spot he was heading for.

He then wanted my opinion as to what the probabilities were in his particular case. I told him that according to their usual destructive habits they would probably first of all annex his ponies, then divide the spoils on the waggon amongst them and most likely take a few pot-shots at him as they rode off. He seemed to be reflecting deeply, and a change of mind appeared imminent, but a thought struck him, and with his unmistakable New England accent, he drawled, " Wa'al stranger, you come by there safe, how is it

they didn't do nothing to you?" "Oh," said I, putting on a real cunning look and at the same time reaching down under the seat and hooking my finger into the grinning skull of the late lamented: "Here is the last son of a dog that interfered with me." He tipped his old felt hat back, scratched his shaggy red mane reflectively and said, "I guess I could dew most as well with that stuff back to Moose Jaw," then turning slowly round, he trotted along behind me Eastward bound.

## *CHAPTER X*

### THE BIRTH OF BRANDON

THE location of a prairie town is often more or less a case of luck, accident or mystery. Sometimes a lonely squatter attracts a few more agriculturalists to adjoining quarter sections and their solitary shacks are the only little dots to be seen on the landscape, when along comes the busy little land grabbers with a bag full of money, buys out the hayseeds, taking a chance that the railway line will run through "Somewhere's near," and proceeds to lay out the land in streets, avenues and town lots. In many cases he is magnificently rewarded by the sale thereof, or else, if the situation happens to suit the Railway Company, he is bought out by them and so reaps the reward of his shrewdness or luck.

The two or three little shacks are soon joined by enterprising pioneer hotel men and storekeepers who at first stick up tents, to be succeeded by brick or wooden buildings, so that in a few short months the bare patch of prairie assumes the appearance of a village, rapidly blossoms into a town, with hotels, churches, banks and stores, etc., and finally aspires to be a city with street cars and all the other luxuries of modern civilization. Then the C.P.R. builds it a fine station, and if the mileage suits, the place is made a Divisional Point and receives the honour of a name on the timetable.

The birth of Brandon was rather different and is most interesting and not generally known.

General Rosser, Chief Engineer: John MacTavish, Land Commissioner, and myself, were driving West, one starry Spring night, in search of a suitable place for the first Divisional Point West of Winnipeg. We were well ahead of the surveyed line and stopped that night at a farmhouse on the North side

of the Assiniboine River. I forget the farmer's name, but he had been settled there for some years and had about 320 acres. It was an ideal site for a Divisional Point about 132 miles West of Winnipeg. The officials had a long talk with the farmer, which lasted nearly all night, until I understood an offer was made on behalf of the C.P.R. Company of fifty thousand dollars for the farm.

I fully believe that this honest son of the soil had never even read about so much money in books. The discussion proceeded and some "wise guys" of neighbours and relations were called in and consulted, till at last, towards dawn, our genial host was egged on to demand "Sixty thousand dollars," no doubt thinking that if his farm was worth so much money he might as well get a lot more. The General thought otherwise.

I think the farmer was astonished and I hope disappointed when the General ordered me to have the horses hitched up. We ferried across the Assiniboine River and after driving a mile or two came upon the future site of

the City of Brandon on the South side of that placid stream basking in the sun. I received orders to return to the end of the track and continue the location of the main line, establishing the first Divisional Point at Brandon.

The proposed City of Calgary received a similar fate. Originally located on the East side of the Elbow River by a syndicate which had secured many acres, they failed to come to a satisfactory agreement with the Railway Company, and although the track was actually laid through their property, and many town lots were sold, the speculation was a failure, as the Railway people located the station on the other side of the little Elbow River and started a town of their own which is now the City of Calgary.

The manipulations of the land grabbers and town site boomers were not always successful, and if they did make a lucky selection, it seemed to me that their best plan was to divide up with the Railway Company. If not, they often found them-

selves a mile or two away from the station and their town was either soon deserted or became only a suburb of the real town owned by the C.P.R.

### THE TENDERFOOT

He was young, handsome, English and unsophisticated. It was in the early days and I was bound West on top of a load of horse feed to locate the main line from Brandon West. The end of the track was then Winnipeg. The roads were worse than awful, waggons went axle deep in the rich black alluvial soil, which was destined to produce millions of bushels of golden grain that in turn filled the coffers of the farmers with golden dollars.

It took a week with heavy loads to make the first town, Portage La Prairie, only sixty miles. I was pulling out early one morning when he appeared, armed with a double-barrelled gun, a Winchester rifle, fishing rod, tennis racquet and other agricultural implements. He informed me that he wanted

to be a farmer and asked me if I would take him West. I told him to climb on board. He went back to the little tavern where we had stayed over night and reappeared with a tooth brush that seemed to be the extent of his baggage.

He was a gentle youth, yet garrulous withal and prattled amiably as my four horses struggled Westward through the mud. Seventy-five miles more brought us to the Assiniboine River, and the site of what is now the City of Brandon where my engineering operations were to begin. My young passenger was anxious to start his agricultural career at once, but as I had more important things to do, I introduced him to an old-timer whom I met by accident and told the gentle youth he must now shift for himself, like Adam and Eve in the garden, "the world was all before him where to choose."

My camp was the only sign of human habitation on these vast prairies. There was the virgin soil waiting for the plough of the

husbandman, millions of acres to be had for the asking, nicely divided by the Government into 160-acre parcels called quarter sections. The guileless would-be farmer was generously instructed by the old-timer, who no doubt relieved him of some of his impedimenta, not actually required for farming. He was told that all that the regulations required was that he should put up a small hencoop on the homestead, made with a few boards and plough a few furrows round it, when he would immediately become a bona fide settler and in due time, having complied with a few more formalities, the proud possessor of the land. Before I left there he paid me a visit one night and all seemed well with him. I departed in the morning to run the preliminary line for the great Transcontinental Highway.

It was perhaps about three months later, when I had run out several hundred miles, that the Chief Engineer came to the front to pay me a visit, and asked me to drive back with him over the line, a journey that took several days.

Upon my return to the spot where I had left my young tenderfoot, I was astounded to find a flourishing town growing up and the iron horse rapidly approaching Brandon. Hundreds of tents lined what were afterwards to be streets and avenues; hotels and restaurants were going up as if by magic. Steamers ran on the Assiniboine in those days and several of them were rapidly unloading their passengers and merchandise. All kinds of stores were opening up business and the daily increase in the population showed one plainly that this bare prairie that I had left only a few months before, was soon to become "quite a place."

I naturally thought of my friend whose modest hencoop was located well in the centre of this thriving business centre, and after many enquiries and no end of trouble, I ran across a stranger in a nondescript sort of canvas edifice, part saloon, part billiard room and part restaurant. Here I learned from the stranger that my protégé had wearied of his lonely life and had sold out

to some land-shark his valuable location for one piebald pony, one meerschaum pipe (second hand), one german silver watch (out of order) and seven dollars and a quarter cash.

That night the embryo farmer paid me a visit and began the conversation by saying: "I suppose you think I am a d——d ass. Everybody else does."

I assured him that if what I had heard was true, I was with the majority every time. He then told me the particulars and I volunteered to try and get his homestead back for him as no transfer papers had been executed. I sent for the sharp gentleman who had tried to take advantage of the guileless youth, and after much bluffing on my part, the pony and the other valuables were returned to the disgusted owner and once more my young hero was "Monarch of all he surveyed," or at least 160 acres of it.

I presented him with a choice collection of very bad novels and advised him to sit tight for the next few months, read the

books and for recreation try to smoke himself to death with cigarettes, all of which he promised to do, thanking me for my kindness.

It was about Christmas when I returned for the second time, en route to Headquarters at Winnipeg. The rails had crept Westward many miles past Brandon and when I arrived at my initial point a real live town was in full swing, good hotels, stores, churches, graded streets, sidewalks, and all the many evidences of a prosperous Western town. Busses were running from the neat, white brick station (which before was an ancient box car), to the "Langham Hotel," no less, and midst all this scurry and bustle it seemed as if it would be quite a trick to find that hencoop.

I searched in vain for the enterprising proprietor, at first in vain, but later on discovered the original "Old Timer" in some gilded saloon, who after partaking of a few stimulants told me the cold, cruel facts. It appeared that the young homesteader, a

short time after I left grew homesick, and receiving a favourable offer it proved too much for him, and he sold out, 'lock, stock and barrel' for three pairs of navy blue socks (quite new), a second-hand concertina, six packages of cigarettes, eighteen dollars in real money and a steerage passage to Liverpool.

Thus ended the husbandman's chance of a lifetime. Not very long ago after he got cold feet, I happened to hear casually that that same little pasture of his fetched over *eighty thousand dollars!*

And thus was the City of Brandon born.

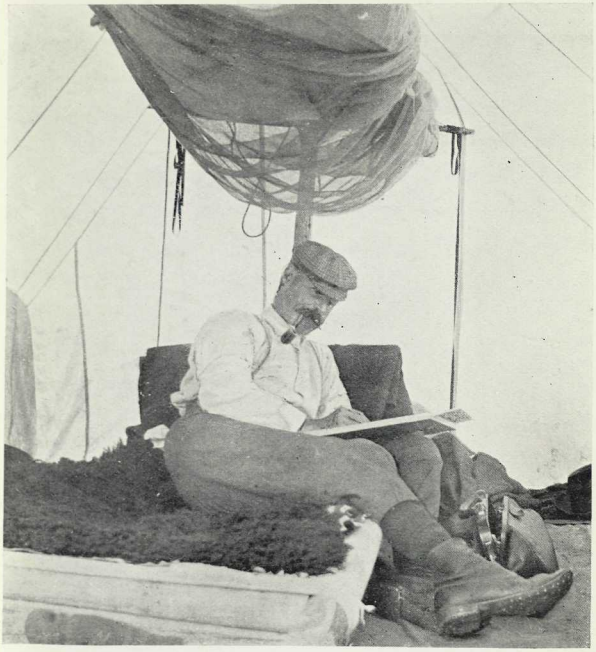
## *CHAPTER XI*

### SELECTING A STATION

THE station surnamed "Secretan" did not have a very distinguished career. It was entirely neglected by the artful land-shark and left alone in its glory, as I predicted it would be.

It happened in this way. Van Horne said to me one day in his usual impulsive manner while rolling and unrolling many yards of profile, "Where do you want a station named after you?" I modestly declined the honour at first, but I think they had run out of names, as they had been busy christening Pullman cars, so I eventually selected the most God-forsaken spot I could think of to be named after me.

It is situated upon the summit of what



AUTHOR. CAUGHT IN THE ACT!

is known as the "Missouri Coteau" or "Dirt Hills," a ridge 600-feet high and forty miles wide, which extended across our course and obstructed the passage of the great national highway. This ridge had given me a great deal of trouble in the location, and necessitated, as my professional readers will understand, a continuous maximum grade of one per cent. for nearly twelve miles, which was strongly objected to by the Company, but eventually adopted.

It was a barren wilderness, probably a spur of the great American desert, full of little alkali ponds and lakes, and covered with "spear grass." I remember, in reporting upon the agricultural prospects of this section, I said: "A desert, but might be suitable for sheep." The next day, after the report had gone in, one of my men, a farmer by trade, told me "That there spear grass is death to sheep." So I wired down: "I take back the sheep." It was a difficult matter to find a line through there, and I eventually followed the Buffalo trails and

these wise, though wild, animals led me to the lowest summit where the railway now runs.

Van Horne suggested some more attractive location for my station, and wondered why I should pick out such a place. I told him because it had given me so much trouble and I felt sure would never amount to anything, and if anybody ever got on or off a train at that station they would break their neck.

And I actually remember reading in a paper one day that a man while attempting to board a train at Secretan, slipped and had his leg cut off.

This is many years ago, but I understand that my namesake still consists of a side-track and a water tank, surrounded by scenery and several old tomato cans. Such is fame! But I suppose the honour of being mentioned in the timetable ought to be sufficient.

After many years, searching for a better line, they reduced the grades by making

very deep cuttings at an enormous expense. Before that there was hardly a locomotive engineer on the road, when he had to cut his train in half in order to get up that grade, who did not sincerely curse Secretan. And I do not think there will ever be a town there until all the other places are used up.

## *CHAPTER XII*

### THE ENGLISHMAN

BEING an Englishman myself, I hope it will not break the hearts of any of my English readers if I mention some of the peculiarities of my countrymen.

I have met all sorts, particularly in the West, and many of that *genus homo* known as the "greenhorn": thousands of first class, well born, well educated, well intentioned manly men, but absolutely useless in a new country, also hundreds of "rotters," no use in any country. Then there was the "Remittance man," usually a younger son, without any prospects, a harmless casual creature, who thoroughly enjoyed himself every time the remittance arrived and was no doubt horribly miserable while waiting for the next.

Sometimes the Remittance men herded together and made a "Jack Pot" of it, when there would be a keg of rum and a glorious jollification. Generally somebody had some sort of a "shack" where the others trailed along in and visited, and they did what they pleased to call their own cooking, and when the plates and dishes came to an end they would have a general "wash up" on Sunday, in which all hands participated, and start fresh again on Monday morning if there was anything to eat. Somebody always had a saddle horse, or a cricket bat and tennis racquets, and I think they enjoyed themselves somehow while waiting for the regular remittance. One of them would dress up in most immaculate English toggery and ride into the nearest town, bringing out the mail, when they would all devour the latest English sporting and illustrated papers. They were a care-free, happy lot in those days, but seem now to have disappeared.

I once had the luck incidentally to save

the lives of two helpless Englishmen who would otherwise have starved or been frozen to death. It happened in this way. I was on my way East after a very hard summer, locating the main line, when in passing near a Hudson Bay Post at Qu'Appelle, I foolishly went in to get my letters, and there found an order from General Rosser to go to the mouth of Red Deer River on the South Saskatchewan to discover what had become of an engineer who had been sent there to examine a river crossing and from whom nothing had since been heard. It was very late in the Fall and quite impossible to take my whole outfit, particularly as the prairie for 150 miles had all been burned over and there was no wood or water. So I decided to make a rapid attempt at it, with a few horses and only one man. I sent my party home to Winnipeg and with Jerome St. Luc, described elsewhere in these memoirs, a couple of carts and about half a dozen ponies, started for Red Deer, via Moose Jaw, 150 miles distant. Forage and water were hard

to find the whole way, but these native ponies are hardy and can live on next to nothing and find it themselves. There were occasional patches of snow in the gulches that were useful in the absence of water, and in four or five days we arrived at the mouth of Red Deer River, which falls into the South Saskatchewan.

I made a rapid examination of the topography and learned that the missing engineer had trekked for Edmonton, as the Winter was approaching. There were a handful of land-sharks camped here, amongst whom I found my two greenhorns, who had been decoyed there that Summer in the belief that the main line of the C.P.R. would probably cross the Saskatchewan at that point, and they would make a fortune in town lots. Hearing that I was about to go East next morning they asked if they might come down with me.

I knew it was a tough proposition and at first demurred, knowing that my methods of travelling, to which they were unaccus-

tomed, were hard and rough—but at last I consented to take them along. They had two gaunt Canadian horses, with very little grain to feed them on, and a spring waggon. I started next morning at three o'clock, an hour to which they strenuously objected, wondering why I did not wait till the sun rose ; but as it was getting well on to November, I had to make long drives, being about six hundred miles from home.

My only rations consisted of Pemmican and Hudson Bay Rum, with biscuits and tea for a change in the menu. I remember passing round a tin cup with a tot of rum at four a.m., to the utter horror of my two poor pilgrims who would have none of it. They wondered what " my people " would think of me for drinking " raw spirits " at four o'clock in the morning. I reminded them that they were not in London now. Pemmican is undoubtedly the most portable and sustaining food on earth. It was made by the half-breeds in those good old days when Buffalo were plentiful :—the meat is

cut in strips, dried in the sun, then pounded into dust, mixed with the tallow, flavoured with a few berries and tightly sewn up in fifty-pound bags made out of Buffalo hide. When frozen, you hack off a chunk with an axe and either eat it raw, when on a "trek," or fry it when in camp. This was all a terrible novelty to my two tenderfeet, one of whom was an ex-professor of Oxford and the other a retired naval lieutenant.

After running into a bad blizzard in crossing the Salt Plains, I at last landed my countrymen at the Hudson Bay Post at Tonchwood Hills, and heaved a sigh of great relief as I handed them over to the tender mercy of the old Scotch Factor with my compliments, but not before one of those gaunt giraffes of theirs had dropped dead in harness, for which they blamed me, although we had only made about forty or fifty miles a day. Having got them safely under cover, I left the same night for Fort Qu'Appelle where I got a couple of sleds or jumpers as

the snow had come, and hit the end of the track soon after and all the comforts of the Superintendent's private car.

A real jolly bunch of Englishmen once hit Montreal in the early days of the gold rush to the Klondyke and interviewed Van Horne at the C.P.R. Head Office. They were a typical group of four ex-officers from Merrie England, a colonel, a major, and two captains. The wealth of the Golden Klondyke had attracted their fancy, and it did not take long to assemble the necessary capital for the venture, so that one fine day four well-groomed Englishmen set sail for New York and put up at the "Waldorf." After many consultations over the walnuts and wine, the overland route via Edmonton was selected. Nothing like discipline, "deah boy, dontcherknow." So our brave heroes divided up into departments. The colonel took command, which was a sinecure. The major had charge of the purchasing department. One captain acted as supply officer, and the other as director of transport. After having

sampled the hospitalities of the "Waldorf" for several days, the commanding officer notified his staff that they were now in America; the supply officer, who was furnished with a list of the necessities required, notified the purchasing department that under the head of "S," he had come across "Stove, cooking, American," hence, since they had arrived in America, this was the place to purchase the stove. So, at a well-known hardware store, a magnificent cooking range, guaranteed real American, was secured (weighing something over a ton) at a fabulous price, and shipped by the transport officer to Montreal, "a town on the C.P.R. in Canada."

This being considered sufficient exertion for one day, the quartette adjourned to their hotel and sampled many curious cocktails indigenous to the soil. The supplies for the expedition had been purchased in London, and although the expenditure was most lavish, the outfit, no doubt, was generally unsuitable. Money will do almost anything,

but a little experience mixes well with it when you are going into almost a " terra incognita " in quest of fortune.

However, here were our four heroes, safe across the ocean. They weathered the perils of New York, and departed for Montreal, the metropolis of Canada. The portly magnate of a great railway corporation sat in his office at Montreal, behind a long black cigar ; ever and anon he pressed a button that summoned a trusty henchman to his side, who would receive an order and depart as silently as he came. Four visiting cards announced the arrival of our Englishmen, who were promptly ushered into the presence of the great mogul.

He scanned the cards sharply, and swinging around in his revolving chair, quickly scrutinized the visitors with a practised eye.

" Sit down, gentlemen ; glad to meet you. Now what can I do for you ? " said the man behind the cigar.

" Oh, really you are awfully good, but I don't think there is anything you can do

for us. We've got everything we want. Just thought we'd drop in and pay our respects as we were passing through to Klondyke."

The colonel was spokesman for the party of intrepid explorers.

"Oh, indeed, and so you are all off for the Klondyke? And what route are you going to take?"

"Oh, we are going by the C.P.R."

"Well, gentlemen, I may be of some assistance to you in this. For instance, as a matter of fact, it might interest you to know that the C.P.R. does not go to the Klondyke."

"Ah, just so. Now, Charlie," turning to the director of transport, "that's what I always maintained. We have to change carriages at some bally place—can't remember now whether its Winnipeg or Quebec."

Charles thought it might possibly be Calgary. The other two distinguished officers gave it up. The railway magnate came to the rescue, and explained that the C.P.R.

would be only too proud to carry them as far as Edmonton, which was the end of that branch.

"How do you propose going on from there?" asked the great man seriously.

"Oh, that's easy enough. We're going to get a lot of horses and snowshoes and things. By the way, do you think snowshoes are better than those other Indian arrangements? You know, Harry, that Canadian chappie we met on the ship told us about; those, what's his names? Mocassins, don't-cherknow? We've ordered a whole lot of tents, too."

The magnate, becoming interested, enquired whether they were well provisioned for their proposed long and hazardous trip.

"Oh, rather," observed the commanding officer, gaily, turning to the supply department. "George, just show him what we are taking with us." Whereupon George produced a small lozenge out of his waistcoat pocket, about the size of a pea, and proudly handed it to the railway chief.

OLD TIME RED RIVER CART. "THE PAST."

"Now, then," said the spokesman, "you can't guess what that is," and in the same breath excitedly, "That's a mutton chop! Eh, what? When we go into camp, you know, just drop that harmless-looking little thing into a cup of hot water, and in two minutes it swells up and there you have a mutton chop."

The magnate was much interested by the enthusiasm of these misguided argonauts with their condensed luxuries, but ventured to ask how they would provide forage for their numerous horses.

"Ah, simple enough. Show him one of those other things, George." When, sure enough, another lozenge was exhibited, this time as large as a bean. "Now, then, sir, what's that? Ah! ha! That's oil cake, you know! Put one of those on a horse's tongue, close his mouth, and in a few minutes it swells into a good-sized ration of oil cake —very fattening, and much better than oats, you know. Saves carrying hay and grain, too. One man can carry enough food for

twenty horses for a month in his waistcoat pocket. Good idea, rather, eh, what? Awful smart! Johnnie invented that. He'll make all sorts of 'oof' out of it."

Before leaving the head man of the greatest railway corporation on earth, they got some good advice. He suggested that they should proceed to Edmonton, where there was a nice comfortable Hudson Bay Fort, then pitch their camp some six or eight miles ahead, and start in on the condensed mutton chop tablets. Then practise walking in to the Fort and back every day for several weeks; but by no means to get too far away from headquarters and human help.

I was told that, after doing Montreal thoroughly, the purchasing department being in great demand, this joyful, guileless quartette arrived safely at Edmonton, where carloads of English supplies awaited them. Amongst other luxuries unheard of in those latitudes were several dozen cases of champagne, also many hundred bottles of pickles and sauces. The winter having set in, these

congealable commodities, of course, all burst, except, perhaps, a few frappe cocktails saved out of the general wreck. They did not forget the advice of the Montreal magnate, and having pitched their camp some distance from the Fort, they took it in turns, sleeping in a tent. Three of them would stay inside the Fort, while the other poor devil who had lost the toss would camp outside. This was supposed to accustom them to camp life, and with the aid of the homœopathic chop, inure them to the hardships of the trail.

What eventually became of these pioneers I never heard. A good story was told of their many eccentricities, for it appears that when one of these intrepid adventurers tried to put snowshoes on the after feet of a mule, the animal objected and the operator had several ribs stoved in. I suppose that the party eventually broke up and meandered back to England. They certainly never got anywhere near the golden goal, although the expedition cost many thousand good old golden British sovereigns.

There was another rather pathetic case that I recollect in Manitoba. He was a retired British General who took up about a square mile or so of land for farming purposes. The land was very stony with many acres of boulders, which I heard he considered a great advantage as the pirate who sold it to him had told him that "there was stone enough on it to build a house, barn and stable"; and he actually did build them.

This noble ex-warrior had some very original ideas about the general principles of farming, and when it came to planting potatoes, he developed an amazing inventive genius that was calculated to revolutionize the ancient methods then still in vogue.

He took a cart and had sharp spikes affixed to the broad tyres of the wheels, just eighteen inches apart. He then cut up a large number of potatoes and, sitting in the cart, proceeded to arm each deadly spike with a section of potato, the theory being that this method would mean mathematical precision in the planting and a great saving

of labour and backache. All went even merrier than the proverbial marriage bell, as the General drove gaily down the ploughed potato patch, followed by the giggling multitude of open-mouthed villagers.

That year they say the General's potato crop was a marvel, and most miraculously distributed; sometimes a magnificent plant appeared, then an interval of ten or twelve feet with nothing in sight, then a whole bunch of vegetables and so on. It was not what one would call a success from an agricultural point of view. The seed impaled by the old General on the spikes sometimes failed to come off at all or else half a dozen concluded to come off at once. However, he managed to dot the landscape with flowering potato plants in a highly picturesque and original manner, and gave his more practical neighbours food for laughter, which is something to be thankful for on a lonely prairie farm.

On another occasion, he decided to paint the barn red, but not by the old laborious

process of brush and paint-pot—Oh, dear no!—that was far too slow—he would show them. He mixed up several barrels of bright scarlet paint and attached a hose with a strong pressure behind it, then, armed with a long brass nozzle, he proceeded to attack the enemy.

But he must have been out of practice, for his marksmanship was extraordinarily bad. Occasionally he hit that barn right in the midriff with gallons of the bright mixture, and some of it stuck, but a good deal rebounded and painted the General himself a bright scarlet. The surrounding crops also received a generous coating and after the engagement was over and the General ordered the "Cease fire," the entire complexion of the landscape was changed and decidedly rubicund; green cabbages blushed and yellow corn was now of a ruddy hue. He painted two or three of the dogs who failed to get out of the way, and a few ponies who also got under fire. All the trees within gunshot received their dose, and when the General

had finished the whole farm looked like a beautiful sunset.

In spite of all their peculiarities and ignorance, however, there were many hardy English pioneers in the early days who settled in Canada and "made good" under most disheartening circumstances. This is particularly true of the Settlers in the Eastern parts, long before the "Wild and Woolly West" was discovered, who had to clear the land by cutting down the primeval forest with an axe they had never seen before;—they probably called it "felling the trees with a chopper." The descendants of those emigrants from England are now some of the very best American citizens, and may well be proud of the deeds of their ancestors who conquered the Canadian forest, boldly faced the cruel winter, and made a smiling home for their children.

Last, and least, we have, of course, the "rotter," who never assimilates "with the Colonials, dontcherknow," who knows it all and continually reminds everybody that

"that isn't the way we do it at 'ome." He is not a success here or anywhere else. He is simply a nuisance. . . .

## *CHAPTER XIII*

### DICK TURPIN

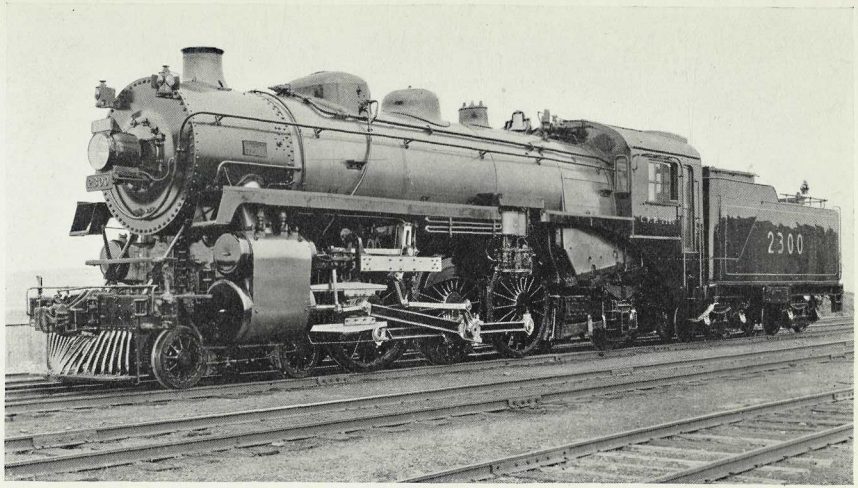
WE came across some extraordinary characters in those days. I remember once meeting an amateur highwayman who had been most successful in plundering a stage coach.

He was certainly not a typical Dick Turpin. He was an ordinary, smooth shaved, pale faced, undersized cadaverous-looking, insignificant robber, the day I first saw him, but he evidently had some nerve concealed about his person. He was coupled up to a stalwart Royal Northwest Mounted Policeman on a C.P.R. train, bound East and he was about to pay a fifteen year visit to the Stony Mountain Penetentiary.

I learned that he was a highwayman, and

discovered incidentally the facts relating to his crime. His name sounded something like Matthew MacGillicuddy, but of this I am not positive, and they said he came of a good family, being the son of an Archdeacon of the Church. He had served as a private in the " Midland Regiment " during the 1885 rebellion and subsequently took to the more precarious occupation in which we now find him. One fine Summer morning he rode over the Salt Plains on his " Cayuse " and when near the western extremity of that desolate region, came across the lonely camp of a respectable old Hudson Bay officer. This gentleman having refreshed himself with the good things of civilization, not neglecting to pay his respects at the shrine of old Bacchus during his short stay in Winnipeg, was en route to his post at Edmonton, accompanied by a faithful servitor in the person of a French-Canadian half-breed, and no doubt accompanied too by a small keg of good old Jamaica Rum.

These two worthies after many miles of




LATEST TYPE OF CANADIAN PACIFIC PASSENGER LOCOMOTIVE. ENGINE NO. 2300. "THE PRESENT"

travel, a good supper of Buffalo Pemmican, several pipes and a few "night caps," slumbered peacefully beneath their blankets, sheltered by their little white tent sticking up above the horizon, the only object upon the landscape.

Up comes my bold highwayman. Bang! Bank! Bang! He fires three shots through the tent, dismounts, opens the flap, and demands the accumulated earnings of a hard life-time. The much astonished Hudson Bay Factor awakes, alarms his faithful henchman, and after much search manages to unearth two dollars, which the robber promptly rejects with scorn, cursing their impecuniosity. The old Factor (of Scottish descent) then offers a cheque on the Bank of Montreal, which is of course refused, and the bold highwayman gallops off, leaving the two half-fuddled travellers to rest in peace.

Success attended our hero in his next venture. He crossed the bleak Salt Plains and at daylight arrived at the Western end where little groves of poplars are dotted over

the prairie. The sun is about to illuminate the landscape when he remembers that the Prince Albert stage is due to pass that way, and hies him to an adjacent bush. He has not long to wait before the day breaks and soon he hears the creaking of the wheels and the hoof-beats of four horses. Behind his cover he counts five men on the waggon, but undismayed, out rides our bold warrior, points his gun at the driver and commands him to " Halt ! " and to hold up his hands, which the man does at once. He then orders the passengers, four in number, to dismount, and at the point of the pistol makes them stand up in a row.

He then proceeds to tie their hands behind their backs all the time talking to imaginary accomplices, " Keep that fellow covered, Charlie," " Never mind the driver, Bill, I've got him," " Stay there, Ned, don't shout till I tell you," " Keep your gun on that chap, Harry, if he moves," etc., etc.

By this time our highwayman had impressed these poor citizens with the idea that

the woods were full of desperadoes. He then announced that he wanted a knife to open the mail bags; the gentleman on the extreme right of the line had a knife, but could not well get at it, as it was securely tied up. He also had a wad of six hundred dollars in the same pocket, but no doubt being much impressed by the nervy little robber and thoroughly scared to death he weakly indicated his right hand trousers pocket.

In extracting the knife, the gentlemanly footpad inadvertently pulled out the six hundred dollars, which he immediately replaced, remarking: "I don't want any of your money." He then proceeded to slash open the mail bags and went through the registered letters. He took a bottle of whiskey from under the seat, gave all his helpless victims a drink, took one himself, and gaily trotted away, leaving them to untie themselves as best they could.

He was caught a year afterwards and arrested. Strange to say the person who

recognized and identified him was the very man whose money had been returned.

I saw the prisoner when he was serving his sentence in the Stony Mountain Penitentiary. The Warden of that Institution being a particular friend of mine, I suggested that he should introduce me to Number 149, whom by this time I could not help regarding as a modern hero, and, if not a leader, certainly a controller of men. He was somewhat paler than when I had seen him before, although his ashen grey complexion, nearly always so noticeable amongst convicts, only seemed to emphasize his clear-cut Napoleonic features. His glittering steel-blue eyes seemed as calm, steady and fearless as ever, and as he related the details of that memorable morning, when one little man held up five of his fellows single-handed at the point of the gun, I could not but admire his consummate coolness and courage, particularly when at the close of his recitation he casually remarked: "And, Mister, I don't mind telling you a remarkable thing, that gun I had wasn't even *loaded.*"

## *CHAPTER XIV*

### THE MURDER

WRITING on the subject of strange incidents in that vast Western Country, I am reminded of a cruel murder that happened up North before the railway was constructed.

Not many years ago a broken-down Western American adventurer, an erstwhile cowboy, prospector, gambler, and tramp, ran across a young Englishman who had a little ready money and was game for anything. It did not take long to convince this young tenderfoot that up North in Canada there awaited him untold riches in the shape of mineral wealth.

The joyous free life of "the Prospector," was skilfully depicted, and after many libations a partnership was soon formed. The

American gentleman was to furnish the experience, while the Englishman provided the necessary capital. Edmonton was selected as the objective point, where a good outfit could be obtained, then hey, for the Rocky Mountains, where riches rivalling King Solomon's awaited their pick and shovel!

The eager Englishman, delighted at his good fortune in securing such a valuable partner, was only too anxious to depart for the scene of operations. So the pair lost no time in buying a handsome outfit and a couple of pack horses with the Britisher's money, and were soon on their way to tempt the fickle goddess.

Mile after mile was negotiated, over vast prairies and muskegs, climbing hills, plunging into deep valleys, swimming rapid rivers, and battling against black flies by day and mosquitoes by night, and at last the partners arrived at the foot hills of the great snow-capped range. With the exception of a few straggling Indians, they did not meet a living soul on their journey. The young English-

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY. IN THE ROCKIES.

man was gay and garrulous, and after supper, when their little tent was pitched, horses hobbled, and a good fire built, he would chatter away to his new-found friend, telling him the history of his childhood and school days in old England. The son of a parson who was blessed with the usual " quiver full," he soon had to leave the parental roof-tree, and, like many others, had picked out America as the promised land of fortune.

This wholesome English boy, brought up in gentle surroundings, young, strong, and artless, had taken quite a fancy to this partner of his, who was a much older man. Reticent to a degree, he offered no confidences to his English friend, but when the day's work was done would listen patiently to the joyous anticipations of the other, occasionally interjecting a remark on subjects quite beyond the range of his more cultured but less experienced companion. He taught the Englishman many strange things in woodcraft, how to swing an axe, set a trap, and throw a diamond hitch, and so the weeks wore on

harmoniously enough as they wended their way towards the land of wealth.

The long, cold, dreary Winter is past, the white mantle of the snow is slowly disappearing from the foot hills, the welcome Spring has come at last. Vast flocks of noisy geese are swiftly making their way North in great V-shaped formations, all day and night the loud " Honk-honk ! " of their leaders can be heard announcing their return to northern feeding grounds. Green blades of grass timidly poke their heads through the ice-encrusted plains. Birds twitter in the sunlight, tiny streams begin to trickle towards the great rivers, now starting to break loose with a mighty roar, and Nature seems to awaken from her long deep sleep, stretch herself, and smile.

At the Fort all is bustle and excitement. This is the season when " traders yawn and the noble redman gives up his furs." In groups of three and four the Indians congregate at their great annual bargain-counter. Stealthily a tall aborigine approaches the

counter in the Hudson Bay store, and to the uninitiated, only accustomed to the business methods of civilization, he looks for all the world like a burglar about to secure the family plate. Just watch him as he silently stalks the company's clerk, who, knowing full well the artful little ways and manners of the noble savage, keeps his back carefully turned towards him.

The Indian, after a cautious look round, puts his hand under his blanket and quietly separates himself from a large beaver skin, which he lays on the counter with a pronounced grunt, pointing up at the shelves for something that takes his fancy.

If it is a dry goods transaction, the old lady will most likely take a hand in it, and when the urbane clerk has snipped off a dozen yards of dress goods, she will contribute a couple more grunts to the general conversation. The clerk then throws the dress goods at the warrior and chucks the beaver skin under the counter. This may go on for a week or more. The clerk does

not say: "What can I show you next, madam?" or "This shade is very much worn this Spring." He generally waits patiently with his back to the counter in the most indifferent manner that he can assume, apparently with the design of impressing the native with the idea that he, the clerk, is doing him a great favour by giving thirty cents. worth of red flannel for a four-dollar beaver skin.

Long lines of traders' carts are now to be seen leaving the Fort, their wooden axles screeching, as they wend their way eastward, heavily loaded with rich furs, destined soon to grace the fair shoulders of many a haughty dame, for, after all, nowadays it is not a far cry from Red River to Regent Street.

Languidly resting, with one elbow on the counter, is a tall weather-stained stranger, who seems to take but little interest in his surroundings and hardly deigns to notice the motley group of Indians, half-breeds, and traders, passing and repassing him con-

tinually. His unkempt beard, long hair, and patched clothes show him to be a prospector newly arrived from the mountains. He is uncommunicative and alone.

For a day or two the stranger loafs round the Fort buying a few necessities and trimming himself, as is customary upon reaching the outposts of civilization, before setting out on the long journey East. There were no railways in those days out there. But fate had decreed that he should not make that journey, for even then the mysterious hand of Providence, call it what you will, was upon the collar of that lonely stranger.

The historian tells us that an old reliable employee of the wonderful Hudson Bay Company, possessed of all the instincts of the trapper, thought he recognized the stranger, and in his own mind identified him as the partner of our young English friend who passed through there not many months before in search of gold. This garrulous old gentleman communicated his belief to the sergeant of police on duty at the Fort, who

in turn paid a visit to the stranger and subjected him to the " Third Degree," with the result that the sergeant reported to his superior officer that there were mysterious circumstances surrounding the stranger's appearance in their midst, and that he had consequently detained him. The stranger was subjected to a series of cross-examinations, and acknowledged his identity with the man who had gone North with the young Englishman.

He said that after being together many months, they had quarrelled and eventually separated, the Englishman deciding to seek his fortune alone, while his former partner determined to return to civilization. While these enquiries were being prosecuted by the Mounted Police, a small band of Indians travelling South came upon the signs of a deserted camp, and noticed the remains of a camp fire, much larger than usual. In poking through the ashes they discovered several metal buttons. There was a poplar tree overspreading the spot, and one wise

old squaw, looking up at the leaves on the tree, sagely observed that "they had been cooking much meat here," as she could detect grease upon the under side of the leaves. These circumstances were duly reported to the police, and a couple of men were sent up to examine the place, taking with them some of the Indians.

It was an ideal spot for a camp, a poplar glade, near a shallow pond or "slough." There were the remnants of the camp fire where the tell-tale buttons had been unearthed by the Indians. The ashes were carefully raked away, and very soon the charred remains of human bones were disclosed. The little pond was next dragged and a sheath knife brought to the surface.

The police then utilized the services of the Indians in draining the miniature pond, with startling results. A small sovereign purse was discovered, and this it was that told so eloquently the dreadful tale of base ingratitude and murder. Swift justice followed. The stranger in the guard room, although con-

fronted with these damning details, stuck to his guns and denied his guilt. The circumstantial evidence was too strong. He was tried, convicted, and sentenced to be hanged.

Then when the Springtime gradually melted into glorious Summer, when warmth and gladness smiled upon that Far Northern country, just as the golden sun rose over the distant foothills, a lonely, friendless, wretched, pinioned murderer slowly mounted the scaffold, gazed heavenward for a moment, and without a single word paid the awful penalty decreed by British law.

## *CHAPTER XV*

### THE SHERIFF

I REMEMBER once travelling West with William White, General Superintendent of the Western Division in his car on an inspection trip. When we arrived at Golden, B.C., being rather tired of our own society, I suggested that I should introduce the sheriff of British Columbia, who was a well-known character to me and everybody else out there, for the amusement of Mr. White, who was a stolid serious Scotchman, but had a real sense of humour somewhere concealed about his person. He was a fine type of the old Railway man and had worked up to his present position on the C.P.R. from a Station Agent on the old Grand Trunk.

I had no trouble in collecting the sheriff

and produced him after dinner to enjoy the hospitality of the General Superintendent's car. I remember him well; I can almost see him now, a trim-built, grey haired man, with a florid complexion, sharp steel-blue eyes, who was always alert and resourceful, a brilliant conversationalist, and ever ready to give you the benefit of his marvellous and numerous experiences. He had Baron Munchausen "skinned to death," and upon the slightest provocation, this distant relative of Ananias would reel off the most astounding recollections. He had been a Mounted Police officer in Australia, a Prospector, Miner, Soldier, Sailor, Farmer and now held the proud position of Sheriff, presiding over a country with an area of many thousand miles.

He would talk by the hour and when pipes were lighted and Fort Benton Benzine circulated freely he would paralyze the "tender foot" with weird tales in which he was invariably the unscathed hero. He generally addressed himself apparently to some imaginary Chairman and when the dénouement of

some blood-curdling lie had been reached, he would look round the gaping audience with a look of defiance in his steel-blue glittering eye and with one hand on the hilt of his six-shooter would glare at his astonished victims, plainly saying, " Let some one of you fellows dare to deny what I said."

It was in the heart of the Rocky Mountains and wild animals were in fashion that evening. Grizzly Bears had the floor. " Talking of bears, Gentlemen," said the modern Munchausen, looking threateningly round upon the assembled Company, " reminds me, as you probably all know, when riding through these hills I generally use a Mexican saddle and always carry a horse-hair lariat on the horn of my saddle. Well, sir, I was coming along the trail the other day, not thinking of anything special, when, sir, what do you suppose I saw ahead of me ? A grizzly, sir, yes, sir, the largest bear I ever saw in my life ; on account of the roaring of the river I suppose he never heard me coming ; well, sir, it didn't take me a minute. I just

whipped off my lariat, and quicker than you could say knife I had roped that bear. Now, sir, what happened? (Glaring round for the least sign of unbelief) I found the lariat tightening up, and, sir, looking down I found myself *horse and all*, sir, where? Why, fifty feet off the ground. Yes, sir, that bear had climbed one of those tall Douglas Fir trees and there I was. Well, sir, what did I do? (Pause, giving time for murmurs of wonder). Well, sir, I just whipped out my sheath knife, cut the lariat and dropped to the ground."

The old gentleman invariably told all his marvellous yarns in the same fashion, asking the phantom Chairman questions and answering them promptly himself. If any greenhorn ventured to hazard a guess at the sequel, he would wither him up with one swift indignant scowling glance, and say: "No, sir, I did nothing of the kind, I knew better" and then wind up the oft-told barefaced abomination in a blaze of glory.

One of his favourites, easily led up to by any of the boys who had many a time

and oft suffered under his bewildering romances, related to his experiences in Australia.

Apropos of nothing, the old prevaricator would burst forth suddenly. "Well, sir, when I was in the Mounted Police at Ballarat, I had to take seven prisoners down country, a matter of two or three thousand miles. I only had a sergeant and two men with me. Well, sir, after sixteen days and nights hard riding, no sleep, mind you, sir, we were absolutely done out. My men couldn't stand it any longer. Well, sir, what did I do? When we camped that night, I said, 'Give me a shovel.' We dug seven holes, put the prisoners in, buried to their necks, tamped the earth round them, and then we had supper and turned in; never had such a delicious rest;—slept till daylight. Turned out, sir, no prisoners to be seen, not a single head—*Wolves*, sir. Yes, sir, *wolves*."

Another favourite one he used to tell was about the early mining days. I think the old Ananias must have been a "forty-niner." "Well, sir, when I was a young

man trying to make my way up to the mines in Australia, we never carried any tents, the heat was awful and we simply threw ourselves down under a gum tree at night. We used a sheep-skin to sleep on. Well, sir, I had a beauty, it must have been off a freshly skinned sheep, but, sir, although the wool was thick, the ground was hard, and at first I couldn't sleep. I tossed restlessly about till nearly dawn, when gradually I felt my bed getting softer, and softer, quite springy, like a wire mattress. I fell into a delightful slumber and when I awoke the sun was high in the heavens, bursting through the foliage of the enormous Blue Gum tree and scorching my face. I looked down and found that I was at least four feet above the hard baked ground. Well, sir, what was the reason? *Maggots*, sir. Yes, sir, *millions* of *maggots!*"

A sigh of approval escaped from the interested gallery, and then the old Past Master of the United Order of Independent Liars would go on to remark: "Well, sir, I was

once up in the Caribou Gold Mines in the early days, and after working our claim all summer, somebody had to take the gold down to the Mint. I was selected for the job. It was just the beginning of winter, but the snow was already very deep, so I started alone on snowshoes with over sixty thousand dollars in dust and nuggets on my back. (The cheerful old prevaricator evidently forgot that amount of gold would weigh over three hundred pounds). I made good time, as I was a young man in those days, and soon arrived at the head of Kamloops Lake, fifty miles long, yes, sir, fifty. What did I find ? The snow had disappeared and the lake was glare ice. It was sixty below zero. Well, sir, what did I do ? Took off my snow-shoes and put on my skates, started down that lake, sir, going over twenty miles an hour. When I was half way down I heard a noise behind me like dogs barking, took a look over my shoulder—what did I see ? A pack of wolves, yes, sir, wolves, over fifty of them coming after

me like mad, their eyes staring out of their heads and shining brightly and their red tongues just as plain as I see you. In a second I knew what to do. I suppose I was fully five miles off the land, but I could distinguish the figure of a man working in a garden near the shore. I turned and skated like a man *will* skate with a pack of hungry wolves after him, and getting closer every minute, too. Got there just in time, sir, I could almost feel their hot breath on the back of my neck. The man was hoeing potatoes. Threw down my pack, pushed the man over, seized his hoe, and faced the wolves—killed over thirty of them, sir. Yes, sir, over thirty, I said, and the rest ran away."

Mr. William White's solemn Presbyterian countenance, after holding its own during the recitation of this procession of bare-faced lies, which I had often suffered under, now broke out into a bewildered smile. I do not think he had ever encountered such a finished Munchausen. The Sheriff was invited to have a drink and another cigar and

escorted to the platform. We said farewell to the Prince of Prevaricators and were on our return journey before morning.

## *CHAPTER XVI*

### MAJOR ROGERS

THIS gifted engineer came suddenly into the limelight in 1881.

He was imported by Van Horne and left his native lair at Minneapolis to explore the Selkirk and Rocky Mountain ranges to find a pass for the great Trans-Continental highway. Strange as it may seem, nearly every pass had been already discovered by Sir Sandford Fleming's engineers, but this fact did not deter the indefatigable Major, who proceeded to discover them again. The Kicking Horse Pass in the Rockies had been well-known since Palliser's time, and the pass through the Selkirks, now known as the Rogers' Pass, had been explored and condemned by Walter Moberly, C.E., who also

turned down the Kicking Horse Pass, before the gallant Major was ever heard of. The current story of the Kicking Horse discovery by the Major was to the effect that upon one of his scouting expeditions he wandered up the Kicking Horse River armed with his favourite compass and aneroid barometer, and having travelled up stream to within four miles of the summit, he returned to the Columbia River and reported that a two per cent. grade was feasible all the way down the Kicking Horse. But, alas!—from the point where the Major turned about, the stream rose 1,100-feet in four miles and a half, which put his two per cent. grade out of business.

If he had gone on a few miles further he would have found this out. When we attempted to locate the line in the Spring on a two per cent. grade, it was of course found to be impossible, the result being that a temporary grade of four and a half per cent. for over four miles was constructed and operated, with three safety switches, and

with the heaviest engines on either end of the trains, for many years, until the line was eventually lengthened by putting in a double loup and two long tunnels at enormous expense, thus reducing the grade to two per cent.

The Kicking Horse Pass was adopted, in spite of this heavy grade from the summit down, we are told, because, when the Major wired his report of a feasible grade, the name of "Kicking Horse" was cabled over to London, got on the English Stock Exchange, and *stuck*, so the Directors made the best of it and with the permission of the Government operated that almost impracticable grade for many years. The Rogers' Pass in the Selkirks was another expensive luxury necessitating many miles of snowsheds, but now all that is changed by the construction of the Connaught tunnel, over five miles in length, which cost the Company many million dollars. I only met the little man once, and that was under rather peculiar circumstances.

He was what we called a "rough and

ready" engineer—or rather "pathfinder." A short, sharp, snappy little chap with long Dundreary whiskers. He was a master of picturesque profanity, who continually chewed tobacco and was an artist in expectoration. He wore overalls with pockets behind, and had a plug of tobacco in one pocket and a sea biscuit in the other, which was his idea of a season's provisions for an engineer.

His scientific equipment consisted of a compass and an aneroid slung round his neck. Thus was he arrayed when I met him, but minus the biscuit. I was winding up the season's work very late in the Fall and was camped on the high banks of the South Saskatchewan River, near what is now known as "Medicine Hat." I had a good, up-to-date engineer's location camp with plenty of horses and waggons and the best of tents and other equipment. I always believed in cleanliness, order and discipline when possible, and my camps were generally kept neat and tidy. A day or two before

I met the subject of this chapter the ice had formed on the South Saskatchewan River, and one fine afternoon it was reported to me that a rabble of ragamuffins had been sighted, trying to cross the thin ice.

This party of starving scarecrows was finally identified as the van of the distinguished Major's survey party, in fact, I think the remains of them, trying to get home. They were hungry and in rags, and were headed by the Major himself, the worst looking long-haired ruffian of them all.

When I discovered who he was, I introduced myself and of course took the weary wanderers in to camp, gave up the best and newest blankets to them, fed them all on the fat of the land and entertained them for two or three days till they were rested, and then sent them East in four-horse teams, rejoicing.

During the time I was camped on the Saskatchewan, awaiting orders, I had employed the men, for sanitary reasons, in cleaning up the camp. The sand used to

blow into the tents, so I utilized old gunny sacks, which, when sewn together made excellent carpets. I also did a little shooting on my own account, and our larder was well stocked with fat Mallard ducks, prairie chickens, geese, crane and other delicacies. So when the noble Major arrived, half starved, I was able to surprise his stomach.

Shortly after he left, I received orders to return to Winnipeg, and when I got down, General Rosser, the Chief Engineer, told me that Major Rogers had given me a very bad reputation. He told the General (who fortunately was my friend and didn't believe him) that he had stayed at my camp and that I was living like the Czar of Russia and would absolutely ruin any Railway Corporation in the world. He said I had all my tents carpeted with Brussels carpet, that I lived upon roast turkeys and geese and many other expensive luxuries, unheard of in the cuisine of a poor unsophisticated engineer, etc., etc.

Thus did the Major bite the hand that fed him! Rosser and I had a good laugh over

his ingratitude, and I forgave him because I imagined that the poor little man had never seen such palatial splendour as my tents with the gunny sack carpets, swept out daily, and my mess tent with a real table and wholesome, well-cooked food upon it. He still had the plug of tobacco and biscuit idea. I explained to General Rosser that the expensive game which I was able to offer my distinguished guest was all shot by myself with my own gun and ammunition, thus saving the Company untold wealth by neglecting to eat their bacon and beans.

I clip from a newspaper the following extracts from an article headed :

"MAJOR ROGERS AND HIS TIME."

This is decorated with illustrations showing :

(1) "The house Major Rogers lived in."

(2) "Watch presented to Major Rogers, of Rogers' Pass fame, about 1885."

(3) "Major A. B. Rogers, who discovered the Rogers' Pass, the first feasible route through the *Rockies* to the Pacific Coast."

The article begins thus :

" One of the most difficult tasks in the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway was to discover a way through the Rocky Mountains. A number of explorers had made attempts to find a way, but it remained for Major A. B. Rogers to discover the most feasible route, the route that was chosen and is now known as Rogers' Pass."

Then follows a lengthy eulogy of the many wonders performed by the renowned Major, probably written for some local paper in the place the hero was born. Of course, the fact that the so-called Rogers' Pass is not either in or anywhere near the *Rocky Mountains* did not enter the writer's head. The paper goes on to say that in recognition of the valuable work done by Major Rogers, the directors of the Canadian Pacific Railway presented him with a cheque for $5,000 and a watch flatteringly inscribed.

Furthermore it says :

" Evidently Major Rogers was of a more poetical than financial temperament, for he carried the cheque in his pocket for several

years, and he only cashed it when his friends of the Canadian Pacific insisted that he should do so."

Some are born rich, some inherit wealth, while others have riches thrust upon them!

A good story is told about the Major and Van Horne. The Major had a horrible reputation for being very niggardly in supplying his survey parties, the old "biscuit and plug of tobacco" habit being ever present, and there were many complaints and frequent desertions.

Van Horne said: "Look here, Major, I hear your men won't stay with you, they say you starve them."

"T'aint so, Van."

"Well, I'm told you feed 'em on soup made out of hot water flavoured with old ham canvas covers."

"T'aint so, Van. I didn't never have *no hams!*"

So much for Major Rogers and his two well-discovered mountain passes.

## *CHAPTER XVII*

### CONSTRUCTION

THE three most important executive officers of the Canadian Pacific Railway at this time were W. C. Van Horne, general boss of everything and everybody: T. G. Shaughnessy (now Lord Shaughnessy) general Purchasing Agent, destined to be President, and I. G. Ogden, Auditor. Ogden was the man behind the pencil, who manipulated figures and dealt in millions without turning a hair. Incidentally, I might mention that Mr. Ogden was an ambidextrous marvel and could write with both hands at the same time, I believe, and could also add up a couple of columns of figures simultaneously. They were a wonderful trio, difficult to match.

The firm of Langdon & Sheppard, of St. Paul, Minnesota, had the contract for the construction of some eight hundred miles of the main line. Langdon was an old stonemason of Scottish descent, and Sheppard was an engineer, not a bad team to build a railway. They sublet most of the grading and covered the ground so rapidly it was difficult to get out of their way, with Van Horne everlastingly driving them forward in his ambitious determination to finish five hundred miles that year.

I have heard grading outfits passing my camp in the night before the line was actually located. Everything was on the rush from morning till night and all night long. We had never seen the like in Canada before. Long lines of heavily loaded waggons wearily pursued their Western way with supplies for sub-contractors.

The organization of this great contracting firm was almost perfect. They sent in supplies for their subs in a most lavish manner, as they well knew that without the sinews

LORD SHAUGHNESSY, THE THIRD PRESIDENT OF THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

of war the battle could not proceed. Hundreds of camps strung along for hundreds of miles, thousands of men, mules and horses. Everybody busy, lots of work for all. About this time, my chief, General Rosser, resigned and was succeeded by Mr. James, late of the old Grand Trunk Railway, an Englishman. James was a long, lean, goodnatured fellow, a thorough Britisher and a true sportsman. He and old Langdon used to make periodical trips to the front, which I suspect was their only holiday. They always had the latest sporting weapons and shot everything in sight from a gopher to an antelope. Often they got lost in trying to chase some beast, but when they found my camp, after a long drive, from the end of the steel, they were like two school-boys and exhibited the bag they had collected on the way up with great pride. James would produce a couple of prairie chicken, alongside of which Langdon would solemnly lay down an owl; then James would extract a few fat duck that Langdon would cap with a gopher and a

couple of wretched badgers or a poor little coyote that had fallen a victim to his prowess. Nothing escaped them if they could hit it. One day James and I were alone, Langdon having gone ahead in another waggon. I sighted an antelope skimming along on a ridge quite a long distance off, and pointed him out to my enthusiastic sportsman. He had a Henry rifle, and promptly jumped out of the waggon, loaded, and adjusted the sight. I think it must have been at least five hundred yards, and although the poor animal was on the dead run, having noticed us, to my surprise he dropped it. It was, of course, a pure accident. We drove over to where it lay and found it was shot plumb through the head, breaking the base of his horns. This spelt victory for the Chief Engineer, for when old Langdon came along with a few prairie chickens, all James did was to point proudly to the carcase of the antelope and offer to present him with the head as a souvenir to take back to his home at St. Paul.

They were a brace of good old sportsmen.

The line was now covered with graders, and contractors' camps were strung out for hundreds of miles. Tracklaying swiftly followed, and though in those days they had no tracklaying machines, the rapidity with which it was done was astonishing. Donald Grant, a seven foot giant, was in charge of this work with a gang of about 125 men. Winnipeg was the base of supplies, and construction trains ran on a regular schedule. Each train contained material for exactly one mile of tracks, so many cars of rails and fastenings, ties, telegraph poles, and bridge material when required. It all worked like clockwork. These trains, loaded in the Winnipeg yards, came up to the front regularly on time, were rapidly unloaded. The empty train backed out, and the ties were pitched on the prairie and loaded on the waggons which were waiting for them at the end of the track. They were then distributed by hand, rails were handed along by the men with the iron car, followed by

the spiking gang ; and in less time than you could possibly imagine another mile of the great railway was completed. While all this was taking place on the plains, work was also proceeding in the mountains. A tote road was built through the Kicking Horse Pass to bring in supplies, and contracts were let for the heavy rock excavation and tunnels. Along the bleak North shore of Lake Superior the heaviest kind of work was also being rushed to completion.

I was often amused during the track laying on the plains at the sight of the Indians who would arrive apparently from nowhere, simply appearing. Squatted on their haunches in double rows, they would take in the proceedings, only occasionally emitting a grunt of half-concealed surprise and admiration as the " Fire waggons " as they called the engines, slowly pushed the steel rails to the front. I often wondered what thoughts penetrated the dusky domes of the savage warriors as they saw those two little bands of steel slowly but surely creeping

westward across their old hunting grounds. They would sit for hours patiently watching the wonders of the paleface, and then when evening came, they would fade away, in the dusk, and go home to relate to their families that they had seen thousands of white men, springing up like blades of grass on the prairie. And what puzzled them most was that these white men had no squaws and papooses with them.

The regularity of the arrival of these construction trains at the front, upon which so much depended, showed the perfect organization of the operating department at the base, which was then under Mr. Egan, General Superintendent. The number of miles of track laid in one day varied, but I believe old Donald Grant once accomplished close upon five miles, which was said to be a record. And so the shiny steel snake wiggled its way across the old home of the Bison whose bones lay bleaching in its path.

When we were on survey and location before this army of graders and tracklayers

arrived, we had good sport of all kinds. There was plenty of game, both big and little, from a buffalo to a badger. The last buffalo I shot was at Swift Current, some six hundred miles West of Winnipeg, probably about the last left in Canada. There were three cows calmly grazing on the opposite banks of the Creek, and I got two out of the three, the other one ambling away. It was not at all exciting and more like shooting domestic cattle in a barnyard, but we needed the meat.

## *CHAPTER XVIII*

### THE LOST DOG AND A BEAR HUNT

UPON one occasion during my explorations, I had a curious adventure with a strange dog.

I was often alone, riding ahead of the line (we were several hundred miles West of nowhere) and this day, right ahead of me, I spotted a good sized dog, also alone. He had his nose to the ground and seemed to be intent upon scenting some North and South trail. He was some sort of mongrel, but quite a decent looking dog. As I rode up he wagged his bushy tail and fraternized with my horse in quite a friendly manner.

I knew there was not a single living human being within a radius of a hundred miles or so from where I encountered that lonely

looking dog. I rode on and he followed me and seemed delighted at his discovery. When I returned to my main camp he proceeded to make himself very much at home and after I had fed him, curled himself up comfortably at the foot of my bed. Some of the men tried to pet him, but in vain, he would have none of it, in fact resented their friendly attentions with a growl. He took no notice of anybody but myself, and followed me day after day.

One day, while exploring the shores of "Old Wives' Lake," accompanied as usual by my faithful unknown canine friend, I sighted a herd of antelope in the near distance. I had always believed that no dog ever known could catch an antelope, but nevertheless I decided to try the unknown wanderer. I dismounted and getting hold of him between my knees tried hard to point his muzzle in the direction of the grazing herd, but instead of joyfully pursuing and catching them as I fondly hoped, to prove or break the theory, he refused to look in

their direction and did nothing but whine and try to lick my face.

I was disgusted with his want of sporting instincts and cursed him for a base-born mongrel, but at last, after pointing his nose towards the unsuspecting antelope, I gave him a swift kick, at which he disappeared like an arrow shot out of a bow pointing for those antelope. I mounted my old pony and leisurely followed the frightened herd, now being pursued by their strange enemy.

Within less than a mile I caught up with my friend. He was mounting guard over his victim, a fine buck antelope with a broken hind leg, a neat piece of work, thereby disposing of the theory that a dog could not catch an antelope.

I soon despatched the poor animal and we had antelope steak for breakfast next morning. A week or so after this event, while riding ahead as usual, followed by my unknown friend, I noticed that he seemed to be much troubled in his mind about something, continually sniffing and looking

about him, while running ahead of me. Suddenly he stopped dead, then, with his nose to the ground, gazed for a minute due North and with his tail up and ears laid back trotted off in that direction.

I whistled and shouted in vain. He never even looked round and disappeared into space as mysteriously as he had arrived.

"Where he goes or how he fares
Nobody knows and nobody cares."

The dread monotony of survey life was occasionally relieved by the unexpected. One day when riding alone ahead of the transport, I sighted an object which at first I mistook for a harmless domestic cow, but of course, upon reflection, I realized that this was impossible, as we were not near civilization of any sort.

I soon discovered by the snort of my little "cayuse" that the object in front of us was a large-sized black bear. This gentleman seemed to be amusing himself by going round and round in a circle, and before he

had noticed my approach, I turned about and retreated towards the head of the transport cavalcade now approaching. It did not take me long to gallop back and stop that noisy procession.

I took my finest revolver and two reliable half-breeds, one armed with a shot gun and the other with a puny little pistol that he fancied, and the three of us started ahead in pursuit of Bruin, well mounted and eager for the fray.

We found the gentleman still revolving, until he sighted us, when he decided to escape. I had no idea that a bear could run so quickly. The enormous leaps he made were wonderful and it was all we could do with our ponies to keep up with him. I emptied my revolver at close quarters, the others did likewise, but still the animal plunged ahead across the open prairie apparently unhurt, until he struck a poplar bluff, or small thicket, which we of course surrounded. This gave us and our horses a breathing space, until our friend suddenly appeared again and headed far

across the prairie to another small patch of poplar. Here we rested for a few minutes, thinking he was not hurt and would soon come out and resume his wild career, but as he did not reappear I went into the little clump of trees on foot, and following the blood-stains on the dried leaves soon discovered the gentleman, who had given us such good sport, in sad distress, standing on his hind legs with his back against a tree and with his mouth wide open.

It did not take long to despatch him, and signalling for my two half-breeds, we dragged out the carcass. Unfortunately, we did not reckon on the attitude of our horses, which had been left outside and were quietly grazing. If there is anything those horses are afraid of, it is a pig and a bear, so that when we arrived with our prize, two of our saddle-horses stampeded at once.

I had the luck to catch mine and rode back for a cart in which we transported Mr. Bruin, to the great glee of the grinning half-breeds. One of my officers pretended

to be very fond of wild untamed meat, and so I was able to recommend a bear steak that night for dinner, but after being chased for over an hour, I fear that steak was not a success. I certainly did not touch it.

That animal took a lot of killing and when he was skinned, the fact was disclosed that he had been hit in about a dozen places, so that the hide was entirely ruined, for it was riddled with bullet holes. He was shot almost everywhere but that did not seem to stop his speed. He weighed over four hundred pounds.

## *CHAPTER XIX*

### RECOLLECTIONS OF A REBELLION

I WAS once asked to deliver a lecture upon the subject of the 1885 Rebellion, but failed to face the music. Instead, I wrote up my personal recollections of a few incidents which I thought might amuse the audience, incidents that occurred during the latest Canadian Civil War in the North-West, where I had the honour to serve on the Staff of the late Major-General Sir Fred Middleton, as Second-in-Command of the Transport.

This regrettable disturbance began in the month of March, 1885. I was in the Stony Mountain Penitentiary at the time (not a resident but a guest of my friend the Warden, Colonel Bedson), when the news arrived that Mr. Riel had declared war against the Cana-

dian Government, and had succeeded in inciting the half-breeds, by most marvellous promises, resulting in the first shot being fired at a skirmish which took place at Duck Lake, a small trading post quite near Fort Carlton, where a detachment of the North-West Mounted Police were stationed. Major Crozier was in command, and with a handful of men, and a few civilian Volunteers, was attacked while endeavouring to remove some supplies to Fort Carlton.

I forget the actual number of casualties, but they were very serious, and I remember my friend, Major Moore, of Prince Albert, lost his leg, and several of the Prince Albert Volunteers were killed.

Major Crozier then retired on Fort Carlton, and Mr. Riel and his half-breeds returned to Batoche. This was the news we got at Stony Mountain, and I immediately drove into Winnipeg where the news was confirmed. All was excitement in Winnipeg, and everybody wanted to enlist in something. My friend, Major Jarvis, was in command of the

Winnipeg Field Battery, and I promptly "took the shilling." By nightfall I was a full-fledged Gunner, although the only uniform I managed to get was a forage cap about the size of half a dollar. I may say that my experience in the Canadian Militia, with the exception of a few annual camps, has been "Active Service." I joined the 58th Regiment many years ago, and after a few training picnics was promoted to be four different Staff-Sergeants, drawing about a dollar a day more than the Colonel.

There were no muster parades in those days, which accounts for this overlooked irregularity. I had the luck to serve with this Regiment—in one of my numerous capacities—during the Fenian Raid (of, I hate to believe it, 1871), and was present at Eccles Hill, or Trout River, or some such Frontier place, where our forces succeeded in killing a real Fenian, everybody under arms that day claiming the honour. However, after the enemy was buried, and a cairn of boulders erected over his remains,

his mother arrived the next day and took him away.

But let us get back to Winnipeg, in March, 1885. General Middleton arrived and put up at Government House. The Hon. John Schultz was the Lieutenant-Governor. The 90th were called out, the Winnipeg Field Battery, and I think some cavalry, in fact, all the Militia Corps available. Gunner Secretan, with his little forage cap on, was being daily drilled between drinks. The day of Middleton's arrival I received a telephone message from my friend Colonel Bedson to meet him at Government House, to consult with the General about the organization of the Transport, and after discussing the matter several hours, Colonel Bedson agreed to take charge, if I would go with him as Assistant Transport Officer. But here was a dilemma! I forgot to tell them that I had been sworn in as a Gunner, and was naturally expected to swab out guns. Between them they got over this difficulty. I got my discharge that afternoon, and while we were on the train

with the General, before daylight I was promoted and gazetted in "Field Orders" as a full-fledged "Major."

We arrived early in the morning at Qu' Appelle, which was the railroad base of supplies for our Column, and began at once the organization of the Transport, by securing all the horses in the country fit for service, waggons, forage, etc., establishing Depôts along the line of march as far as the South Saskatchewan, and in I think less than three days the Column was able to advance.

The Depôts were established ten miles apart, and named generally after some prominent officers, telegraphic communication was secured, the transport waggons told off in divisions of ten, under a head teamster, and a head waggon master appointed, with four assistants. The Column advanced in good order, Scouts, Cavalry, Artillery and Infantry, making the astonishing marching average of a fraction over twenty-two miles a day, which was considered quite remarkable even for regulars. Indeed, the late Sir

Adolphe Caron, who was then Minister of Militia, told me that when he was in London, after the Rebellion was over, Lord Wolseley was much surprised at the endurance of the men and considered the performance almost marvellous, particularly in the bad condition of the trails, which we must recollect at that season (early Spring) were in an awful state —ice, snow-drifts, lakes of ice-cold water to go *round* or wade *through*, mud, and every conceivable obstacle.

However, the Column pushed along and at night we managed to have the Transport up, and there was not one single night on the march that the Column was without tents, blankets and regular rations. Every day soon after the noon halt, a waggon master rode ahead with a camp quarter-master and selected the site of the camp. The ground was quickly staked out by the Engineer Officer, and when the troops marched in at night each arm knew exactly where to go. A zareba was formed by the waggons, directed by the Transport Officer,

and this usually took about twenty minutes, and then the cooks got busy, tents were pitched, picquets posted, guards mounted and the day's work was over.

This daily routine continued till we arrived at Humboldt, over two hundred miles out. Here we halted for one day for a breather, and here it was that I first made the acquaintance of Captain Haig de Haig. The Headquarters camp was always pitched in a square, and this fine afternoon, being busy in my tent, I heard the merry jingle of chains and spurs, the present arms of the Sentry outside, and, unannounced, my bold Haig de Haig burst into my tent.

The first thing he did was to produce a little red note book and introduce himself as Captain Haig de Haig, of the Royal Engineers, of Halifax. He then proceeded to inform me that England in the past had invariably lost all her wars through the damned stupidity of Transport Officers, that the way we were carrying on was Suicidal, Suicidal, Suicidal ! ! ! He was a rather nervous, pale-

faced looking duck and seemed much excited.

He said the first thing to be done was to corduroy the Salt Plains. This little piece of landscape is about forty-two miles across, and as there were no trees in the vicinity, I did not condescend to discuss the insane proposition.

But he said, "If you don't do it at once you will not be able to get any supplies hauled up, and the troops will all starve to death."

He then catechized me about the weight with which my waggons were loaded. I said, after consulting last night's telegraphic report, "1800 pounds." "Ah," said he, "Now I want to know what you would do if two horses couldn't possibly haul it?" I suggested reduce it to 1,000. "Very good," said he, "but if they couldn't move 1,000 pounds?" "Well, cut it in two." "Well, supposing you found that could not be moved?" "Think I would try four horses." "Ah! now this is where I have you. What would you do if four horses couldn't haul

500 pounds ? " " Well, I think I'd shoot 'em ! "

He stared at me in a half-dazed puzzled sort of way, and buckling on his belts said suddenly : " Where's the General ? Where's the General ? Where's the General ? "

I looked as solemn as an owl and said : " I don't know." " What ! do you mean to tell me, Sir, you don't know where the General is ? "

I assured him that I was afraid the General was acquiring bad habits, subversive to all discipline, as lately he had got into the way of going out without asking my permission.

Then he *knew* that I was insane, and starting madly for his horse, galloped off, followed by his orderly.

He found the General and told him he had been talking to one of his Transport Officers, who was evidently a lunatic, but he had explained the seriousness of the situation to him and told him what had to be done. The General, however, advised him to throw his little red book in the first river

he came to, and to leave the Transport Officers alone. As the old Gentleman very properly observed: "Haig, they have brought me over two hundred miles so far, I don't know how they did it, and I don't intend to ask them; but this I do know, when I say "March" they march, and when I say "Halt" it's halt, and damn me, Sir, I don't want to know the details."

Next morning we were on the march for Clarke's Crossing, South Saskatchewan River.

It was my custom to stay behind to drive up the stragglers for the first hour or two, and I met Haig riding down the long line of teams. He said, "Do you know I've been talking to your men, telling them how important it is to keep closed up; as we are now in the enemy's country, etc., etc., and do you know I find they are quite intelligent."

I said, "Could you point him out? Because, if any of them show the slightest signs of intellect, out he goes. That is why I wear these orange striped riding breeches, we have to do the thinking for the whole bunch."

He looked puzzled again.

Another thing I said: "I am sorry you have been talking to them, because every man has printed instructions pasted in his hat, to take no notice of anybody except a Transport Officer."

He said he had never seen such a queer Service in all his life, and galloped wildly to the front, remarking:

"You don't seem to realize that you are in the enemy's country." To which I replied: "My dear Haig, I know the enemy, he is a personal friend of mine and would not think of attacking my Transport without consulting me." This sort of thing went on daily.

Eventually we arrived at Clarke's Crossing. The river is 1,000-feet wide at this point, and a cable scow ferry had calmly operated this crossing for years. But the rebels had cut the cable and the scow had disappeared.

One night at mess the General decided to separate his Column and send a force under Lord Melgund, his Chief of Staff, down the

West side of the River. I think it was I who suggested that Captain Haig was the right man to cross this detachment, being an Engineer Officer. The genial old General fell at once into this idea and gave the necessary orders.

Haig always applied for two hundred men as a fatigue party on the slightest provocation, and accordingly always got them. Unfortunately he had never seen a Cable Ferry operated, and as the Rebels had cut the cable and let go the scow, he was up against a rather novel difficulty. The ice was rushing madly through the river and the prospects were certainly not inviting for a mad, married, or Methodist Royal Engineer. However, he ordered his two hundred fatigue party, and undertook the job.

Poor old Haig!—He reported it "*Impossible!*"

The General appealed to his old Transport standby, and we rose to the occasion, and upon the condition that Haig and his men should be removed, we actually guaranteed

to cross the General's forces before daylight next morning.

The cable having been cut by the Rebels, we had to pick up the slack and make fast to an improvised "dead men" or "post"; then we had to get hold of the scow six miles below and tow her up to the crossing, when it was an easy job to ferry the General's half column (under Lord Melgund) across, including the guns, much to the surprise of Captain Haig de Haig.

After the events at Fish Creek, where we had fifty or sixty casualties, it was necessary to re-ferry the command, and as usual, Captain Haig was requisitioned. He reported an "impenetrable forest." I may say that my old Canadian teamsters slashed it down in three hours, and after fixing the same old cable again on two trees, we once more brought the Column together.

After the main trouble was over, and the General with a handful of infantry, some scouts and cavalry, moved up to Fort Pitt, our old friend Haig was still on deck. I had

several River Steamers requisitioned, and in command of the Transport. It was quite a problem to transport this whole force safely down to Selkirk and Winnipeg, and then East to their respective Headquarters. We decided to make arrangements with the Lake Winnipeg Navigation Company to place their boats and scows at our service. We had several steamboats of sorts at Port Pitt, and in spite of our friend the A.Q.M.G., managed to accommodate all the troops, barring Boulton's Scouts and some cavalry horses, which went overland.

We took them from Fort Pitt down the North Saskatchewan, via Cedar Lake to Grand Rapids, and from there on board flat bottomed scows, towed by the Lake Winnipeg steamers to Selkirk, where many Eastern Regiments were disembarked and transhipped to their homes, the rest going to Winnipeg.

It was in March, 1885, when our little war broke out and then, as ever, the great Transportation Corporation came to the front. The line was far from complete, especially

along the North shore of Lake Superior where many gaps existed, but this did not deter Van Horne from going up to Ottawa and offering to transport the Eastern troops which had been ordered out over the gaps. This was done with rapidity, but with some hardship. Many sleighs were provided and the troops driven over the ice where the gaps in the line occurred, to be transferred to the waiting trains West of Winnipeg. Regular trains were of course running and the soldiers were taken in comfort as far West as Qu'Appelle, which was the military base.

Supply trains were constantly on the move taking provisions up to the front with wonderful regularity, hence we suffered no hardship from want of rations. As before remarked, I was Assistant Transport Officer to Sir Frederick Middleton, who commanded the force. We first struck the rebellious half-breeds and Indians at Fish Creek on the South Saskatchewan River, where they gave us a hot reception for three or four hours, being

concealed in rifle pits dug in the steep banks of Fish Creek. Our casualties that day were about fifty-two killed and wounded. In the afternoon the enemy retired to Batoche, a small village down the river, leaving behind a few dead men and about fifty dead ponies. Our hospital arrangements were rather primitive, but the doctors performed numerous difficult amputations on the field with great skill, considering the means at their disposal.

This delayed the advance of the Columns until we could arrange to send the wounded down to the base hospital, when we continued the advance on Batoche, where, after three or four days' fighting, the enemy surrendered and we captured Mr. Riel, their leader, who was afterwards tried, convicted and hanged at Regina.

We then proceeded to the relief of Prince Albert, a town on the North Saskatchewan River, where the residents were in a great state of excitement and fear and very glad to see the soldier boys. The next point we headed for up the River was Battleford,

where the Indians had been very threatening and troublesome, burning houses and generally pillaging the community, most of the inhabitants being gathered into the barracks by the Mounted Police.

The next danger was expected to come from a brave Indian chief who rejoiced in the name of "Poundmaker," whose reserve was some forty miles from Battleford. But Middleton frustrated this warrior's intentions by sending a courier to his reserve with a curt message notifying him to present himself with all his minor chiefs at Battleford, informing him that if he did not comply in a given time, he, Middleton, would march on the reserve, and blow him and his whole tribe off the map. This had the desired effect.

The surrender of "Poundmaker" was most picturesque. A few days after he received the General's message, the old warrior and his whole retinue appeared and an audience with Middleton was arranged. He was a splendid specimen of an Indian, a little over

six feet, and straight as an arrow, handsome and dignified, every inch a typical Indian Chief.

It was a glorious summer day. The old General with an interpreter at his side, surrounded by his staff officers, all in full uniform, more or less weather-beaten, after a six months' campaign, was seated in the only chair we could find, while the Indian Chief arrayed in full war paint and decorated with feathers, a gaudy coloured blanket loosely thrown over his shoulders, faced him, squatting on his haunches, Indian fashion. On each side of him were many young Indians, arranged in a semi-circle, all squatting on the ground.

The Pow-wow lasted for an hour or two; murderous deeds committed by the tribe were related by different witnesses, which seemed to amuse the younger Indians immensely, even the murderers themselves, who grinned and giggled when they listened to the interpretation of some of their devilish deeds. They had killed several of my drivers

and stolen their horses. I recovered several of these horses, and remember a pair of white horses they had stampeded which were painted a brilliant scarlet when we got them back.

As the palaver drew to a close, " Poundmaker " arose and in a most dignified and lordly manner stalked solemnly over to the General and offered his hand, which, of course, the General refused, practically telling him he could not shake hands with such a murderous old scoundrel, or words to that effect. A short sharp command from a Police officer and the whole batch of Indians were under arrest, handcuffed and marched to the Barracks, headed by their noble Chieftain, much to their surprise. They all had a puzzled look and it seemed to me as if they had expected to be rewarded instead of punished.

This practically broke the back of the rebellion. " Poundmaker " was tried for sedition or some such offence and sentenced to two years in Stony Mountain Penitentiary, where I often saw him afterwards. The

young murderers were all sentenced to be hanged and about a dozen were executed together at Battleford, all in a row. They approached the scaffold, laughing and singing and smoking cigarettes.

General Middleton now moved up the River with a small Column to Fort Pitt, where an Indian Chief called "Big Bear" had been amusing himself at the expense of the Hudson Bay Company and a few scattered white settlers. Some of this tribe had murdered two French Catholic priests, and then had turned their attention to the Hudson Bay Company's store, which they sacked and partially destroyed. "Big Bear" sent word to the Factor, Mr. W. J. McLean, to bring his wife and family into camp or they would all be killed. McLean could not defend himself and wait till we came to his relief so he had no alternative but to join the savages, which he promptly did. "Big Bear," fearing the arrival of the troops, then took to the woods, dragging his wretched prisoners with him—men, women and little

children. They tramped for many weeks through the bush, occasionally dropping most pathetic messages of help along the broad trail they were making, as there were nearly a thousand of them altogether.

Soon after the Battleford episode, the General went up to Fort Pitt, and sizing up the situation, at once started with a small force in pursuit of "Big Bear" who was heading due North into a most impossible country full of lakes and swamps and heavily timbered. We followed the old scoundrel for over fifty miles, but had to give it up and return to Fort Pitt.

The crafty Chieftain, knowing we were on his trail, at last changed his course and turned South-East, and when attempting to cross the river at Fort Carlton, he was caught by the Police and like his confrere, got two years in the Stony Mountain Penitentiary, where he died. "Poundmaker" served his sentence or nearly so and went back to his reserve, where they gave him such a gorgeous reception, including a roast dog banquet, that he died of acute indigestion.

The condition of " Big Bear's " prisoners was most pitiable when we rescued them after they had been abandoned by the Indians, especially the women and young girls. For weeks they had been forced to tramp with these savages through the wilderness, eating what they were given and sleeping at night in the smoky Indian " teepees " with the squaws. Their clothes were in rags, many of them had no stockings and were barefoot, unkempt, unwashed—they were a sorry lot of scarecrows. McLean, the Hudson Bay officer, his wife and a big family, mostly daughters, were amongst them and I knew them all well.

With the arrest of " Big Bear " the rebellion ended.

## *CHAPTER XX*

### ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

THE formation of this magnificent force, modelled somewhat upon the lines of the Royal Irish Constabulary, was due to Sir John A. Macdonald's Government. For many years it has protected the Western country, patrolling the vast plains and even penetrating the sombre solitudes of the Arctic Circle. A small force originally carefully recruited from a high class of men, now largely increased, it has never been allowed to deteriorate, either in physique or efficiency. There are many gentlemen, particularly Englishmen, in the ranks, the wild Western life, in the early days, no doubt inducing them to join in search of adventure. Splendidly uniformed in scarlet, well horsed and equipped,

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE. A TYPICAL TROOPER.

fearless and resourceful, this grand Police force has ever been the terror to evil doers and bad Indians. It has been truly said that they always "get their man."

For a good many years now this remarkable force has been the only protection for the squatter, farmer, ranchman, miner, sportsman, trader and everybody else in the West. The enormous area of territory over which the Mounted Policemen preside and administer law and justice is almost incalculable. Long before these vast Western plains were divided into Provinces, the Mounted Police controlled this wonderful country, destined to be the home of millions of settlers and the greatest granary in the world. He was there when the Buffalo in countless thousands roamed at will and is there now when the busy hum of the steam thresher is heard in the land, and there is nought but the bleaching bones of the lordly buffalo to remind him of the past.

Whenever a new mining territory was discovered, who followed upon the footsteps

of the prospecting pioneer? The Mounted Police. Did the noble red man become troublesome to the settler, who was it that went after the savage, recaptured the stolen horses and restored them to the owner? The ubiquitous Mounted Police.

Many a good story is told of the intrepid policeman taking his prisoners single-handed out of a bunch of hostile Indians. They were often called upon to do detective work and there have been many cases when through individual shrewdness, combined with good judgment and much common horse sense, mysterious crimes have been unearthed and the criminals brought to the gallows.

I cannot do better than relate a case which happened at Dawson, in the early days of the well known Klondyke boom. It was a cold night at Dawson City. The bulbs in the mercurial thermometers were down and out, and the spirit thermometers were working overtime. The dreary military routine of barrack life, with the briefest of days and longest of nights, seemed interminable.

The Commandment sat in his office after dinner smoking a cigar, reading the latest papers, some six weeks old, when a visitor was announced by the Sergeant on duty, who said the man wanted particularly to see the Colonel on business of great importance. This was at least a welcome break in the dull monotony, and the stranger was ushered into the office at once. A long, lean, lantern-jawed specimen of humanity, with an air of mystery, appeared ; he seemed to be overburdened with the weight of a secret, and proceeded to unbosom himself at once. " Colonel, I have something to tell you which I believe will be of great interest to you. The other night I attended one of them Methodist revival meetings and I got converted. I listened to them praying and singing and I sure got religion."

" Well, get along with your story," said the Colonel.

" Well, Sir, not many days ago, I happened to fall in with two men down to the Red Dog Saloon and they made a proposition

to me—you know the stopping place kept by Slim Pete at the Forks? Well, he's got a store too and a safe in it, and most of the miners up the creeks has been depositing their dust with Pete, him being considered quite honest, and at times there is as much as two hundred thousand dollars or more in the safe. Well, Sir, these 'ere two men proposed to me that we three should go into partnership, and some night take a dog-train, go up to the Forks and get the dust out of that safe. We talked it over, and it seemed quite a likely proposition, and profitable at that, but after a discussing of it near all night they concluded it was too much of a trick to try and get that much weight out of the country, and a better plan would be for us to go up the river on the ice, cache ourselves in the bush somewheres this side of the summit and wait for the miners to come out, which they generally does in twos and threes, a-packing of their dust, all the way from two to ten thousand dollars, when we could kill them first and

rob them afterwards, cut a hole in the ice, shove their bodies in and wait for some more."

"The first man argued that they never would be missed till after the ice went out in May or June, and long before that time we would be out and down to 'Frisco enjoying ourselves with the boodle. Being out of a job and dead broke, I agreed to the scheme, but before we was ready to start I happened into this here Church meeting and as I say got religion, and Colonel, I tell you straight I've got it bad and it's come to stay. Therefore, I takes the first opportunity to come right here and after it gets plumb dark to tell you the whole thing. The head man is real desperate, he is an ugly customer, strong, and determined, a middle-sized, thick-set gent with a short black beard. His partner is much younger and seems more innocent like, but is controlled by the other man and will do what he's told. They's got one black dog with them."

The Commandant scratched his chin thoughtfully and told the informer to go away just then, but to return the following night; meanwhile the town should be searched for these would-be murderers. Next day all the well-known haunts of crooks and toughs were searched but no one answering the description could be found. However, it was ascertained by the Police that two men, accompanied by a solitary black dog, were known to have left town that morning going up the river on the ice. The Police were communicated with by wire at the different points as far as the summit, but no suspicious characters had passed that way.

Towards Spring a man who answered to the description given by the "convert" was arrested by the indefatigable Police. He had in his possession a black dog and a large amount of money, amongst which was a rather uncommon ten dollar bill on a bank in Texas. This bill was submitted to the Trading Company at Dawson and as

luck would have it, recognized as having been paid to a certain miner who was missing, having gone out that winter and never been seen afterwards. The organizer of the murderous expedition was held at Fort Selkirk Barracks till Spring, when, as the Police officer grimly observed, the Yukon invariably gave up its dead.

At last the enormous field of ice began to move out slowly and the bodies of three men came to the surface. One was identified as the bad man's pardner, and the other two as miners who had gone out during the Winter, one being recognized as the owner of the ten dollar bill.

Upon this circumstantial evidence, although always strongly protesting his innocence, the bad man was convicted and eventually hanged at Dawson City. It was a terrible execution. The wretched prisoner acted like a raving maniac as he approached the scaffold and died with curses on his lips for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

There have not been many Commanding

Officers of this most remarkable Force since its formation and I have had the honour of knowing them all—French (who organized it), McLeod, Irvine, Herchmer, Perry, and at present, Starnes, all fine, staunch, loyal officers, who have served this country truly and well often under very trying and hazardous circumstances in the vast lone land.

Far removed from every comfort of civilization, they never faltered, ever faithful to their duty, to the British Flag and the gallant Force they so ably commanded. Canada may indeed be proud of such officers and men who compose this unique Force known as: "THE ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE."

## *CHAPTER XXI*

### A PROSPECTOR'S FUNERAL ON THE BANKS OF THE YUKON RIVER

YEARS ago when I was camped a mile below what is now Dawson City, when the Arctic Summer with its monotonous daylight was about drawing to a close, a terrific thunderstorm came along one night; the wind blew a hurricane, shifted all around the compass many times, lashed the river into foam and snapped off the trees round the camp like carrots. The lightning was close to us and very vivid; the thunder roared and re-echoed again and again far away in the mountains. It was appalling, and the timid ones were almost induced to register a temporary vow to lead a better life in future.

A few days after these fireworks I was visited one evening by a huge giant, a typical prospector and as fine a specimen of a man as you could hope to come across in an ordinary lifetime. Handsome of face, bright-eyed, tall, straight-limbed, broad in the chest, spare in the flank, this magnificent creature came crashing through the under-bush like a moose. After the manner of his kind he nodded at me, sat down, then slowly filled his pipe and proceeded to unburden himself of his tale of woe.

"Pardner," said he, "You ain't afraid of ghosts, be yer?" As it was considered *infra dig* in that country to be afraid of anything, I assured him that I was the proud possessor of unlimited courage, and had more nerve than I could conveniently pack.

"Well, Pardner, it's like this; I've brought a dead man down here to stay with yer awhile; I've got him in a boat; I've tied him up down under them bushes, and if yer don't mind I'll leave him there for a

bit." I assured him that any friend of his was most welcome, dead or alive, but ventured to suggest that as the weather was still warm, perhaps a funeral would be appropriate. "Pardner, yer needn't be the least mite skeered. John will keep all right—why, he's guaranteed for thirty days." Then came the particulars of the tragedy. It appeared the deceased and my newly found friend were, as he remarked, "sort of side pardners," and were prospecting away up the Eldorado Gulch.

On the night of the big storm they were sleeping together under a sort of make-shift "lean-to," when a tree was blown down, instantly killing the young man by smashing in his skull. There was no help nearby and after cutting away the tree my giant discovered that his little "side Pardner" had done with prospecting in this world for ever. Taking him on his back, as he innocently observed (he always referred to the departed as "him"), he actually packed the body twenty-five miles down to Dawson.

" I had him in the Company's warehouse," he said simply, " till yesterday, but the Captain told me I had to take him away, as the *or*thorities won't allow him to stop in town."

I again suggested a funeral when the giant looked serious and explained his reason for delaying the final operation. It seemed that the dead man had a brother who was prospecting away up some distant creek, and he had been sent for, as they thought it the proper thing for him to officiate as chief mourner, so they decided to keep the late lamented above ground till the arrival of the brother. In addition, my friend was anxious to prove that there had been no foul play.

With these ideas, a number of old " sour dough " miners, with the aid of a retired tinsmith and many tomato tins, had actually managed to *can him* in a sort of home-made casket, so that he would keep. And there he was in the bottom of the boat that was moored to the bank, a bright shining object,

a quiet, well behaved, and at present inoffensive neighbour.

"Good-night, pardner," said my visitor, and then looking over his shoulder before he slowly disappeared into the bush, "keep an eye on him, will yer? Yer see, some of the boys might take an notion to play a 'josh' on me and come and cut the line and let him go downstream."

Nothing happened for the next few days, and the faithful giant used to come down every morning and take a look at his silent armour-plated friend, till at last he came one day arrayed in all the trappings of woe, including a collar and an immense black necktie. He proudly announced that the brother had arrived, and the funeral was ordered for two o'clock that afternoon. The regular old miner dearly loves a funeral. To him it is an occasion not to be neglected.

The sad event is announced by crude notices posted on trees in conspicuous places, and the solemnity of the occasion is highly appreciated and most impressive. The vir-

tues of the deceased are generally discussed in low tones and his many good qualities often exaggerated. On the day of this funeral I was formally invited to be present at the obsequies, but was obliged to decline. The giant prospector, who by this time I had christened " Gabriel Conroy," then suggested that I should send a couple of my men in canoes to follow the boat containing the canned gentleman, remarking quite pathetically, " I think, Pardner, that will make a kind of a nice little *per*cession like, don't you ? "

The ceremony came off exactly as planned and was a great success. I saw Gabriel once or twice afterwards, when he thanked me profusely for my share in the proceedings, which consisted principally in not being scared of ghosts, and taking care of *him.*

The heaven-born prospector, i.e., the genuine article, is the most hopeful and the most confident creature in the Universe. Failure simply whets his appetite and encourages him to seek fresh fields. The most

E. W. BEATTY, ESQ., THE PRESENT PRESIDENT OF THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY, 1923.

appalling obstacles only increase his desire to penetrate the inaccessible on the merest chance of discovering the hiding place of the precious metal. Inured to hardships all his life and anticipating nothing better, he religiously follows his strange and varied calling without a murmur.

Theories born of long experience are constantly exploded, which makes no difference to him; he patiently plods along, working hard to discover the great secret of nature, living a hard life and often dying a hard death, "unwept, unhonoured and unsung." Once I asked Gabriel how it was that having prospected all over the Continent, he had never become rich. He quickly assured me that once he had discovered a mine in Colorado and "sold her for forty-seven thousand dollars cash." I wondered why he did not hang on to it and retire, to which he replied with childish innocence: "Well, pardner, I jest tell yer exactly how it is with us prospectors; the time I sold that there mine and got all that money, I thought I was a

son of a gun, but I wanted to be a —— *great big* son of a gun, so I took that money and blowed it all in a quartz lode in Idaho, which warn't wuth a cuss, so I lose the whole pile."

## *CHAPTER XXII*

### THE LAST SPIKE

I HAVE often been asked why the C.P.R. went through the "Kicking Horse Pass" instead of the "Yellow Head," the latter being well known to have moderate gradients and being far easier for construction. I can only say, as I have attempted to explain in this book, that the rumoured reasons seem to have been because Van Horne put his finger on the map, and, Czar-like, demanded the "shortest possible commercial line," which no doubt he got; then, as I have also mentioned, Major Rogers reported favourably of the "Kicking Horse," and finally, it seemed, this euphonious name appealed to the sporting instinct of the London Stock Exchange and the English controllers of the

money market who were handling the C.P.R. Stock. Be this as it may, the prairie section was rushed to completion heading for what is now the City of Calgary on the Bow River, the fat was in the fire, and it was " Kicking Horse " or bust.

Thousands of men, mules and horses, from morning till night, were busily digging up the rich alluvial soil, constructing a road-bed for the future Transcontinental trains. Grading machines and scrapers covered the plains for hundreds of miles, following close upon the heels of the locating engineers, and almost before the ink on the last plans and profiles was dry, the snort of the Iron Horse could be heard in the distance.

Sir John A. Macdonald is reported to have said upon one occasion in the House of Commons, when making a speech upon the subject of the Canadian Pacific Railway: " Mr. Speaker, although I may not live to see the completion of this great Transcontinental highway, I hope I may someday look down and see the two oceans united by a

band of steel." Mr. Alexander Mackenzie, then the leader of the opposition, interjected the remark: "Perhaps the Right Honourable gentleman will be looking *up*." However, Macdonald did live to see the consummation of his great project, as he did not die until 1901.

All honour to that grand old Statesman whose brain conceived the magnificent idea of binding the East and West together in bonds of steel, and all honour to the officers and men of the Canadian Pacific Railway, who carried to success this wonderful undertaking in the face of every known danger and difficulty from "The driving of the first Stake to the driving of the last Spike." Wise old David Harum once sagely remarked: "A reasonable amount of fleas is good for a dog, they keep him from broodin' on bein' a dog." And so it is I think with a book, for if it is short and at all amusing, it will keep people from brooding over their troubles, but if too long drawn out it becomes wearisome, and would make them wish they had

been born a dog, fleas and all, so that then they could never have read it.

The last act in the great drama of building a great Continental Railway was performed by Sir Donald Alexander Smith (afterwards Lord Strathcona). It occurred at a place now called Craigellachie in the Eagle Pass—November 7th, 1885, at nine a.m.

I once read in the work of some fiction monger that the *golden* spike used upon this occasion was afterwards withdrawn and presented to Mrs. Alexander Mackenzie, the wife of the Premier of Canada, and that he had often seen her wearing it in Ottawa as a pendant to her necklace. I regret to throw any doubt upon this romantic "pipe dream," but in the first place I do not believe there ever was a *golden* spike; secondly, I know that Mrs. Alexander Mackenzie was *not* the wife of the Premier of Canada in 1885, who happened to be the Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald, and thirdly, if there had been a golden spike, the weight of it, if worn on a pendant would have broken the poor old lady's neck.

THE DRIVING OF THE LAST SPIKE BY LORD STRATHCONA, 1885.

Not having been present at the performance assigned to the late Lord Strathcona, in driving the last Spike, I cannot do better than to quote a few descriptive lines from Mr. Lawrence Burpee's most excellent book on the life of Sandford Fleming. He says: "Early on the morning of the 7th, the junction was verging to completion and at nine o'clock the last rail was laid in its place. All that remained to finish the work was to drive home one spike. By common consent the duty of performing the task was assigned to one of the four Directors present, the senior in years and influence, whose high character placed him in prominence—Sir Donald Alexander Smith. No one could on such an occasion more worthily represent the Company or more appropriately give the finishing blows, which in a National sense, were to complete the gigantic undertaking. Sir Donald Smith braced himself to the task and he wielded the by no means light spike-hammer with as good a will as a professional tracklayer. The work

was carried on in silence—nothing was heard but the reverberation of his blows."

There was evidently no ceremony. In the picture you can single out Van Horne quite easily, and also Sandford Fleming, looking highly respectable in a tall hat. Thus came to an end this great struggle, without any music or firing of guns, and when Sir Donald Smith had assaulted the head of that last spike several times, uniting the two oceans with a band of steel, the great Continent was spanned at last, and a voice in the crowd was heard, in the most prosaic tones, to sing out: "All aboard for the Pacific!"

THE END

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