

The Daily Examiner

ISSUED EVERY AFTERNOON FROM THE OFFICE OF The Examiner Publishing Company

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION (IN ADVANCE) One Year \$4.00 Six Months 2.00 Three Months 1.00 One Month 0.35

THE DAILY EXAMINER

JANUARY 19, 1898. FROM OCEAN TO OCEAN.

A borrowed title yet a new one; for its connotation has suffered change. To Principal Grant it stood for a mighty achievement; to us for a pleasurable excursion.

When a traveller has a hairbreadth escape to recount for every day's journey accomplished a narrative of his experiences is replete with interest; when one tells of new things men delight to listen; but when neither dramatic qualities nor novelty can be claimed for one's experiences, description alone must fail to satisfy.

As a loyal Canadian, one feels loath to accept aught that has its source in Goldwin Smith's "Canada and the Canadian Question," yet his definition of the geographical situation of Canada has unquestionably much truth.

In the morning the scene has changed. The soil seems to have vanished and the bare face of the cold grey stone is visible on every side. A few stunted trees hold fast to the crevices of the stone and fight for a living.

Looking at a map of North America we see that the State of Maine lies between the Maritime Provinces and Quebec. This part of the sea, beating against the headlands as far as it can be seen from the Railway, we grant at once to be wilderness.

We reach Montreal in the morning and here the transcontinental line is joined. This is made up of colonist, tourist, first-class and sleeping cars. The first-named are for settlers who wish to reach their new homes with least expense; the second for the economically inclined travelling class; the third for the foolish and the last for the rest.

Pausing a moment let us make an observation of our company. The officials first; and first in order of importance among them, the porter. What in the world could we do without him? Court-

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ous as all porters are and obliging, much afflicted with babies and women with bundles, and what bundles. It would make anyone but a colored porter send in his resignation at once to have to dispose of them; yet our porter never was in the least worried.

Then there is the dining-room conductor. This personage stalks through the car at fixed intervals with a strange dignity and in the solemn tones of a hierophant proclaiming the decrees of fate announces "Dinner is now ready in the dining car," or, "last call for lunch in the dining car," as the case may be.

Among our fellow-travellers there were several English people. A mining engineer is particularly worthy of note, a strong strapping, muscular, clean-shaven fellow in his prime, a great traveller like all English tourists, knows absolutely everything, and thinks the natives densely ignorant, is accordingly quite willing to instruct, if you can pardon the good-natured complacency of his manner, a very takeable, sociable kind of fellow.

The morning the scene has changed. The soil seems to have vanished and the bare face of the cold grey stone is visible on every side. A few stunted trees hold fast to the crevices of the stone and fight for a living. All signs of human and animal life are wanting, but the very barrenness lends a certain attraction to the landscape.

These are the gardens of the desert, these the unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful, for which the speech of England has no name.

The Prairies. I beheld them for the first, and my heart swells while the glacial light takes in the encircling vastness. Lo, they stretch in airy undulations far away, as if the ocean in his gentle swell, stood still, with all his rounded billows fixed.

And motionless forever." From Selkirk to Calgary this remarkable tract of country extends. The soil is very dark and as fine as powder. After the rain the mud sticks to shoes and wheels in a marvellous way.

Man hath no part in all this glorious work; The hand that built the firmament hath heaved

And smoothed these verdant swells and sown their slopes With herbage, planted them with Island groves

And hedged them round with forests. For ages the prairie lay untroubled by the foot of white men. The Indian disputed for the possession of it with the buffalo. Mighty battles were waged on it in the mists of the dim past.

selling the horns of the vanished bison. Who would recognize the kith and kin of "Laughing Water" and "Hiawaha"? Soon these, too, will go, and history and paleontology alone shall know them and their ways.

Winnipeg calls for little remark. It is unquestionably the finest city between Ottawa and the coast. There are many fine buildings, although but few good blocks. The city covers much ground and consequently looks straggling.

From Winnipeg to Moosejaw, the land seems quite level or gently rolling. The sun sinks down into the grass at evening and rises from the grass in the morning. At twilight a light blue cloud hangs on the horizon to the northward like a calm sea, and the stacks of hay and wheat just visible in the gloom beneath it look like advancing hills.

From Moosejaw to Calgary the prairie is quite rolling and the view is generally limited by a range of low hills. One gets decidedly tired of the prairie by this time, and anxiously scans the horizon for the foothills of the Rockies.

A day at Calgary quickly passed. The riding costumes of the men seen upon the streets and the prevailing accent proclaimed it a centre of ranching and of Englishmen. This is the headquarters of those who receive remittances.

The next morning brings us to Banff, the Government Peak in the Rockies. We are surprised to find that we are at an elevation of nearly 5000 feet, so gradual has been the ascent. The hot springs at Banff are world famous. The water in the bathing tanks is quite warm, but smells of sulphur, and tastes villainously.

All along the track are small sheets of water that reflect the image of the mountains. At the foot of Mount Stephen we look down upon the image of its summit lying buried in the bosom of a small lake, unruffled save by a ripple like to the undulations of Cleopatra's hair or the swell of a sea in fancy land.

The Kicking Horse pass has allowed us to penetrate the Rockies. The Selkirks are opened up by the Rogers' Pass and the Eagle pass leads us through the Gold or Coast Range to the western slopes of the mountains. The Rogers pass is probably the least adapted naturally for railroading and the tortuous course of the track speaks plainly enough of the difficulties overcome.

A sea of wilderness but a grand and sublime sea, a sea that washed a golden strand suddenly frozen to its lowest depths at a time when a mighty tempest raged and the billows mounted to the welkins cheek and the spray mingled with the clouds.

As we pass through the mountains the brooks by the railroad track teem with red colored mountain salmon, as thickly packed as smelts in our eastern streams in April. They almost push each other out of the water in their stampede away from the passing train.

Six hours sail on the Charmer brings us to Victoria. On a calm, clear day it is a very enjoyable trip. The intricate scenery of Plunket Pass is quite interesting, and the whales disporting and plowing in the distance engage the attention. It was evening when we came off the harbor of Victoria and we had the good fortune to see the sun drop like a shield of gold behind the southernmost point of Vancouver Island, into the waters of the Pacific Ocean.

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