IDYLLS FROM ENGLISH MOORS

Old England is instinct with idylls of kings and poets, princes and simple folk, and in no part are these more germane to their environment and their people than in Devon. Of traveling in England William Winters has said: "There should be no inexorable route, for the chief charm of English travel is liberty of caprice; and whichever way you turn you are sure to find some pecullar beauty that will reward your quest."

Following his advice I had scrambled over the rock-bound, jagged coast of north Devon until I had found my way up the Lynn and Bagworthy valleys and had come out at last upon the lofty table-land lying between two vales, with moors rolling away on either side to the tree-crowned heights inclosing this remote and silent spot. From Childhood I had been familiar with these rugged scenes through Blackmore, Kingsley and Hardy. With them I had wandered in thought over these heather-covered moors, the purple interspersed with the sunshine-yellow of the gorse; had scrambled over the cliffs of the bordering coast with its coves and sequestered caves; and had made acquaintance with hardy folk of the district. While the actual valley lacked some of the precipitousness and wildness of Blackmore's setting, it was easy, as I surveyed it, to fill in any dicrepancies with imaginary details.

What a stronghold this spot might have made for outlawed gentry of the Plantagenet and Stuart kings, I thought, as I made my way from the moss-grown sluice-way along the pebbly bed of the little stream which divides the plateau! And then, as if to substantiate the impression, on either side of the stream were revealed half-buried semblances of what once were huts. No wonder that Blackmore and Kingsley and Hardy could spin romances with such backgrounds! In these surroundings, the past with its rough and hardy living, its Mother Melldrum, Tom Faggus, and Carver Doone returned and wrapped me about like a cloak.

Suddenly my reverie was interrupted by the bark of a sheep dog and then by the voice of his mistress, who informed me that these foundations were the ruins of the old Doone huts. And I thought of Lorna as I had often seen her through John Ridd's eyes: "By the side of the stream she was coming to me, even among the primroses as if she loved them all; and every flower looked the brighter as her eyes were upon them. . . . The pale gleam over the western cliffs threw a shadow of light behind her, as if the sun were lingering."

Yet it was not alone John Ridd and his visits to this haunt of the Doones that were now filling my thought, but rather was it the moors. For their Old World atmosphere lingers in the dark shadows and follows along the rocky torrents that tumble down from the wooded hills; their associations are rich with the literary inheritance of English ballad, folk song, play and romance.

Slowly winding downward from this valley of the Doones I came upon a secluded cottage tucked against one of the black moors. In front of it, spanned by an old stone bridge, was a little stream of which Coleridge might have sung:

A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

The hostess of the cot came out, greeting me with ruddy face and genial smile, and bearing a tray on which were strawberries, a bowl of Devonshire cream and toast, enough for a platoon of King Charles' troopers who, no doubt, had known the sweetness of this fare. She might have been Mother Ridd or Lorna's aunt—she seemed so a part of that story of long ago in which I had been romancing throughout the day.

As I looked out over the moors from my garden seat, watching the light and shadows "on summer hills that lie," Wordsworth's lines came to my thought:

A surface dappled o'er with shadows flung
From brooding clouds; shadows that lay in spots
Determined and unmoved, with steady beams
Of bright and pleasant sunshine interposed.

And Keats himself might have written of the shower of sweet peas climbing over the trellis of the old cottage:

Here are sweet peas on tip-toe for a flight:
With wings of gentle flush o'er a delicate white,
And taper fingers catching at all things,
To bind them all about with tiny rings.

The sun had long dipped behind the clouds and hung its red cap on the hills ere I moved from that old-fashioned garden. I dropped slowly down among the shadows of the moors, watching the long black wings of night creep across them; listing now and again to the soft bleating of sheep or the far call of the shepherd-woman on her lonely fastness. I watched the strange lights that come and go over the moors, fleeting and illusive, till they came no more and the world was left to darkness and to me and ever to that gallant company of romancers and poets who have drawn inspiration for their lyrics and tales from the subtle atmosphere that lingers over downs, the deep valleys, the little ribbons of streams running among the lush green meadows, and the hedgerows and winding lanes.

For the Lonely.

Alone! And in a world of friends! Have you ever tried to imagine what it would be like?

"Woe to him that is alone when he falleth." Everybody dreads being alone. Anything lost is full of distress. A dog that has lost his master is frantic with anxiety. A dog is a social animal—like ourselves—and loves friendship as truly as he is a real friend.

Most of those who read this will be unable to realize fully how lonely some people are, for most of us have been able to find a way out of our difficulties.

When we have been with our backs to the wall we have usually been able to ask a friend for help, and that help has been forthcoming.

But try to imagine your life without a single friend; none to stay to hear the unburdening of your heart and with no patience with your misfortune. Try to think what it would be like if every star in your social sky went out and you were encircled with an impenetrable gloom.

You want to give your friendship and no one desires it; you ask for comradeship and no one responds. There are many lives like that.

Have you ever stood in a crowded city street and tried to realize what it would mean to be absolutely alone, without friends, money, or experience? There are some people like that, entirely friendless and alone.

Charles Kingsley was a very good-tempered, sympathetic individual. A woman once asked him how it was he possessed so loving a disposition, and, with a look of profound thankfulness, he replied: "I once had a friend."

Yes, and so say all of us when we think of the best in our lives. Had it not been for a friend who helped us when we needed help and heard us when we called we should have been in the world to-day hopeless and forlorn.

It is up to us to be as friendly as we can be to the lonely and unfortunate. If we could hear the sighs of the lonely and know the emptiness of many a life around us, we should respond without hesitation. We should be more tolerant, more kindly; and, moreover, we should reap where we had sown.

The Anglo-Saxons gave names to many localities from their supposed resemblances to parts of the human body, as headland, a neck of land, a tongue of land, the mouth of a river, the brow of a hill, the foot of a hill, an arm of the sea, and so on.

Was it Murder?

He—"After we defeated them in the boat race we took their sculls away and hung them in our boathouse."

She—"Oh, horrible! Why haven't you all been arrested for murder?"

Silver Poplars.

God wrote His loveliest poem on the day
He made the first tall silver poplar tree,
And set it high upon a pale-gold hill,
For all the new enchanted earth to see.

I think its beauty must have made Him glad,
And that He smiled at it—and loved it so—
Then turned in sudden sheer delight, and made
A dozen silver poplars in a row.

Mist green and white against a turquoise sky,
A-shimmer and a-shine it stood at noon;
A misty silver loveliness at night,
Breathless beneath the first small wistful moon,

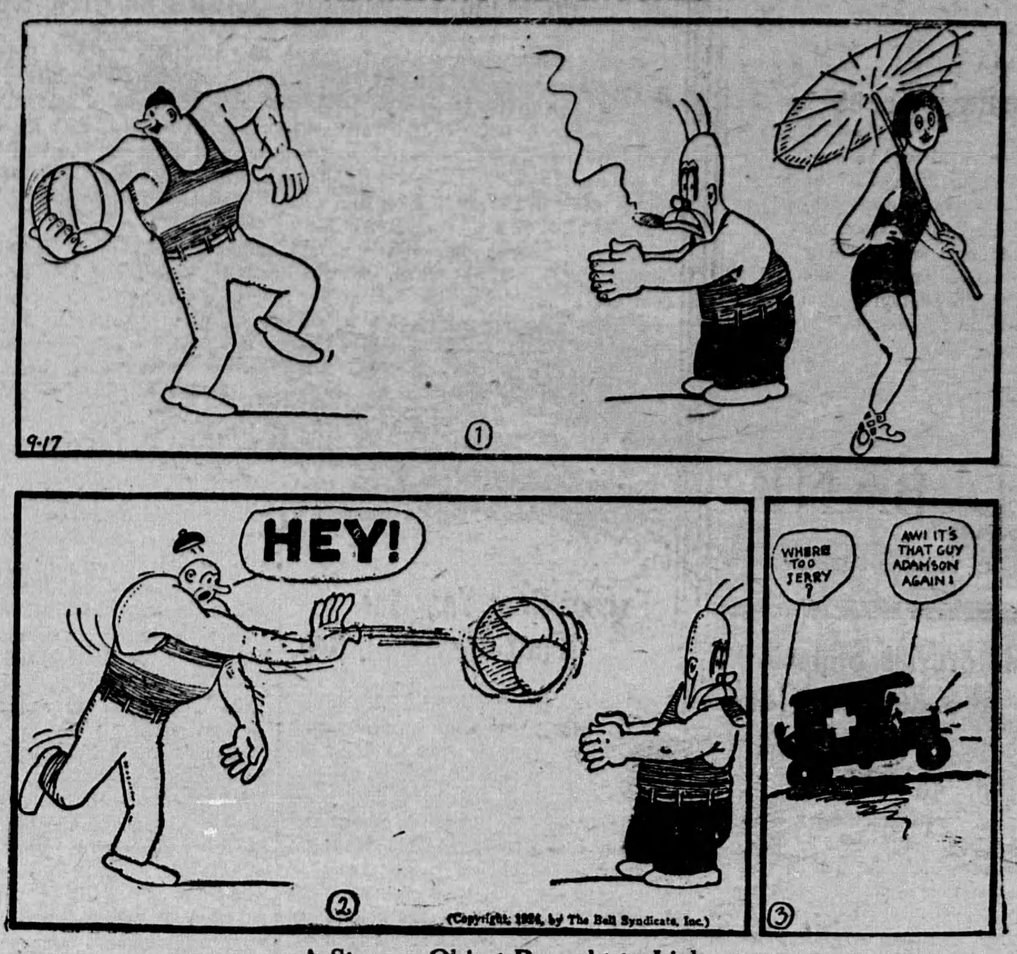
And then God took the music of the winds,
And set each leaf a-flutter and a-thrill—
To-day I read His poem word by word
Among the silver poplars on the hill.

—Grace Noll Crowell.

Christianity should be so presented in the light of fuller knowledge that the bias of educated opinion will swing again to the Christian position.—Bishop of Birmingham.

Starched linen should always be soaked in cold water so that the old starch is softened and removed in the washing; otherwise there is a tendency for it to turn yellow.

ADAMSON'S ADVENTURES



A Strange Object Brought to Light.

FROM DEL HAVEN TO GRAND PRE

My first view of Grand Pre was afar off from the little village of Del Haven on the opposite shore of the Basin of Minas; and owing to the wonderful fascination of this western shore of the basin, it was some time before the drive of a few miles, partly along the course of the Gaspereau, was made for the closer inspection of Grand Pre. One has the sensation of being on the planet Mars, when in this region of Nova Scotia, the tone of the beach and shores is so unmitigatedly red. Then, too, the shrinking of the water in the basin twice a day to a width of some five miles less than it is at high tide parallels very well the strange behavior of the canal on Mars, as it is described by some astronomers. . . .

The banks all along this western side, limiting the encroachment of the tide, look as if they had been carefully cut down with a huge knife, so straight up and down are the lines. . . . The banks vary in height, but they are never very lofty, though the land above them is undulating, ending in the ridge, which . . . forms the imposing and peculiarly beautiful Cape Blomidon, five hundred and seventy feet in height, with its red sandstone walls and battlemented top of gray trap rock, and its growth of solemn firs. Red, red everywhere are those banks, and at their base, as at the base of Blomidon itself, stretches the red beach, as smooth and seemingly as level as a floor . . . The tale is told at Del Haven that if one were at the outermost edge of the beach when the tide turned, he could not walk fast enough to keep from being overwhelmed by it, so rapidly does it rise. . . .

The magic of low tide when it occurs near sunset in the glowing afternoon light, is hardly describable in words. Patches of dampness left on the beach by the receding tide refract the light in such a manner that the whole atmosphere becomes radiant with melting rainbow tints. . . . Blomidon looms somber in the background, its crest alone lit up by the rays of the departing sun; and perhaps far out on a dike, still in a flood-tide of sunlight, may be seen an old-fashioned ox-team with hay wagon attached. . . .

When one finally makes up one's mind to leave this loveliness and drive from Del Haven to Grand Pre, what other loveliness is the reward! What wonderful orchards! . . . . Fields of wheat and oats and rye which exhale the richness of the earth. One may drive to the top of Blomidon and look down upon all this beautiful garden as it lies far below in squares of many tints. . . . When the Gaspereau is met on the way to Grand Pre, it has become a gentle stream flowing through a peaceful valley. . . . The river starts a little lake of the same name. . . . For the first few miles, and as it flows through the settlement of Canaan, there it a wild beauty and grandeur in the scenery. It rushes impetuously between two lofty and almost perpendicular hills. . . . When finally the valley broadens out it becomes a most peaceable little river, and when it nears the Basin of Minas its waters mingled with the tides from the salt marshes. Bliss Carman has pictured all the beauty in this fine poem, "The Valley of the Gaspereau," with the loving touch of one who was born in this land:

"The crowds of black spruces in tiers from the valley below,
Ranged round their sky-roofed coliseum, mount row after row.
How often there, rank above rank, they have watched for the slow
Silver-lanterned processions of twilight—the moon's come and go!
How often as if they expected some bugle to blow,
Announcing a bringer of news they were breathless to know,
They have hushed every leaf—to hear only the murmurous flow
Of the small mountain rives sent up from the valley below! . . .
"Then the orchards that dot, all in order, the green valley floor,
Every tree with its boughs weighed to earth, like a tent from whose door
Not a lodger looks forth,—yet the signs are there, gay and galore,
The great ropes of red fruitage and russet, crisp snow to the core.
Can the dark-eyed Romany here have deserted of yore
Their camp at the coming of frost? Will they seek it no more?
Who dwells in St. Eulalie's village? Who knows the fine lore
Of the tribes of the apple trees there on the green valley floor?

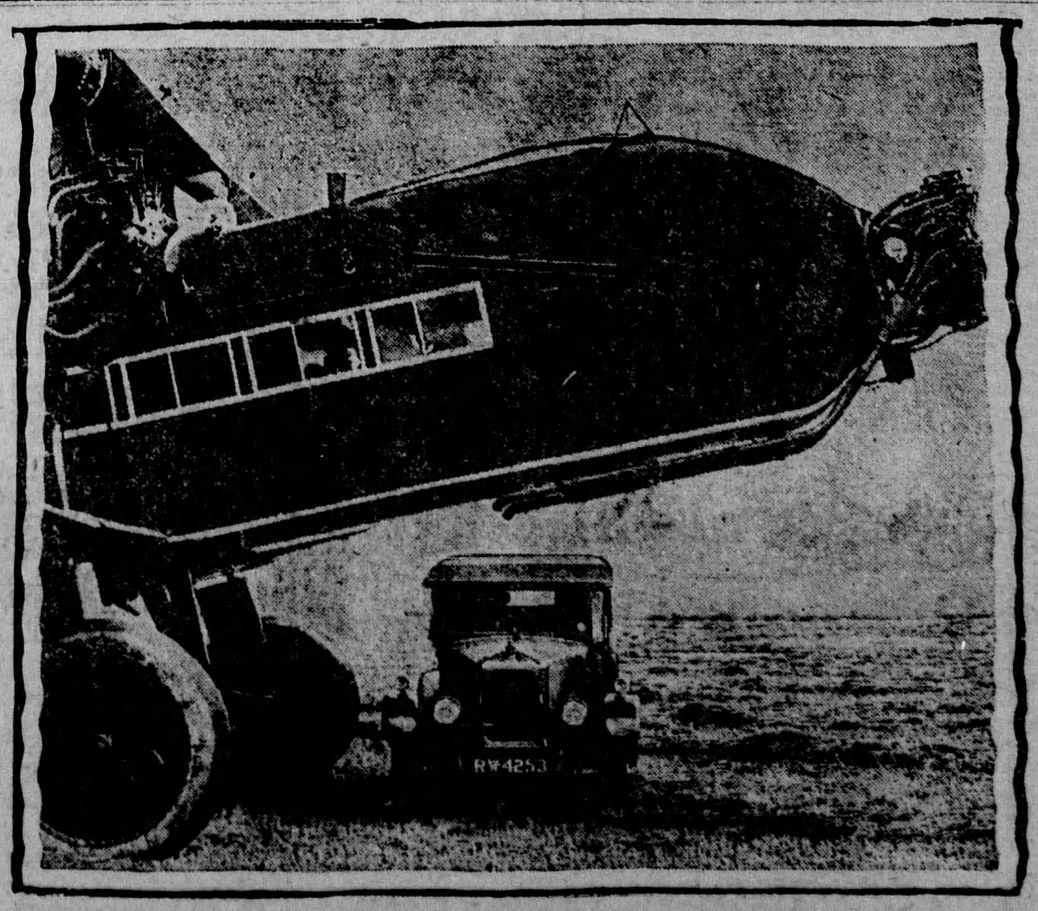
"Who indeed? From the blue mountain gorge to the dikes by the sea,
Goes that stilly wanderer, small Gaspereau; who but he
Should give the last hint of perfection, the touch that sets free
From the taut string of silence the whisper of beauties to be?
The very sun seems to have tarried, turned back to a degree,
To lengthen out noon for the apple folk here by the sea."

—Helen Archibald Clarke, in "Longfellow's Country."

Royal Horseshoes.

The custom of taking a horseshoe as toll from every King, Queen or Duke who rides through Oakham, the county town of Rutland, is a very ancient one. The right to claim the shoe originated in the time of William the Conqueror, and was supposed to encourage people to patronize the local trade of shoeing. In the great hall of Oakham Castle there are more than a hundred horseshoes, including one from the present Prince of Wales, from Edward VII., Queen Victoria, George IV., and Queen Elizabeth. Some of the shoes are gilded, but others are ordinary iron shoes.

Those who put the least into life are usually the most dissatisfied with what they get out of life.



New British air liner, largest in Commercial air service, launched recently at Coventry Aerodrome. Its size may be judged by the motor car below. It is called the Argossy and is propelled by triple engines so that the failure of one will be negligible. The plane will carry 20 passengers.

OIL DEVELOPMENT IN WESTERN CANADA

By G. G. Ommanney, M.E.I.C., M.I.C.E.

The search for petroleum in Western Canada, first undertaken about 1884, and prosecuted in various sections of the country with quiet persistence and spasmodic outbursts of enthusiastic energy since that date, has to-day reached a phase of greater interest and promise than ever before. Since 1884 over 400 wells have been started at various points in the Prairie Provinces and the Mackenzie River Basin, many of which have not been completed but which accumulatively have added to andconfirmed the conviction—now almost underlying these viction—now almost a certainty—long entertained, that somewhere, underlying these vast areas will be discovered perolenm pools of commercial size.

This conviction is not the outcome of uninformed optimism but is based on known geological facts and on results of successful oil exploration in the United States immediately to the south of and almost up to the international boundary line. That the same strata which have contributed such great production in these adjoining areas extend under a vast territory in Canada, from the international boundary to the Arctic Circle, is known, and even without the evidence of recent discoveries, he would be a pessimist indeed, who would expect to find these rocks, so prolific of oil immediately to the south, to be barren and unproductive north of this imaginary boundary line. To-day we have sufficient proof that nature has shown no such discrimination.

The Turner Valley Field.

In the Turner Valley some 35 miles south-west of Calgary, favorable structure, located and drilled some fifteen to twenty years ago, resulted in a small flow of oil. Activities in this field led, in 1914, to an oil boom in that district out of all proportion to results obtained. In 1924, Rayalite No. 4 was deepened from 3,175 feet to 3,740 feet, and at that depth a very large flow of gas, under extremely high pressure, was encountered carrying with it crude naphtha of 70 deg. Beaume. So important has this discovery proved that a separating plant was built and a pipe line was constructed to the Imperial Company's refinery at Calgary, 29.4 miles distant, and during 1925, 156,766 barrels of naphtha were sold, the sales averaging 430 barrels a day for 365 days and during the first part of 1926 as high as 579 barrels for 90 days.

This remarkable discovery has stimulated development in that field, and work is now in progress on 15 new and reconditioned wells and many new wells are planned. It is believed that the Royalite discovery indicates the existence of a much larger oil pool than previously supposed lying at greater depth, and it is anticipated that several of the wells now being drilled will tap the productive horizon about in July of this year.

Mackenzie River and Edmonton Field.

A few years ago the Imperial Oil Company extended their explorations north to the Mackenzie River Basin, where the probable productive strata lie nearer the surface than farther south. Their drilling operations at Fort Norman had the important effect of proving these strata to carry oil where structure is favorable, thus giving encouragement for search farther south in Alberta where the oil rocks are at greater depth.

Yet another field has added to the growing weight of proof of the value of Western Canadian oil fields. At Wainwright, the British Petroleum wells have proved oil saturation in the sands of about 2,200 feet and brought in a production of 75 barrels a day. The oil is heavy, ranging from 18 deg. to 20 deg B. The Edmonton Wainwright oil well at 2,238 feet has brought in a producer of 150 barrels a day. On the interprovincial boundary east of Wainwright, G. S. Hume, of the Geological Survey, worked during 1925, and his report just published indicates structural conditions here in certain areas very favorable to the presence of oil. Throughout the Prairie Provinces some 44 wells have been drilled or deepened since the beginning of 1925.

This brief review shows that the search for oil is to-day being continued along conservative lines based on sound information and the experience of past years.

It is no longer a problem as to whether oil exists or not in these areas, it has become a question only of tapping the hidden reservoirs at the right points.

Alberta production for 1925 reached the important figure of 169,432 barrels, and for the first time exceeded that of the Ontario fields and alone exceeded the total production of Canada for 1924. These figures speak for themselves of progress made.

English as She is Spoke.

"This is a pretty backward spring."

"Yes, it is the most bashful weather I've ever known at this time of year."