

TRAILS OF LONG AGO TURNED INTO GOOD ROADS

The Indian, The Hudson Bay Man
and Prospector Blazed the Way
For Capital

People speak of New Ontario today as if it were a newly-discovered country, says W. W. Foy. True, it is only within the past few years that they have awakened up to the fact that in time it will probably be the richest part of the Province. But it is old, very old indeed, and to the redman there is nothing new about it. His father's father lived and hunted, fought and died in its forest fastnesses and there passed to the happy hunting ground long before the "Shogonos" stranger came upon the scene. And it would have remained terra incognita to the white man to-day but for the discovery that it possessed much valuable agricultural and timber land. Then the Government began the building of the Timiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway, to open up these lands to settlement, and as construction proceeded they tumbled upon the rich mineral deposit in Cobalt. And so one fine morning Old Ontario awoke to the realization of the good things that lay just outside its back door and hastened to possess itself of them. The boom followed, and soon the name of Cobalt was known at every cross-roads on the continent.

But no matter whether one is or is not interested in its agricultural or its mineral resources, this hinterland of Old Ontario is new enough to offer attractions to the visitor that can not be found anywhere else in the Dominion of Canada. The records of the Government railway prove this, for every succeeding season witnesses an increase in the number of tourists coming to the country. And then it is so big that it will be many years before it can be "done to death," as the Thousand Islands of the St. Lawrence have been, the Adirondacks of New York State, and the Yosemite Val-

ley. Already visitors are coming in from cities along the international boundary, and some of them have gone so far as to build summer houses. Only the other day a party of eight from Buffalo passed up the Montreal River on their way to the Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort Matachewan. They were going to attend the annual gathering of Indians there, where the redmen meet Indian Agent Cockburn every year and receive their "treaty money"—four dollars for every man, woman and child. It is the one great event to the Indians, for, besides the "treaty," a priest attends and holds a "mission," solemnizes marriages and incidentally collects his dues—if he cares.

Feasting and dancing day and night are continued for a week and then they "fold their tents like the Arab," but there the similarity ends. Instead of "silently stealing away," every departing canoe is saluted with the discharge of firearms, and when the priest leaves all line the shore and give him a royal salute with anything that will make a noise.

This country is new enough to retain some at least of the landmarks of long ago, for the axe of the lumberjack and the plow of the settler have not had time as yet to obliterate many of the old trails. From time immemorial these have served as highways for the Indian and the voyageur of the ubiquitous Hudson's Bay Company. Take the Montreal River above Elk Lake, for instance; the self-same river routes and portage trails are used by the Indians to-day that served their ancestors and the Jesuit missionaries of two hundred years ago when they carried the gospel far inland to the shores of Hudson Bay.

The Hudson's Bay Company still and it to their advantage to continue many of their posts in this country. Of course these posts are separated by many weary miles of forest, lake and stream, that are only to be negotiated, as they were in the long ago, by paddle and portage. One of these posts is Fort Matachewan, on the Montreal River. It is a three-days' journey above Elk Lake post, and for nearly thirty years has been in charge of Steve Lafrican, and ex-soldier of the war of the Rebellion. Years ago he secured the entire confidence of the Indians as well as their trade by marrying one of their women and has raised a family, some of whom have married Indians. He is the one "Shogonos" friend they implicitly trust, and the right man in the right place, and the great fur company know it.

The only innovation in the method of transport, as compared with the old days, is that the long boat of the white man is now used instead of the birch bark. Another old canoe route is that from Stony portage on the Montreal River, to Gowganda and to Porcupine. During the Gowganda boom of three years ago this route was crowded day and night by prospectors and other representatives, both male and female, of the heterogeneous crowd that go to make up a mining town. To-day that trail is deserted, but for many years to come one may easily recognize it by the empty bottles, barrels, tin cans and canoes that mark every mile of it. Just such trails are to be found all over this country.

A FAIR ARRANGEMENT.

Smith and Jones were discussing the question of who should be head of the house—the man or the woman.

"I am the head of my establishment," said Jones. "I am the bread-winner. Why shouldn't I be?"

"Well," said Smith. "Before my wife and I were married we made an agreement that I would make the rulings in all major things, my wife in all the minor."

"How has it worked?" queried Jones.

Smith smiled. "So far" he replied, "no major matters have come up."

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