

NOTES AND COMMENTS

"For some distance" is a vague and perfidious phrase to apply to the flight of the coming air-ship. It suggests the chagrin, perhaps the defeat, of modern science, which wanders in complicated astronomical and other calculations, knows with shocking exactness how far the flea jumps, the kangaroo leaps and similar trifles. It is a strange and significant lapse from the usual accuracy of science when the last and highest achievement of the most promising craft for navigating the skies is reported in a term so general as "for some distance."

"But he can't fly" has been the most serious reproach to the man of science who boasts of half a century of wonderful results in his wrestling with the forces of nature. To merely list his achievements would be a large undertaking. The public knows of the construction of giant telescopes, of amazing electrical appliances, of nameless, mysterious rays that penetrate where a rifle bullet can not enter, of a thousand products of inventive genius and mechanical skill; besides these, there are strange things known only to unmitigated persons of science, called by names that are all Greek to the general. But he can't fly.

This reproach causes him to suffer more for what he has failed to do than he rejoices over the great things he has done. His study of the structure of the frigate bird, which, Prof. Lancaster says, moves with fixed wings at the rate of 100 miles an hour, has led to nothing more than the waste of money in bird-like ships and the loss of an occasional human life. The principle employed by the Maxims has enabled him to move above the surface of the earth, but not high enough and far enough to meet the most moderate notion of flying. He has tangled himself in a network of ropes and bamboo poles, has run down hill, leaped from walls and fences, trying to flap his absurd canvas wings, and going high enough, like Brer Terrapin, to make the down-coming a matter of fracture, splints and arnica, but he has not soared.

When the hitherto exact man of science, loaded with tape lines, pocket scales and pedometers, prurient with figures, swaggering with preciseness, sets up a poor appearance of joy and satisfaction and translates the glittering and delusive phrase "for some distance" as something highly favorable; when he pretends to see in Prof. Langley's doubtful feat a solution of the problem that has balked him, there is warrant for assuming that he has virtually failed and that the few remaining years of this proud "century of science" will pass dismally away with ambitious man still subject to the implacable laws of gravity and dependent on surface lines for rapid transit. Near an obscure and land-locked bay, we are told, where the curious world does not penetrate, where only the amphibious fishermen, caring less for the things of the air above than the water beneath, could witness his timid tentation, Prof. Langley constructed and at last sailed his aeroplane. On a breezy Saturday afternoon the aluminum monster had its complicated wheels whir, and when released from its detaining ropes "it leaped into the air like a thing of life, in the face of a perceptible breeze, and, after sailing gracefully for some distance, alighted on the surface of the water."

"It's a bird and can fly"—after some further attention is paid to its steering apparatus and other parts—is the verdict of the men of science who witnessed the event, but who happened to be without their familiar tape lines and decline to make a closer estimate of the flight than the expression quoted. What is needed to bring the century to a glorious close is to apply Mr. Keely's motor to the aeroplane. Until this is done it must still be said of pre-emptive man that "he can't fly."

CHANGE OF HEART.

Socialistic Mob—Bring him out! Inventor, putting his head out of the window! Down mit monopoly! What does this mean? Mob Spokesman—You moost die! Ve hear you invent a machine vat do de work off von boondret men. You dake breath out off deir mouths; you—Inventor—This machine of mine is an attachment for breweries, and will bring beer down to one cent a glass. Mob, wildly,—Hurray!

THE WAYSIDE VIEW.

Hungry Higgins—Wot? You dunno wot a miser is? A miser is a man that denies himself the necessaries of life, when he has the money to buy 'em. Weary Watkins—O, I have met some of them fellers. But I thought they called themselves prohibitionists.

PRETTY MEAN.

Hello, Jim, what are you doing now? Working for the same old farmer I worked for last year. Being pretty well? No. Last year I did well enough. I got \$20 a month, this year the old man played it low down on me and made me take his crop for my pay.

A WONDERFUL COUNTRY

MR. BAILEY DESCRIBES THE B. C. MINING REGION.

Its Present is Great, Its Possibilities Immense—Transport Facilities Required So That All Work Could be Done Within Our Own Borders.

Mr. S. S. Bailey has earned the right to call himself a miner. Born in Kentucky, he started as bell boy in a pack train of a hundred and twenty-five mules, thirty-four years ago, and has been interested in mining in one form or another ever since. He has worked or owned mines in Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Utah and Washington, and has now mining interests in Rossland, in Ainsworth, where he is operating the Dellie mine, and in the East Kootenay section. Last October he sold a property in the Slocan district for \$125,000, and this mine is now being operated at a profit of \$40,000 a month, with about half of a million dollars' worth of ore in sight. Mr. Bailey has lived in the British Columbia mining regions between eight and nine years; he knows all the camps and he stakes his reputation upon the assertion that the value of the metals exported from that province during the next eight years, including gold, silver and copper, will be greater than that of any other country on earth. The Slocan Review gives the value of the output for last year at over \$3,000,000, and this only includes the sections now served by a railway—Rossland, Ainsworth, Slocan and Toad Mountain.

NEED RAILWAY FACILITIES.

"It is this want of railway facilities that is hindering the development of the country," says Mr. Bailey. "For instance, in the Trout Lake, Fish Lake, Murphy Creek, Goat River, St. Mary Perry Creek, Fort Steel and other sections there are not only no railways, but in many cases not even the roughest trail. Yet here are many mines of low grade ore, assaying forty to fifty ounces of silver per ton, and sixty per cent. of lead, which it is absolutely impossible to move until means of transit are cheapened. These mines have been examined by careful and competent engineers, and their value is beyond question. The building of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway is of the utmost importance. This railway would pass through the immense coal deposits lying 150 miles east of the Fort Steele section, and with this coal the very best of coke could be made, which is indispensable for smelting purposes. The ore is now shipped to smelters across the border because of this absence of fuel, and what this means to the country will be apparent when it is understood that three men are necessary to take care of the ore from the time that it leaves the mine until it is marketable, that is, in transport, smelting and refining; in addition, each of these men would have to pay five dollars for a miner's license, and three dollars provincial revenue tax, so that the total loss to British Columbia and Canada, and the consequent gain to the United States, is even now a pretty considerable sum and grows larger every day."

A WONDERFUL COUNTRY.

"It is a great, a wonderful country," continues Mr. Bailey, "and the more one knows of mining, the more sure one is that that is so. Fancy a region about two hundred miles long, and from fifty to a hundred and fifty miles wide absolutely crowded with a wealth of precious metals of the utmost diversity. It crops out in one section as gold and copper; in another as gold and iron; here it is lead and silver exclusively, there, lead and copper; in another place, the ore will have a large percentage of lead and gold; at the lower end of Slocan Lake nothing else is found but silver dry ores; the O. K., J.K.L., and Golden Drip mines yield partly free milling ores, and the Cariboo on Rock Creek shows a percentage of from eighty-five to ninety per cent. of free milling ores—or all that is at present utilized. The old Poor Man mine, ten miles below Nelson, is another free milling mine, which, although it is being worked slowly and privately, has made a profit of from \$100,000 to \$150,000 during the past five years."

"WILDCATS" AND MINING.

Mr. Bailey says that no one deprecates "wildcat" swindles more than those who are expending money and energy in the country, but he considers that there has been less of that sort of thing in British Columbia than in any mining country with which he is acquainted. In a celebrated recipe concerning the way to cook a hare, the catching of the hare was stated to be a necessary preliminary, and Mr. Bailey considers it just as well for the intending investor to be sure that there is a mine. Being assured that there is veritably a mine, however, upon which an independent and qualified engineer has reported favorably, and which is being promoted by men who are considered honorable in other walks of life, Mr. Bailey considers that the investor ought to be willing to take some chances. "There are risks upon the Stock Exchange, in real estate, in ordinary business, and if mining risks are heavier, the profits of success are out of all proportion."

"The War Eagle mine was sold four different times," says Mr. Bailey, "and reverted to its original owners, because the new capital was exhausted. It was closed up for periods of months at a time and then started again. In 1894 the shares went begging at six cents, and now, when the capital is four times what it was then, it is selling for \$1.25 per share. With several other properties it was sold the other day to the Gooderham syndicate for \$750,000. Another and more striking instance is the Le Roi. Shares in this mine were offered at six cents in Spokane in 1891, and at twenty-five cents in 1895. In the fall of 1895 the shares sold at a dollar, the mine having changed hands for \$53,000, and the purchasers were thought to be the biggest fools on earth. Well, an English syndicate offered the directors \$4,000,000 for this mine the other day and it was refused! Take again the Silver King, in the Toad Mountain section. In the summer of 1893 it was sold to a Scotch syndicate for \$50,000 money and some stock. This syndicate capitalized the mine at \$1,500,000, and the shares are now selling at ten dollars. Last year this mine cleared a profit of about £28,000."

ACTIVE PRESENT, GREAT FUTURE.

"It has been said that there are only about half a dozen mines in active operation, Mr. Bailey; what is your reply to that?" "It is too absurd. In the Slocan and Ainsworth section alone there are from twenty-five to thirty mines shipping ore and possibly as many more under course of development work—many of which have shipped more or less ore. These latter are now developed for the purpose of acquiring greater depth by running across tunnels or sinking shafts." "Then the future prospects are bright?" "I can conceive of none more so. In from four to six years I hope that most of the prospects will be reached by rail or wagon roads, and that all the ores will then be smelted in Canada. With the railways, coke, smelters, so that the ordinary business of mining, refining, separating, gold from copper, silver from lead, etc.; in fact, all that appertains to mining and putting the metals in a marketable shape, is conducted in the Dominion, the probabilities for the growth and material advance of this country exceed the bounds of ordinary imagination." Mr. Bailey looks a shrewd, hard-headed, practical man, not at all given to romancing, and that he believes all that he says, and has knowledge whereof he speaks no one could doubt after five minutes' conversation with him. He has had ups and downs, like most men of his class, but he has never lost faith in the country from the time he did "placer" mining there until now, and he says that his faith has been abundantly justified.

LONGEST RUN WITHOUT STOP.

The Cornwall Express Travels From London to Exeter Without a Pause.

The longest regular daily run made without a stop by any railway train in the world has just been placed on the schedule of the Great Western Railway, of England.

It is made between Paddington station, in London, and Exeter, a distance of 194 miles, in three hours and thirty-six minutes, by what is known as the Cornwall express. It is remarkable not so much owing to the time, as for the fact that not a stop is made from one end of the run to the other. There have been longer runs made without a stop, but they have been made by special and not regular trains. The average speed attained by the Cornwall Express when making this run is 51.7 miles an hour, although, owing to a peculiar construction of the road at Bristol, 118 miles from London, the train is obliged to slow down to a speed of ten miles an hour.

The express train is composed of six long coaches, a tender and engine. An American would call it a vestibule train, but the English prefer to call the cars "bogies clerestoried corridor coaches," bogie being a term applied to the trucks. They are fully as heavy as an ordinary drawing-room car, each one weighing about forty-seven thousand pounds, while the train without the engine and tender weighs one hundred and forty tons. The weight of the engine and tender is eighty-one tons, making the total weight of the train as it rushes along on its long run two hundred and twenty-one tons. During the run it is necessary to take water for the engine twice. This, however, does not necessitate any stop as it is taken up from a trench beside the track as the train speeds along at nearly a mile a minute.

The engine which draws this essentially "through train" is a curious-looking ponderous affair quite unlike any locomotive seen on our roads. It has on either side a single driving wheel seven feet eight inches in diameter, while what must by comparison be termed the small wheels of the engine, six in number, known as trailers, are four feet six inches in diameter. The water tank of the engine holds thirty thousand gallons, and when running at full speed there is a steam pressure of 160 pounds to the square inch, while there is a heating surface of 1,561 square feet.

Each day the run is made, the train leaving Paddington station at 10.25 o'clock in the morning, and it never fails to roll into St. David's station, in Exeter, exactly on time. The time allowed by the schedule for this run makes no allowance for delays of any kind. Even the time lost in going over the loop around Bristol and the necessary slowing down when going through Bath is not allowed for.

STRANGE HIMALAYAN TRIBES.

M.M. Olafsen and Philpsen, two Danish officers who recently explored the Pamir country north of the Himalayas, found there unknown tribes who are fire worshippers, and ignorant of the use of money. Their animals are all dwarfed, the cows being the size of ponies, the donkeys of large dogs, and the sheep of small poodles. Women are sold for five or six cows or fifteen sheep apiece. The chief article of barter is furs.

IN TIME TO COME.

Mrs. Strong—I suppose you have heard that Miss Ricketts and Miss Gazzam are deadly enemies now? Mrs. Small—Yes, I heard; but I didn't hear who was the man at the bottom of it.

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