

RECORD ICEBERG YEAR

Nothing Like It Up North For Over Forty Years.

PERIL IN FLOATING ISLETS.

Off Newfoundland Coast and on the Grand Banks floes and bergs are proving a menace to shipping—Fishing fleets' business sadly hampered.

The present year continues to maintain its unenviable notoriety for the seriousness of the iceberg peril. In the first week of August icebergs were as numerous about the Newfoundland coast as they have ever been in midwinter and more numerous than at the same time in any year of the past quarter century. The whole of Newfoundland's eastern seaboard and the Grand Banks also are thickly strewn with these floating islets that spell destruction for every vessel that hits them. Daily the steamships plying in these waters report sighting scores, if not hundreds, of bergs, and one passenger ship from New York to St. John's, N. F., counted over a thousand during twenty-four hours.

What they mean to ships at this season is shown by the fact of three steamers having been crippled by them in the past few days. On July 23 the steam freighter Bergulus entered St. John's with her bow battered in by contact with a berg in a dense fog off Cape Race. She was so seriously injured that a deck load of machinery had to be jettisoned and 100 tons of coal thrown overboard, but even with this relief she barely succeeded in making port. Three days later the Black Diamond liner Bonavista, with seventy passengers aboard, made port, also with her bow stove in. At the impact her passengers stampeded to the deck and rushed for the boats, and only the most strenuous exertions on the part of the officers averted a tragedy. At the same time the Canadian Pacific line steamship Montrose was lying off Cape Race for four days, repairing damages caused by running into another berg while on her way to Montreal with 300 passengers. She was badly battered forward, and the British warship Brilliant stood by her until she effected repairs to enable her to reach her destination.

Several other steamships more or less crippled from contact with ice had to make the same port recently, and there are a few missing and overdue vessels.

Fishing Fleets Hampered.
Navigation along the Canadian route has been seriously hampered by the presence of the bergs and floes in these latitudes. Belle Isle strait has been closed till an unusually late period, and the Labrador waters have been rendered very dangerous. The fishing fleet from Newfoundland, numbering 1,500 vessels and employing some 25,000 persons, had been unable to operate there up to a recent date, and it looks as if the catch of cod on the coast for this summer would be seriously curtailed, owing to the long continuance of the ice pack. Even on the section of the Newfoundland seaboard from St. John's to Cape Race bergs are so abundant now that fishing operations are practically suspended, as men have to take their nets out of the water to prevent them from being destroyed.

As the Labrador fishery represents one-third of the annual catch of cod by the people of Newfoundland, it can easily be seen how serious a situation this iceberg incursion represents, and as the season is short at the best the situation is causing much concern.

On the Grand Banks, too, the trawlers are hampered by the presence of bergs, and all the big liners are obliged to slow down in passing. The story of icebergs in the north Atlantic shows nothing to resemble the conditions that prevail at present.

Cause of Many Marine Tragedies.

No one can explain why these ice conditions exist in certain years and not in others. Not since 1863 has there been any approach to the present condition, and in that year much less inconvenience was felt, as business interests did not demand such regular communication as at present. In the spring of 1890 floes and bergs were numerous in the north Atlantic, and a number of marine tragedies resulted which are attributed to this cause.

Four stout steamers, with an aggregate list of nearly 300, one or two having some passengers aboard, vanished, and it has always been believed that ice was the cause of their disappearance. In the spring of 1899, again, ten freight steamships, with 380 souls, vanished in the same way. All had left American ports at dates which would bring them together on the Grand Banks, and the theory always has been that they were caught in the floes there and, a hurricane springing up, were pounded to pieces. In the present year, however, the floes have been even worse than on these occasions, and the harbor of St. John's has been icebound and sealed up against all arriving and departing vessels even more securely than if surrounded by a blockading fleet.

Monster Masses of Ice.
The worst feature of this iceberg situation is that all the bergs and floes are now drifting south into the track of New York liners. The more ice there is the more fog will follow, since the mist that always overhangs the Grand Banks is due to the steam generated by the commingling of the gulf stream with the arctic current and its burden of ice. The bergs, moreover, are of monstrous size, and

the larger they are, of course, the longer they take to melt and the farther south they are carried before they disappear. There are always during the summer months more or less of these silent destroyers cruising toward the ocean lane south of the Grand Banks, and this year promises to witness a record number. Until ten years ago accidents to liners from collision with these were numerous, as then the sailing track of the New York "greyhounds" traversed the southern end of the Grand Banks, which, owing to the meeting of the currents, is where most of the bergs are found. Disasters became so common that an international conference was called which resulted in shifting the ocean lane nearly 200 miles farther south.

Last year one of the big German liners struck a berg, luckily without injuring herself, but it is rarely that steamers survive an encounter with these ice masses, as only one-eighth of the total volume of the berg appears above water, and its contour below may be very different from that above, so that when a steamer rams an iceberg she may disturb its equilibrium and cause it to topple over.—St. John's (N. F.) Cor. New York Post.

NOTED PREACHER-HUMORIST.

Story Told About Robert J. Burdette by a Brother Humorist.

Rev. Robert J. Burdette of Los Angeles, Cal., one of the last of the brilliant galaxy of old school humorists, is the subject of the following story, which is told by his friend, Strickland W. Gillilan, also a humorist, who hails from Baltimore:

One day as a California clubwoman was driving an eastern friend along Orange Grove avenue, Pasadena, Cal., she pointed to the beautiful Spanish home of the Burdettes on the hilltop.

"That," she said, "is the home of Rev. Robert J. Burdette. You've heard of him and read his prose and poetry."

"I've heard of his prose, of course," replied the eastern lady, "but I don't recall his poetry."

"No, of course not," replied her California hostess, "for it's the funniest thing—he signs all his prose writings 'Robert J. Burdette' and all his poetry 'James Whitcomb Riley.'"

During his seven years of newspaper work in New York Mr. Burdette made a host of friends and gained a larger host of admirers in the metropolis. His career began obscurely on a little newspaper published in Peoria, Ill. It was there that his humorous writings first attracted attention in 1874. He soon went to the Burlington (Ia.) Hawkeye, on which paper he worked with increasing brilliancy and success for several years.

The vein of sweet seriousness which marked so much of even his most humorous writing was traceable in part to a living tragedy that clouded his early career. His young wife, to whom he referred as "her little serene happiness," became an incurable invalid. But she never ceased to share with him the pleasure and the labor of his literary work. He did most of his writing at a table close to her bedside, and she read every word of his prolific output, often criticizing, often suggesting a thought or an abridgment.

GOLDEN'S HARD SNOWSTORM.

Incident in Career of Actor Famous as Old Jed Prouty.

Richard Golden, the actor, who recently died on a private yacht which was anchored off the Brooklyn (N. Y.) Yacht club, Gravesend bay, achieved fame in the role of Jed in a comedy entitled "Old Jed Prouty." At one time he was an actor in a stock company. "One night at the old Tremont theater in Boston," he remarked some time ago, "in speaking of the experience, 'we were putting on the old melodrama, 'Storm Beaten,' in which I was compelled to play the aged father. It was a 'Hazel Kirke' affair, the only scene of importance that I had being in a snowstorm, when I had to grope around with my face upturned to heaven, murmuring, 'My child, my child, where are you tonight?'

"I got a fair start, and I was looking heavenward and reading the lines with all the pathos at my command when suddenly something about the size of a toy balloon, it seemed to me, struck my front teeth and passed on into my throat. I stopped, coughed, choked, got red in the face and threw myself forward in a spasm, and, to my great relief, an object struck the stage with a sharp click and bounded out into the audience.

"The darned property man had put a rock in the snow. After the audience quit having hysterics I continued, but I refused to look squarely at heaven again during the run of that play."

Marriage of Chimpanzees.

James Reid, whose title of "Marrying Squire" was gained after he had married 400 couples within four years, recently officiated at the "wedding" of Julia Krager and Master Tony, chimpanzees owned by August Larmbrigger, a banker of Orville, O., in the presence of over 200 people. Master Tony's "bride" was a tiny monkey. The license, which bears the name of Edward Hanke, clerk of the circuit court, announced the bridegroom to be two years old, the bride a year, a daughter of Oom Paul of Palshye, Africa. Chief of Police Vincent Skelton volunteered to give the bride away. Reid used his usual ceremony and pocketed \$5 tendered by Larmbrigger.

HAPPY, YET IN JAIL.

Sculptor Tells Advantages of Being Incarcerated.

A GOOD PLACE TO STUDY.

Roland H. Perry, Who Refuses to Pay Alimony, Has at Last Found Time in New York Jail to Read Great Authors—Sure No Burglar Can Break In and Disturb His Slumber.

The advantages of being in jail, while not likely to impress the average free citizen nor even the majority of those whose view is based on personal experience, are many. At least such is the conclusion of Roland Hinton Perry, sculptor, who has served four months of his six months' term in the Ludlow street jail, in New York city, for contempt of court in refusing to pay alimony to his first wife.

Leaving the blistering heat of the lower east side, a reporter found one of the aforesaid advantages when Keeper Murphy led him into the dim, cool reception room of the jail. Perry came down from the cell floor attired in slippers, light trousers and a thin, soft collared shirt, open at the throat.

"This is one of the primary advantages of being in jail," said Perry. "I wear what I please and have no bothersome changes into evening dress to make. I haven't had a stiff collar on since I came here, not to mention patent leather shoes, silk hats or frock coats."

Good Place For Study.
"What are some of the other advantages?" was asked.

"In the first place," the sculptor replied, "there is no life more conducive to deep thinking and study. I came here on April 1. In four months I have accomplished what I have been trying to find time to do all my life. I have read practically every one of Balzac's novels. I have also brushed up on the Elizabethan dramatists and read many lighter books and magazines.

"In no other place except another jail could I find time for this reading. 'Really,' smiling through his carefully trimmed vandyke beard, "I should advise every young man who wishes to go through a course of home study and finds it impossible under his present circumstances to get in contempt of court and be sent to this jail for six months or a year."

Life There Safe and Sane.

"It is not at all a bad place. While somewhat monotonous, the life here is decidedly of the safe and sane variety. I go to bed at 10. I arise at 6 and have my fruit, bread and coffee. I return to my cell, which is really a room with two windows and a comfortable bed, where I stay until 10 o'clock. Then we are permitted to roam about until dinner time. There is the yard to exercise in and fairly congenial prisoners to chat with or play cards with. Some of us play handball. Sensible hours, good plain food, plenty of light, air and exercise—such a life should put any one in good physical trim."

Wives Need Have No Fears.

Perry looked the part. His eyes were clear and his skin glowed. "There are several other advantages," he continued. "One's wife can go to the country confident that her husband will not be up to any mischief. I imagine there are many wives out of town who would rest easier were their husbands in my position.

"Then, too, one goes to bed here with such a sense of security. There are no burglars to break in, though there may be a few who would like to break out. There are no frantic telephone calls in the middle of the night, no bill collectors in the morning.

"Of course I shall be glad when Sept. 30 comes and I am free.

"I have commissions to execute, and there are more in sight. My imprisonment has not hurt me professionally, I believe. I am assured by friends that I have done the sensible and proper thing. I could not pay all the money my first wife demanded, and I had the choice of leaving New York state or going to jail. My professional future would be jeopardized by banishing myself permanently from New York, so I took this way out of the difficulty."

In jail Perry has received frequent visits from his second wife and artist friends. Miss Irma Perry, the first wife, is in East Aurora, N. Y., at the Roycroft colony.—New York World.

Automobile to Run on Rails.

A motor inspection car, convertible into an automobile, has been built by the Chicago and Northwestern railway for the use of one of its division superintendents. The car has flanged steel wheels like an ordinary one for use on the rails. These may be replaced by pneumatic tired wheels and the steering wheel unlocked, so that the car may be used as an ordinary automobile. It carries seven passengers, is driven by a twenty-two horsepower engine and to a certain extent will take the place of the superintendent's private car.

Curfew For Adults.

As soon as the ordinance is signed by the mayor and the required publication is made it will be unlawful for any person to be on the streets of Paragould, Ark., between the hours of midnight and 4 o'clock in the morning. Violation is punishable with a fine, if a good excuse is not forthcoming. A curfew law for children is already in effect, the youngsters scampering home with the ringing of the 9 o'clock bell. The law for adults, however, is an innovation in the United States.

WATERWAYS COMMISSION.

Work in Europe For the Board Appointed by Congress.

To investigate the waterways of Europe for the purpose of making recommendations for the improvement of the rivers, harbors and canals of the United States eight members of the national waterways commission appointed by congress recently left New York city on the Kronprinzessin Cecilie. The party is headed by Theodore E. Burton, senator from Ohio, chairman, and he is accompanied by Professor Emory R. Johnson of the University of Pennsylvania; Colonel W. H. Bixby, corps of engineers, U. S. A.; Herbert Knox Smith, commissioner of the bureau of commerce and labor, and three secretaries.

The other members of the commission will leave later, and the whole commission will unite at Strassburg, Germany, Sept. 8, when an investigation of the Rhine will be begun.

Professor Johnson represents the national rivers and harbors congress and, besides making a report of his independent findings to the commission, will submit also a statement to the national rivers and harbors convention, which will be held in Washington Dec. 8, 9 and 10. He occupies the chair of transportation and commerce in the University of Pennsylvania and has on other occasions made investigations of the waterways of Europe. He will give special attention to the relation of waterways to railways and the industry and trade of the waters so connected.

An investigation of the canals and rivers around Berlin will be the first work of the commission. After visiting Dresden, Prague and Vienna a stop of three days at Budapest will be made for an investigation of the waters of the Danube. The Rhine will be reached Sept. 10, and a four day trip is planned on that waterway.

The commission will also study Holland's dikes and canals and the canal system of Belgium, regarded as the best in the world. Eight days will be spent in Paris, which will allow the party to reach London Oct. 1. The harbors and waters of England, including trips on the Manchester ship canal, will demand attention until Sept. 15, when the party will prepare for the return home, arriving in New York on Oct. 23.

Immediately thereafter the commission will go up the Hudson river as far as Albany, then on to Buffalo, from which point a tour of the great lakes will be begun.

MENACE IN MAGAZINES.

Editor Thinks Constant Reading of Them Will Harm Americans.

Frank Chapin Bray, editor of the Chautauqua Magazine, in a recent address at Chautauqua, N. Y., said:

"There is a menace in the magazines. The magazine habit may become as bad as the morphine habit. Mere desultory reading of magazines may result in a loss of the power to select good reading and to think about it intelligently.

"Carolyn Wells has aptly defined a magazine as a small body of literature entirely surrounded by advertisements. Some magazines are playing the advertising game to such an extent that their productions seem to be made up of anything that will hold the advertising and support a picture of a vaudeville actress on the cover. There are notable exceptions, however. In many cases one magazine one month is so like another magazine for another month that they are practically indistinguishable.

"Careless reading of the magazines will make us as a nation more hysterical than ever before and worse than the French in not having a background of steadiness and a sense of proportions. We shall lose our power of thinking."

FARM FOR SHORT SERMONS.

Indiana Clergyman Given Valuable Land For Concise Preaching.

The Rev. J. M. Williams, a Methodist minister at Pine Village, Ind., received a deed recently for sixty acres of land worth \$125 an acre from Mr. and Mrs. Burgoyne Davis because he preached short sermons while pastor of the church which they attended.

Mr. Davis is wealthy and was so impressed with the brevity and pointedness of the sermons of Mr. Williams that he determined to make him independent. The deed specifies the brevity of Williams' discourses as the consideration received for the land. The sixty acres comprise one of the most fertile tracts of land in Montgomery county.

New Compass For Warships.

The new compass recently adopted by the German government for their warships is a remarkable instrument. It is known as the gyroscopic compass and is the invention of Dr. Anschuetz-Haempfe. A nine pound wheel mounted in a holder of quicksilver is made to rotate at the rate of 21,000 revolutions a minute by an electric motor. After running for two hours the wheel is set in the direction of the mathematical meridian, which direction it maintains. The advantage of the new compass is that it is entirely unaffected by neighboring iron or steel or by vibrations and rolling of the vessel. A compass card attached indicates direction in the usual way.

Postal Innovation.

By way of expediting the transmission of letters the Belgium postal authorities have recommended that all letters intended for Brussels should be enclosed in red envelopes, those for other Belgium points in yellow and foreign letters in green envelopes.



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