

Winter Thrills

HOW SKATES, SKIS, SNOW-SHOES AND THE TOBOGGAN ARE MAKING SPORT HISTORY IN THE ICE ZONES.



BY EDWARD FRANK ALLEN.

THE Winter girl has many phases, of course, and no matter where you may live, the chances are that you don't know how many different kinds of her there really are. You certainly do not in Portland, where the real Winter girl rarely puts in an appearance.

You may see her in city or in country, in the dances or on skates, going housework or war work, making merry or making money; but you will need many backgrounds to get the range of her wonder.

The truth is that Winter thrills need essentially wintry settings, and when you find your settings you will find among other things that the modern girls hold their own in competition with their masculine companions in strenuous sport quite as well as in the quieter exploits of the skating carnival.

A mere man from Atlanta or Los Angeles or even Portland, unless he has spent Winters in the East or Middle West, feels very helpless beside a St. Paul or Duluth miss, or the ice-fair girl on a pair of skis and the result is pathetic. Only when he is safely wedged onto a toboggan—in chicken sandwich fashion, to use a popular figure of speech—can he suitably compliment of daughters of the North, can he be happy.

What matter if wind-whipped locks of hair close his eyes to the beauty of the Winter world? Tobogganing is the apotheosis of speed and exhilaration, providing that slide and sliders are well protected, safe and comfortable.

Skating Defies Climate. The time has come, though, when one may learn to skate in any climate, for artificial rinks multiply and society is taking up the fad with an earnestness that seems likely to last. Professional skaters from the north countries—some even from Sweden and Norway—are engaged both for teaching and exhibiting, and some of the best of these are women.

The revival of skating as a fad is comparatively recent. Artificial ice made it possible and "skating queens" made it fashionable.

Alas, no more are the days when one of the allurements of taking one's best girl a-gliding on the ice was the adjustment of the skates to her dainty feet. There used to be a cantankerous lever that had to be worked so that the clamps would fit snugly over the sole of the shoe, and then there were the ankle straps that must be drawn just tightly enough across the instep. But now all that is changed, for the Winter girl of today wears skates that are so firmly riveted as to become a part of the shoes, and putting them on is simply a matter of changing footwear. And a man can't help with that, can he?



At a St. Paul Ice Carnival.

thing like playing the piano. The wise ones are those who have learned to fall gracefully, for spills are inevitable when one is learning to navigate in the snow on wooden runners six or seven feet long. But women have even taken up ski-touring, a sport made in Switzerland, which consists on a harness and reins and being drawn by a spirited horse helter-skelter over the snow.

Snowshoeing, too, is somewhat of a knack, except for the endurance part, and has many of the same pitfalls as

skating, but the fact that both these sports are gaining in favor among Northern daughters shows that their difficulties are not insurmountable.

The question of clothing should not puzzle those who take their Winter recreation out of doors. One of the

most important requisites is that it should be warm, but not so heavy as to promote undue perspiration nor so bulky as to impede the free movement of the limbs. Knickerbockers are almost a necessity, whether skirts are worn or not, for if they are not taken

for granted as a matter of comfort, they at least save possible embarrassment—doubly possible in skating and snowshoeing.

At all events, let the costume be colorful. It is a duty. Scarlet or saffron for the hat and sweater, or a



The Toboggan Belongs in the Bob-Sled Class of Outdoor Jogs.

warm orange—any color so long as it makes a strong, bright note against the snow. This applies to any Winter sport for women, whether it be skating, skiing, tobogganing, or motor-sledding.

St. Moritz, the Swiss Winter resort

past that train. Orders? What cared the soldier boys for orders? Not a hoop. But finally, and after threats of looting the train, and the prevention by armed guards (for no matter who rules in Russia an American citizen is looked upon with respect and fear), a strategic detour was made at a switch in one of the towns and the refugees went ahead.

One of the prime factors in making the trip pleasant, as it was, barring the insolence of the soldiers, was the work of the Red Cross people and the Y. M. C. A. "I wish you would say to the readers of The Oregonian," said the Stanciffs, "that they never gave to a more deserving cause than that given to the Red Cross, unless it be to the Y. M. C. A. We have seen much of their work abroad, distant from the theater of war, and surely the American people have cause to rejoice that they have so splendidly equipped both of these bodies."

It seems the Y. M. C. A. has been operating for a number of years in Russia, where they call the organization in their pride by a word equivalent to our lighthouse. Is that not a splendid name to be given to a foreign organization? "Lighthouse." How proud the members ought to be that in far-away Russia, in darkest Siberia, their "Lighthouse" is upholding the good name of the American people.

Siberia Land of Beauty. "Siberia," said Mr. Stancliff, "is a country of the greatest possibilities. My wife and I were tremendously surprised to see it a land of beauty, a land of sunshine and flowers, a land of possibilities so great that I honestly believe it will in time be the seat of one of the greatest ranch and farm booms the world has ever known. But all over Russia, the possibilities for investment almost beyond belief. With a stable government established there we will soon find on the plains and steppes of Russia and Siberia a population more dense than that of the United States. As it is now all of Russia in Europe has a population of 175,000,000, while the United States has 102,000,000; but Russia (in Europe), has an area

where royalty went to play in the days before the war, is dormant in these times of belligerency, but it will scarcely be missed if the American princess takes advantage of her opportunities to be presented at the court of King Winter.

PORTLAND VISITORS TELL OF RIOTS IN RUSSIAN CAPITAL

Mr. and Mrs. F. F. Stancliff, of Petrograd, Declare Red Cross Will Do More Toward Settling Russian Affairs Than All Other Mediums.

BY ADDISON BENNETT.

LOOKING over the register of the Hotel Benson yesterday I noticed the names of F. F. Stancliff and wife, which names meant nothing to me; but the address of Petrograd, Russia, gave me a hunch and I sent my card up to their room and soon found myself in very pleasant company, and listening to a tale of that great country now torn by revolutions and counter-revolutions. Mr. Stancliff has represented large capitalists of the United States in that far-away "republic" for several years, and Mrs. Stancliff has been there for several months.

Mr. Stancliff is a native of Kentucky, and his wife was born in Brooklyn. Her maiden name was Margaret Branigan, which gives her the right to her "French" brogue and to the roses on her cheeks and the brightness of her eyes—her winsome smile and her "blarney." Sure, if there is such a rock as the blarney stone, and if any person ever kissed it, then that person was Mrs. Stancliff.

I am sure I cannot make a connected story of my two-hours' talk, and I am equally sure that I do not wish to, for I believe it will make a better story by rambling back and forth as we did in our pleasant chat. I said that Mr. Stancliff represented large commercial interests in Russia, the exact nature of which he did not care to divulge to the general public, for the reason that he will go back to that land of opportunity with the same connections as soon as that torn and Sundered land gets back to a peace basis. But I can say that he represented there some of the big moneyed interests of this coun-

try and will do the same on his return.

Perhaps I had better begin at the near-close of the story and say that he went the last time to Russia about three years ago and left his bride with his parents in New York, at their fine home on Riverside Drive, just across from Grant's Tomb. Last Winter, Mrs. Stancliff grew tired of this parted married life and concluded to go to Russia, and she chose the good ship Kristiana Fjord, which left New York March 27, 1917. Upon this vessel also sailed Torsenski, the Russian Socialist.

He, it will be remembered, was taken off the vessel at Halifax, which might be set down as episode number one. But in good time the Kristiana Fjord arrived at the neutral port of Kristiania, Norway, from where she carried her husband, who was at the time at Norovoskiak, a Russian city on the Black Sea, that she would meet him at Petrograd. She arrived at the capital city three days before her husband—but just a few days before her arrival the city was torn asunder by revolution and riots, and she arrived there to find great districts of the magnificent city in smoking ruins, and many fires still burning.

At that time, as now, the city was overrun with troops and refugees, then as now practically everybody, workmen, peasants, revolutionists, soldiers and sailors, carried a musket, maybe loaded, maybe incapable of loading—but still a dangerous looking weapon. Great gangs or mobs of these men would parade the streets, loot houses of all sorts, gather their plunder in any convenient place, stack their arms, build a great fire, cook their cookooska, drink their vodka—and go again in quest of more loot.

Such mobs were seen on almost every available place.

Before the casting of Czar Nicholas there was a mandate issued that no soldier should have a furlough until the war was ended; no sooner had the new government been set up than that order became a dead letter and all sorts of furloughs were granted; then with the overthrow of the Kerensky government the tired soldiers did not even ask for leave but shouldered their guns and knapsacks and went marching home, riding if the trains ran their way, paying no fare, subsisting by loot and foray. No property was safe, no property rights respected. Everything belonged to "We, the people."

Under the regime of the Czar the pay of a private soldier was 75 kopecks a month, which mighty sum figured down to our currency amounted to 37 1/2 cents—when a kopeck was a kopeck (in fact, but the kopeck got down so low that it took anywhere from three to a half dozen of them to equal one of our lowest copper coins. The silver and gold coins, kopecks and rubles, long ago disappeared and now only paper money is used. And such money! Mr. Stancliff gave me some of a jackknife engraver, a couple of better looking money on better paper by the ton—and it would pass just the same. Do you suppose the soldiers of fortune looking for soft snaps have overlooked such opportunities? Nay, they have taken full advantage of the situation until the real and counterfeit are practically on a parity. The ruble, worth on a gold basis 50 cents of our money, has gone down and down in the monetary centers of the world until the paper ruble, a piece of paper about the size of four postage stamps, unnumbered, without seal, signature or check-letter, is worth—whatever you can get, say from 10 to 15 cents; but the old silver ruble is worth the same as ever. Is that not a pretty good financial illustration of inflated currency?

Let me jump now to the day last November when the American Ambassador at Petrograd sent word to all Americans in that city, and all other parts of the kingdom, that they must vamoose, skeddadle, get out, quit and leave the country at once. The date of the begin from Petrograd was on the 20th of last November. On that day Mr. and Mrs. Stancliff and about 40 other American citizens left over the trans-Siberian railroad for Harbin. They had two special cars and a dining car, also theirs. Of course, before boarding the train they had to have their transportation. Now, when the ruble was doing business on a gold basis the fare from Petrograd to Harbin was 400 rubles, or \$200, the rate per mile being not greatly different from the rates in Oregon. But when our refugees went in search of tickets they found the ticket offices closed to them, none but brokers and scalpers had tickets. So one had to make the best terms possible. Mr. Stancliff finally secured two tickets, but before he had the pleasure of paying 800 rubles for them he had to cough up the tidy sum of 2200 rubles to the broker. And remember the rubles of Mr. Stancliff represented their face value in gold, for when his drafts on New York or London arrived he had to hawk them around and make the best bargain he could. There was no fixed exchange value at the financial institutions.

There is but one passenger train a week each way on the road from Petrograd to Harbin. The time as per schedule for the trip of about 6000 miles is eight days. The refugee train left Petrograd say on a Saturday and was due in Harbin a week from the following day. It was, however, a trifle late, a matter of five days, and arrived on the second Friday out! The trip was full enough of excitement to make a novel; I only wish I had the fluency as a typewriter that Mrs. Stancliff had in telling it. Just a matter of a day or so ahead of them had departed a train of troops on "furloughs."

Trains Five Days Late. As the refugee train was running special it soon overtook the troops and took four days before they could get

nearby three times as great as the United States, Russia having, as I remember, nearly 9,000,000 square miles and the United States about 3,000,000; and yet Russia has but 20,000 miles of railroad, while the United States has 25,000 miles. I tell you the latent, sleeping, waiting opportunities in the fair land of Russia are simply beyond comprehension.

"And the Russian people, as a whole, at least all of the educated and refined Russians, look upon us as their friends. In fact they all do. Look how quickly the Bolshevik government released Stevens when he was arrested at Harbin a few days ago. Why, the Russians feel that in the future they must rely upon our country and Japan for their financial rehabilitation, and we must not let them think that in vain. If we had the money of ours now invested in Mexico invested in Russia we would be indeed fortunate."

Russian People Delightful. "I know Russia; I have been all over it. It is a land of dreams, a land of tradition, a land of enchantment. The Winters with their Winter sports are charming; their Summers just as delightful. The better classes of people are the most delightful I ever met—refined, educated, never snobbish, never arrogant, always ready to meet and greet an American more than half way as a friend and brother."

Practically all of the freight cars in use in Russia are made in the United States, and the locomotives, combination oil and wood burners, are from the Baldwin Locomotive Works. The Pullman cars are not yet in use there, but they have a very fair grade of Russian-made sleepers, diners and day coaches. The language spoken in Petrograd and the other cities is about 50-50 German and Russian. The diplomatic correspondence is all German. It is said, and, while Mr. Stancliff has no doubt of it, he has no proof, that the German printing presses are turning out 250 and 500 ruble notes by the bushel and distributing them to the Russian troops in the trenches, and it is on the strength of this sudden "wealth" that

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