FROM ALASKA TO ARGENTINA.

The Pan-American Railroad, Long Regarded as a Visionary Scheme, May Become a Reality.

ROUTE WHICH THE LINE WOULD TRAVERSE.

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Man is a nomadic animal. One of the most deep rooted instincts of the genus homo is the passion to be in just that place where he is not.

Out of this spirit of restlessness have sprung the trolley car, the steamship and the railway engine. For the last score or two of years the very flower of mechanical and inventive genius has concentrated itself in the ever increasing production of more expeditious and more efficient means of transportation.

The outcome of this activity is that hemispheres are being bridged together, or with thousands of hurrying feet, scattered continents have been bound up by the innumerable steel bands of our modern railway systems, and continents have been woven ever closer and closer by the locomotives that go ceaselessly back and forth like devices shuttles. Today the surface of America is so overlaid with its intertwining and interwoven system of steel rails that a railway map of our country looks like all the world like a great fish net of tangled threads. Each glimmering line is an artery carrying ceaselessly up and down the land the essential corpuscles of commerce. Mountains have been tunneled, great rivers have been bridged, arid wastes have been pierced and long lands built up till the east and the west have joined hands and the restless modern has annihilated distance.

The result has been that the railway is now looked upon as the real apostle of enterprise and progress and civilization, and commerce has become the backbone of empire. This has been the result of all the Russian railed when he, somewhat style, it must be confessed, set about the tremendous task of pushing out into the deserts of Siberia a railway that in time is to link St. Petersburg and the Baltic on the west with Vladivostak and the Pacific on the east. This, too, Czar Alexander thought would be first planed his Napoleonic Transsiberian road that is to allow the Cape and Cairo some day to join hands across 1,000 miles of African jungle and desert.

But an undertaking which overshadows both these great lines in commercial importance as well as in extent will be the bed for distant construction of the Pan-American railway, therefore together the American on a single string. From Dawson City to Buenos Ayres is a far cry, but if one may judge by appearances it will not be very long before the opulent Klondiker, looking for a change of air, will be able to step into his Pullman at some snow bound Alaskan station and disembark at a depot in the South American city of Buenos Ayres. The thing is a Utopian dream, but it must be remembered that the Klondike road is already under construction and that the preliminary survey for the intercontinental railway itself has already taken place.

It is not quite ten years since the idea of a continental railway connection was called into existence at Washington. This was effected by the invitation of congress, at the suggestion of several South American republics and with the enthusiastic support of the late James G. Blaine. The task of this commission was to look into the feasibility of constructing a trunk line from the United States through the different republics to the south of us, so that this line and its ramifications branching off into the various Latin states of the Americas might effect the commercial unification of the western hemisphere.

As early as 1821 Simon Bolivar had advocated closer connections between the governments of South and Central America on the one hand and that of the United States on the other. John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay in their own time had given their support to the same idea, and at Lima in 1847 a congress was held to investigate the possibility of bringing about some such movement.

Nothing tangible was accomplished, however, and a second congress, convened at Santiago, Chile, in 1856, was equally unsuccessful. So, too, was the third meeting of a corresponding body at Lima in 1864, while the congress of Montevideo in 1912, though failing in its original purpose, served to interest the people of the United States in the question. The ultimate result of this last convention was the appointment of the Washington commission in 1889 and the appropriation of $60,000 by congress as the share of the United States in the expense of a preliminary survey for the suggested Pan-American road, the conferees having recommended the appointment of a final international committee capable enough to go into the proposed route. These engineers, of whom each nation should appoint three, were to have authority to employ as many other assistants and workmen as were needed to carry on the work.

Some time later the railway committee of this conference submitted this report, and in it they advocated the construction of a railway which should connect the 18 different nations that lie to the south of the Rio Grande with the United States. Our provision of the pink was that so far as possible railways already in existence were to be incorporated in the proposed system, while it was further provided that the new lines to be constructed were to be paid for by the different states through which they run in proportion to the number of miles of road in each state. Another and even more important provision was that the railway was to be declared forever neutral for the purpose of securing freedom of traffic. When President Harrison transmitted the report to congress, he designated the pass as "vast, but not impracticable."

In 1891 congress appropriated another $60,000, and in the same year three government expeditions of civil engineers sailed from New York for South and Central America to undertake the proposed preliminary surveying. The first expedition went to Central America to mark out a line from Mexico southward until it should meet the second expedition, which was to begin operations at Quito, Ecuador, and progress northward. This third party was to survey southward from Quito, striking down through Ecuador and Peru to Lake Titicaca, on the fringe of the British pampas.

No less than nine years have been occupied in completing this partial survey, and the reports of the three expeditions have just been made public and issued in book form. These reports fill three large volumes and in a fascinating way tell of the hardships and experiences of the surveyors in the field. While the object of the survey was at no time the determination of the precise route for the new road, it was nevertheless to ascertain the most suitable country to be traversed by such a road and then deduce the approximate cost of construction from the conditions and character of the country passed through.

The decision of the surveyors is, in a word, that the line must run down the very backbone of the Andes. In other words, the proposed intercontinental railway shall follow meridional valleys or valley lands boating approximately north and south among the cordilleras, the Andes being crossed with important centers by branch roads. At Lake Titicaca the road will strike east and will connect with the South American roads already in existence.

The surveys also took into account topography, geological formation, climatic conditions, racial distinctions, the nature of the soil, the density of population and the available resources for railway construction in the different sections traversed.

The road, when completed, will permit of a continuous railway journey from any city in the United States to almost any point of importance in Central or South America. The track lies will run from Mexico City to the northern terminus of the Argentine railway system, a distance of more than 5,500 miles. When it is completed, the American pleasure seeker and commercial traveler will be able to make an unbroken journey by rail from Maine to Buenos Ayres, a distance of at least 10,000 miles. The general elevation when once in South America will be from a mile to a mile and a half above the level of the sea, and at a number of points the elevation of the roadbed will distinguish this new line as the highest railway in the world. Only 250 of the total 4,900 miles from the southern terminus of the Mexican system to the most northern terminus of the different Argentine railways have as yet been built. There are, however, at present many private lines under construction which can in time be made use of by the Pan-American trunk road. These private lines aggregate some 2,000 miles of roadbed, leaving some 2,750 miles of the transcontinental route still to be surveyed and built.

The South American countries which this road will traverse have not yet built as few very good in railways, but proportionately rich in resources. More than this, the people of these different South American republics are anxious for some such connection with the north. From the gold mines of Colombia alone more the seventh century pour $100 worth of gold has been taken. Three thousand mines in Peru are daily turning out minerals of practically unknown value. In Central and South America there are approximately 40,000,000 people who are willing and anxious to trade with our own 75,000,000 people. All of these 17 Spanish-American countries yield many of the things which we need and cannot produce ourselves and want the things which we are now putting on other and more distant markets. The building of the first railway line connecting the United States and the interior of Mexico is well known to have resulted in a wonderful increase of trade in six years. The combined foreign trade of South America is estimated at $500,000,000 annually. Of this the United States secures only a little over one-fifth, the other four-fifths going to Great Britain, Germany and other European countries.

But a Pan-American railway would work a change all this. Our experience with Mexico has shown us just what influence railways yield in turning the tide of trade.

A road of 5,000 miles will have to be the returns, for the cost of building such a road as the "intercontinental" is a stupendous one. It is calculated that on an average it will take $50,000 to build but one mile of it. At some points the expense of construction will run up as high as $65,000 a mile, while at others it will scarcely cost $10,000 a mile to build one mile of it. At some points the expense of construction will run up as high as $65,000 a mile, while at others it will scarcely cost $10,000 a mile to build one mile of it. But unlike Russia's great Transsiberian road, the Pan-American line will run through no long tracts of barren country in its entire extent. There is an extended portion of South America that is not of commercial importance, and it will thus open to us the doors of countries already in a more or less advanced stage of development.

To appreciate the vast obstacles which the engineer will have to overcome in building this new railway let us imagine ourselves seated in an observation car on the way to its proposed southern terminal, the fourteen city of Buenos Ayres. There will be little new in the trip from the United States to the capital of the Mexican republic. At the City of Mexico our car switches off to the new line built by the Mexican government from the capital to the thriving town of Ayutla, which lies on the Pacific, in the northwest corner of Guatemala, 12,000 feet above the sea and in view of the towering volcano of Santa Maria. The western slope of Guatemala is narrow, and we are crowded close to the Pacific by the great mountain walls on our right. We notice that this western slope is cut by many rivers that ceaselessly wash and nagle away the mountain sides. It is at Ayutla that we pass over the first rails of the real transcontinental line, and, speeding southward directly parallel with the ocean, enter Mexicotango and Retalhuleu, two big and important towns.

Leaving these old looking Latin places behind us, we pass on to Santa Lucia, which is not far distant from the Pacific volcano. Here we cross the newly built Central railway of Guatemala, then plunge into the mountains and at an elevation of some 8,000 feet skirt Lake Atitlan and look down the volcano of Jamay. Crossing the frontier into Salvador, we race to Santa Ana, well southward of Lake Ontja, and find a railway already built from Salvadro to Ariquiba, on the Pacific. In Honduras our route follows the fortunate line of the coast, twining in and out between mountain and sea, until we arrive at the city of Chinandega, where we again strike due south for Chinandega and speed along the railway that has for some time connected Corinto with Lake Nicaragua. At Granada we start out on our new road again and, coasting the lake, reach Rivas and the site of the proposed Nicaragua canal. Once over the canal we strike off at a tangent and fly eastward to Brito and the Pacific again. We slip into Costa Rica, on the southern coast, and touch at Santa Rosa and Liberia. Then we steam on across the Panama country, still hugging the western slope, close to the Pacific, on the south and through and mountainous country, and we halt ship of it as which as possible, favoring the seaward and running through all the important shipping points of Costa Rica and Panama. Then comes a dangerous ride across the back of Colombia, until at Rio Sucio we actually enter South America and, leaving out of a stretch of country very like the flat lands of Dakota, say goodby to Central America, with its ruins of curious and other and its tales of an old civilization that has long since passed away.

Once in South America, we can see that it was here that the engineers troubled most. The Andes, the great mountain ranges extend from the north to the south of this continent, showing great valley depressions that alternate with crowning peaks and elevations rising up among the clouds. From Rio Sucio, in Colombia, we go southward to Pasa de Caramanta, from which point we see that a great number of branches cordillera occidental to avoid a series of the most impressive. Ambosa Sokkhs, and from Quito to Mocha carefully skirts a most gorgeous series of mountain peaks, some of them with elevations of 15,000 feet. In continuing our route from Lojo to Valladolid that is crossing among cliffs and raising pass friendly water courses our straight railway is like the hull of a dirt-seven night crawler.

Railway building through the Andes must have been a sore bagatelle in this.

Near Chincha we are over 11,000 feet above the sea, and as we skirt the eastern shore of Lake Junin we are still joined 14,000 feet to the clouds. Then for a route we a rise on the Himac river, which flows at Callao and the Pacific, and before long cut across mountainous country and follow the course of the Julys until the Little Rio is approached. Here we dart eastward by marvelous in and out evolutions, right through the rugged heart of the mighty Vilca Cubiga. At Cusco, after twisting and turning and doubling on ourselves for a few hundred miles, we come across an older railway, which leads us southward to Lake Titicaca and from there on to Huanchaca. From Huanchaca three lines spring, one stretching away to Sin Antonio, by way of Cobina, the other twining off into Paraguay and thence by way of Corrientes into Uruguay and on to Montevideo. The third line, which we ourselves take, passes southward to Jujuy, to Tucuman and on to Buenos Ayres, across the fertile Argentine pampas. At Buenos Ayres, with its busy 1,000,000 people, we come to the end of our journey.

Here we get out and in all probability stretch our legs and dazedly think of the strange scenes and the different climes and the magnificent panorama of ever diversified mountain and valley and plain past which we have been speeding for the last few days.

The description of such a journey sounds chimerical enough, but equally ridiculous did the mere thought of ever spanning the Rocky and stretching long continuous steel band from the Atlantic to the Pacific seem to our ancestors. In this age of enterprise and during the decade of yesterday because the accomplishment of today, and it requires no mechanical Moses to foresee the time when just such a journey as has been described will be made.

WILLIAM J. RUDOLPH.

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SCENES ALONG THE LINE OF THE SUGGESTED PAN-AMERICAN RAILWAY.

THE NEW FRENCH PRESIDENT.

Like M. Jules Grevy, the new French president, M. Emile Loubet, is a lawyer. He has been all his life remarkably for devotion to work and for simplicity of manners, and when only last year one of his friends ventured hints that he would be a fitting candidate for the presidency he remarked that he preferred to retire to what he called his grange, meaning his farm in Drome.

Before going to the senate M. Loubet and his family lived in an entresol of the flats in Tournon, leading to the Luxembourg gardens, and they kept up the unostentatious southern hospitality. Mme. Loubet, who, like her husband, comes from the Drome, frequently assisted at the receptions given by her daughter-in-law, the president's wife, Madame Both the president and his wife have a strong southern accent, and embassadors and the potentates who are expected at Paris next year will have an opportunity of hearing the French pronounced according to the style of old Provence.

The president has three children—a daughter and two sons. His eldest son is less a few miles away from his house at Montelimar, and on the last occasion that he went to see his father-in-law he indulged in making a speech, a task in which he at once charmed.

A CURIOUS WILL.

The entire uniformity about wills in general, both as to parchment and pen-manship, makes all the more noteworthy the last testamentary act of the late Sir George Parkes. Sir George, who had his life at Calcutta during the Indian mutiny, had only a little scrap of paper on which to write his will, and when it was made, it was carried through the lines by a native, who concealed it in his hair. Finally, as it is, it will doubtless rather be a curiosity and almost as a bit of national history than a lofty manuscript inscribed on material prepared to defy the decay of years. The entire number of words—and there are 59 in all—were kept from answering President McKinley's call."

An enormous pipe has been made for President Kruger by a Dublin firm. The bowl is of the finest briar root, the stem of cut vulcanite and the case of leather lined with chamois. On the back of the stem is a medallion of the head of the Transvaal president.

During the course of the trial in Boston the other day of a woman restaurant keeper who was charged with selling milk "below standard" the fact was developed that no Bostonian discriminated with his nickelmen can claim that the new nickelmen be made to submit to a use of the from the Milk Dealers' association. The defendant testified that upon finding that the milk she was getting was one she tried in vain to sell to other nickelmen, she then found the 20 fine of the first and refused to sell to her. She finally succeeded in getting better milk by purchasing from another dealer in the name of her partner.

Harry D. Cooper, known among runners as "Railroad Jack, the Hancock Flyer," says he has traveled over 100,000 miles on the last ten years, first by a mismatch of his own invention swung under a hot stove. He then made a hot coffee or milk and is fairly comfortable, having a corner in the mismatch that keeps out the dust.

MATTERS OF INTEREST.

The Times of Cuba, published at Havana, employs native compositors and the result is sometimes astonishing. Witness this paragraph: "Mr. Edward McKean is here from San Francisco. He is a curio hunter and expect to get some rare old gems in the city of Havana. He thinks a few old swor buckles a Spanish dagger or two, and one of Columbus' chairs wheels would suit his taste admirably."

New Orleans is so amused to know that when the heavy storm struck it recently it found the'if unable to compel citizens to shovel off their sidewalks for want of a local ordinance to that effect. The desired ordinance is now reported in short order, although it may not be necessary to enforce it for half a century.

The newsboys of Boston are required to take out licenses to sell papers, the documents costing 25 cents each. "We expect to license 2,000 of them this year," said the clerk who issues the certificates the other day. "Last year we had 1,300, and then the boys were taken down somewhat, and anybody was allowed to sell papers during the war. I shall have a superintendent and two men on the street now, however, and any boy found selling papers incorrectly will be reported to the committee on licenses, which has said it will take away the licenses."

At the recent dinner of the Boston alumni of the University of Maine the statement was made that the university graduated more men in proportion to its size than any other college or university in the United States. It was only by the utmost exertion that Maine could get up a decent showing.

AN EASTER SONG

BY JOEL BENTON

Now Easter buds and Easter bells
Come to end the months forlorn.
While Heaven's eternal asphodels
With beauty paint the purple morn.

Northward hies the boreal blast,
To the realms of ice and snow;
All the darksome days are past,
For life and light will have it so.

Here starts a crocus in the grass;
A rosy gleam tints bush and tree;
Soft, wooing zephyrs, as they pass,
Toy with the rath anemone.

With Easter buds and Easter bells
Nature and life arise newborn;
On craggy rocks and distant fells
Wonders of growth the woods adorn.

The blithe song sparrow, dauntless still,
From vale to hilltop sends his song;
On yonder elm, with earnest will,
The bluebird warbles sweet and long.

But deep within, through hints divine,
We feel the broader, bluer sky;
And drink the soul's imperial wine
As it the risen Lord passed by.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

On the third day of April 114 years ago Washington Irving, one of America's most noted men of letters, first saw the light of day.

Washington Irving, though a most delightful companion, was strangely constituted. "Peculiarly selfish," as he himself once said, "he any particularly requiring task or any stipulated hour of the body or mind." his whole life was a desultory one. He had no command of his talents, and he had to watch the vagaries of his mind as he would those of a weathercock. Born in New York in 1783, he was a genuine American. He was the youngest of five sons, all of whom showed decided literary taste, and in early life he betrayed the natural bent of his mind.

He was a delicate lad, however, and was obliged to go abroad at an early age. He studied for the law, but, though admitted to the bar in 1806, he never practiced.

He took an active part in the war of 1812, being aide-de-camp and secretary to Governor Tompkins and dubbed "Colonel." At this time he published the "Sketch Book."

He was shortly thereafter appointed secretary of legation to the American ministry at London under Minister Mc-Lane and on the return of the latter to the United States became charge d'affaires, officiating as such in the coronation ceremonies of William IV and in other state pageants. He was our minister to the court of Madrid in 1842, remaining there four years. Returning to America, he began his "Life of Washington," which he finished just before his death.

He died at his home in Sunnyside and was buried in the old churchyard in his beloved Sleepy Hollow, Tarrytown, N. Y., which is about three miles from his home. His tombstone bears this simple inscription:

Washington Irving,	Born
April 3, 1783,	
Died	
November 28, 1859.	

A NOVELTY FOR THE PARIS EXPOSITION.

Inventors certainly seem to have outdone themselves in getting up novelties to show at the Paris exposition next summer. One of the most interesting of those that will be on view is the mareorama. By means of this invention the society after society can enjoy a real sea-sick trip without going to sea, and as effectively as the celebrated cyclorama, which had such a run of popularity several years ago.

In the mareorama one embarks on board a real steamer in which sea-sick chairs, staterooms, berths, etc., all lend their aid to the belief that the voyager is really about to set out gaily to cross Africa for a long trip.

The steamer is on dock, arranging the details of crew conduct and looking around. Suddenly the big boat begins to move. The scene is shifted, the passengers are amazed to find themselves on a real sea-going steamer, and the illusion is so exactly carried out that one can even be seasick if desired. The things, the shake, the recovery and the up and down, fore and aft motions are all given with startling fidelity. Up and by the cabin begins to change, the city of departure is left behind and a new one appears. Sometimes the boat anchors in a harbor, and the sight of boats, thousands of sightseers and the morning going and coming of belated persons and departing ones are fairly lifelike.

In the mareorama which is to be an exhibition the boat is supposed to start from Marseilles and to turn Algiers, Algeria, Tunis and Constantinople are to be visited. Inside the quietly of the mareorama the world be traveled and have an opportunity to obtain an accurate view of the cities named and the country of their location.

Paris is at first observed by the sea-sick visitor, and a Thanksgiving dinner could days. This was at first reduced to three days, afterward to two and finally to the single day, Easter Sunday.