DILLON WALLACE.

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Experiences in Labrador.

BY MR. DILLON WALLACE, NEW YORK.

ADDRESSING the Canadian Club on "Experiences in Labrador," Mr. Dillon Wallace said:—

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Canadian Club,—It is always an inspiration to come to Canada, especially to Toronto. There is something in your very air that breathes the great Canadian spirit, and the wonderful progress you are making. During the past few years you have achieved the wonderful development of your wheat fields of the West. Now comes your wealth of Cobalt mines, and always present are your great manufacturing industries. Canada is destined to become the backbone of the great Empire of which she is a part She is known far and wide Away yonder on the bleak coast of Labrador I was consulting the catalogue of one of your large Toronto stores, and everywhere the traveller goes he hears of Canada and her prospects.

My work in Labrador is what I am to speak to you about for a few minutes this afternoon. It was pioneer work. We were blazing the early trails in the hope that some day civilization and prosperity will follow in our wake. Some day, I hope, Labrador will be to Canada what Alaska is to the United States.

We never know the ultimate benefit of explorations. When people asked Columbus what benefit was to result from his discovery of America, he could not tell. Our work in Labrador is on a small scale, but neither you nor I can tell the ultimate benefit of it. I hope that there is a wealth of mineral to the found in and below the rocks there. There is, of course, no agricultural possibilities, but nature distributes her good things fairly and impartially. If the wealth is not on the soil, it is under it. I am convinced that there is a future for Labrador; that, as I said, Labrador will become to Canada what Alaska is to the United States.

My first trip to Labrador was with the ill-favored Hubbard expedition, wherein the young Leonidas Hubbard, assistant editor of *Outing,* the New York magazine, lost his life. It was in the year 1903. We left Grosse Water Bay, over 300 miles north of the Straits of Belle Isle, and penetrated into

the eastern portion of the wild land to the great interior lake. We went across the northern divide and located the head waters of the George River and followed it down.

Unfortunately, we entered this great wild, uninhabited country in a year of paucity, when game was scarce. We were, moreover, short provisioned. Near Lake Michicoma, on the wind-blown wilds, we found ourselves with but 16 pounds of pea-meal and 250 miles between us and first food.

Hubbard bore up bravely on short food and no food at all, but he was finally able to go no further. The Indian and myself then left to seek aid, the Indian to reach the trappers and I to find a little wet flour in a bag which we had earlier abandoned. When I turned back to Hubbard I realized I was lost in the wilds of the bleak, lone land. The days that followed are like a haze in my memory. For ten days I wandered alone in the ever deepening snow. I lost all sense of time. I had left the world and seemed to be leading an existence altogether apart from it. I was living another existence. I heard voices talking and men shouting. I answered back, but I know not what I was saying.

I failed to find the camp where I left poor Hubbard, and he had penned the pathetic last entry in his diary the day we left him. I suppose I must have passed the tent. I knew not whether the trappers had come, but I started down, knowing only that to keep alive I must keep going.

One morning when I got up I found I could not stand or walk. I sat down by the smouldering fire, believing that the end had come. The fire smouldered—it was just smoke, there was no wood.

Then, all unexpected, I heard a shout near at hand and saw the rescuers, four native trappers, approaching. I realized that I was saved. I had walked all the day before and believed I had covered many, many miles, but the trappers traced my tracks and found I had gone only about one mile.

Part of the party was sent on to look for poor Hubbard. Two of the trappers stayed with me. Hubbard was dead when they reached him and they had brought back the pathetic entry he had made in his diary after we had left. I brought his body out and buried it at home.

Hubbard's death and life should be an inspiration to young men. It has been to me. When I wrote my farewell to the friends at home I promised Hubbard to write the story of the expedition and, if I got out safely, to continue the work.

Last year, again on the suggestion of the editors of *Outing*, I once more visited Labrador. This was a better year.

We were more successful in securing game and we travelled 2,000 miles around the coast on dog sleds. We came in contact with much of the good work of the Church Mission Society—and it is doing a wonderful work. We went among the Esquimos; we lived their life, we ate their food, we slept in their huts. We also mingled with the Moravians.

On our journey, Dr. Grenfell's missions were a great aid to us. On our first trip we visited Battle Harbor, where we received great kindness from Dr. McPherson, resident physician at the Battle Harbor Hospital. Last year Dr. Benford was in charge and we were equally well cared for.

I cannot speak too high words of praise of Dr. Grenfell and his noble work. They say that even the dogs know Grenfell. He is a wonderful man. He has done more to relieve the poor on that bleak coast than the world will ever have any idea of. He is always rendering medical and surgical aid when it is needed, and his students carry on his work.

Let me relate an incident. Two or three years ago, by the accidental discharge of a gun, an old Esquimo had his foot blown off. There were no medical instruments at hand, but with a meat saw and a jack-knife he amputated the foot, and to-day there is an old Esquimo cheerily hobbling around with a wooden leg.

The Moravian missionaries, too, are doing a wonderful work. They look for Dr. Grenfell every year. He is building new hospitals and travels all over with his dogs.

My work last year was to map the interior country from Hamilton interior to Ungava Bay. I found five rivers not shown on the map, the Toniluk, the Mukalik, the Tookatuk, the False and the Koroksoak. We collected a great number of geological specimens, which are being classified at the Columbia University in New York. Many botanical specimens which we also secured were forwarded to the New York Botanical Gardens. We kept an accurate reading of the temperature until all our instruments were broken, and kept all the records of the winds. The opening of the territory between Grosse Water Bay and Ungava will be, I am assured, of great benefit to the world.

My future explorations are uncertain. We travellers hear the call to the unknown. It is a fever in the blood. Peary is just back from the far North, but he says he will try again. I sympathize with him. There is one great arm at the northwest of Labrador that we know nothing about, with at least one large river running through it. Sometime I want to go up there and look up that river. I am looking forward to the

future for Labrador when she becomes to Canada what Alaska is to the United States. The rocks are yet to yield something of commercial value, and a railway to Cape Charles will give a shorter water route to England. They are talking railway in Labrador. The natives say, "We have now got the telegraph; look out for the railway!" They have even talked of damming the Straits of Belle Isle, but I don't know about that.

I deem it a great honor to meet the members of the Canadian Club, and a privilege to speak before such a fine representative gathering of the best and most loyal element of the Dominion. Cosmopolitan New York is not an American city, using the term "American" in its broadest sense. Toronto is a more typical American city, and I feel here, away from the Babel of tongues and the many mingling nationalities, as though I were among my own people where I properly belong. We are, after all, all of the same Anglo-Saxon stock. We have all that feeling of affection for the Mother Country and we all turn to her. My father always spoke of England as home. The Mother Country and the United States are close together and I hope they may always stay so.

As the hour was early, Hon. A. B. Morine, formerly of Newfoundland, now of Toronto, spoke briefly in moving a vote of thanks to the guest.