

# New Sweden Has Some Curious Features

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**S**TOCKHOLM, Sept. 14.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—How would you like a first-class telephone at a dollar a month? That is what they have in Stockholm. There are two telephone companies here, one belonging to the government and the other owned by a syndicate of Germans. Neither company charges more than \$10 a year per dwelling and this charge includes a radius of forty miles about Stockholm. It gives you 600 conversations a year and for a few dollars more the service is unlimited. Business houses pay only \$25 and some only \$20. The government service covers all Sweden. It has 55,000 subscribers, of whom 9,500 are in Stockholm. The German service has 33,000 'phones, and both companies have public pay 'phones on almost every street corner.

I like the street telephones. They stand alone on the corners or in the parks looking like sentry boxes walled with glass. Each has slots for small coins and in each is printed the rates for Stockholm and all Sweden. You can have a five-minute talk with anyone in Stockholm or within a radius of forty miles outside of it for 2½ cents, or to any part of Sweden for 7 cents.

There are telephones in the restaurants, some of the tables having electric connection. Suppose you are eating there and want to send a message home or to ask a question of someone in another part of the country. All you do is crook your finger and the waiter brings a 'phone to your table and you talk away.

I have a telephone in my room at the hotel, and this is the case with every guest here. The 'phone has a switch, so made that by turning it I have connection with the office and bell boy, and so that on reversing I am in connection with the central station, and can bring all Sweden and Norway to my ear at a moment's notice.

The "hell girls" here are government officials, for the government runs the telephones. They are very polite, and you don't have to ring more than once. They pronounce the word "hello" as though it were spelt "haloo," with the accent on the last syllable, and they never tell you the line is busy when it is not. At present all the wires in Stockholm are being placed in underground conduits, and altogether the lines are expensively constructed. Notwithstanding this the companies make money and pay dividends at a 2½-cent rate.

The Swedes are opening up new iron territory for h of the Arctic Circle. As yet in the region of long days and long nights they have discovered mountains of iron and are building a railroad to connect them with the sea. They are importing American machinery to get out the ore, and I am not sure but that American cars will carry it to the ports. The road runs from the gulf of Bothnia, in Sweden, to the harbor of Ofoten, on the Norwegian coast of the Atlantic. The latter harbor is free from ice the year around.

Along this road are enormous deposits of excellent ore. One of the peaks is 817 feet high and it is all iron. There are other deposits nearby a mile in length and from 10 to 150 feet thick. In all there are about 23,000,000 tons of ore now in sight, and some of it is very fine. The iron mountains of Gällivare are also in northern Sweden. Their mines are of great extent and the ore is rich.

There is a good chance for a steel test here. Not a big one like the United States Steel company, but a little one of a million or so, which would pay large dividends. I refer to getting the ownership of the Dan-



SCENE IN GOTHENBURG, SWEDEN'S SEAPORT.

namora mines, which produce the finest iron known to man. These mines are now owned by ten companies, working under an agreement not to manufacture more than 1,000 tons a year. They make the iron with charcoal, and ship it all over the world in light bars. The ore is so fine that it sells for \$700 a ton when other iron is worth only \$30; I am told the Dannemora iron might bring twice as much just as well. I met a man who is interested in one of the companies, and who wants a trust formed to control the output. Said he:

"We have the only iron of its kind in the world, and the kind that makes the finest steel. The best cutlery establishments of England, Germany and the United States use it, and they would buy it if we charged double the price."

This is probably true. The Swedish iron makes the best tools, the best drawn wire and the best nails for riveting. Thirty-five years ago there was not a horseshoe nail driven in the United States that was not made of Swedish iron. It can be bent, coiled and twisted in a cold state without breaking. Our minister to Sweden tells of a Swedish steamship which, in a fog, ran at full speed into an upright cliff. The shock was such that the bow turned around into a spiral, but not a plate of the iron was broken or cracked.

This Dannemora iron is famous for making fine razors. President McKinley shaved himself every morning with Dannemora steel, and I am told that President Roosevelt does the same. Our minister here keeps the White House supplied with such razors. He does not send knives, for knives will cut friendship; but these razors he hopes will cement the cordial relations between him and the president. At any rate, he recently sent seven of the finest to President Roosevelt, and the president uses

a different one every day. Each blade is marked with the day of the week on one side of the blade and with Theodore Roosevelt's autograph on the other side.

These razors are made at Eskilstuna, the Sheffield of Sweden. It is a little manufacturing town on Lake Malar, not far from Stockholm. It has a gun factory, foundry and engine works and is famous for its fine steel inlaid with gold.

I dropped into our legation here the other day. The American minister was absent and I asked when he would be back. The reply was, "He has gone off ptarmigan shooting and will be gone for a month." The American minister is the best shot in Sweden. He can hit the fleetest bird on the wing. The office of the legation has trophies of former hunts in the shape of wild duck, snipe and the heads and hoofs of elk.

Speaking of hunting, Norway and Sweden are rented out much like Scotland. The best shooting grounds bring so much a week, and I heard the other day how Burton Harrison paid 1,000 kronen, or (260), for two weeks' sport. He came here to shoot elk, but found that the best forests were owned by private parties, who did not care to rent them. He could not shoot in the crown woods without the royal permission and he failed to get that. He then advertised in the papers, offering to pay a big price for the right to hunt during the season on any good estate, but received no satisfactory answer. Finally an American here asked one of the wealthy forest owners to allow Mr. Harrison the privilege of shooting in his woods. The man replied that he would grant it for two weeks for 1,000 kronen. Harrison accepted the offer and killed six elk during that time. At this rate the elk cost him about \$48 apiece.

There should be good hunting in Scandinavia. This country has some of the best forests of the continent. It is frequently called the lumber yard of Europe. About 41 per cent of the dry land is covered with trees. The best are in the north, where there are fine pine and spruce, and where thousands of lumbermen go out to cut logs every winter. There are many streams and the trees are cut and hauled to the banks of the waterways and floated down when the snow melts.

At the mouths of the rivers are some of the largest sawmills of the world. Here the logs are sawed into boards and other lumber and shipped across the Baltic and down through the Atlantic. The export of lumber runs high into the millions of dollars a year. There are public forests which yield \$18,000,000 worth and there are also private syndicates which do a large business. In all, Sweden has a thousand saw and planing mills; it has 320 furniture factories and 123 woodworking factories of other kinds. It does a big wood pulp business and its exports of wood and timber alone amount to \$25,000,000 a year.

A big business is being done here now in school houses, hunting lodges and small frame dwellings. There are enormous mills just outside Stockholm which make nothing else. They have designs after which houses are made to order. They are shipped away in pieces, knocked down to Africa, South America, Australia and England. This trade is increasing, and I am told the exporters expect to do a big business in such houses if we begin work on the Panama canal. When that canal was first started the laborers were furnished houses from Maine. The Swedes claim that they can put up a better and cheaper house than the Americans, and they expect to be a competitor for the business of Panama.

Sweden has been buying some American locomotives within the past few years. They are heavier than the Swedish engines, and are, I am told, liked very well. I have ridden over some of the trunk lines of this country in the past few days. The roads are well built and the scenery along them reminds one of the lumber regions of the United States. Many of the roads are through great woods filled with ferns. The ground is carpeted with ferns, and the silver trunks of the birch trees rise out of beds of emerald green. There are many rocks of all shapes. The air is moist and the moss grows in the crevices of the rocks; here it is green; there silver gray, and in other places almost sky blue.

Leaving the cities, you pass many little towns, go in and out of the forests, now crossing little farming regions with big barns and little log cabins. Many of the log cabins are built with the logs perpendicular instead of horizontal, as with us. Some such houses are tiled instead of shingled.

Sweden has now about 7,000 miles of railroad, 2,000 of which are owned by the government. The railroads make money and pay dividends, notwithstanding that their fares are lower than ours. All trains have three classes, first, second and third. The first class rate is 2½ cents a mile, the second class about 1½ cents a mile, the third class only ¼ cent. The first class is luxurious, the second is comfortable and the third is furnished with bare wooden benches.

There is much travel, especially on the trunk lines—to Christiania and Gothenberg, the chief port of Sweden on the North sea.

The latter line is through a more thickly

(Continued from Page Twelve.)



THE FALLS OF TRAILHATTEN.