

the same nose and heavy eyebrows. He stood facing the sun, squinting at the stranger; then a light of recognition came into his eyes and his hand shot out to grasp his brother's. John Cronin was at a loss for words. Conflicting emotions worked in his face. He gestured feebly towards the open letter, and said, "You've read it!"

Calmly and clearly Hugh Cronin replied, "Yes, poor Aunt Mary has gone, God rest her soul. But come inside. I think I smell the Missus' coffee on the stove. Why'nt you come down to see us oftener. Got a fine place here now — we're doin' mighty good." Without protest, John Cronin was led through the open door into the sunlit kitchen. That was that!

—PATRICIA PENDERGAST '48

VAIN PURSUIT

A sense of loneliness upon me creeps,
A longing for some thing yet unattained.
I've sought it oft; my soul in boundless leaps
Pursues it still through long years undismayed.
I see it hover o'er horizon bright;
Oft times to worldly things it seems allied.
I strive toward that goal so near in sight,
But reaching there — it has a newer bride.
Once more I ask in vain, without reply,
"Through all my life, must I be so distraught?
Must all desires their noble ends belie?
Illusive something, can'st thou ne'er be caught?"
A voice within me comforts my distress:
In God at last we'll find true happiness.

—C. SINNOTT '49

ALL ABOARD

So this was the Murray Harbour train. Often had I heard its fame noised over the Island, as well as the Mainland, but never, until December 20, 1946, did I have the opportunity of viewing it with my own eyes, and of experiencing some of the thrills that attend a ride on this fabulous train. That is why I shall always look upon this particular day as a milestone in my life; I travelled from Charlotte-

town of Fodhla, a distance of about twenty-five miles, on this modern flyer.

As I stood on the railway platform gazing at the "Murray Harbour", I was attracted, as if by some gigantic force, to the Titian locomotive. After a few moments of open-mouthed awe, I decided to walk around this steel monster, to inspect it more closely. The first thing that struck me was the number on the front, 1001. I was later to learn that the great majority of people think this number indicates the year in which the machine was manufactured, but a little investigation proved to me that this notion is entirely wrong. Indeed, there is considerable evidence to support the claim held by a few that the engine was manufactured within the past seventy-five years, perhaps even in this century. Its enormous size, (it must be ten feet long and of proportionate height,) its beautifully moulded body of streamline design, gave ample indication that this was no ordinary run-of-the-mill locomotive, but an aristocrat of its species. There it stood on the track, sometimes, belching forth a great burst of steam as if to rid itself of surplus energy, and reminding me of a high-strung snorting race horse, impatient of the start, or purring like a contented family cat lying in front of the fire, dreaming of oceans of fresh milk. So much was I occupied by my study of the locomotive that I was startled by the conductor's "All aboard".

Along with several other tardy passengers, I entered one of the spacious and well-appointed passenger cars. Although there was the usual Christmas season travelling, some seats were still available. I sat down and took note of the environment. Our car was provided with substantial straight backed seats, too uncomfortable to sit up in, and too small to lie down in. It was heated by a large coal stove placed in one corner directly across from a water container marked "ice water". Light was provided by kerosene lamps suspended from the ceiling. The wisdom of retaining this system of lighting must be apparent to all this year, when the electrons have become so capricious. Could not electricity fail on the "Murray Harbour" as well. Heaven forbid such a calamity as the plunging of this meteoric wonder into darkness profound. Outside windows were provided, too, and these were of the type that can neither be raised nor lowered; in fact, they just cannot be opened except by breaking, for they are securely fastened top and bottom. Thus quarrels over heat and drafts, often prevalent on other trains, are unknown on the "Murray Harbour". In this regard, the management deserves credit both for its efforts towards the harmonious relationship between passengers, and for its appreciation of

the ill effects of draughts of fresh air on the health of the passengers. Seated around me I could see and distinguish the farmer with his weather-beaten face, the travelling salesman with his deboniar look, the sober student with the stamp of intelligence imprinted on his brow. Besides these, there was the usual number of people who are not easily placed in any category.

But now we were on our way. I looked at my watch and found it was 3:15 P.M. We were leaving exactly on time. Such punctuality is admirable, and one could see the pleased look on the faces of the passengers. We had gone only a short distance when suddenly, bang! I was thrown out of my seat and draped across the back of the one in front. At first I thought we were involved in a collision, but I soon learned my fears were groundless. Our sudden stop was caused by the emergency brakes being applied to see if they were in working order. They were! No chances can be taken with faulty brakes on a train that develops such amazing speed as the "Murray Harbour". I noticed that several passengers were scarcely moved by the shock. They, it seems, were the veterans of the line, who expected this brake-testing procedure from the moment of departure, and protected themselves by bracing their feet solidly against the seat in front of them.

Once more back in our seats, we moved cautiously over the Hillsborough Bridge, making sure to stop at the draw-bridge, which has not been opened in years. But then, one never knows what fanatic might take the notion to sabotage our national economy by scuttling the Murray Harbour train.

After we had successfully negotiated the bridge, the passengers were visibly relieved, even the locomotive itself seemed to radiate a spirit of freedom, and picking up speed tore off at a mad rate with all three cars hopping merrily after. At such a rapid pace were we going that I found it exceedingly difficult to count the stakes of the railway snow fence; even the telephone posts were being passed now and then. Soon we began to arrive at stations. Here passengers got out. Of course if they were ladies, they were assisted, particularly if they happened to be pretty young ladies. Even some of the males were assisted, but in these cases it was not through chivalry. Passengers were then taken aboard and freight unloaded with meticulous care and smooth efficiency. Then on our way again, with not a second wasted. Keeping up this speed, we arrived at Lake Verde, about 10 miles out, at 4:45. Here it was necessary to replenish the water supply of the locomotive. It drank long and greedily;

(so did several of the passengers.) Then we were on our way down the "loop".

At first mention of the "loop" I tried to conceive our flying train going through aerial gyrations, but of course this was not to take place. We merely branched off the main line at Lake Verde, sped down to Vernon and returned to Lake Verde. This so-called "loop" is yet another way in which the Murray Harbor line is distinctive; others go in a straight line from place to place, or at least they go as directly as possible. Not so the Murray Harbour. Thus we have the "loop". True, it took us an hour to travel over the seven miles of the "loop" but what does an hour mean to the "Murray Harbour".

Back on the main line once more, we rapidly worked our way southward. Soon it was to be given an example of the resourcefulness of our train crew. At a station at the top of a long grade, the engine pulled into the siding. I thought a car was being taken on. We moved on in a few moments. Imagine my surprise, when, on looking out the window as we were rounding a curve, I noticed our engine coming after us almost one-quarter of a mile behind. It was almost unbelievable, but there it was, clearly to be seen by all. I had read of runaway trains, but never of anything like this. The explanation was simple; our crew had uncoupled the engine from the cars, allowing them to coast down hill. The speed they picked up was so great that even the Murray Harbour locomotive was unable to keep up. However, as we reached level ground it did catch up and pushed us to the next station, where it once more took up its proper place at the head of the train. Incidents like this not only give convincing evidence of the interest and ingenuity of the crew, but they also effect a considerable saving in coal.

It was now 6:30 and we were nearing Uigg. I had only about six miles more to go; about one more hour should bring me to my destination. I was not disappointed. With clanging of bells and screeching of brakes we arrived at Fodhla at 7:45, having come all the way from Charlottetown in four and one-half hours. As I watched the red light of the "Murray Harbour" fade into the distance, I said to myself, "How wonderful is our transportation system! Why, our ancestors would have taken at least eight hours to walk the distance that we came in little more than four."

So for speed in an age of speed I give you the Murray Harbour train.

You are welcome to it!

—J. CAIRNS '49