

# The Borthwick Theory

By E. C. DAWSON.

Professor John Borthwick closed his front door at 9.14 a. m., one moment ahead of scheduled time. This enabled him to collect a scrap of paper from his lawn and inter it decently in a bed of variegated leaves fallen from the maples bordering the roadway. The sharp October breeze exhumed it almost before his back was turned, and his housekeeper, watching from an upper window, observed that men with a vast amount of brain showed an extraordinary want of common sense.

Professor Borthwick—with the alphabet transposed after his name—walked to the end of the block and turned the corner that brought the buildings of the Canadian Geological Survey into view. For a generation past he had been one of the department's shining lights; over and above all, he was the Borthwick Theory.

It was impossible, in scientific circles, to discuss the pre-glacial period in Polar regions without reference to the Borthwick Theory. It permeated the calculations of two decades of geologists as inevitably as the knowledge that certain fossils were characteristic of certain horizons. The world over the Theory was discussed and quoted, argued and dissented from. Of course, there was dissension—the very magnitude of the theme courted criticism from its bearing upon vast economic possibilities in the Northwest provinces, as yet but partially explored. Not that Professor Borthwick concerned himself intimately with economic questions; his interests were centred in the course of events before Man was.

His critics, also the possessors of comely alphabetical tails, were the members of other surveys; they disputed the Borthwick Theory in the academic journals, and fended Professor Borthwick at international congresses.

Meanwhile, the scientific world, approving and dissenting, waited complacently; men to whom a thousand years were as a day, geologically speaking, expected to wait; even the optimists scarcely supposed that Professor Borthwick would have the luck to personally establish his claim to posterity.

The Theory had its origin in a handful of obscure fossils collected by the professor in early manhood, when field instructions had taken him, one of a band of pioneers, into unexplored regions bordering upon the Arctic.

Years passed, and each season found him pursuing his investigations with patient, unswerving energy; those untrodden lands became divisions, the divisions districts; wide-awake prospectors began to follow in the Geological Survey's footsteps; Professor Borthwick continued to collect fossils in summer and determine them in winter, and slowly but surely his researches strengthened his convictions.

Borthwick on Northwest geology attained importance in the eyes of the department, his views passed, in process of time, to wider acceptance as Dr. Borthwick's Theories, and finally attained impressive, singular and international significance as the Borthwick Theory.

The Professor aged with the Theory; younger men went into the field, able—where he was now unable—to withstand the hardships entailed; he remained in his laboratory, and on the evidences of their researches continued to deduce and establish the Theory, link by link. Year by year he hoped for the conclusive results that would blaze in on time's records as incontrovertible fact.

Thus, the autumn was a season of paramount importance to him, since it heralded the return of the field staff and the possibility that the Northwest had yielded the clues he needed.

A sharp gust of wind swirled his coat tails; the Professor folded the garment closer without annoyance; a touch of frost in the air, and clear sunshine induced a physical sense of wellbeing that demanded analysis, together with the opposite deduction that it was possible to feel otherwise.

He paused on the steps of the survey with a dawning sense of misgiving. Suppose that, in place of confirmatory evidence, the season's work served to weaken the foundations of the Theory, or in any way suggested the possibility of his critics being right and he wrong. Even in the home survey there were men who doubted—youths of thirty-five and forty who based their arguments on experience that, compared with Professor Borthwick's, was insignificant.

Some of them had theories of their own, and toward these he exercised the courtesy and tolerance becoming in a man who had forgotten more than they ever knew. For the Theory, so far as it went, was circumstantially proved—even as the Theory it was a laurel that had creditably adorned his lifetime and would undoubtedly be utilized on his bust.

A side door into the building opened to exude a couple of empty crates, indication, therefore, that the fossils and mineral specimens collected in the past season were unpacked and awaiting identification.

The Professor's autumnal elation reasserted itself, his forebodings vanished; entering the Survey, he said good-morning to the janitor in a tone

that caused the official to note thoughtfully that he mounted the stairs to the next floor taking two at a time.

He remembered that same buoyancy in the Professor when the patriarchal beard had been brown, and coupled with baldness and comparative youth, sufficiently incongruous to suggest the possibility of hair restorer applied absent mindedly to the wrong place.

A spirit of bustle and rejuvenation pervaded the Survey; the field parties were assembling day by day from all quarters, and exchanging specimens and experiences.

In a corridor Professor Borthwick happened upon a man fresh from the centre—to him—of vital interest. They paused for an interchange of greetings. The Professor was popular with the younger generation following his footsteps in the Northwest; its solitudes bore everlasting witness of him and of their esteem, even though the Theory should pass, in a Borthwick mountain, a Borthwick river, and lakes to match.

"A successful season, I hope, Tillman?" said the Professor punctiliously, but with an undernote of eagerness in his voice that was unmistakable.

"That's for you to decide, Professor," the younger man replied. "There's a crateful of specimens waiting for you, some of them new, I think. We followed up the west fork of the Borthwick and explored one of the unknown tributaries. A wonderful country, but the difficulties—"

"No doubt, no doubt," interrupted the Professor gently; transport problems were mere details, and he noted facts. "Come to my room when you have a moment to spare," he pursued. "I should be glad to note down everything likely to be of service in my researches."

He proceeded down the corridor and reached the door labelled with his name.

His stenographer, Miss Dickson, was seated at her desk, studying the stock and share column of the morning paper.

"Good morning," said the Professor, with the same jubilation he had evinced toward the janitor. "What a delightful day!"

"Good morning," said Miss Dickson, without looking up. She never encouraged the Professor to be enthusiastic at 9.30 a. m.; it involved working through the luncheon hour without a break, which was bad for both of them.

"A delightful morning," pursued the Professor, unchilled. When not conversing academically he tried to be conventional, and became commonplace. "I believe the market is going up," he added, after a pause and a flash of inspiration.

"Down," replied Miss Dickson, pursuing the damping process.

She dabbled mildly in shares, and the Professor heard of her ventures with the puzzled interest that a man with a banking account and no use for money would naturally evince toward a woman with gambling propensities—and a salary.

Next to the Theory, Miss Dickson was an indispensable adjunct to the Professor's welfare. Every New Year's Eve a check, for the purchase of additional shares, lay on her desk, presented "with the gratitude and esteem of J. Borthwick."

She was a little, energetic woman, agreeable, well educated, well read; ten years as the Professor's secretary had grounded her so effectually in the Theory and all pertaining to it that she had become a source of reference on the subject, consulted by the Professor and the geological staff, indiscriminately. A kindly nature enhanced her mental attainments, coupled with an assured manner. She was self-sacrificing and self-assertive as occasion demanded, championed her chief in public, and bullied him in private as one who knew his weaknesses and corrected his spelling.

He turned to his desk and the morning's correspondence. Miss Dickson laid aside her paper.

"The new batch of fossils came in this morning," she said. "I had them arranged in the sampling room."

"I met Tillman as I came in," the Professor replied; "from what he said it's just possible they have happened upon something new."

He reverted to his letters. "Nothing of importance—ah, yes, unfortunately—a reminder from the Editor of 'The Scientific Journal' about the contribution I promised. He shall have that note on a Fossil Fish Tooth from the Devonian—when it's finished, only"—he referred again to the letter and glanced toward the sampling room door regretfully—"he wants it at once."

"And you want to get to the fossils, so 'The Journal' must wait," suggested Miss Dickson, coniving with the Professor's inclination against his conscience.

"A promise," began the Professor pedantically, drifting toward a bureau.

From a drawer containing manuscript he extracted the Fossil Fish Tooth sheets. Miss Dickson took them from him compassionately.

"I'll look through it and see what alteration is needed—your attention would be so divided," she said.

The Professor bore the imputation with meekness and made a bee line for the sampling room.

"Be sure you come to me if there is anything unnecessary or unintelligible, in your opinion," he paused to add from the threshold—to propitiate Miss Dickson and palliate the sense of wrongdoing.

Miss Dickson nodded and smiled; the Professor, artful and conscience-stricken, was genuinely humorous.

Left in solitude, she commenced work on the Note; it covered several pages, closely typewritten, and even to her scientifically adjusted mind became a trifle tedious. She turned, for diversion, to the Professor's correspondence and prepared the replies for his signature.

Midday struck; the janitor knocked at the door with a telephonic dinner invitation for the Professor.

"Ask for the number and say the Professor will ring up later," replied Miss Dickson. "He is busy with some fossils, and I can't disturb him." It was her custom to waive matters of minor importance without reference to him, an authority the Professor never resented.

In the next hour various individuals dropped in for conversation with the Professor, and stayed to enjoy it with Miss Dickson. It was past the luncheon hour when the last departed, and the Professor was still closeted in the sampling room. Miss Dickson decided to give him another half hour, and reverted, hungry but patient, to the Fossil Fish Tooth. At the end of the period she knocked at the door and entered.

"Time you went to lunch, Professor," she said.

He was seated with his back toward her, before a table littered with rock specimens, his head sunk between his shoulders, his elbows resting on the table.

It struck her, for the first time, that he looked very old and shrivelled and fragile; the reaction, possibly, from his earlier elation. She approached softly, to avoid startling him.

He seemed unconscious of her presence; his eyes were glued to a magnifying glass beneath which lay a fragment of limestone containing fossils.

"It is past 2 o'clock—time you went to luncheon, Professor," she repeated.

He made no reply, nor even the slightest movement. She waited a moment longer, and with a woman's intuition divined that something was wrong.

"What is it, Professor?" she exclaimed.

He turned his head slowly and stared at her with a sort of mute defiance.

"Professor, there's something wrong! Tell me what it is," she said sharply.

He pointed at the specimens before him and tried to speak, and with the several languages at his command could find no word to express himself.

He raised his eyes to hers, shamefacedly; a suspicion of the truth flashed upon her—he read it in her eyes—and flung the magnifier from him with a gesture of despair.

"All—dis—proved," he said, faltering from syllable to syllable, and sank back in the chair, a withered, decrepit, old, old man.

"Nonsense! Not the Theory?" she retorted, struggling with overwhelming conviction of the truth and the utter futility of fighting against it.

A knock came at the outer door. It galvanized the poor, broken old man into active misery.

"A laughing stock! A doddering old idiot. Good God!" he said.

Miss Dickson answered the knock instantaneously, stepped into the passage and closed the door behind her.

"The Professor is busy, extremely busy; for goodness' sake leave him in peace," she said with irritation to the intruder. "Oh, it's you, Mr. Tillman; I beg your pardon—will you come back presently—I mean to-morrow? Professor Borthwick promised an article for the next number of 'The Scientific Journal,' and we must get it off to-day, somehow."

Tillman departed, after a chaffing reference to the business methods of academic cranks. In his wake followed the janitor with another message.

"Look here, Symes," said Miss Dickson decisively, "tell every one who wants the professor—in or out of the building—that he's too busy to be interrupted to-day—on any account. I'm sick of repeating the same thing."

The janitor shuffled away; Miss Dickson re-entered the study and paused for a moment's reflection. Before returning to the Professor she slipped on her hat and coat.

He sighed with relief at her entry; his misery became a shade less acute in her presence; she seemed, temporarily, to stand between him and exposure. Then he noted with deeper despair that she had donned walking attire.

She came to the table and scrutinized the specimens lying before him. Next she turned to a cabinet filled with rock sections labelled "Borthwick River Series," and picked out several fragments from a miscellaneous heap, resembling in shape and size those that lay on the table.

The Professor watched her with apathetic curiosity; she came beside him and picked up the tell-tale limestone near the magnifier, and dropped the pieces one by one into the capacious pockets of her coat.

"The river," she said quietly, and arranged the specimens from the cabinet in the space beside the glass.

"No, no!" he exclaimed.

She drew on her gloves with determination.

"They will never be missed," she said.

He remembered with terrible joy that she had always had her own way. She was having it now, and he sat there—unprotesting.

"Now, I'm going to lock you in for a few minutes, Professor," she resumed. "You've overdone things to-day, and you're too busy to see people."

The door handle clicked, and the key turned on the outside. Inevitable reaction succeeded the tension of the last few moments; a shiver ran through the distraught old man—his head swam, a tightness at his throat and chest turned him sick and clammy, his head dropped limply on his hands.

"I'm dying for luncheon and a mouthful of fresh air," said Miss Dickson to the janitor, in passing. "I won't be gone long, but don't forget my instructions about the Professor."

She took the air from the bridge spanning the river, pitching stones into midstream with vigorous accuracy.

Thus the Borthwick Theory remained unrefuted for a season, at all events, and possibly for an indefinite period. But she saw in perspective a vista of weary days—she and the Professor enacting the pretence of the Theory; she could do it, but he, with his abstruse intellect and elemental simplicity, was like a child—there was childish, helpless abandonment in his grief, but where the child's misery is short lived, his would endure—till the sods in the Northwest had been opened to receive Professor Borthwick, as provided for in his will.

He was old, and it was a terrible shock. Miss Dickson found herself wondering, conscience-stricken, how long it would be.

She hastened back to the Survey and the Professor. He had not stirred from his seat, and made no sign when she laid her hand on the arm of the chair.

"Professor!" she said, softly.

He did not reply; she scarcely expected that he would, and stood for a moment irresolute, reluctant to rouse him. His watch lying on the table ticked out the seconds; she counted them mechanically. No other sound broke the stillness, not even the Professor's breathing—she held her own to listen.

Another moment passed, and she dropped on her knees beside the chair.

"Professor!" she cried, and her fingers closed on his wrist. "Oh, Professor!"

She dragged his hands from his face and his head dropped sideways, limp and unseeing. She shrank away horror-struck and reached to the bell.

A rumor rushed through the building that old Borthwick was in a stupor; later, the news spread that he was dead.

Miss Dickson was blamed for the folly of letting an old man remain for so many hours without interruption and without food.

"Heart, I'll be bound," said the janitor. "It's what you'd expect when a man of his age tries to climb the stairs two at a time."

"Heart, I am sure," said Miss Dickson, with nervous conviction.—The Sketch.

## WORDS OF WISDOM.

He is not eloquent whose words do not change acts.

Complacency is often complacently mistaken for consecration.

A little laughter lengthens all our lives and shortens every day.

There is no outer radiance from the life that has no inner light.

Deep in the dark alley we often find the foot of the golden ladder.

The worst of all liars may be able to make the best analysis of truth.

The honorable man will always honor the things that are honorable.

The emergent title will do a lot to solve the problem of the submerged tenth.

Many women forget that it takes more than a perfect house to make a home.

The social for revenue only does not promote the righteousness of the church.

Every weed that comes to fruition is to remind us that good seed is not barren.

The religion that can be confined to place and season is never in place or in season.

The virtues with which we are oppressed are not impressing others in the same way.

You cannot eliminate selfishness by legislation, but you can sometimes check its speed.

This world is being saved by the love that could die, and not by any theory about it.

Some men think they save the leaking ship by hauling a new flag to the masthead.

He who has walked life's way in truth always sees the promise through the gates of death.

They become blind to the spiritual who will not blind themselves to some of the things of sense.

The Love that is ever within us gives us greater comfort than even the hope of the life beyond.

A rubber-tired vice is likely to take just as straight a course and make even better time to the pit than the old rattle-rim kind.—Ram's Horn.

More than 5000 Russian Jews emigrated to Palestine in one month.



New York City.—The round yoke waist is always a pretty one. It suits the greater number of figures admirably well and it has a certain simple charm that is distinctly its own. The model includes various novel features in addition to those mentioned and makes an exceedingly attractive blouse that allows a choice of elbow or long sleeves. In this instance pale

**Change Pockets For Wrist.**  
Tiny change pockets are set upon the wrists of some Blarritz gloves, and the wrist fulness may be left loose.

**Shoes, Belt and Hat.**  
A light gray skirt, gray shoes, a delicate silver nailhead belt, a white waist, and a light-blue hat; isn't that a pretty outfit?

**Net Yoke on Batiste.**  
The net yoke of a batiste waist is trimmed with straps of the batiste; the wide cuffs are of the net with batiste bands also.

**Use For Thin Gown.**  
If you have a thin gown that is too deep a shade to be becoming, make an underslip of white silk and the color will be softened materially.

**Steel and Jet Buckles.**  
Steel and jet have had their places in the making of the fashionable belts, and excellent buckles of inlaid and of etched gold and silver are well toward the top of the list.

**Negligee Jacket For Embroidery.**  
Negligees made from embroidered flouncing are among the latest and prettiest devices of the season and are exceedingly attractive. This one is combined with a yoke of wide insertion and frills of embroidery but there are a great many variations that can be evolved from the design. In addition to the flouncing it can be made from any bordered material as the lower edge is quite straight, but its usefulness is not limited even to them and any plain material can be utilized if appropriate trimming be added. The slightly open neck and the elbow sleeves are both attractive and healthful, while the general style is an extremely graceful one at the same time that perfect simplicity is maintained. If a yoke of embroidery is not desired, the plain material trimmed in any way that may be



blue crepe de Chine is combined with all-over lace and with silk that is cut into bands and embroidered but all the pretty soft fabrics of fashion are appropriate, veilings and similar light weight wools and pretty silks and even the mulls and the muslins.

There is a lining which is fitted to the figure and the waist itself consists of the front, backs and yoke. The front is cut to form extensions and both front and backs are laid in one box plait at each shoulder while the trimming straps are arranged under these extensions and under the upper portions, the box plaits so producing an exceedingly attractive as well as unusual result. The sleeves



are the prevailing ones that are moderately full and can be finished at the elbows with bands or extended to the wrists as may be liked.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is three and one-half yards twenty-one, three and one-eighth yards twenty-seven or one and seven-eighth yards forty-four inches wide with one-half yard of all-over lace for the yoke, one yard when long sleeves are used, one-half yard of silk for the bands.

**Neat Traveling Costume.**  
About the neatest traveling costume this season, one which is practical and at the same time stylish, is a champagne-colored mohair trimmed with brown velvet. With clean waists in one's suitcase it would be possible to travel for weeks in such a costume and look right at the end of one's journey. The hat worn with it is a shade of brown, a ribbon knot at one side being thrust through with a heavy quill in which there are both brown and orange colors.

**An All the Rage Bracelet.**  
A flexible bracelet that is all the rage in London is made of flexible gold, in the form of a strap, and is buckled round the wrist. Some are quite plain, and cost merely £2 10s., while others, set with jewels, can be as expensive as the purse of the purchaser will allow.

**Applying Lace Squares.**  
The new way of applying lace squares is by laying them flat upon the goods without cutting out the material underneath. These squares are put on the goods, secured with stitching, and are trimmed with tiny little frills of lace.

liked can be used or bands can be made to serve as a finish.

The jacket is made with the full straight portion that is tucked at its upper edge and the narrow yoke to which it is attached. The sleeves are simple full ones that are gathered into bands and to these bands the frills are joined.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is two yards of embroidered flouncing twenty-four inches wide, one and three-eighth yards of plain material thirty-six



inches wide, one and one-half yards of insertion three and one-half inches wide for the yoke, five and one-half yards of embroidery for frills to make as illustrated; or, one and three-fourth yards of plain material twenty-seven, two and one-half yards thirty-six or one and seven-eighth yards forty-four inches wide.