

# LAWRENCE BURPEE

AMONG THE  
CANADIAN  
ALPS

Lawrence Burpee  
**Among the Canadian Alps**

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# Lawrence J. Burpee

## Among the Canadian Alps

### PREFACE

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# I

## THE LURE OF THE MOUNTAINS

WHAT is the peculiar charm of that mighty, snow-capped sea of mountains, whose stupendous waves tossed far into the heavens seem ever about to overwhelm the level wheat-fields of Western Canada? The lure of the mountains defies analysis, but it is surely there with its irresistible appeal to all in whom the spirit of romance is not quite dead. It stirs the blood strangely when, far out on the plains of Alberta, you get your first glimpse of the Canadian Alps – a line of white, glittering peaks just above the horizon, infinitely remote and ethereal, something altogether apart from the prosaic world about you of grain and cattle, neat farm-house and unsightly elevator.

As you follow the course of the sun, the peaks loom gradually up into the sky and dominate the scene, but still retain the atmosphere of another world. The rolling foothills in the foreground, like spent waves from the storm-tossed sea, seem tangible and comprehensible, but beyond and above the dark ramparts of the outer range, the towering outer wave of the mountains, float silvery outlines that seem to be the fabric of some other and purer world. Doubt may come with the marvellously clear and hardening light of the western day, but at sunrise, and peculiarly at sunset, the last shreds of uncertainty are swept away. Not of this earth is that dream of fairyland poised mysteriously in the upper air, glowing in exquisite tints, soft as a summer cloud; a realm of the spirit to which one might hope to journey over the path of a rainbow.

One who has seen this vision may not resist the insistent call to explore the mountain world, to discover what lies beyond the frowning battlements that guard this other realm. The call has been working in the hearts of men for generations. They came alone in the early days, each man fighting his way up through some doorway that led into the heart of the Glittering Mountains. Only the stout of heart might then win through, for this Wonderland was guarded close on every side. Pitfalls awaited the unwary. The explorer must cut his own trail through the wilderness, cross icy torrents, climb alpine passes, find a way through networks of fallen timber, face perils and discomforts every hour of the day. And yet there was something alluring, something that drew him on, and brought him back again to these high fastnesses; something that he could not understand, but that was none the less imperative. That same spell is as potent to-day, but most of the barriers are down, and where once men came singly or in twos and threes, paying heavily in labour and peril for the joys they found in the mountains, thousands now follow at just enough cost to themselves to give spice to the experience.

The history of the Canadian Alps, so far as White Men have had anything to do with it, dates back to the closing years of the French Régime in Canada. It is characteristic of the race that gave to the world such heroic figures as those of Champlain and La Salle and La Vérendrye, that while the infamous Bigot and the egotistical and brainless Vaudreuil were gambling away an empire in the New World, tireless and unselfish explorers were carrying the boundaries of that empire far out toward the setting sun.

It was in the year 1751 that the Chevalier de Niverville, with a small party of French *voyageurs*, pushed his way up the muddy waters of the Saskatchewan, and built Fort Lajonquière in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Niverville was not the discoverer of the mighty range that runs like a backbone throughout the length of North America. He had been anticipated some years before by a fellow-countryman, La Vérendrye, son of the patriotic explorer who had devoted his life to western discovery for the glory of his native land. Niverville, however, was the first White Man to look upon that portion of the mountains now known as the Canadian Rockies.

One wonders what his impressions were as he gazed out to the westward over that bewildering scene. As a Canadian officer he had served in the expeditions against the New England Colonies, and was therefore familiar with the mountains of New Hampshire and Vermont, as well as with his

own Laurentian Hills, but what preparation were these for such awe-inspiring majesty? Range piled upon range to the westward, soaring up and up in vast towers and domes and spires, and extending north and south to the utmost limits of vision, they must have seemed to Niverville an impregnable fortification designed to bar all further progress in this direction.

Niverville was not the man, however, to be daunted by even the most formidable natural obstacle, and he was not without evidence that a way might be found through the mountains to the shores of that Western Sea for which he and many other Canadian explorers had been searching, even since the days of Champlain. While at Fort Lajonquière a party of Indians visited him, from whom he learned that they had traded with a strange tribe whose home was far to the westward, beyond the great barrier, and who spoke of White Men that they had seen on the sea coast. Niverville no doubt made plans for an expedition through the mountains, but they came to nothing. His leader, Saint-Pierre, was having trouble with the Indians at his fort on the Assiniboine; Niverville was recalled, and before long the entire party of French explorers were making their way back to far-off Quebec, to help Montcalm in his last desperate effort to save New France.

In 1754, and again in 1772, officers of the Hudson's Bay Company made journeys of exploration from York Factory, on the western shores of Hudson Bay, to the country of the Blackfoot Indians, among the foothills of the Rocky Mountains; but it was not until 1793 that any White Man was daring enough to penetrate their fastnesses. In that year Alexander Mackenzie, who had four years earlier descended the river that bears his name, to the shores of the Arctic Ocean, forced his way through the Peace River Pass, and after suffering great hardships, stood at last beside the waters of the Pacific, fulfilling at last the dream of French explorers of an overland route to the Western Sea.

Within the next few years discoveries followed thick and fast. The North West Company, the Canadian rival of the Hudson's Bay Company in the western fur trade, was reaching out eagerly for new fields to conquer, and the more adventurous of its officers, scouting far ahead of the main army, became more explorers than fur-traders. Mackenzie was himself a partner of the North West Company, and where he led others soon followed, breaking new trails through the mountains, leaving the level plains and comparatively sparse vegetation of the eastern side, and coming down into the almost tropical luxuriance of the Pacific slope.

David Thompson, the astronomer of the North West Company, was the first to find a way through the mountains in the neighbourhood of the Kicking Horse Pass route, or the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. In 1800 he made his way over to the Columbia Valley, perhaps by what was later known as the Simpson Pass; and the same year Duncan McGillivray found a route farther north by Howse Pass, named after Jasper Howse, another Rocky Mountain explorer. Simon Fraser, who had followed Mackenzie through the Peace Pass, in 1808 explored the river that bears his name from the mountains to the sea, descending its terrific canyons in a frail canoe.

At the very time that Fraser was making his way down this river, Thompson was exploring the Kootenay and the Columbia. Two years afterward the latter discovered the Athabaska Pass, which for many years was to remain the principal highway of the fur-traders back and forth through the mountains. Often enough the mountains above the pass must have looked down upon the picturesque cavalcade of traders, carrying goods over to the posts in New Caledonia or down the Columbia, or bringing back the "returns" as the cargoes of furs were called. One can picture the long string of pack-horses climbing up the pass, with the cheerful philosophy (or diabolical cunning) of the Indian cayuse, urged forward by fluent traders. One can see, too, at nightfall, the camp-fires in the mountains; horses, browsing contentedly; men lounging about waiting for their supper, perhaps fresh venison, or the old stand-by pemmican; and later, pipe and story and song – the beautiful old *chansons* of French Canada with their haunting refrains:

A la claire fontaine  
M'en allant promener,

J'ai trouvé l'eau si belle  
Que je m'y suis baigné.  
*I' ya longtemps que je t'aime,  
Jamais je ne t'oublierai.*

or —

Derrier' chez nous, ya-t-un étang,  
*En roulant ma boule.*  
Trois beaux canards s'en vont baignant,  
*En roulant ma boule.*  
*Rouli, roulant, ma boule roulant,*  
*En roulant ma boule roulant,*  
*En roulant ma boule.*

After this initial age of exploration, most of the credit of which belongs to the men of the North West Company, we come to a period of travel. Some of the rarest and at the same time most interesting books of travel in Northwestern America are those which describe overland journeys to and from the Pacific by way of one or other of the famous gateways through the Canadian Rockies. Such a book is Gabriel Franchère's narrative including an account of his trip through the mountains in 1814; another is that of Ross Cox, who with Franchère was concerned in the dramatic events connected with the history of Astoria, of which Washington Irving wrote such an entertaining and thoroughly unreliable account. Ross Cox crossed the mountains three years after Franchère.

Another little-known narrative is that of Sir George Simpson's expedition of 1825. Sir George Simpson was then Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, and like Jehu he drove furiously. He travelled in what was known as a light canoe, manned with picked boatmen famous for speed, skill and endurance; they were off at daylight or earlier, and did not camp before nightfall. In his journeys across the continent, by the great water routes of the fur-trade, the Governor's canoe bore about the same relation to the regular brigades that the Twentieth Century Limited does to a freight train.

One of the most fascinating of the narratives of this period is Paul Kane's *Wanderings of an Artist among the Indians of North America*. Kane was a Toronto artist, who travelled across the continent studying the manners and customs of the various tribes, and making a series of most delightful sketches of them and of their country. His comments on the natives and their habits are shrewd and entertaining, and if written to-day would sometimes be thought much too frank for publication. Kane crossed the Athabaska Pass in 1846, and returned the same way the following year.

Five or six years earlier Sir George Simpson again traversed the mountains, by the pass that bears his name, in the course of his famous journey around the world. The journeys of Father De Smet, the western missionary, of the Earl of Southesk, of Milton and Cheadle, and of William Francis Butler, to mention only a few of the more prominent, belong to the same general period.

Butler went through the Peace River Pass, and at its eastern entrance climbed a steep hill known as the Buffalo's Head to get his first wide view of the mountains. He tried to describe what he saw, but admitted the futility of the attempt.

"Not more wooden," he says, "are the ark animals of our childhood, than the words in which man would clothe the images of that higher nature which the Almighty has graven into the shapes of lonely mountains! Put down your wooden words bit by bit; throw in colour here, a little shade there, touch it up with sky and cloud, cast about it that perfume of blossom or breeze, and in Heaven's name what does it come to after all? Can the eye wander away, away, away until it is lost in blue distance as a lark is lost in blue heaven, but the sight still drinks the beauty of the landscape, though the source of the beauty be unseen, as the source of the music which falls from the azure depths of the sky.

"That river coming out broad and glittering from the dark mountains, and vanishing into yon profound chasm with a roar which reaches up even here – billowy seas of peaks and mountains beyond number away there to south and west – that huge half dome which lifts itself above all others sharp and clear cut against the older dome of heaven! Turn east, look out into that plain – that endless plain where the pine-trees are dwarfed to speargrass and the prairie to a meadow-patch – what do you see? Nothing, poor blind reader, nothing, for the blind is leading the blind; and all this boundless range of river and plain, ridge and prairie, rocky precipice and snow-capped sierra, is as much above my poor power of words, as He who built this mighty nature is higher still than all."

Yet so insistent is the charm of the mountains, as he makes his way ever deeper into their secret recesses, that he must try once more to put his impressions into words:

"Wonderful things to look at are these white peaks, perched up so high above our world. They belong to us, yet they are not of us. The eagle links them to the earth; the cloud carries to them the message of the sky; the ocean sends them her tempest; the air rolls her thunders beneath their brows, and launches her lightnings from their sides; the sun sends them his first greeting, and leaves them his latest kiss. Yet motionless they keep their crowns of snow, their glacier crests of jewels, and dwell among the stars heedless of time or tempest."

Up to the year of 1858 travel in the Rocky Mountains was confined to one or other of the passes. Men did not wander off the beaten trails, but hurried through east or west. Between 1858 and 1860 the members of the Palliser Expedition, and particularly that tireless explorer, Dr. James Hector, pushed into the very heart of the mountains, discovering new passes, tracing rivers to their sources, and for the first time giving the world some idea of the wonderful region of peaks, lakes and valleys that lay beyond the western prairies. Among many other familiar place-names in the Canadian Rockies, that of Kicking Horse Pass was given by Dr. Hector, who on his first journey through the pass was nearly killed by a vicious horse. It has before now been suggested that a more appropriate name for this important route through the mountains would be that of the explorer himself.

The task so splendidly initiated by Captain Palliser and his associates of exploring and mapping the Canadian Rockies was afterward taken up by the officers of the Canadian Geological Survey and the Topographical Survey of Canada, and is still in progress.

One may round out this very brief survey of the opening up of the Canadian Alps, the Wonderlands of the Canadian West, by mentioning some recent expeditions of a group of explorers whose object was rather recreation than science; who saw in these mountains a boundless playground where tired men and women of the cities might find rest and pleasure, where unclimbed peaks rise on every side to tempt the more energetic and repay them with marvellous impressions of unforgettable splendour, where snowbound passes lead one over into green valleys holding in their embrace lakes of the most exquisite colouring, where the mountain goat and the bighorn gaze down upon you from dizzy heights or scamper up the face of impossible precipices, and the silvertip lumbers off the trail with ponderous dignity, where the day's tramp brings endless variety of towering cliff and snowy summit, cathedral aisles in the primæval forest, falling curtains of mist from gigantic glaciers, chaotic slopes of rock and alpine meadows dressed in all the colours of the rainbow, where the camp-fire brings perfect content and a spirit of comradeship unknown in the cities, where the mountain air puts new life into you, fills you with wholesome optimism, makes you realise as you never did before that the world is good, good to look upon and good to live upon.

One need only mention the titles of some of the books in which these expeditions are described to suggest the spirit that animates them: Hornaday's *Camp-fires in the Canadian Rockies*, Schaffers's *Old Indian Trails*, Outram's *In the Heart of the Canadian Rockies*, Green's *Among the Selkirk Glaciers*. If we add the wonderfully-illustrated work of Walter D. Wilcox, and the narratives of Stutfield and Collie, Coleman, Baillie-Grohman, and a few others, we have a little library of Canadian Alpine literature that will be a revelation to any one who has not yet become familiar with the irresistible appeal of this land of pure delight.

A word remains to be said, and it may as well be said here as elsewhere, as to routes – how to get to the Canadian National Parks. From Eastern Canada, and the Atlantic seaboard, probably the most convenient route is the direct transcontinental line of the Canadian Pacific Railway from Montreal, and by that route unquestionably the most comfortable train is the well-known "Imperial Limited." From Toronto, or points south of Toronto in the United States, the "Pacific Express" of the Canadian Pacific Railway offers a direct route to the Mountains. If your starting-point is in the Middle West, it will be well to take the route from Chicago to Winnipeg and join the "Imperial Limited" there; or the more direct line from Chicago to the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway at Moosejaw. All these routes will bring you to the eastern portal of the mountains at Calgary, and on to Banff and other points in the Parks. If you are bound for Jasper Park in the north, any of the three transcontinental railways, the Grand Trunk Pacific, Canadian Pacific, or Canadian Northern, will take you direct from Winnipeg to Edmonton, and you can get in to the Park by either the Grand Trunk Pacific or Canadian Northern.

If your starting-point is on the Pacific Coast the Canadian Pacific Railway from Vancouver is the direct route, or you may join the main line from the south at several points east of Vancouver. By the autumn of 1914 the Grand Trunk Pacific will be completed to its Pacific terminus, Prince Rupert, and the Canadian Northern may also be ready for traffic to Vancouver before the end of the year. Round trips will then be possible taking in all the Canadian Mountain Parks: From Calgary by Canadian Pacific Railway to Rocky Mountain Park, Yoho Park and Glacier Park, and on to Vancouver. From Vancouver north by boat to Prince Rupert, and by Grand Trunk Pacific east to Robson Park and Jasper Park; or possibly direct from Vancouver by Canadian Northern to the same parks. From Jasper Park the return to Calgary would be by Edmonton and the Canadian Pacific Railway branch line.

## II

# THE NATIONAL PARKS OF CANADA

THE last spike in the first of Canada's transcontinental roads, the Canadian Pacific Railway, was driven at Craigillachie, British Columbia, in 1885. Two years later, after a memorable debate in the House of Commons, an Act of Parliament was passed setting apart for the use and enjoyment of the people of the young Dominion a national park in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. Thus was initiated a policy which has since been developed upon broad and generous lines, and which will ultimately give Canada an unrivalled system of magnificent natural playgrounds.

The first park, as created in 1887, covered an area of 260 square miles, with the little station of Banff, on the Canadian Pacific Railway, as headquarters. In 1902 the area was enlarged to 5,000 square miles, but reduced again in 1911, under the terms of the Forest Reserves and Parks Act, to 1,800 square miles. The object of the reduction was apparently to confine the park to an area that could be efficiently administered with the existing staff. It is understood, however, that in view of the extraordinary popularity of this wonderful mountain region, steps will be taken before long to re-establish the boundaries of 1902. The wisdom of such a move cannot be doubted. The increased cost of maintenance would be comparatively slight, and the advantages would be enormous. It would make accessible the exceedingly interesting country north of the present park boundaries with its great alpine peaks, snow-fields and glaciers, its beautiful valleys, lakes, mountain streams and waterfalls; it would help to preserve from destruction by vandalism or sheer carelessness many of the scenic beauties of the region; and would give to the wild animals of the mountains a further lease of life.

Since the establishment of the first reservation, known officially as Rocky Mountains Park, and popularly as the Banff Park, several other similar districts have been set apart. Immediately west of Rocky Mountains Park, but on the British Columbia side of the main range, is Yoho Park, with an area of about 560 square miles. The boundaries of this park also will, it is hoped, be enlarged in the near future. West again, and still following the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, we come to Glacier Park, in the Selkirk Mountains, with an area of 468 square miles. Farther north, on the main line of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, the Canadian Government has lately established Jasper Park, with an area of 1,000 square miles. This, too, may be expanded to several times its present dimensions within the next few years.<sup>1</sup> It is possible also that a new park may be created between Rocky Mountain Park and Jasper Park, to embrace the little-known Brazeau River country and possibly the upper waters of the North Saskatchewan, with the great peaks that lie up toward the continental divide. Down near the International Boundary, at the extreme southwestern corner of the province of Alberta, is Waterton Lake Park. The present area is only sixteen square miles, but the Government is being strongly urged to extend its boundaries so as to make the reserve conterminous with Glacier Park on the United States side, thereby creating what would in effect be an international park.<sup>2</sup> North again, but still in the province of Alberta, are Buffalo Park and Elk Island Park, the former of 160 square miles, a little south of Wainwright, on the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, and the latter, about the same area as Waterton Lake Park, near Lamont, on the Canadian Northern Railway. The former is the home of the famous herd of buffalo, now numbering over 1,200, most of which were purchased by the Dominion Government in 1907 from Michel Don Pablo of Missoula, Montana. The latter is a reservation for elk, moose and other large animals.

In addition to the proposed Brazeau Park, access to which would be provided by the Canadian Northern Railway, plans are being formulated for a new park west of Glacier, to include Mount

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<sup>1</sup> Increased in 1914 to 4,400 square miles.

<sup>2</sup> This has since been done, the present area of the park being 423 square miles.

Revelstoke and the surrounding region, and another on the Pacific Coast not far from the city of Vancouver, to include the country between the north arm of Burrard Inlet and Pitt River.

The somewhat peculiar boundaries of the Canadian National Parks may call for a word of explanation. It will be noticed that on their western, or rather southwestern, sides Rocky Mountains and Jasper Parks stop at the continental divide, or in other words at the boundary between Alberta and British Columbia. The explanation is this: when British Columbia came into the Dominion she retained control of the public lands within her borders; on the other hand when the province of Alberta was created her land remained vested in the Dominion. Consequently the federal authorities may establish national parks wherever they will on the Alberta side of the mountains, but have no jurisdiction on the British Columbia side except in one particular region. This is a strip of land forty miles wide, or twenty miles on each side of the Canadian Pacific Railway main line, extending from the summit of the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. When British Columbia entered Confederation in 1871, one of the terms of union was that the new province should be given railway connection with Eastern Canada. In fulfilment of this agreement, the Dominion granted the Canadian Pacific Railway a subsidy of \$25,000,000 and 25,000,000 acres of land. British Columbia was also to give a money subsidy to the company, but finding it impossible to meet its obligations the Dominion assumed the burden in consideration of a grant of this forty-mile strip across the province. It is in this strip, therefore, that the Yoho and Glacier Parks have been located, as well as the proposed park at Burrard Inlet.

The policy of the Dominion Government in administering its national parks is to throw them wide open to the people, to provide convenient means of access to every point of interest within their boundaries, to preserve intact their natural beauties and safeguard their wild life, and to grant all visitors the widest liberty consistent with these objects and with the interests of the people themselves; in fact to provide the maximum of convenience and protection with the minimum of interference. Thanks largely to the intelligence, broad-mindedness and genuine enthusiasm of the officials in charge of the Parks, from the Commissioner in Ottawa to the Forest Ranger on duty in some remote corner of the reservation, the administration has been conspicuously successful, as every one will admit who has had the good fortune to visit any of these magnificent national playgrounds.

The extent to which the Parks administration is prepared to go in insuring the comfort and convenience of those who seek rest or pleasure in the mountains is admirably illustrated in the following extract from the Commissioner's Report:

"The Parks Branch policy necessarily relates to the quality of the service of whatever kind rendered by those dealing with the tourist: character of accommodation, avoidance of congestion, protection against extortion, provision of minor attractions to fill in between the nature trips, construction and maintenance of good roads and trails, special care in the matter of the dust nuisance and rough roads, supervision over sanitary conditions, water supply, horses and vehicles, guides, drivers, charges and rates, furnishing of full and reliable information, and, generally, the reduction of discomforts to a minimum and the administration of affairs so that the tourist shall be as satisfied with the treatment received while in the parks as he inevitably must be with the scenic wonders he has viewed."

The accommodation of the hotels in the parks is excellent in every way. In spite of their out-of-the-way situation they provide all the comforts and luxuries of city hotels, and at very moderate rates. There are several good hotels at Banff in the Rocky Mountains Park, the best of which is the Banff Springs Hotel, maintained by the Canadian Pacific Railway. The railway company also owns the very comfortable Chalet at Lake Louise, in the same park, as well as the hotels at Field, in Yoho Park, and Glacier, in Glacier Park. The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway has also decided to build hotels at Jasper and Miette Hot Springs, in Jasper Park, as well as at Grand Fork in Robson Park, within full view of the monarch of the Canadian Rockies, Mount Robson. Robson Park has recently been set

apart by the Government of British Columbia. Its boundaries extended to the height of land where they run with those of Jasper Park.

One of the admirable features of the administration of the Canadian National Parks is the leasing of lots on nominal terms, so that those who prefer home to hotel life may build their own cottages. At Banff you can obtain a lot for from \$8.00 to \$15.00 a year, according to position and area. The leases run for forty-two years, with the privilege of renewal for an equal period. The same privilege may be obtained in Jasper Park.

One of the principal activities of the Park administration is of course the building of roads and trails to the various points of interest, mountains, lakes, waterfalls, and so forth. The Canadian parks are still in their infancy from an administrative point of view, and an immense amount of work remains to be done before their innumerable points of beauty and grandeur are made conveniently accessible. Still it is possible to-day to reach all the principal peaks and valleys with a moderate expenditure of time and energy. In the four principal parks, Rocky Mountains, Yoho, Glacier and Jasper, there are now, 163 miles of good carriage road, and nearly 300 miles of trail, and this mileage will be largely increased within the next few years. It is the intention also to provide foot-paths to all the nearer points, with rest-houses, for those who prefer to wander about afoot.

An ambitious project closely associated with the parks is the automobile road from Calgary to Vancouver. This is being built through the co-operation of the Dominion Government, the provincial governments of Alberta and British Columbia, and the Canadian Pacific Railway. Portions of the road are already completed, and the balance has been surveyed and the necessary appropriations provided. The present coach road from Calgary to Banff will be improved to form the first link; and the Banff to Laggan road will be utilised as far as Castle Mountain. Here the automobile road turns up Little Vermilion Creek to Vermilion Pass, the boundary of Rocky Mountains Park on this side. From Vermilion Pass the road will cross the Briscoe Range by Sinclair Pass to Sinclair Hot Springs, and ascend the valley of the Columbia to Windermere Lake and the source of the Columbia. Crossing the spit of land that separates the Columbia from its mighty tributary the Kootenay, the road will follow the latter stream to Wardner, then turn west to Kootenay Lake and Nelson, cross the Columbia again after its huge bend to the north, and swing down to the international boundary at Grand Forks, where connection will no doubt be made some time with automobile roads from the south. From Grand Forks the road will follow a general westerly direction, crossing Okanagan River near Fairview, ascending the Similkameen, traversing the Hope Range and coming down the Coquihalla to Hope on the Fraser River, and descending the Fraser to Vancouver.

An alternative route runs west from Windermere, over the Wells Pass, crosses the Lardo country to Killarney at the head of the Lower Arrow Lake, thence up Fire Valley to the present wagon road near Monashee Mines, follows the road to Vernon and Grand Prairie, and by way of Douglas Lake to Merritt and a junction with the route already described. The main road from Calgary to Vancouver will have a total length of about six hundred miles, and will provide one of the most magnificent scenic routes in the world.

From Grande Prairie a branch is projected to Kamloops, and south to Nicola. By way of Kamloops and Ashcroft, also, connection may eventually be made with the famous Caribou Road to the north country, and in the far north, the Caribou Road may be extended to Fort George and up the Fraser to Robson and Jasper Parks, bringing the traveller back to the eastern side of the Rockies at Edmonton. From Kamloops, again, a road may be built up the North Thompson to Robson Park.

Another alternative route, and one that has already been practically decided upon, will swing east from Wardner and traverse the Crow's Nest Pass to the Alberta side of the mountains, where it will follow the foothills to Calgary. Still another branch of the main motor road will run from Castle Mountain through Rocky Mountains and Yoho Parks to Field and Golden, thence up the Columbia Valley to a junction with the main road. Portions of this branch road have already been built by the Dominion Government in the two parks. Apart from other advantages, the completion of this branch

and of that portion of the main road from Castle Mountain to the Columbia Valley, will provide a motor road with easy grades through beautiful valleys and over several mountain passes, completely encircling the famous region of magnificent peaks, snow-fields, glaciers, lakes and waterfalls centring in Lake Louise, a region which in its combination of majesty and beauty, and its variety of colouring and composition, is surely without a peer. From the main road trails will lead inward to Consolation Valley, Moraine Lake and the Valley of the Ten Peaks, Paradise Valley, Lake O'Hara, the Ottertail Range, and a perfect galaxy of great peaks many of which have never yet been climbed or even visited.

As already mentioned, the administration of the Canadian National Parks is designed to interfere as little as possible either with the natural features of the parks or with the liberty of those who come to enjoy their beauty. There are in fact only two important MUST NOTS addressed to visitors in the Parks, and these are that they must not destroy trees, and that they must not kill wild animals. Even in these cases the policy is rather one of education than prohibition. People are being taught to appreciate the scenic as well as material value of the forest areas in the parks, and the simple precautions that are necessary to protect these areas from destruction by fire; and they are also learning to protect rather than destroy the wild life that seeks sanctuary here. One suggestion only remains of police supervision. If you bring a gun into any of the National Parks, it is sealed as you cross the boundary, and severe penalties are provided for breaking the seal while the sportsman remains within the park.

The marvellous effect of protected areas on the increase of wild life has been often commented upon, but the instinct which seems to draw all wild creatures, and particularly the more timid and shy animals, to these sanctuaries must always be a matter of interest and astonishment to visitors. To one who has watched the rapid increase in Rocky Mountains Park and the other reservations of animals which a few years ago were rarely seen, the situation is exceedingly gratifying. The diaries of park officers in this regard make interesting reading. Deer are now found everywhere in the park, and have become so tame that "numbers wandered into Banff town and remained there for days." Mountain goat are constantly met with along the trails, and were lately found on the east side of the Spray River, which had not occurred for many years. Flocks of twenty-five or more may be seen any day along the Banff-Laggan road. What is even more satisfactory, bighorn which had entirely disappeared from most parts of the Canadian Rockies are now increasing rapidly in the Parks. Black bear have become numerous, and a number of grizzlies and cubs have been seen, as well as red fox, wolverine, marten and lynx, and tracks of mountain lion. Large flocks of wild duck are reported on Bow Lake, as well as ruffed grouse, partridge, rabbits and other small game in the woods. Cinnamon bear are reported in Jasper Park, as well as a marked increase of beaver.

A word or two may not be out of place as to some of the plans for the future of the Parks administration. The Zoo at Banff is to be moved to a much more suitable location on the lower slopes of Tunnel Mountain, and systematically developed with the object of making it a complete exhibition of the wild life of Western Canada. A special reserve is to be set apart in some suitable place for antelope, which do not appear to thrive in any of the existing parks. It is proposed to establish a protected area in the Fort Smith country about seven hundred miles north of Edmonton, for the preservation of the herd of wood buffalo – the only buffalo still living in the wild state. This would also be used as a sanctuary for other animals of the northern regions. It is also proposed, following the very successful experiments in Alaska, to provide reservations for reindeer in the Yukon. Another suggestion, which it is earnestly hoped may be adopted, looks to the setting apart at various points throughout the Dominion of small sanctuaries for the preservation of bird life.

One other plan that is being earnestly advocated by the progressive Commissioner of Dominion Parks will appeal with peculiar force to those who are labouring to bring the physical, mental and moral advantages of out-of-door life within reach of the masses of our city-dwellers. The plan is simply to bring National Parks to the people – a step distinctly in advance of the old policy of providing parks, and letting the people get to them if they were able. The Commissioner recognises the fact

that the great mountain parks of Canada are for the most part accessible only to the comparatively well-to-do. To the majority of those who live in the cities the cost of the railway journey is of course prohibitive. He proposes, then, that the Dominion Government should secure a suitable tract of wild land within easy reach of each of the principal centres of population throughout the country, make it accessible by means of roads and trails, put it in charge of competent wardens, make it a sanctuary for the wild life of the neighbourhood, and throw it wide open to the people. Probably no other country is so favourably situated for such a measure at the present time. Wild land, with every variety of delightful natural scenery, may still be set apart or secured at no great cost within an hour or so's journey of most of the Canadian cities. At the same time these cities are growing at a phenomenal rate, and in a few years' time when the need of these natural playgrounds of the people will be much more acute than it is to-day, the cost of the land would probably be prohibitive. An illustration of what may be done for other Canadian cities is the proposed park on the British Columbia coast between Burrard Inlet and Pitt River. This park will be of great benefit to the present people of the city of Vancouver, but it will be of infinitely greater moment to the Vancouver of fifty years hence with its population of a million or more.

It is worth while to read the debates in the Canadian House of Commons of a quarter of a century ago, when the first of Canada's National Parks was set apart for the benefit of the people of the Dominion, and note the practical unanimity of sentiment among statesmen on both sides of politics, Sir John Macdonald, Sir Richard Cartwright, the late Lord Strathcona, Peter Mitchell, and many others, most of whom have since gone beyond the reach of worldly problems, as to the manifold advantages of such a policy. Equally significant are the words of the present Governor General, His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, at a meeting in Ottawa in March, 1913. "I do not think," he said, "that Canada realises what an asset the nation possesses in the parks. These areas have been preserved from the vandal hand of the builder for the use and enjoyment of the people, who may take their holidays there and keep close to nature under the most comfortable conditions, assuring a store of health which will make them the better able to cope with the strenuous life to which they return after their vacation."

Even more significant are the words of Lord Bryce, late ambassador to the United States: "Let us think of the future. We are the trustees of the future. We are not here for ourselves alone. All these gifts were not given to us to be used by one generation or with the thought of one generation only before our minds. We are the heirs of those who have gone before, and charged with the duty of what we owe to those who come after, and there is no duty which seems to be higher than that of handing on to them undiminished facilities for the enjoyment of some of the best gifts the Creator has seen fit to bestow upon His people."

### III

## IN AND ABOUT BANFF

BANFF is probably one of the most cosmopolitan communities in the world. Although its permanent population hardly exceeds one thousand, about 75,000 visitors registered during the season of 1913, coming from every out-of-the-way corner of the globe, Finland and Tasmania, the Isle of Man and the Fiji Islands, Siam, Korea and Japan, Norway, Egypt and the Argentine, New Zealand, Mexico, Turkey and Borneo. In fact, one is rather surprised to find no representative here from Greenland or Terra del Fuego. The bulk of these tourists of course come from other parts of Canada, from the United States, and from the United Kingdom, but practically every country in the world sends its quota, large or small, to this wonderful playground in the heart of the Canadian Rockies.

To accommodate all these visitors there are several comfortable hotels in Banff, notably the Banff Springs Hotel, and the Chateau Rundle. The Banff Springs Hotel, which has been repeatedly enlarged to meet the ever-increasing requirements of tourist traffic, stands on the summit of a rocky butte above the junction of the Bow and Spray Rivers, and commands a strikingly beautiful view to the eastward where the Bow has forced a passage between Tunnel Mountain and Mount Rundle. Bow Falls lie immediately beneath, and in the distance the Fairholme Range makes a splendid background.

Of the large number of tourists who visit the Canadian Alps, the majority do not get very far away from Banff. The reason is perhaps not hard to seek. At Banff they find, without any particular effort, delightful views of mountain scenery, with all the comforts and luxuries of eastern pleasure resorts. Comparatively short carriage drives over good roads take them to a dozen points of interest in the immediate neighbourhood. One of the most popular of these is the Cave and Basin, a mile or so up the valley of the Bow, where one may enjoy a plunge into the clear green waters of the pool. Other springs, with a much higher temperature, boil out of the upper slope of Sulphur Mountain, flowing over a series of brilliantly coloured terraces into natural limestone pools. Here, as well as at the Basin, bath-houses have been provided with every appliance for those who seek health or merely pleasure. The drive up to the springs, through the pines, and with ever-widening views of the enchanting valley, is well worth while for its own sake.

A much finer view, however, is to be had from the summit of Tunnel Mountain. One may drive, ride, or if he prefers a little moderate exercise, walk to the summit. The southern face of Tunnel Mountain drops in a sheer precipice nearly a thousand feet to the valley of the Bow. Beyond rises the rugged bulk of Rundle, with the Goat Range in the distance, the Spray winding as a silver thread down the valley, the Bow sweeping down from the northwest, a noble circle of peaks filling the horizon to the northwest and north, the Vermilion Lakes sparkling in their emerald setting, and around to the northeast, a glimpse of Lake Minnewanka.

With a fishing rod, and any other congenial companion, an enjoyable canoe trip may be had to Vermilion Lakes. The way lies up the Bow to Echo Creek, and by this miniature waterway to the lakes. As an afternoon's paddle nothing more delightful could be imagined, and the fishing is excellent, but the really serious fisherman will prefer the longer trip to Lake Minnewanka where lake trout are to be had of fighting temper and phenomenal size. Fourteen fish of a total weight of forty-three pounds represented one day's catch of a couple of sportsmen in this lake; sixteen caught the following day weighed forty-eight pounds. These, however, were pygmies beside the gigantic trout landed by Dr. Seward Webb in 1899, which tipped the scales at forty-seven pounds. To silence the incredulous, this monster is still preserved in a glass case at the Minnewanka Chalet.

A drive of nine miles from Banff, skirting the base of Cascade Mountain, lands the traveller on the shores of Lake Minnewanka. On the way he may visit a herd of about 25 buffalo, and enjoy the view from the rustic bridge down into the Devil's Canyon. The lake is some sixteen miles in length,

and one may explore it either in a boat or by chartering the launch provided by the Canadian Pacific Railway. It swings, in the shape of a great sickle, around the base of Mount Inglismaldie, whose dizzy precipices soar some thousands of feet into the sky, with the glorious pinnacles of Mount Peechee in the background.

Another delightful drive leads past the Cave and Basin and around the northern end of Sulphur Mountain to Sundance Canyon, a weird little gorge through which Sundance Creek rushes down to its junction with the Bow. The plateau above the gorge was at one time a favourite Indian camping ground, and the scene of the barbaric Sun Dance.

On the northern bank of the Bow, high up above the river, stand a number of those fantastic natural monuments called Hoodoos, an excellent view of which may be gained by taking the drive around the Loop to the foot of Mount Rundle.

So far we have been confined to points of interest at no great distance from the village of Banff, and reached in each case by well-built carriage roads. Back and forth over these roads throughout the season drive streams of pilgrims, absorbing to a greater or less extent the manifold beauties of mountain, lake and river, wild canyon and sunny meadow, sombre pine woods and mountain slopes blazing with the rainbow colours of countless wildflowers; but above all, drinking in the glorious sunlight and revivifying air of the mountains. The great majority will always prefer to worship nature from the comfortable if somewhat crowded seat of a tally-ho, with a luxurious hotel to return to in the evening, and after all why should one blame them; but there will always be some who prefer the wild mountain trail to the macadamized road, the cayuse with all his idiosyncrasies to the upholstered coach, and the camp-fire to all the luxuries of a modern hotel.

Fortunately there are to-day, and will be for some years to come, many miles of trail for each mile of road within the confines of the Canadian National Parks. The present policy seems to be to gradually develop the trails into carriage roads, but one may venture the hope that this policy will not be carried too far. The thought of driving to the foot of Mount Assiniboine on a motor bus, and having its glories profaned by a professional guide perhaps through a megaphone, is too painful to admit.

The evolution of mountain roads is an interesting problem in itself. The foundation is nearly always an Indian trail, one of those ancient thoroughfares that run hither and thither throughout the mountains, following the courses of innumerable streams, and winding up over mountain passes and down again to the valleys that lie beyond. There is a peculiar thrill of excitement in falling unexpectedly upon one of these relics of other days. The imagination leaps back to the time when Indian hunters followed them in search of elk and deer, mountain goat and bighorn. With the exception of a handful of Stonies, whose days are numbered, the Indian no longer hunts in the mountains; and the trails he once followed are now mostly covered with underbrush or blocked with fallen timber.

The first step in the conversion of an Indian trail into a modern road is to cut through the down timber. Expert axemen are sent out for this work, which varies according to circumstances from the cutting out of an occasional log to the hewing of a path through a tangle of fallen trees ten or fifteen feet high. Wherever possible the latter is of course left severely alone, but it sometimes happens that no way around the obstacle can be found and there is nothing for it but to cut out a path. The huge game of jack-straws may cover only a few yards, or it may extend for several miles.

Incidentally the axemen straighten the trail more or less. The practice among the Indians, and after them the fur-traders and white trappers, was to follow an old trail until a fallen tree blocked the way. It would have to be a formidable obstacle to stop the average cayuse, but occasionally even that professional acrobat was brought to a standstill. The rider in such case never cut his way through if it could be avoided. He followed the lines of least resistance, turned right or left through the standing timber until he had won around the fallen tree and back to the trail again. The next man took the new path, until he was perhaps brought up by a later windfall and in his turn added another twist to the devious course of the original trail. It can readily be imagined that these forest thoroughfares did not

at any period of their history represent the shortest route between any two points; and it may as well be admitted here that the policy of every man for himself in trail-making is as active to-day as it was a hundred years ago. Each one of us who has camped in unfamiliar valleys of the mountains must plead guilty to the same selfish practice. Hurrying along the trail, anxious perhaps to reach a certain camping-ground before dark, the temptation to flank a fallen tree rather than laboriously cut through it, is irresistible. The thought is there, though we may not admit it, that we may never come this way again, and the next man must look out for himself.

It remains for the trail-makers to unravel the tangled skein and reduce it to something very remotely resembling a straight line. Having cut through the fallen timber and roughly bridged the deeper creeks, the result is a good pack trail. This is widened and cleared from year to year; levelled, graded and provided with substantial bridges, to convert it into a carriage road; and finally macadamized. And as the picturesque trail is converted into the eminently modern and respectable macadamized road, the equally picturesque pack-train disappears and in its place we see, and smell, that emblem of the twentieth century, the automobile.

However, let us not meet trouble half-way. There are still, thank fortune, many miles of trail in the Canadian national parks which the most enterprising automobile could not possibly negotiate, and many more miles of wonderful mountain country that as yet are even trailless. From the main road which follows the Bow River, and roughly speaking runs southeast and northwest through the centre of the Banff Park, good trails branch off on either side up every important valley. Portions of some of these have been converted into roads, such as those to Lake Minnewanka, Sundance Canyon and up Spray River. From the Chalet at the western end of Lake Minnewanka, where the road now ends, a trail has been opened along the north shore of the lake to its eastern extremity, through the Devil's Gap and Ghost Valley, and across the South Fork of Ghost River to the Stony Indian Reserve, which lies just outside the Park.

Ghost Valley is a weird, uncanny canyon, the scene of many wild Indian legends. It is believed to mark the ancient valley of the Bow, Minnewanka and a couple of smaller lakes being the sole remaining relics of the channel. No water now runs through Ghost Valley, though mountain torrents and waterfalls dash down its precipitous sides. Each disappears in its limestone bed, which must cover a network of subterranean channels. The mountains end abruptly in the Devil's Gap, from which one looks out on the plains, or rather on the border land between plain and mountain. A few miles to the north rises a grim peak known as the Devil's Head, and the whole country is studded with Hoodoos and other strange natural features appropriate to such a region.

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