

Canadian Pictorial

VOL. 5, No. 3

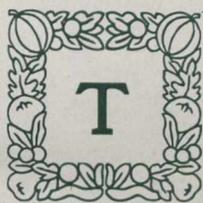
One Dollar
a Year

FEBRUARY, 1910

142 St. Peter Street
Montreal

PRICE 15 CENTS

Canada and Winter Carnivals.



SEVENTY-FIVE years ago, Canada was best known to the world as the home of Ice Palaces and Winter Carnivals. Since that time she has become known to the world as the greatest wheat-growing country on the face of the earth. Then, the illiterate among the peoples of foreign lands had a hazy idea that because they saw pictures of ice palaces in Montreal perhaps the people all over Canada lived in winter-time in houses built of ice! This seems preposterous, but those interested in immigration tell us that in time past they have come across people who admitted having harbored ideas of that kind. Now they know better; they have seen the wheat; they have seen the vegetables; they have seen the flowers, and they know that none of these could have been produced in a country such as their imagination painted. And after all, perhaps they were not so much to blame, for nearly three centuries ago, the French king ceased to take any interest in the little colony in "New France" because this country was merely a "few acres of ice and snow."

Because of all these things the Carnival Committee have a hard time of it now-a-days. So many influences are brought to bear against them that it requires considerable courage and faith to undertake the heavy responsibility of arranging a winter carnival. Last year, and then again this year, the railways refused to offer excursion rates or advertise the carnival in any way, and this attitude they maintained through repeated conferences with upholders of the celebration. Their eye was upon the golden fields of the west, and they feared the effect of a winter celebration in Montreal upon the settlement of Manitoba, Alberta, and Saskatchewan.

We think their view is a mistaken one, and we think that every visitor to Montreal this week will agree with us. In discussing this very matter a year ago, we said: "Winter is not a skeleton in Canada's cupboard, a thing that must be tolerated but kept out of sight as much as possible. On the contrary we Canadians are proud of our winter, and we want the world to know it. That is why the idea of an Ice Palace at Montreal was taken up so heartily by the people generally, in spite of a certain amount of opposition from unexpected sources. All the world knows that Canada has a winter, but all the world does not know how the people enjoy it and how much it contributes to their health as well as their wealth. That is what the Montreal winter carnival is designed to proclaim. The ice palace is 'a thing of beauty,' but not 'a joy for ever,' for, under the rays of the strong spring sun, the last vestige of it will speedily vanish."

A great deal has been said and written about Canada's winter since then, but we see no reason to change our opinion, sincerely believing that the best way to remove the vestige of any superstition that our winter is a terrible thing is to bring people here—all the people that can come—and show them that we all thoroughly enjoy the winter, and that we build ice palaces as play-things, not as dwelling-houses.

There is also another side to this question. Winter sports have done and are doing a great deal towards building up that sturdy manhood and womanhood of which we as Canadians are so proud. Girls and boys grow up in the open-air, and as they reach maturity they still continue to enjoy the life out-of-doors. We have a climate second to none in the world, and it needs no defence at any season. The only thing that our climate has to

live down is that senseless prejudice against an invigorating winter that finds some lodgment in lands where the winter is a wet, drizzly, foggy time. There can be no comparison between their winter and ours.

The programme, published in full on another page, includes events in almost every branch of winter sport. Of course all interest centres around the Ice Palace itself. The mild weather of this winter so far was responsible for some delay in commencing and continuing the building operations, so that unfortunately it could not be so thoroughly completed as were the original plans of Mr. Theodore Daoust, the architect, the full extent of which are shown in this issue.

The Ice Palace stands on Fletcher's Field on the eastern side of Park Avenue, about 300 yards away from the site of last year's structure. The plans call for the main tower to be 100 feet high by 40 feet square, and the supplementary towers on each side 50 feet high, 40 feet by 20. Encircling the three towers is a wall reaching to a height of about 25 feet, and then a courtyard intervenes, the outer wall of the palace being 30 feet distant and rising 15 feet above the ground. Towers 40 feet high mark each corner of the outer wall, which measures 164 feet on Park Avenue by 125 feet on Rachel Street, and from these points of vantage glacial bridges have been built, extending to the main tower. Around the main tower, and above the smaller ones, a corbelled parapet will be built, serving to supply a splendid point for observation of the whole of the city.

The most spectacular events of the carnival will be the night attacks on the palace by several thousand snowshoers, bearing flaming torches. They will tramp across Mount Royal and attack the citadel from the west side, firing off sky rockets as they descend the slopes of the mountain. This fire will be responded to by the defenders of the stronghold, and there will be booming of cannon, and as the contestants draw nearer we are promised a pyrotechnic display that will discount anything ever attempted in Canada. Last year over one hundred thousand people saw the sight and marvelled at the magnificence. The location of the Ice Palace is eminently suitable for such a display. On the west the slopes of the mountain form a natural grand stand, while the expanse of Fletcher's Field and the broad streets leading to it form spaces that are easily filled with vast crowds. The "fete de nuit" at the Park Toboggan Slide is another sight that no visitor to the city should miss. In its picturesque beauty it is absolutely unique. Many will be interested in the jumping on skis. This is to Canadians a newer form of sport which is very popular in Scandinavian lands, and is fast obtaining a foothold here. Hockey matches will be found of intense interest, and a welcome for all visitors will be found at the Curling Clubs for those who have any desire to see the Scottish roarin' game. Skating is another graceful pastime that is popular with Montrealers, while snowshoe tramps will be much favored by parties large and small. Weather suitable for the carrying out of all the events of the programme is all that is necessary to ensure that visitors will carry away with them a new and true idea of what the winter means to Canadians.

As this February issue is the Official Souvenir of the Carnival, most of the regular features of the CANADIAN PICTORIAL have been omitted to make space for the special illustrations of the events of the week. These departments will be resumed next month.