

fore us; granite palisades rose aloft in perpendicular towers; columns of rock jutted out from the precipitous walls like pillars of masonry; between the towering masses the river poured its current with a thousand voices, as its mad waters plunged and tossed and dashed in a wild race for the sea. New scenes appeared—as the canyon changed its forms and outlines—in a constant succession of panoramic pictures, and every turn in the great gorge disclosed views of grander mould.

Mount Stephen rose 11,000 feet into the air, like a king among the lesser peaks, with a mantle of white on his craggy brow. Midway up the lofty peak its sides are pierced with tunnels, whose round black mouths resemble portholes in a ship. The rugged old cone holds within its rocky breast large deposits of precious metals; miners have cut zig-zag trails along the face of the cliffs up to the veins penetrating the rocky pyramid, and have chiseled their way into the face of the mountain in quest of the treasures stored within its stony ribs. The tunnels appear in rows along the peak, 3,000 feet above the base. The shafts have been bored to a considerable depth, and great wealth has been extracted from them.

At this point several of the party remained for several days, our number including tourists from Japan, China, and India. An eating-station

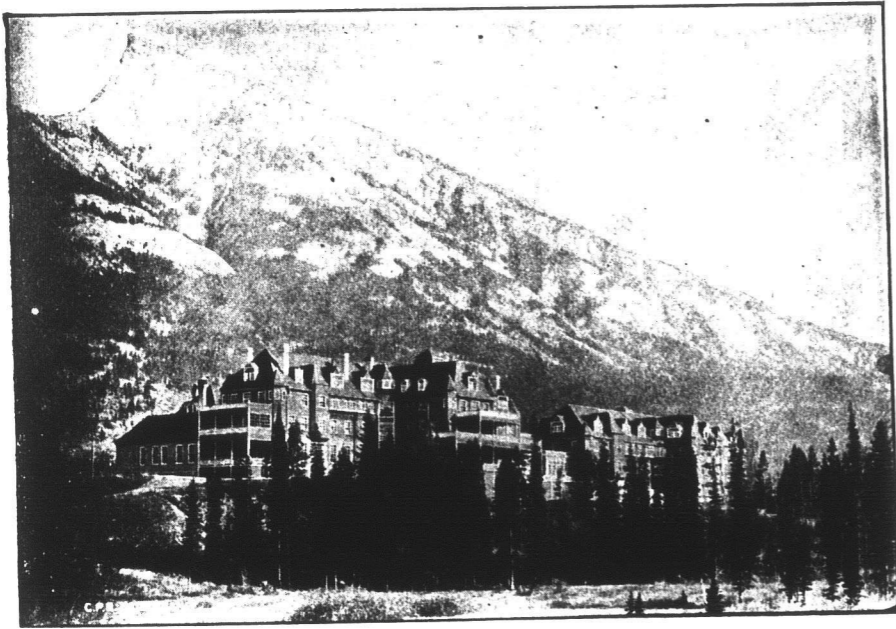
considerable depth and breadth, and is navigable for small craft when not frozen over. From the car windows we looked down on the clear waters meandering like a grassy avenue through the forests and over the valley, and recalled their wide sweep and strong current below the Dalles in Oregon.

Westward we saw the dark masses and white summits of the Selkirk Mountains rising in the distance like a formidable barrier, but one whose jagged heights we must surmount.

Leaving the Columbia we began the ascent of this famous range, waving an adieu to our old friends the Rockies, whose snow-clad mountains stood like marble towers in the east.

The up-grades being heavy, an extra engine is here attached, but the progress of the train is still necessarily slow. Two tracks encircle the mountain—a winter and a summer track. Snow-sheds, constructed of heavy timbers, and having strength to sustain a great weight, are here rendered necessary by reason of the heavy falls of snow, avalanches of which frequently slip down the steep slopes, and, falling on the sheds, are guided over the slanting roofs harmlessly down the mountain side.

The Selkirk range has an unusual formation, and one peculiar to itself, extending in continuous chains, and lacking the granite pinnacles and



C. P. R. HOTEL, BANFF.

and summer hotel at the base of the peak furnish travellers with ample accommodation while they inspect the mines and explore the magnificent scenery of the canyon. A wilder and more varied exhibition of nature cannot be found in the world; a month's stay would not exhaust the wonders of this remarkable region. The climate is so healthy and the water so pure that the Indians here are said to dry up and blow away; certainly no graves are visible.

From this point we sped westward through Howe Pass. The grade here takes a downward slant and the growth of spruce still covers the slopes with a surging wilderness of foliage, rising like plumed steeples on the hilltops. Mountains rear their heads high into the air, and along the broken summits glisten shrouds of snow. The accelerated speed and the bracing air quicken the circulation until everyone glows with excitement and vigor.

Descending the western slopes of the Rockies we passed out of Kicking Horse Gulch into open country, a valley with rolling lands, extending toward the sunset. Stock ranches and country houses dot its slopes. The elevation being too low for grain to mature, only fodder crops are grown.

Town of Golden—an outfitting place for the adjacent mines. Following we follow the Columbia westwards along the banks of the winding channel. The river at distance from the sea has a

massive peaks of the Rockies. The summits are covered with a great depth of snow, but the lower slopes are overgrown with spruce. The avalanches—hundreds of tons in weight—which slide down these slopes tear up the big trees in their path as if they were reeds, the crash of their fall in the canyons sounding like distant thunder. From the top of the Selkirks there is a sublime view of the surrounding mountains, their snow-covered heads rolling in every direction, with the forested canyon winding its dark depths among the ranges below, until shut in with a wall of peaks. Far to the west the series of crags, domes, and pinnacles rise in wild disorder, conning above come, and range standing behind range, the whole expanse draped with a veil of spotless white, against which the dark green of the spruce trees below stood out in beautiful and varied contrast of colors.

Descending the western slope new and charming vistas appear, the canyon making many bends, and the spruce forest becoming denser and taller. At nightfall the view from the top of the observation car is sublime, the stars sparkling in their blue vaults like points of sapphire; the clearness of the sky and the purity of the air accentuating their brilliance. The mountains lie silent and grim in the dark robes of night, and look even more impressive in their noble grandeur than in the light of day. The snow-capped peaks of the western range shield the peaks with

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