

# At the Head Waters of the Wheat Belt

Quebec Travellers with Pack Saddles and Tents among the Glaciers of Alberta.

By AUGUSTUS BRIDLE.

THE number of white men who have seen the head waters of the Saskatchewan could probably be crowded into a street-car. The great river of the wheat belt, more than fifteen hundred miles from its two sources to Lake Winnipeg, has a story of its own. Hundreds of thousands of people are settling along the banks of this remarkable river who have only the faintest notion as to whether it rises in a lake or a glacier, or runs out of the side of a mountain. Once in a while in a dry spell the Saskatchewan jumps ten feet in a night; then the old inhabitants say that there has been a cloud-burst in the Rockies, or that a hot day has come over the glacier. What glacier? Nobody knows. Where is this sea of ice that makes the upper waters of the Saskatchewan cold till past the midsummer? What is it like?

None of the red men on the plains are able to tell you, and but few in the mountains. The Stoneys are the only Indians who have a hunting-ground at the head waters of the Saskatchewan; but they seldom go further in than the river itself and know nothing of its upper tributaries except the Red Deer, and if they should see a glacier would not know what to call it. The few white men who have penetrated far into that remote region are those who have had some other object than merely seeing some of the most superb scenery in America. For two or three summers Professor Coleman of Toronto University, and his brother, Lucius Q. Coleman, a rancher in Morley, Alberta, have camped out in this part of the lower slopes of the Rockies. Last summer these gentlemen went to climb a new mountain—Mount Robson—the highest peak in that part of the Rockies and never yet scaled by any man. They were prevented by snow. A few summers previous they went to explore the mysterious glacier called the Brazeau, which forms the real source of the Saskatchewan. Last summer while the Colemans were at Mount Robson, Lieut.-Colonel Talbot, M.P.P., of Bellechasse, Que., and his party were digging for coal among the upper feeders of the Saskatchewan.

The illustrations on other pages of this issue indicate what sort of strange, beautiful land these

travellers saw in their four months' toiling up the knees of the Rockies. With fifteen horses, nine of them packs and five saddle, they kept on the move from May 14th to September 23rd. They saw fresh snow in May and June and September. They discovered that for the first time in their lives they were in the region where weather is made; the land where storms are brewed out of the primeval vapours; the land where rains and snows and hails and rivers rise; where the mysterious chinooks glide out of the mountain passes and breathe over the foot-hills and down the valleys into the plains of the wheat belt.

This is the poet's land. No man with a merely economic sense has any business pitching tents on those charmed high levels. These travellers began their journey at an altitude of nearly four thousand feet. This was at the Ghost River—where a rancher will tell you that he has been out riding on the Ghost. These are the ranch lands of the foot-hills, bold and beautiful, over which the indigo mountains twenty miles away lean as though one might hit them with a bullet. From the Ghost to the Red Deer is a two-days' ride—getting near the upper waters of the Saskatchewan. Here are the splendid woodlands that in their almost rustic beauty might have inspired a Wordsworth. Here the Stoneys pitch their lodges in the fall and from here push in to the mountain ways after bear and lynx and wapiti. Not many hours distant is the wilderness of timber blown into chaos by the mountain storms. Hereabouts are the coal seams under the timber. Here up the shut-in corridors of the mountains may be seen the blue heads of great peaks that make the mountaineer feel like a mountain lion.

In this awe-inspiring, primeval land Colonel Talbot and his party saw the sort of things that made them want to write poetry without knowing how. They found the tributary streams that come sneaking in threads of crystal out of the defiles and crevasses of the Rockies. They shot the lynx and they saw the steeps that make the home of Krag, the mountain goat. They saw the glacier known as Brazeau out of which glides the Brazeau River that runs into the Saskatchewan hundreds of miles west

of the wheat lands which it threads for the best part of a thousand miles.

Colonel Talbot and his party also found coal at the head waters of the Saskatchewan. Incidentally this means more to the future of Alberta than scenery. Coal in that great province is continually cropping up. Edmonton is built on lignite; so is Strathcona across the river. In the banks of the Saskatchewan for fifty miles down the voyageur sees the black outcropping of this stuff that means heat and power in a land where water-power is rare and where wood fuel in many localities is not plentiful. In the neighbourhood of Edmonton there are twenty-six coal mines turning out nearly three thousand tons every day. Out at Morinville on the Canadian Northern is a great new coal centre where the seams are from eight feet to sixteen feet thick; at Goose Encampment, fifty miles nearer the head waters of the Saskatchewan, the seams run to a depth of thirty feet.

This lignite is the coming salvation of that country. Already formations have been discovered on the Battle River near the borders of Saskatchewan—the same lignite; running from 8,000 to 9,000 heat units to the pound; about half the heat value of pure carbon. Last winter lignite was sent from Edmonton to Winnipeg and Calgary, to Saskatoon and Battleford and down to Prince Albert.

The lignite areas about Lethbridge in the cow country are almost as famous. These lead up through the foot-hills to the celebrated areas of the Crow's Nest Pass in British Columbia. Now at the head waters of the big wheat river new coal measures have been located; on the Brazeau three miles staked, varying in depth from four to sixteen feet; again at Big Horn on the Rocky River seams were staked by Colonel Talbot and his party. The extent of this new area is not yet known, but it looks as though the charmed and awful solitudes of the lower Rockies are soon to be invaded by the cough of the coal mining engine and the snort of the locomotive carrying out the lignite of which the red man never dreamed, more than the lumberman in the Temiscaming dreamed there was a Cobalt with hundreds of millions beneath his shoepacks.

## A N H E R O I C Q U E E N

A Consort who showed right royal courage.

ALL the accounts coming from Lisbon indicate that Queen Amalie of Portugal is an heroic woman. The disaster which has overtaken her husband and her son has shocked the world, and was quite sufficient to have dismayed even a strong-hearted man. It is only by accident that she and the youngest of her two sons were saved from as sudden a fate as overtook her other loved ones. Notwithstanding these personal griefs and the grave political situation, Queen Amalie seems to have exhibited rare moral and intellectual courage. Had she been a weak woman, the crown of Portugal might have been buried with the remains of her murdered husband.

That Marie Amalie of Portugal is no ordinary woman is proved by the fact that after her marriage she took up the study of medicine in the Eschola Polytechnica, the most important medical college in Lisbon. Every moment of her spare time was devoted to her unusual study, notwithstanding the great social demand upon her time. After several years of hard and serious study she received her degree and became a full-fledged Doctor of Medicine. It was said by the gossips that the cause of her desire to study medicine was due to His Majesty's tendency to stoutness and that he good-naturedly became her patient. Strangely enough, His Majesty followed her orders, though the regulations were decidedly severe; the treatment brought him great benefit. The Queen's knowledge of medicine has enabled her to take a great interest in all kinds of medical and sanitary reform and has been of much benefit to the people of Portugal.

Queen Amalie is the eldest daughter of the late Comte de Paris and was named after her great grandmother, Louis Philippe's wife, Marie Amalie. She was the member of a large and happy family, and

was noted for her light-hearted gaiety when the Duke of Braganza claimed her as his bride in 1886.



Queen Amalie, of Portugal.

The Duke, then known as the Crown Prince and later as King Carlos, was a handsome, dashing

young fellow only twenty-three years of age.

The married life of the royal couple seems to have been fairly satisfactory. Their two sons were a great source of comfort to them, and the Queen was greatly interested in their education and development.

A story which is worth recording at the present time runs thus: Some years ago, when trouble threatened Portugal, the King remarked: "If I were ever put to the test I should prove to Europe that, though the king of a small nation could not hope to be victorious over a powerful enemy, he could be brave and loyal, and could die for the honour of his flag."

The Queen immediately said, "And I should not let the King go alone."

A certain marquis who happened to be present remarked, "Madam, a woman's place is not on the battlefield. You have your children to think of."

"Marquis," was the response, "a woman's place and a queen's is by her husband's side, through good report and ill, through rough times and fair."

Queen Amalie displayed great personal courage at the time of the inhuman attack upon her family a few days ago. She was willing to sacrifice herself to save the Crown Prince Luiz. She herself and her younger son were wounded. But her physical courage was second to her moral courage in advising the dismissal of Premier Franco and in manoeuvring so that her younger son, now Manuel II., should accept Admiral Ferreria de Amaral as his chief adviser. As the new king is but nineteen, he cannot be expected to play a strong part even in this exceptional drama. Of his uncle, the Duke of Oporto, little is known, and it is to Queen Amalie that the world will probably credit the firm manner in which a throne was saved at a time when weakness might have meant revolution.