

■ ■ ■ The Wardens of the West ■ ■ ■

Written for The Western Home Monthly by Robert Wilson (Author of "Canada's Western Wonderland," "A Northern Paradise," etc., etc.)

A LITTLE travel, like a little knowledge, is a dangerous thing. This is the experience—the acknowledged experience—of the most travelled traveller, the most exploring explorer. The world is full of odd surprises; surprises which would stagger the raw hand and flabbergast the untutored. The old and trite saying: "Fools admire, when men of sense approve," is especially applicable when the subject of travel is being discussed. The uninitiated, the inexperienced in the world's magnificence, the mind untutored in the entrancing art of travel is invariably the one to go into raptures at the first indication of terrestrial allurements, the first to cry with unreasonable enthusiasm and extravagance at Nature's first revelation.

Experience teaches, however, and it is in the exacting school of experience, so ably and rigorously presided over by this hard-headed old autocrat, that we begin to learn a whole lot of invaluable lessons; lessons which not only remove the dangers ever present with a "little knowledge," but which also ennoble us by broadening our outlook, by enlarging our view and by giving us just that insight into a host of things, leaving us in wonder and awe, to grope our own way into the labyrinths and mazes of a perpetually increasing, and eternal land of wonder.

The experienced traveller; the traveller who, when he speaks of what he has seen and the lands in which he has travelled, has right to be heard and who speaks with the authority born and begotten of experience, eschews the unbalanced language of the novice. He approves, when the inexperienced goes into raptures and loses himself in a frenzy of extravagant iteration.

It is with the unequivocal modesty and reverence of the man who has travelled in many lands and sailed many seas, that the writer approaches the impressive and fascinating subject of Canada's mighty wardens of the West; the incomparable, the majestic, the inspiring Rocky Mountains. The magnitude of these colossal warriors of ages, their magnificence, their infectious grandeur and peerless beauty, their glory by day and their mystery by night, are beyond the power of pen to portray, beyond the life of man to comprehend.

The Canadian Rockies, is an expression as familiar to the average denizen of this Dominion as the war now raging in

Europe; but, how few even begin to comprehend its true meaning, its marvellous significance. The Canadian Rockies! The phrase in itself is an inspiration, suggestive as it is of a land of silent sentinels engaged to-day, as they have been for tens of thousands, may be millions of years, in a vigil of strange solitude. The everlasting hills are surely here, as they tower sky-ward for thousands of feet, snow-capped and gorgeous in the light of the sun, sombre and sad in the shadows of night.

But, when the Canadian Rockies are lightly and even flippantly referred to, it should be remembered that they represent but a small portion of the heritage of beauty with which a prodigal Nature has endowed this magnificent Western Wonderland. The fact that so little reference is made to the glories of the gigantic, nameless lakes with which this gorgeous territory is studded, to the mighty foaming rivers, to the infinite and silent valleys, to the towering trees and trickling brooks and to the sober shadow-land which yawns away into a seeming eternity, when the reddened sun and his golden glory fade over the last radiant mountain-top, speaks eloquently of the fact that the vast majority of Western travellers have passed through this enchanting country on the beaten track of steel, satisfied with the most casual glance at this land of unsullied delight, content, mayhap, to tell the story in the distant, street-soiled city, of a trip through Canada's Western Wonderland, when they were but the merest, the most common-place lookers-on, from the precincts of a well-ordered dining-car, or, like one or two "experienced travellers," coiled up in the depths of a capacious "Lower Berth," while radiant Nature was at her best.

"Whereon the foot of man has never trod," "on which the eye of man has never gazed," are terms which have a new meaning and bear a different interpretation when this land is reached. As the northern city of Edmonton is left in the distance and the odd but attractive town of Edson falls behind, the world-famed Canadian prairie lands are almost forgotten. We are in a new world, so far as environment goes, yet a land of inconceivable antiquity, so far as the evidence of science goes.

Who can ever forget the relief to the eye and the sense of delight when the first mountains begin to loom into view? The monotony of the level stretch of un-

ending prairie is completely and irrevocably left behind as the well-ordered and luxuriously-equipped Canadian Northern train approaches the entrancingly beautiful town of Jasper, occupying a natural position of intrinsic beauty and snugly leaning against such an array of magnificent, multi-hued mountains as may be found nowhere else in the entire world. Pyramid mountain, a mountain of strange reflections, a revelation in changing glories of light and shade, with the chilled waters of the same name sparkling in the sun or scintillating in the fitful light of the dazzling starshine, calls forth the unstinted admiration of the least-impressionable traveller. Goat Mountain to the west and, still further west the leaning form of Mount Cavell and the glacier-torn and lacerated form of Mount Hardisty may be clearly discerned. In between, in a valley-land of unparalleled beauty, wherein the lashing and spray-tossed waters of the mighty Athabasca add a vigor and a charm, lies the town of Jasper, the starting-point for many a trip from which travellers return impressed with earth's beauty as they never were impressed before, and endowed with an experience that would justify them in applauding, instead of merely approving. "Fools applaud, where men of sense approve," may be true of other hallowed terrestrial sanctuaries, but here, all express admiration at first, but as the enchantment of this paradise grows on one, and reality assumes the place of phantasy, reverence and delight follow in the natural order of things.

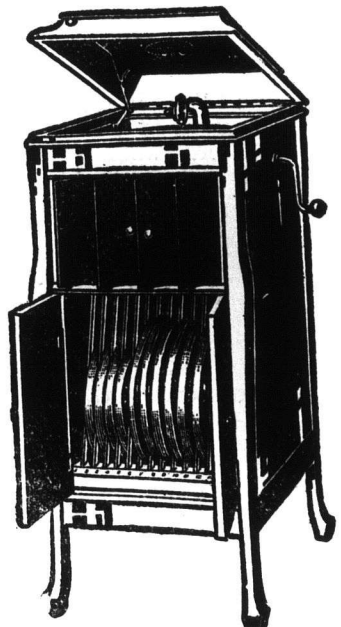
At the present time there is limited accommodation at Jasper for tourists and others who having heard the call of the alluring West, have come here to revel in the delights of Nature unadorned and at her very best. But, the fame of this incomparable land is spreading every day and with every summer come visitors from the remotest corners of the earth, all of whom return impressed with the heritage which is the rightful possession of every Canadian. So rapidly are these visitors increasing that the C.N.R. have determined upon an elaborate and most desirable method of catering to the requirements of such. Chalets of the most artistic appearance and possessed of all the comforts of the most modern and up-to-date hotel, will be erected in certain judiciously-selected parts of this Western Wonderland. One of these will be established in the town of Jasper, and all the conveniences will be at hand by which tourists as well as the visitors who love to "take it easy" and lounge the days away in untrammelled bliss, may have the very best that money and experience can provide.



The entry of the King and Queen of Belgium into Bruges. After being occupied by the Germans for four years, the liberated inhabitants almost went wild with the sight of their hero king returning to their city. The photo shows the King and Queen entering the square. The couple are in the immediate centre of the photo. The royal party is saluting the Belgian flag, which has been raised for the first time in four years in the city.



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