

THE CANADIAN ROCKIES

PART I

FIRST VISIT TO THE ROCKIES, 1884

CHAPTER I

ON THE WAY TO THE ROCKIES

WHEN the train left Winnipeg for the West, about the middle of May, 1884, it was not in a hurry. It took its time at the stations so that you could pick spring flowers from the prairie, and eat a dinner of wild goose in a restaurant tent at one place, or enjoy a supper of antelope in a shack beside the station at another.

Twenty miles an hour meant a serious spurt, not to be undertaken everywhere, so that the motion and the scenery were not wildly exciting. The wheels sounded a monotonous beat on the ends of the rails, and the landscape was always the same—a sort of magic circle of prairie grass that seemed to travel with us. The sky was a very shallow dome, and shut down all round like a watch-glass over an insect.

One began to fancy that we were only marking