

Western Welcome of the Canadian Press Women

(Concluded from page 15.)

For the past three years the offices of president, corresponding secretary and treasurer of the C.W.P.C. have been held in Toronto. It has meant much hard work and a great deal of pleasure. Now the "head office" has been moved to Edmonton, and the new President is Mrs. Arthur Murphy, widely known as "Janey Canuck," and the author of "Janey Canuck in the West" and "Open Trails." When we reached Edmonton we were met by a reception committee so kind at half-past seven in the morning that one fails to imagine how pretty they would have been to us if we had arrived at a more reasonable hour. In Edmonton we met, besides the Edmonton ladies, the Regina members, including Mrs. Bennett; Calgary members, Mrs. Cumming, Miss McLennan and others; Vancouver members, with our poet, Mrs. Isabel Ecclestone MacKay, Miss Maclean, who one would like to mention as among the best and most promising of the younger women journalists of Canada, Miss Durham and many others. It was something worth travelling more than two thousand miles, and planning and working, to see how well pleased they looked and to hear them say, "I am so happy to be here." Miss Clare Battle was a club member from Victoria. Miss Russell, of Halifax, had travelled from Winnipeg.

ONE must return in the recital of this wonderful journey to Winnipeg. Shall one try to tell how these six Canadian cities welcomed the members of the Women's Press Club? At Winnipeg the Mayor, aldermen, and representatives of the C.P.R. met us at the station. From Winnipeg Mr. Trautman of the C.P.R. joined the expedition. We were conveyed to motor cars, carried over the city, which is growing in population as surely only cities in Canada can grow, given tea in Assiniboine Park as the guests of the newspaper men of Winnipeg and the City Council, and at seven-thirty were entertained to a civic banquet in the Royal Alexandra. Banquets and bouquets are as familiar to women writers now as printer's ink.

It was all very pretty, very kind, very Canadian and charming, this hospitality of Canadian cities. In Edmonton the members were billeted by kindness of the Women's Canadian Club. We were bidden to tea, and banquetted again, and the president who was retiring from office was given such a two armsful of red roses as she can scarcely ever hope to see again, certainly never to have for her very own. She will never think of Edmonton without remembering these beautiful sweet red roses. Calgary was kindness itself. Again the members were carried off in motors, entertained to luncheon and tea, given flowers, candy, had a special number of a newspaper published in their honour, and were made to feel that when they came this way again Calgary was one of the places where one would like to stay indefinitely.

And now one comes to the part of the journey which cannot be described. Before we visited Calgary we had been taken as the guests of the Grand Trunk Pacific into Jasper Park. Mr. Cy Warman was sent specially to convey us with all kindness. "I had been thinking for a long time on this journey that I must be the Princess Patricia," said Mrs. McClung, "but now I feel as if I were the whole Royal Family." Such a train as the train we travelled in! With special menus printed for the Canadian Women's Press Club, and given to us afterwards to carry home! Such visions of mountains in the sky! All the long day we went and came. We saw the swift Fraser, and barges built of rough timber to carry provisions down to Fort George. These barges never come back again; the current is too strong. We saw the Athabasca, which runs north and ends in the Arctic Ocean. Then it was sunset, and as we sat there, women who knew each other well and cared much for rivers, mountains, sky of Canada, the sunset colors fell on the mountains and fell on the river, and that was the time when no one said anything. There was nothing that one could say.

Nor can anyone tell about the mountains at Banff, where this fortunate and happy club of ours were guests of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Banff is a delightful place, and we felt great mag-

mates and nabobs to be owning a great hotel for two days and two nights and to have a new ball room opened in our honour. Then the day followed when it was time to say good-bye. Two-thirds and more of the club members went west, and most of them are still travelling, making friends with the mountains and chumming with the Pacific. One-third turned back home.

AND now one has a confession to make. On Sunday night, the fifteenth of June, eleven of us were left standing on the station platform at Medicine Hat. The train would not come back, even for eleven members of the Women's Press Club. So it happened that we missed one long, happy day in Regina. To me, personally, nothing can ever quite make up for this loss. They had planned such a beautiful day for these women scribes. And we were to have had tea at a farmhouse on the prairie. To think that one will never, never have that tea! I would give a great deal if I could turn back the clock for that one day in Regina, when we were to have been the guests of The Leader to breakfast, and of the Mayor and City Council at luncheon, and then tea at the farmhouse. But this one can say heartily: I never knew any people behave more perfectly than these disappointed hosts of ours. Not one word of reproach; and in the one short hour we had in Regina they showed us their beautiful city, where there is not a mark—scarcely a mark—left of the terrible cyclone. I can assure the people of Regina, especially these kind people who came to the station to meet us—that the Women's Press Club have a great admiration and a warm attachment for Regina folk.

This may seem a long story. So much remains to be told. How Colonel Rogers of Jasper Park came with us on the train and then left us in a special to fight a forest fire. How Mr. Brown of Edmonton and the Canadian Northern Railway, when there was a rumour that there would not be room for everyone on the Jasper Park trip, had a train all ready to carry us to Athabasca Landing, so that none of us should miss a jaunt into the north country; how this same Mr. Brown gave the president a pass for one of the members over the telephone at twelve o'clock one night in Edmonton. How the C.N.R. gave free transportation to members who needed it to get to Edmonton. How splendid the papers were which were read by the members of the C.W.P.C. at the general meeting. How Mount Robson, that famous peak, was shrouded in mist when we stopped to look, and then doffed that wonderful cowl, showing himself in his loftiness. "You might have come here forty times without seeing him," said Colonel Rogers, who was the guide of the C.W.P.C. How Mile 49 is the most typical construction camp that anyone ever could see off the stage. How the new President, Mrs. Murphy, although ill and only half recovered from an operation, smiled and worked as only she can. How the city of Moose Jaw invited us to lunch on the spur of the moment, ran us round the city in motors, and then gave us flowers to wish us back again. How Mr. Taylor, of the C.P.R. in Moose Jaw, sent his private car with us to Regina for tea and strawberries and cream.

But best of all to remember is the good fellowship, the friendliness, the happy times we had together as we journeyed. One is very proud of that company, without jealousies, without heartburnings, with pride in each other's work, with not a single happening to regret. What good talks we had! What peals of laughter came from here and there in these cars where groups of writing women listened to those who have the genius of talk. I can't help telling you about one Toronto girl who is a born humorist, and of Nellie McClung and her stories. "I must work harder," we all said. Good friends we were and are. Because of all the kindness shown to us we have a humble feeling that we have never done anything to help anyone else. If ever a wonderful journey put anyone in the mood to write and to write better than before it has been this 1913 journey of the Women's Press Club.

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