



THE ATHABASKA VALLEY

THE Athabaska Valley, through which the Grand Trunk Pacific approaches the mountains, is a most remarkable, natural avenue of commerce, and in many ways closely resembles the rolling prairie but for the snow-turbaned giants with which it is girt. It is so wide, so level and so gentle in its approach to the continental divide that it is almost amazing that such a pathway should have been provided by Nature when the colossal peaks were upheaved in serried ranges on every hand. For a hundred miles before the traveler enters its portals the phantom forms of nameless peaks haunt the horizon as the railway winds its way through the foothills and the beautiful valley of the Athabaska River (Mistahay Shakow Seepee), the Great River of the Woods, as it is known by the Crees. Gradually those phantoms take definite form out of their shimmering, prismatic, gauzy haze until the first escarpment of the Rockies is thrown up, well defined, mighty and defiant—transcendently beautiful with its battlemented heights, castellated towers, ramparts and beetling precipices filling the range of vision. There are, however, two peculiarly prominent elevations. These are Roche a Perdrix and Roche a Miette, the grim, cyclopean sentinels who eternally guard the portals of the pass. Those two grand old warders—landmarks to beckon the traveler on to the beauteous valley and the wonders of nature beyond—are two of the half dozen mighty peaks which the old trappers thought



JASPER LAKE, JASPER PARK