



THE POOL HOT SPRINGS, BANFF.  
(Messrs. Wm. Notman & Son, photo)

## The Hot Springs of the Canadian North-West.



OUR visit to Japan, that land of solfataras and highly temperatured, highly mineralised springs, where every one, down to the very poorest coolie, takes the baths for every complaint under the sun, makes us prick up our ears whenever we hear the word "Springs." So on our journey across Canada's Transcontinental, we determined to stop off again at Banff and to make the acquaintance of Harrison.

Banff is a very favoured locality. Everyone has heard and read and probably dreamed many a time of the Rocky mountains—the Switzerland of American romance. Here they have the opportunity of visiting them in a hotel of the Monterey calibre, situated within a mile and a half of the railway station on the transcontinental line, where a person can stop off as long as he chooses without forfeiting his railway ticket or his Pullman ticket as he goes to San Francisco (changing at the Mission station) or Japan. As I write these lines, the last connecting rails between it and San Francisco are about completed, and San Francisco folks will be enabled to see for themselves whether my judgment of the Springs and the scenery is a sound one—without risking the discomforts of a steamer, which for invalids has special terrors.

Banff is situated in a gap of the Rockies; it stands, it is true, over four thousand feet from sea level, but then the Cascade mountains tower five or six thousand feet above it, and the Peak mountain, the Sulphur mountain and the Sentinel are hardly inferior. Ringed though it is with mountains, the valley is as level as a billiard board, and through it winding like a serpent, of the same exquisite turquoise blue as the Limmat when it leaves the Zurich See or the Lake of Zug, flows the deep, wilful Bow river tearing in one place through ridges of rock with a mighty cataract that approaches a waterfall in altitude and just below rolling floods of fabulous depth like the mighty Fraser.

A mile from the Falls a couple (one young male and one young female, will be found best) that can handle a canoe, pass up a clear creek—now grating shallow, now deep, glassy pool with a white sand bottom, almost untenanted by fish, into a most fascinating little slew, through which nothing but a birch bark canoe can thread its way amid the tall overhanging tufts of hay grass and fireweed and golden rod. Around it winds and loses itself among reeds. A startled white-tailed eagle soars, some ducks whirr away and the tete-a-teters find themselves among the red sedges of the Vermillion Lakes with a diadem in tiers of tall reeds and dark pines, foothills and distant faint blue mountains.

The train from the west arrives at half-past ten at night, and the train from the east at a quarter to seven in the morning, so naturally the first thing one thinks of on one's arrival is hotels. There are hotels to suit all persons, from a dollar a day to three and a half. First, of course, comes the great C.P.R. hotel, whose appearance is familiar to every one from the famous view taken by Notman, of Montreal, with the Peak Mountain and the Bow Valley in the background. Very picturesque it is with its chalet styled architecture half way between a Tudor Hall and a Swiss Chalet; it might almost be described as a Tudor Chalet in wood, so full of gables and terraces and tall chimneys is it. Inside of course it presents great attractions to the traveller, with its hundred or two of guests, its great hall with three or four tiers of galleries and baronial fire-place, and its luxurious drawing-room; it is just as palatial as a Monterey or Saratoga hotel—while it is right away up in the forest scenery of the Rocky Mountains.

The Sanitorium is a hotel for a different class of purses, and its virtues are proved by its being full all the year round; it is very handy to the town, just at the end of the bridge, it has excellent sulphur baths and an excellent resident physician, the Hon. Dr. Brett, whose ability is evidenced by his being speaker of the N.W.T. Assembly; and as the C.P.R. Hotel has its Bow Valley and Peak Mountain view, the Sanitorium looks full in the face of the sublime Cascade Mountain which raises its stormy peak to heaven 10,000 feet high, and commands a perfectly charming view of the turquoise blue water of the Bow river, meandering across the