CANADA WEST

Frederick Niven

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FT. McPHERSON
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NORTH WEST TERRITORIES
YUKON
MACKENZIE
KEEWATIN
HUDSON'S BAY
ATLIN
CASSIAR MOUNTAINS
PACIFIC OCEAN
QUEEN CHARLOTTE IS.
PORT SIMPSON
PRINCE RUPERT
PEACE R.
REINDEER LAKE
MANITOBA
PATRICIA
ONTARIO
BRITISH COLUMBIA
ALBERTA
SASKATCHEWAN
YELLOW HEAD PASS
CARIBOO
EDMONTON
CAN. NOR. RY.
CANADIAN NORTHERN RY.
CANADIAN PACIFIC RY.
KICKING HORSE PASS
CALGARY
SHUSWAP
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CANADA WEST

by

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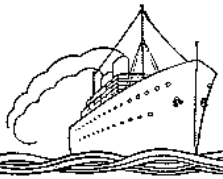

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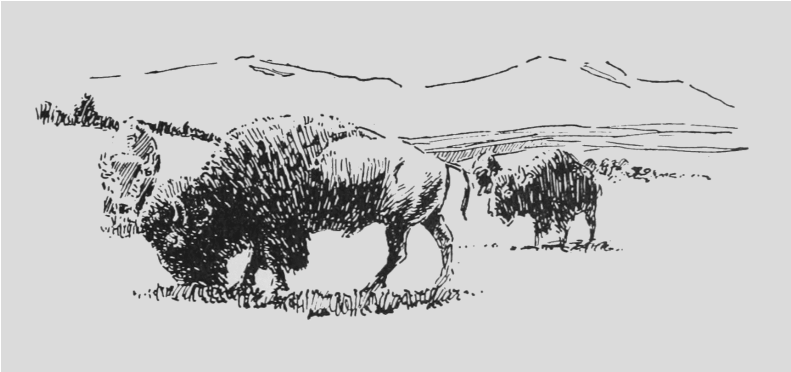


Kings of the Plains

CHAPTER I

VASTNESS—THAT is the word. That is the Open Sesame to any impression of this land, and to simplify the task of conveying it a bisectional treatment at once suggests itself. The Prairie Provinces, and other vast tracts northward, to the Rocky Mountains; the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast: that will be the order of our going.

And first it is necessary to go back some way; not so deeply as to inflict a geological or antiquarian treatise on readers, but the better to convey that sense of vastness essential to feeling the land as its peoples feel it.

At the quarries near Tyndal, in Manitoba, geologists have gone down like divers, where there is no sea now, and brought up for our enlightenment and wonder rocks scrawled upon with arabesque of seaweed and stamped with ammonites and other ancient shells as leaves are pressed between the pages of an old book. And away at the other end of this tremendous land, in a region of the kind that the early French voyageurs called *mauvaises terres*, much like the Bad Lands of Dakota, antiquarians have found megalosaurus and plesiosaurus, and have chiselled out a monstrous thing that has the neck of a snake and a crocodile's head, the flying pterodactyl. These creatures they have found on either side of a stretch of the Red Deer River, a stream much narrower now than it was five million years ago. The history of the land since then until more or less recent years has been but of slow geological change, and of the seasons, the scorching heat of summer, the stinging flurry of the dry winter snow.

Vastness—vastness, from the flat plains of what is now Manitoba to that surge of rocks that the Indians called "the backbone of the world," and we have named the Rocky Mountains. After the seaweed and the pterodactyls had been all laid away in sand and pressed down as in the leaves of a book, there was grass; and antelope herds and bison (commonly called buffalo) herds wandered over that vastness. We know little—next to nothing—of the early history of men there. But two stories of their migrations (old stories, or recent stories, according to how one considers time) survive in their legends and are ratified linguistically.

Long ago a band of the great Dakota (or Sioux) nation, called Assiniboines, that is to say, Stone Sioux, because of their custom of cooking their food with hot stones, left the centres of their tribe, somewhere about where Minnesota and Dakota now are—one dim tradition says because of a feud arising out of the faithlessness of a Dakota Helen—and journeyed northward to discover what lay across that flat immensity. Thus we have the Assiniboine River, to which these Assiniboines came on that trek.

When I first went west as a boy that big parallelogram that is now South Saskatchewan was called Assiniboia. On the maps of the very early travellers you may see the location of these Indians marked, to the best of their hearing, by the words "Assini poets." In their own way these copper-hued explorers were poets! The old restlessness persisted, urging some of them, later, westward along the banks of the river to which they had come.

Anyone who has seen the indigo blur of the Rockies along the western prairie's edge will realise how, raising that in the immensity, these Assiniboines kept on. From north to south the mountains extend, in summertime as a thickening of the base of the sky, as though its colour had run down and solidified there. And over them, from north to south, are spectacular sunsets, the white cloud mountains above the ones of stone turning gold, turning pink, then lit with hues as of calamitous fire and smoke before the final crumbling into night. In the spring and late autumn and winter the Rockies are a ragged white selvedge of the sky. But it was in summer that the Assiniboines saw them first.

The Blackfeet Indians, into whose territory they had then come, as it happened were away from their centre *en masse* on a great buffalo hunt, and so without let or hindrance the Assiniboines continued on their way. They entered into the pass through which the Canadian Pacific Railway now runs. They saw. They admired. But when at last they turned back they found the Blackfeet, who had returned to their central camps, about where the city of Calgary now stands, inquiring into the trail that they had left.

In the battle that ensued the Assiniboines had to fall back westwards. One or two subsequent attempts they made to pass eastward, but always the Blackfeet were ready for them. Yet such was the valour of this little band that the Blackfeet durst not pursue them among the natural fortresses of the foothills. Then philosophically the Assiniboines considered that it was a great and goodly land to which they had come, and there they are to this day —Stony Indians, which is merely the Anglicising of Assiniboine, a clan of the great Dakota (or Lacota) nation. So one of their legends tells us, and their speech and certain manners and customs verify that legend.

Of another great flitting across these vast lands, this time from north to south, we learn similarly. Up toward the Arctic Circle there was internecine strife in a tribe of the Athapascan stock. So bitter and bloody it was that at last the old men of the tribe pled for a truce and a pow-wow. They harangued the people on the folly of it. The result was a decision to draw lots. The faction that lost would then migrate away so many moons (months, as we say) in any direction they saw fit. That drawing of lots would, no doubt, be done by the old method of a long and a short stick held between closed palms.

In the history of the west along the foothills east of the Rocky Mountains one comes across references to this exodus. Down through that vastness, out of the Land of Little Sticks (the north woods), across the rolling western prairie, always with the Rockies to right of them, blue with silver veins of snow, and high cliffs morning after morning mirroring the dawn, these people moved, the ordained moons. Bits of that old trail trodden down by these moccasined feet, and by the dogs that hauled the *travois*, we travel on now in our motor-cars. It passed close to Calgary. It continued to where the city of Helena is, in Montana. What old-timers still speak of as "the old MacLeod trail" their predecessors referred to as "the old north trail." And down in Arizona to-day are the Apaches and the Navajoes, speaking a dialect of the Athapascan tongue.

These are the only two movements of aboriginal men, in that vastness, of which we know.

When the Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay began their adventuring, what struck them first, as it must strike any sensitive mind to-day, even when the antelope and the buffalo are gone and you look upon wheat from horizon to horizon, was the vastness, the immensity of the territories into which they adventured. Their trading posts were dotted from Hudson's Bay itself down into Astoria, which is now Washington State. News of the doings in old Europe reached their distant outposts two years after their occurrence. The pelts from Astoria passed up the Arrow Lakes to the great bend of the Columbia, thence up Canoe River, then were portaged, carried through the mountains to the prairies, shipped down Saskatchewan to Winnipeg, which was then Fort Garry, and thence continued by river, lake, and portage, to Montreal.

Immensity. Vastness. During the ensuing years many explorers journeyed through these lands, cheerfully planning where they would winter this year, where they would winter next year: Samuel Hearne, Sir John Franklin, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, David Thompson, Alexander Henry,

Pierre Gaultier de La Vérendrye, the Frobishers, Pierre Esprit Radisson, and the rest. In the annals of this land these names seem to come out of long and long ago. And yet, considering its antiquity (the arabesques of seaweed on the rocks at Tyndal, the pterodactyls by the Red Deer River), it is only the other day they passed this way. The Hudson's Bay Company had its rivals in the North-West Fur Company; the firm of Revillon Frères had not been imagined.

Even to-day, travelling through the land by train, alighting nowhere, but just watching the unfolding, hour after hour, of space and space again, the impression persists of a vast land. There are those who, looking out of the car-windows, feel to the marrow of their bones that they could never live there. That billiard-board under the arch of sky terrifies them. Yet to be out and about in it is a very different matter.

The early fur-traders, of course, on coming out, were wont to spread reports that it was a howling wilderness, and to asseverate they would not live there unless they had to. To prevent an influx of population they centralised upon the harsher aspects. They told of blizzards in winter cutting across the flat prairie, blizzards that blinded a man so that he could not see his camp were it no more than a hundred yards away. They told—though perhaps this sounded, to some ears, like a long-bow yarn—of how in the afternoons of blazing hot summer days there would come over the world's horizon, as it were over the flat edge of the sea, a little cloud no larger than a man's hand, but of a warning colour, discharging, after the terrific heat, hailstones as large as hazel-nuts; yes, as large as bantams' eggs. They did not tell of the lure of these distances, of the prairie flowers, of the songs of birds, of the great migrations of the ducks and geese, so cloud-like that, passing under the sun, they sent shadows over the land. And if to praise the country had been their object instead of to disparage it, they would not, perhaps, have even tried to tell of one thing that called them back: the cry of a loon across the misted lakes at morning. For what is the call of a bird to lure a man!

Yet others besides the servants of that Company of Adventurers began to arrive here, and with the intention of remaining. These, to state the case mildly, were not welcomed. In the books of history you may read, for example, of the treatment accorded by the fur-traders to the Scots agricultural settlers who came into the land under the auspices of Lord Selkirk. The aim of this book is not, however, that of a historical work. No more of early history need be told here than is necessary for a realisation of the vastness of this land.

HOME SEEKERS

And here is transition period come definitely. From then till to-day it has always been transition period in that wide north-west. Leave it for ten years —yes, five—and return, and you will see. It is as if the land had its destiny and men are but the unwitting servitors of that. The fur-traders had no desire, touching the land, save to conserve it as wilderness; intruders, but hardly to be called innovators, introducing to its inhabitants a necklace of beads for one of shells, a flintlock rifle in place of bow and arrows, no more. But the first slit made by a plough in one small corner of the pastures of the buffalo and grassy coverts of the prairie chicken—that was an ominous gash indeed. There were those who realised that—or, at least, that it might be.

Many of the French voyageurs who rowed the York boats and paddled the birch-bark canoes taking in the "trade," taking out the furs, for the Hudson's Bay Company, had married Indian women. There were settlements, thus, of French half-breeds. And now the dread of an influx of population, that had troubled the factors of the Hudson's Bay Company earlier, affected these. Their first rebellion broke out in 1869, on the transference to the Crown of the Hudson's Bay Company's domain. The second occurred in 1885. Many of their grievances were utterly valid, and leading members of the North-West Mounted Police realised that, and that the Government's attitude to them was despotic. A miserable business.

There are many who can recall, very clearly, incidents of that second Riel rebellion. To hear them talk is to realise how swiftly, the dam once broken, the flood poured through. In their stories we hear a strange sound across that immensity, the scream of the ungreased wooden wheels of the old Red River carts. It carried for miles. Where the transport (apart from the winter's dog-team and sled) was not by rivers in canoes and York boats, it was in brigades of these primitive conveyances. Day in, day out, that shrill scream accompanied their long journeys, and large brigades could be heard before they came over the horizons.

But the Riel rebellions have been written of frequently now, not only in volumes, but in reminiscitory articles in such Canadian journals as *MacLean's Magazine*, and in the annual of the North-West Mounted Police, *Scarlet and Gold*. It was chiefly the plains Crees and Assiniboines that the half-breeds won over as allies. What Blackfeet or Sioux came to their aid were with them as freelances, not as tribes at war. Many a story you can hear, from those who lived them, of savage terrorism and cruelty, many a story too of savage tolerance for the sake of some old service rendered—the Indian being built like that and the quality active unless when he has had his fill of white man's fire-water.

It was in the year of the completion of the trans-continental railway by the insertion of the link through the north-shore woods (of Superior, that is) and through the Lake of the Woods and Rainy River country, that the second Riel rebellion broke out. In the building of that link the engineers, in several places, came across traces of the military road, overgrown by a tangling luxuriance of scrub, that Wolseley's engineers had sweated upon so short a time before for the passage of troops toward the quelling of the first rebellion. Willow-herb and wild berry-bushes, even then, made that an old story. Settlers for Western Canada from Eastern Canada, prior to the insertion of that link, passed into the North-West Territories through the United States of America.

A neighbour of mine who would be grieved, or amused perhaps, if one were to call him old—though he might admit himself as at the beginning of elderly—has told me of his entrance by Chicago, where he bought bullocks and a wagon (bullocks and a wagon in Chicago!) for the northward saunter to take up a homestead. Odd what a radiance, in retrospect, enfolds days that, before memory had them to winnow, were arduous and even desperate. Yet there was a thrill of escape, too, which atoned for the hardships. And a strange necessity, a compulsion beyond full explanation, urged such men.

Another way of entering the country in those days that seem so distant because of the celerity of change, was from Fort Benton on the Missouri. River steamers from as far as Saint Louis churned up the Mississippi, took a turning to the left (the Missouri) and steamed on. Sometimes they stuck upon sand-bars of that silty river, and during these years of unrest among the buffalo-hunting copper-skinned nomads, who were adread of what the end of white invasion might mean, a steamboat with the ill-luck to go aground upon a sand-bar was sometimes a target for shots from Indians on the bluffs on either side. Necessity is the mother of invention. What may best be described as stilts were affixed to the hulls of these vessels, one on each side, the lower end of each pointing forward. From the upper ends cables were rigged to a capstan or winch. Boats coming up too early in the spring, before the river was in freshet, going on a sand-bar simply kept nosing into it. At the same time the capstan began to revolve. The butt-ends of the stilts thrust down as, slowly, the upper ends were dragged ahead. A splash, a swirl, a churning of sand, a whoop from the pilot—the steamer was over the bar and deep-breathing upon her way. That's how many came to Canada's Far West then, disembarking at old Fort Benton, and crossing the prairies (rolling prairies there in many places) northward, in the slow bullock-drawn wagons. Or perhaps they would buy horses, at five dollars a head or so, from Indians there, and ride north upon their way, keeping guard at night lest other Indians, seeing these horses, should attempt to stampede them.

Those were the days of vastness without railway or barbed wire. The North-West Mounted Police (in 1904 Royal North-West Mounted Police and more recently merged and lost in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police), a seemingly pitiably small force to patrol so wide a region, kept order among white and red, and established a tradition that was to last for years, a tradition of a certain sort of heroism. I say a certain sort because of many well-authenticated stories of the sheer effrontery, the nerve of its examples. The cattle industry, that had for years flourished on the grassy lands from Texas to Montana, had a northerly extension. From the foothills of Alberta to far down the Assiniboine River the buffalo range became cattle country. The buffalo herds had almost gone, though the antelopes still scurried on their slender shanks before the riders.

I was talking recently to one of these old cattlemen. He is one who cannot cordially accept what is called progress. His gaze is wistfully upon the past. He told me of the great spring round-up that began near Calgary, and continued far down into Montana. The object of it was to cut out from the wandering herds the steers of each individual ranch, and drive them home again. He told me all about the Stock Association of those days, of the

method of electing round-up foremen (recalling, in an aside, one who, though a full-blood Blackfoot Indian, was once unanimously chosen by his white fellows); how, returning to the ranch near Calgary, there was only time for a little rest before the fall round-up—or the beef round-up. Its object was the shipment of the steers eastward. And never a strand of barbed wire from Calgary to the Yellowstone.

Incidents of those old days have their memorials in place-names, such as Medicine Hat and Pincher Creek. And names on the prairies, such as Kipps, not deflecting the average traveller of to-day for one moment from his survey of the menu-card, give a pinch to the hearts of old-timers. The steward is kept waiting, the menu-card forgotten, while they look out at seemingly nothing, or next to nothing, a little red-painted house with a name (of import for them) in white upon its gable, a section-gang standing by till the train has passed, a roll of coulée and a white cloud frothing up beyond.

The locomotive whistle hooted across the expanses, over the sigh of wind in the grass or through the peppering of the winter snow; and the screaming of the ungreased wooden wheels of the old Red River carts was dying away, soon to be gone, only a memory.

There is something ironic in the fact that those who are driven by some strange urge, and as it were a heady impatience with sophistication, to the frontiers and the sparsely peopled parts of the earth, loving elbow-room, prepare a way for those who are miserable unless they can rub shoulders with their kind. With the completion of the trans-continental railway, demanded by the early settlers for the shipment of their produce, there arrived in greater numbers young men of that restless spirit. There was, so far, only the one railway track, a very thin thread, close to the base of that vast land. These young men disembarked from the train on station platforms the planks of which still smelt new from the sawmills, to the rear side of which stood high-saddled horses with deceptively drooping heads and apparently no more vigour than to swish flies from their haunches with hock-long tails; and ramshackle-looking conveyances of the kind called buck-board and democrat, from homes perhaps invisible over the expanse. They were at least in at the death, or the birth, as you please.

American farmers from Kansas, or from Illinois and Ohio, which had become too greatly populated for them, were coming in overland in the ancient way, with canvas-covered wagons for a moving home, their sons, restless as they, and fired by the stories of earlier migrations told by their fathers, driving the herds of cattle and horses on either side. The old phrases still endured as living speech. There was still that omnipresent sense of

vastness, intoxicating. They told you how they had been "out of sight of land." It was as if to them, from these great leagues, the water had just receded and might again flow, as though across a vaster Solway sands on the transit of which they adventured. The phrase was not extravagant. It conveyed the impression of that tardy crawl day by day with only the sigh of wind in the bunch-grass for company like the lapping of a wave. And then over the horizon, one day, there would be a blue cloud, a low blue cloud, that darkened and eventually became hills—Cypress Hills perhaps. Their covered wagons they called prairie schooners. The first of those who came in on the new railway saw all that.

The locomotives that drew their trains made many peculiar sounds. You could tell, sitting in the coaches, what was on the track ahead by listening to these sounds. Sometimes the whistle would emit a series of short blasts, the nearest approach of a whistle to the barking of a dog. That would indicate sheep upon the track. Sometimes there would be prolonged roars in an attempt to startle steers away from between the metals. Sometimes there would be a hissing of steam, and if you walked on to a car-platform and, taking hold, craned out a little way, you would see the antelopes scurry. A fire-guard was ploughed on either side of the track. I forget how many ploughs were lashed together and how many horses drew them. But they made an impressive team for one man on his perch to handle. From Winnipeg to Calgary was that broad fire-guard on either side of the track so that sparks from the engines would not set fire to the grass.

Transition period, always transition period. The buffalo had gone and his bones were numbered. The Indians, who had lived on him—had made their tepees from his hide, their needles from his bones, glue from his hoofs—were out on the great plains shovelling up his osseous remains into wagons, driving them into Calgary, Medicine Hat, Swift Current, Indian Head, for sale to middlemen who shipped them away east. "Imperious Cæsar dead, and turned to clay, might stop a hole to keep the wind away." That noble-looking beast, the buffalo, became fertiliser, I suppose, in eastern factories.

But here, still, was a chunk of earth very much to the minds of the wild young men who were weary of going into offices. From Britain and from cities of Eastern Canada they came, and from its rural districts too. There were fine phrases such as "growing up with a new land" as explanations for their flight, but the incentive was probably, generally, simply that one which sent the band of Indians called Assiniboines questing north, and questing west again. It is pleasant for youth to test itself against hardship. Warnings of possible hardship were no deterrent. No one had dreamt of motor-cars

then. A horse was swift enough for anyone. Did something go wrong? Were you nettled? You swung on a horse and rode—to the horizon and back, having seen only another horizon recede the while. Space was your febrifuge.

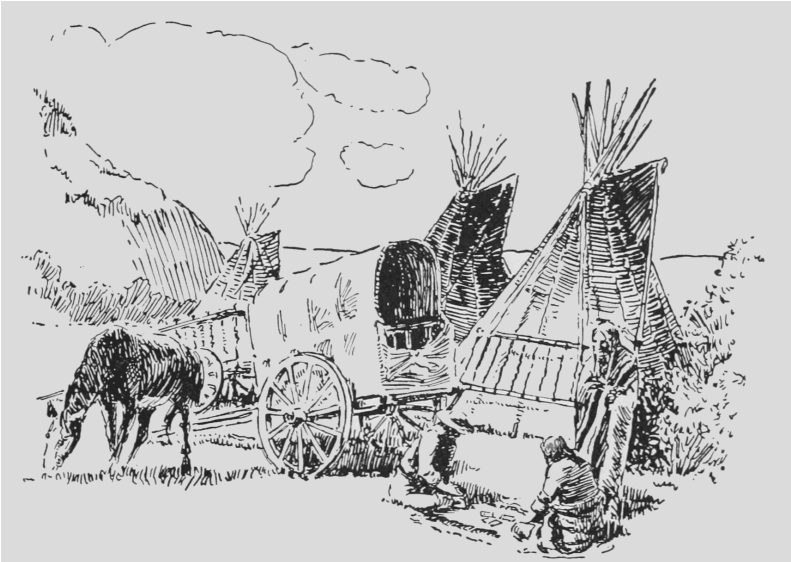
But they could not all be cow-punchers. Among the unskilled labourers, in those days, were frequently found young men from the universities—the older universities that do not teach a trade. Those men toiled even in gravel pits, and in construction gangs, for the new lines of railway, working with pick and shovel, not experienced enough to be in the ranks of bridge builders. Everywhere was the English speech. To the hardest drudgery there was attached an element of romance. They were making this land; they were at the beginning of things. They may have come in at a death, but they were also in at a birth. These were not true settlers. What brought them here was the urge of restlessness, not the desire for new homes.

But there were some to whom this immensity was intolerable. This, to them, was not spaciousness, but vacancy. Of them one must tell, so that this book may see sanely and whole. Lingering, long-retired members of the old original North-West Mounted Police Force can tell you stories of those who had the light put out within their brains by the unutterable emptiness of this scene to them. Preferably a hundred times, one of my old mounted-police friends has told me, would he have been detailed to go out and arrest some horse-thief, even if reported heavily armed and bragging (as such sometimes did) that no redcoat was his match, than sent out on what they called a "bug-house" case. One wondered, sometimes, what brought these victims of solitude to this dry ocean—middle-aged people usually, these sufferers, even middle-aged city people, with the next neighbour miles away, and nothing to see but the rim of the plain and the clouds coming up on one side and going down over the other. Their minds gently gave way. They were seldom violent. They were simply, eventually, stunned. A patrolling policeman, visiting them, discovered they had changed identity, as it were, humoured them in their foibles, went back to his post and made a report, returned with a democrat wagon, cajoled them into it, responding to their nonsense as if it were high sense, and drove them away out of the immensity that had unhinged their minds.

An ex-member of the old force told me a pathetic story of an elderly man and wife he conveyed once from their lone homestead. He had received orders to go to their place and relieve a constable who was there, and had sent a messenger to report. On arrival, seeing his fellow redcoat on the veranda, he thoughtlessly hailed him, in the vernacular, with "Hallo! Where

are the bug-house patients?" The response to that was the sign of forefinger on lip. They were indoors, entirely tractable. The man had lost his reason first, and his wife had easily followed him in his delusion. He thought, it appears, that he was the Duke of —— and she the Duchess, a thought-link, if deranged, which was obvious, for surely they were monarchs of all they surveyed. The policeman on duty, going to the door, saluted, and announced that the patrol had arrived. They were entirely charming. Their heads were not turned by their supposed rank. They looked upon the relieving policeman as some sort of guard of honour come to conduct them—somewhere. They lived the part and he lived up to it, and when he delivered them at Regina the old man asked to see an officer to whom he expressed his appreciation of the courtesy of the guard and stated that he wished him to receive a sergeant's stripes. That is a story of the other side, but it too speaks of the vastness. The big new playground, the region of elbow-room for some, was, for others, such as these, implacable emptiness. No motors then. Only one line of rail across it all, where now is a design of tracks like a spider's web on the map.

The prairie Indians did not wander about alone. They were a gregarious people. I doubt if they ever had fixed camps on what is called "the bald prairie," and sometimes "the bald-headed prairie." That was their hunting-ground. Their home camps were by lake-sides, sheltered by wooded bluffs, or on the lee-side of these hills that here and there rose like islands in that sea of grass. It is not in the nature of the Indian to camp long on a poor site, nor to carry fuel. In winter he would certainly camp by shelter, and close to fuel. Sir W. F. Butler, in his *The Great Lone Land*, which is in the nature of a classic of those lands, tells of the Indians speaking sometimes of the buffalo herds passing "far out"—showing their view of these seas of grass. The winter camps of the railway-construction gangs, during the building of the first trans-continental line, were in the shelter of hills, these prairie islands with their trees.



Indian and Half-breed Camp, 1890

But even some of the wild young men, when (instead of working on big cattle-ranches or horse-ranches among their fellows, or with the railway- or road-construction gangs) they homesteaded, found too much of elbow-room. Once, many years ago, in a little western city, a tall strong specimen of young humanity sat down beside me and entered into talk. When it seemed that we were getting on fairly well together, without any apparent thought-link he launched at me the question:

"Tell me, do I look a bit odd to you?"

I lied. I told him that he did not. He told me he was glad to hear it, but whether he looked odd or not, said he, he was through with the prairie. The Government could have his homestead. He had had enough of it. We were sitting by a window of the hotel, and so as to impress upon me what he had been through (and, in the vernacular, was *through with*), he pointed to the window-sill.

"That was my view," said he.

This, I thought, was indeed an odd remark, but he elucidated.

"If you just focus your eyes on that window-sill," said he, "and imagine, you'll have the view from my homestead. The front of the sill is the beginning of the prairie outside my house; the farther side of the sill is the horizon. Got it?" he asked.

I had got it. It seemed desolate, described so.

"Well," said he, "one day I was working outside and couldn't stand it any longer, and I left the plough in the field and rushed inside just to have a look at the wall. Something close I wanted. I saw I had not washed up the dishes, so I washed them up then, for something to do while I stopped inside. I felt a bit better and I started to sing, and I was singing away when there was a voice at the door, 'That's a grand singing voice you have.' I jumped about three feet off the floor. I was certainly glad to see that man, but there was something"—he held up a hand and flicked thumb and second finger together—"snapped inside my head, like that. I've never been the same since. I don't think I'll even go on to the mountains. I think I'll go to a large city."

If he had stayed: Groves of trees planted round farms on the prairie that he fled from, railways meshing it, telephones, electric light, motor-cars, lonely little lakes become summer resorts for the city people, and perhaps the farmer who sells them butter and eggs, despite that financial increment due to their presence, not utterly regretful when they go, the rural peace untroubled then by their ceaseless gramophones and merry parties. Who could have prophesied that? They knew nothing of those things then.

Yet, even at that period, railways were constantly stretching like a fumbling octopus, and there were not enough of the restless young men from Eastern Canada and Britain, and from over the border to south, to build them. Scripture says something about one who putteth his hand to the plough and turneth back. The hand had been put to the plough in this tremendous area, and there was no turning back. I don't say Frankenstein was creating his monster, but something was being made, unpredictable then. Immigrants were brought in *en masse* from Central and Lower Europe. Gangs of Italian labourers, most of these inspired by the aim to save enough money to return to Italy in a few years and live happily there ever after, moved from place to place where work offered for their picks and shovels. Now, by the way, the itinerant Italian labour squads, for various reasons, are obsolete.

Another transition period was on the land. And it was then that there subtly began among the English-speaking peoples, and also among the immigrants from North-western Europe—the Scandinavians, who spoke English and, though clannish in their way, worked side by side with the Canadian and British born, and the scattered Danes—a feeling that romance had ebbed. To be sure, "Romance brought up the nine-fifteen." But for these —the romance ebbed, slightly, out of the activities that required the sweat of

the brow. They began to be as greatly aware of the curse of Adam as of the romance.

Over thirty years ago, one October day, I leant against the wall of the old station-house at MacLeod, watching the snow whiten the rolling plains and the wind, in eddies, whirl it away, so that the plains were piebald. And as I was standing there I saw two riders drawing near. They dismounted by the western gable-end, dropping the lines of their horses to the ground, these being trained to stand so, and came on to the depot platform. Though I was a youngster then, seeing I was white and alone they nodded to me. I knew their type. They were cattlemen, one a typical westerner, the other of a sort then very common on the western prairie, an Englishman, obviously of the cultured sort. What they had in common was their occupation of cattle-raising and their affection for the land.

After desultory talk on this and that, discovering, on inquiry in the agent's office, that the train was half an hour late, one of them suggested that we might as well go into the waiting-room. I can remember still, very clearly, what happened then. At the opening of the waiting-room door we took but one more step forward, and then stood pat. The windows were all closed, and a stale stench fanned out on us. Inside that large room, sitting on the floor, backs to the wall, elbow to elbow, all the way round, were men who, at a glance, had nothing to do with us. Each of them, between his knees, held some large green fruit, or vegetable, hacking slices from it with a jack-knife. Juice of it was on their chins. I don't know what the fruit or vegetable was. We did not stay to inquire. We held breath, closed the door, and on the platform filled our lungs with the prairie air that was fresh if chilly. These two men looked one to the other, and then the westerner said to his English companion:

"Do you suppose these foreigners will drive us out some day?"

The answer was a shrug. Hard it is to prophesy, hard to foretell what the future holds. These foreigners were to arrive in greater and greater numbers. Yet there were to be other changes, antidotal or corrective. There have come many ramifications to what is called progress. It flows no longer a single, if silty, stream. It is a delta. With the constant stretching of the railroad lines more engineers were required, and railway men. With the growth of the cities, electric-light plants were installed. The web of the telephone is over that vast land, as is the web of the railway lines. In the lead, creatively, constructively, are the English-speaking peoples, survey engineers, electricians, telephone linesmen, bridge builders. And here are the motor-car now, driven by them, and the motor-tractor, driven by them. They go east to

study and return full-fledged doctors. They are organisers of the large business combines. They are pilots on the great monoplanes that now carry the air-mails across this astoundingly changed old pasture of the buffalo and antelope.

CHAPTER II

HARDLY can there be any land more provocative of the Rip Van Winkle feeling for returning travellers than this sweep of the world from Manitoba to the Rockies. Apropos of this I would tell you of three visits to Calgary before passing on to a résumé of the present, political and social.

The first was over thirty years ago. The conductor, strolling through the car, commented in a slightly intoning voice, "Calgary is the next stop." The train slowed down, and to south of the track was a picture out of the days of George Catlin, an encampment of Indians on a long leisurely undulation of green, a circle of smoky-topped tepees. A multitude of ponies, sorrels and bays, buckskins and pintos, browsed and stepped nonchalantly, or stood erect, necks askew, staring at the train, presenting to us the white splashes on their foreheads. Pottering papooses responded to those who waved to them from the train by raising their podgy hands in the old-time peace sign.

To north of the track was a frontier town very different from the Calgary of to-day. To and fro in the street horses stirred the dust, ridden by men whose legs were encased in chaps of angora or leather, white men and Indians alike wearing those Stetson hats of the broad brim and high crown. The barbed-wire fences were behind us, round the wheat belts, Regina way. Calgary was still a cow-town, buoyant with the hilarity of cow-towns.

Not for another ten years or so did I see it again, coming and going between British Columbia and the prairies by the more southerly route, through the Crow's Nest Pass. Again, drawing near from east, I heard, "Calgary is the next stop. The next stop is Calgary." The words moved me. They were an Open Sesame, or I expected them to be so. But this time they evoked no picture in the manner of Catlin (who, even if his paintings be mostly of the sort that artists call daubs, was eager and, in his eagerness, conveyed the spirit of what he looked at), no picture after Frederic Remington. I looked out of the window to south, watching for my Indian encampment. And I saw houses on what had been that leisurely roll of green and, where it dipped, houses beyond. I looked to north of the track and saw, where there had been few houses and vistas between them of horses stirring the dust, many houses of wood, of brick, and in many rows. Something

clanged and buzzed out there. A tram-car. It was about the hour when offices closed. I had a glimpse even of strap-hangers. I saw men going home with crooked umbrella pendent from arm, evening paper in hand.

We slowed down, in a space where there were many parallel railway tracks, and halted at a new station. No redcoated member of the North-West Mounted Police spraddled his legs and flicked a riding-crop under his arm. No Indians stood like effigies to watch us coming. No cowboys sat upon their heels, elbows on knees, and cigarette between the fingers of a brown hand. Station police in blue stood by the wrought-iron gates. I passed them like a culprit. I went through the flagged hallway where there was a news-stand, and an alcove in which a young lady of high coiffure (bobbed hair yet to come) served ice-cream drinks. Just as I made the transit of this strange place I saw one solitary Indian among the crowds that studied the tall blackboard for the hours of the arrival and departure of trains. (No longer was the time-table a simple thing of *Eastbound* and *Westbound*.) He still wore the braids, one on either side his face, and moccasins on his feet, but he sported a white shirt, a soft collar, and a tie. Yet in his black eyes I saw puzzlement, something baffled. Perhaps in mine was the same look.

I stepped out into Calgary, and six men raised their hands, pointing at me, and six men said "Taxi?" But I hurried away, carrying my valise, with a great dread that the old Alberta Hotel might be gone. Finding it, I was a little appeased, or comforted. Even then, despite the tall houses they were building, with the rub-a-dub of electric hammers driving in the rivets, there clung to Calgary a feeling of frontier town. To be sure most of the inhabitants seemed to wear pressed trousers and knobbly-toed shoes; and their hats, if not hard hats, were the soft hats of city men. But here and there on the sidewalks were groups of men who did not hurry, but stood talking together quietly, the old high-crowned and broad-brimmed hats upon their heads, and on their feet the high-heeled shoes of their kind. They did not, of course, wear chaps, these being for use when riding, not part of the attire when visiting town. But the evidence sufficed. I knew that somewhere out beyond the termini of these car-lines there were still ranches in the old sense of the word, and the men of the ranges at their old calling. It was still possible to get on a horse and ride to one in a day. The peace of the evening would find you sitting with the boys in the wonted place, on the top bar of an old pole corral, talking the old talk. And the sunset that Charles Russell, the cowboy artist (who succeeded Remington as Remington had succeeded Catlin, and Russell, I think, best of all, each improving on his predecessor), has put into many canvases because of his love of it, and because it is typical of these lands, would be slipping the while through all its phases of gold and

red and strange hues of calamitous fire and smoke above the long serrated smudge of the Rocky Mountains, selvedge of the western sky. They had built a library, a credit to the place. If towns grow to that size without a library, something, definitely, is far wrong. But Calgary had built a library. Strange to sit there reading such sophisticated authors, let us say, as Henry James and, raising the eyes and looking out of its westward windows, see that sunset, that scene.

Indian Travelling

Real-estate men and merchants thronged the streets. And if you were at all sensitive to the telepathic waves unconsciously radiating from those round you, you were aware of excitation. The streets were a kaleidoscope. There were Doukhobor women, broad of beam, in their bright petticoats, their headkerchiefs knotted under their chins; and Doukhobor men, who recalled Edwin Markham's "Stolid and stunned and brother to the ox." But English was still the main speech heard there. And still, astoundingly, despite the street-cars, despite the sightseeing car and its conductor, with his megaphone explaining the city to his passengers, Calgary was a frontier town. Hard to explain how, without tabulating one's impressions. But there was the spirit of frontier town refusing to be exorcised. Though steel rivets were being hammered into the high steel frames of new business blocks with great clangor, down Eighth Avenue you might see your cowboy ride, clearly but in and out on an errand, wearing his chaps. A telephone pole by the sidewalk's edge still served to hitch his horse to while he entered a store. In a vacant lot only a few blocks from the city's centre, behind hoardings of

bill-posters, some Sarcee Indians, in from their reserve, parked their wagons or left their horses.

I went back again ten years later. Something had happened in Calgary, beyond gainsaying. The motor-cars, that had been only a thin trickle on my second visit, were everywhere whizzing to and fro. It seemed to me that a light that used to be upon these house-fronts had evaporated, passed away. I could not find the old Alberta Hotel. Something had happened to the streets. The signs over the doorways and along the fronts of buildings were all so many epitaphs upon the past, such as this: "Alberta Pacific Grain Company." I called on a friend, going up in an elevator to his office in a tall block. His back was turned toward me as I entered. He was talking on the telephone, talking to a friend in Edmonton, a conversation which necessitated his conferring, next, with a man in Regina. Is it child-like, he wondered, to find an element of miracle in this: his voice one minute in the ear of a man a hundred and eighty miles or so north, and the next murmuring in a room of that other city to south-east? In its way it was as miraculous as the plumes of the aurora borealis—the northern lights—that flicker up in the sky and send their shafts to the zenith over these leagues and are reflected in the southern sky till it seems as if the whole dome of night is made of silk, shot silk, and the silk shaken.

What was interesting Calgary now? What was the latest? Oil. They had found it among the foothills. It was a wonderful oil. Five or six different sorts of commercial by-products were made out of it. And then there was such a surplus that they had to burn what remained. A shame. But there was no other way to dispose of it—yet. He would take me out in his car later on, after dark, to where I could see the blaze of it like a torch in the night. We sat and talked of the changes. He had known the old days too. He and I were both Rip Van Winkles in a quarter of a lifetime. He recalled the days when, wheat-raising near Saskatoon, the members of his rural community, when winter came and sleighing weather, sledged their wheat all the way to the main, and only, line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. They went in companies to help each other in case of any misadventure on the way, such as sudden blizzard. "Those were the days!" he said. "Pardon me," for his telephone had rung. The man in Regina had got some information he wanted.

Yes, he said, hanging up the receiver, the prairies had had years of plenty and years of hardship. A great deal depended on a man's location. There were good locations; there were bad locations. People really should study the lie of the land before commencing. There were places prone to early

frost. Summer hail was a menace almost everywhere, except in one or two fortunate belts, but then there was hail insurance. One could insure as much as one wished, even beyond the established minimum, and be quite safe. I asked him about certain failures that I had heard of, of men who had once been doing what is called "making good." The trouble with them, he explained, was the gambling spirit. A good year for wheat is a very good year indeed, and these men I inquired about, it seemed, had used their profits to buy still more land, forgetting that not every year is a good year. Perhaps, because of these disbursements, they let their hail insurance be but at the minimum. Gamblers, they "chanced it." And then came a hail summer. That hail beats the standing wheat down into the ground, leaves it like a field ploughed drunkenly and erratically harrowed. Others, more canny, remembering the tricks that weather may play, were content with their original holding, even after a fat and profitable crop. They banked their profits. With a portion of these they might even evade the prairie winter, go off to Florida or California, not to return till the ducks and geese again were flying high, northward over that vast land, where now the wheat stretches from horizon to horizon, interspersed here and there with barley and oats. As we talked it all over he came to this conclusion: that the financial life of these prairie farmers has gone much like the chart of a person in fever, zigzagging up and down, but that the base of these zigzags, unlike that of the sick-room chart, has not been level. The base itself mounts steadily upward. That was his view. And I think his view was right. He was one of those who had been in at the death of the old and the birth of the new. A progress without problems, above all a progress so great in so brief a space of time, and involving such territories, is not to be hoped for.

I asked him about certain regions more recently put under wheat, of which I had heard worse report than of summer hail which is, after all, but a gambler's chance, telling him that one of the farmers thereaway had informed me (with a jocularity that the West can attain even in hard times, perhaps because of the atmosphere) of fierce winds that had blown his seed out of his acres into the fields of his leeward neighbour, and deposited over his ground sand and tumbleweed from his windward neighbour. He knew that region. For the trouble there he had a parallel in the history of placer-mining, not only in the province to west, but the world over. A rich strike is made. The news of it spreads. Late-comers arrive, and they stake claims wildly to left and right of the fortunate discoverers, even where, geologically, there is no hope of "colour" at all. So it was, he said, with wheat. Fortunes had been made by farmers in good wheat belts. Late-comers, fired by their success, rushed in and took up land without caution—

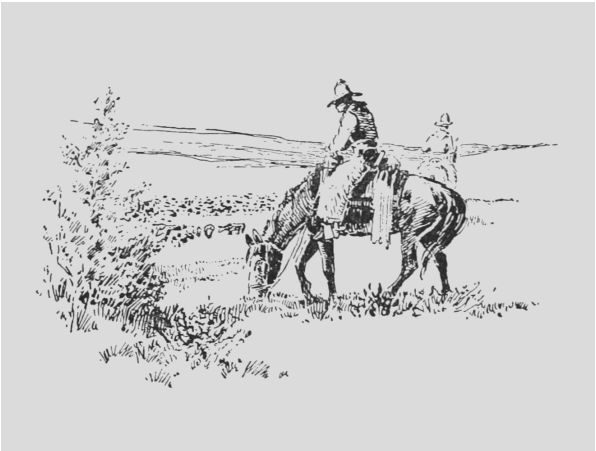
and realtors were willing to sell. There were thus tracts under wheat that had better been left for cattle-raising in the old manner.

I saw an opportunity to speak of the foreign element, but let that remain in abeyance, he being off on another tack. Apropos of his mention of these tracts that should, it seemed, have been left to cattle-ranching, he spoke of the changes even in that industry. No more the long-horned steers strayed at will over unfenced prairie, tough animals that, at the branding, one threw a rope over and jerked upon their sides. Now there was carefully bred stock. These successors of long-horns were handled gently. They were not thrown to be branded, but walked into a pen, the end of which was alley-way. In hard winters hay was hauled to them. And mixed farming was on the increase among those who were in sections where the raising of wheat was too great a gamble—unless, that is, they were gamblers by instinct. They had several irons in the fire—or their eggs not all in one basket. They raised wheat and hay, beef and chickens. They had herds of milch cows, shipping milk to the nearest cities, or to the butter-making concerns.

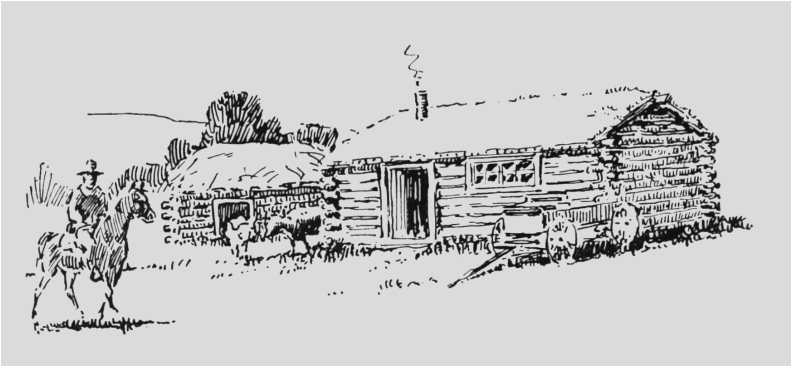
But with all these swift changes, greatest change of all was that in the social life. To social gatherings, in earlier days, the settlers went *en famille*. Rows of babies were laid upon beds, cots, quilts, shake-downs, in an ante-room. And when the hour of departure came wise parents would make sure they had their own progeny, even looking for identifying moles for final certainty, lest some of the hilarious young men had mixed them for a prank. Those were the days of the surprise party, when some favourite of a scattered community would be lured away from home by pretext and return to find all the neighbours installed, each with viands for the feast. Perhaps they had even taken down the surprised one's own pictures off the wall, so that he wondered at first if he had come truly back to his own house. Hilarious gatherings, these, when the feet beat the floor night-long to the sound of violins scraping out the old Red River jigs, and in the doorway a dance-caller called the dances.

Time has changed all that. Over a hundred miles the dances are arranged by telephone. Over wide areas the hanging coal-oil (paraffin) lamp, the wick of which had to be turned up once in a while as the night wore on, and the smoking of which announced that a window must be opened for air, has long since lain in the heap of discarded things, with all its convoluted brasswork that made it, once upon a time, a treasured possession. Electric light has taken its place. Only in the hinterlands do you find that old life still lingering, though, even there, in place of the coal-oil lamp you are likely to find the gasolene lamp, a brighter illuminant, while they wait for their

electricity. Where it took a man three days to go by wagon on a rutted and uncertain road to his nominal "home-town," he now spins in a motor-car in as many hours. He listens-in on the radio in the evening to music from Winnipeg or Chicago. There are, in fact, some who regret the decay, in places, of the old community life. The springing up of so many towns gives new social centres to the farmers and, still more markedly, to their sons and daughters. The car allows them to run into town in the evening to the movies. Instead of going only to their occasional red-letter day settlement dance, the people of the settlements now go to dances in town, and frequently. That a farm is all dark by nine of the evening does not mean that its owners are hayseeds and abed early, like the hens, to be up betimes. On into the small hours across the leagues of wheat you will see a travelling haze of light—another, and another—in the night mists, indicating the rural populace homing from town.



COWBOY



SETTLER'S CABIN

CHAPTER III

TRANSITION period passes to transition period, and now—the contributing causes various—these prairie provinces have come to a stage of development causing Progress to spell Problem. It is one that you can readily get shrewd minds to discuss for you in any of the cities from Winnipeg to Edmonton, from Saskatoon to Lethbridge, and in the wide rural regions between. Immense tracts of this West still await population, but who are to inhabit them? That is the question. The Federal Government has its list of preferred and non-preferred countries of Europe in relation to the immigration question. The preferred countries are Britain, Norway and Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Luxemburg, also Finland and Iceland. The non-preferred countries are such as Czecho-Slovakia, Esthonia, Jugo-Slavia, Latvia, Lithuania, Roumania, Russia. The very sound of these names perturbs many. They recall the old days of which I told you, when the English speech was everywhere, indomitable settlers driving the first furrows, and the wild young men, the breakers of the prairie, going on their jocund way as though to the sound of bands.

It is interesting to discuss the matter with men who have given it consideration, both with those whose attitude is that of Montaigne's motto —"in equilibrium"—and those who violently hold the view, this way or that, which they hold. Census returns give us a great number of Scandinavians in the country. You find them everywhere, looking upon themselves practically as Canadians, and so looked upon by Canadians and settlers of British origin. (After all, is there not a legend that Leif Ericson saw this continent first?) Yet of late Scandinavians and Danes have shown decreasing desire to come and inhabit these remaining vacant places. The Government of Holland is not partial to emigration of its people. Belgium has colonies sufficient for her needs. And as for France, as you may know, bled white by the war, she has even to draw immigrants from other lands in Europe to help her in manual labour. To the German agriculturist it is immaterial whether his race is on the preferred or non-preferred list, he being better circumstanced than ever. Sir Henry Thornton, President of the Canadian National Railways, visiting Berlin last year, and discussing European emigration, voiced the view no doubt of many when he said that German

farmers would be welcomed in this West, and could obtain land under favourable conditions.

Standards of living among the preferred races have vastly advanced of recent years. Despite that fact, if Western Canada were still what it was a generation or two generations ago, youthful adventurous sons of these preferred races might care to come out, with the romance of something in the nature of empire-making to atone for the sweat of the brow. But that time is past. A difficult subject, this. Hardly a statement but has its postscript of exception or modification. There is one part of the great North-West, yet new from the point of view of agriculture, that is not looked upon askance by the preferred. Of course I refer to the Peace River country. For half a century it has had its lure. I sometimes wonder if the name is not part of that lure. It sounds like the Well at the World's End, or the Hesperides. The heart of Peace River country as the crow flies (or, in the western variant of that phrase, *in an air line*) is two hundred miles north by west of Edmonton. Many of those settled in that block *went in*—they still talk of travel to and from Peace River so: you *go in*, you *come out*—in prairie schooners. Here you find Canadian settlers, both English-speaking and French-speaking, Americans, Britons, Scandinavians.

This is one of the districts that call forth reminders that it is no hard-and-fast rule that the farther north we go the colder, and steadily colder, is the climate. The lie of the land, and altitude, have much to do with climatic conditions. For long now it has been known that the natural growths here are luxuriant. The wild pea, or vetch, was remarked upon by early travellers; and the Government's agricultural statisticians tell us of barley sown on May 9th, and cut on August 6th, at a latitude of 58° 24′; Windsor beans ripe and pulled by August 17th; wheat in stook by August 26th; cucumbers, started and raised in the open air, ripe on August 14th.

Some of the early settlers, finding their journey well requited, growing their two or three thousand bushels of wheat every year, and getting from a dollar to a dollar seventy-five cents per bushel for it from the Hudson's Bay Company, coming out, accentuated the harsher side, some say, telling of nips of June frosts some years, and lakes frozen in October, wanting the land to themselves. And possibly it was so. Such a proceeding is not new. But to-day they are more likely to tell you of the lingering beauty of their Indian summer and omit mention even of the mosquitoes. The Peace River country has got that length in its history. Ask them if their winters are not cold, and you may detect a shadow of a thought pass on their faces. They suspect you of being an effete sybarite. They reply that they are assuredly healthful, that

the Peace River country is noted for the long years of its natives, that when you hear of low temperatures you need not run away with the inference that the iron-cold days last the winter through, the thermometer stationary, and may even avow that, as for themselves, they prefer a land where once in a while, in winter, lacking precautions, one may be frost-bitten, to a land in which one is sapped by fevers—or, indeed, to a land the winters of which are sunless and mere months of drear fog and sleet.

It is a land of woods and open rolling prairies, and therefore of mixed farming. Wheat and barley, cattle and horses are their chief interests now. But other activities, obviously, are road-making and saw-milling. The stretching of railroad, river steamers, and the motor-car of these last years have rapidly changed, are rapidly changing this wide tract. Soon, it may be, you will not *go in* and *come out*. You will but come and go. It is being put on the map. It is being put on the map by strenuous workers of the preferred races.

The great majority of the preferred races, however—their standard of living at home far different from that of their fathers and grandfathers—jib at the thought of playing the part of the man with the hoe—which is a very different rôle from that of the man with the spurs, or the man in the prairie schooner. Somewhat as Alexander sighed that there were no more worlds left to conquer, they consider that there are no wildernesses left to conquer with fun, only with toil. They will not be the man with the hoe.

An earlier generation of their own race produced pioneering men who went out into these spaces and, for their first home, had but a dug-out in the face of a cut-bank, constructed by their own hands after arrival. That sort of thing, on the last frontier, they now leave to others. They are not moved to emulation by any picture of the present home of such pioneers, with barns and garages dotted on either side, and a view of the original home (now the root-house) inset. The world itself has suffered change.

Students of the subject tell us that here we have carefully to distinguish between under-development and over-production. They point to Britain, with its system of doles for the unemployed, as a land over-populated. Yet those who are interested in colonisation and immigration will tell you frankly, not burking the question, that the average immigrant of a preferred race is of little service on these vast tracts still awaiting exploitation, that he cannot or will not (or it may be cannot and will not) *tackle the job*, and that the non-preferred races are the only hopeful ones for the task. They may themselves belong to the preferred countries. But there it is. In their secret

hearts they would not care to inhabit these places. The romance for them would be gone. It would be a dog's life.

To members of the non-preferred countries it is not a dog's life. Everything is relative. To many of the non-preferred, there, on these remaining tracts of unbroken land, would be escape. Their standards of living give them a different view of the case. Where the preferred see dreary toil and spiritual stagnation, they see a better land. Their demands upon life are trivial compared with those of the preferred peoples. Passing observers, visiting some of these hinterlands where the peasants from middle and lower Europe are breaking the prairies, are apt to put themselves in these peasants' shoes, and consider "What a life!" Much more often than they imagine it is a misplaced sympathy. Here is a new freedom for many of these. They have a relieved look, as of people out of prison. And they have not that tendency of the preferred peoples to live beyond their means, to consider that the mere wanting a thing means the possession of it—and whistle for the price. Frugality is natural to them.

But there are people at once to ask, "Are they to be the possessors of this land?" And in reply to that others say, "Look at the second and third generations of them." Statistics are produced, to show that the standard of illiteracy among these second and third generations is not as low as in certain regions eastward, where the stock is all Anglo-Saxon. Those who are dubious of statistics then wish to know if the tests of literacy have been the same among the peoples in question as among the Anglo-Saxon communities cited in comparison. That the morality statistics stand high from districts inhabited by these peoples, in certain procurable tables, even as compared with those from districts of the preferred races, some explain by reminding us that in many of their communities morality is preached as part of life; but others, less credulous of the exactitude of these figures, have other explanations. They point out that in many colonies of non-preferred races there is resentment even at having to make notification of births, marriages, and deaths. How do we know, then? How do we know, they inquire, that we have the true statistics of legitimacy—on which these tables are based? The question is shrewd enough. For it is true that in some settlements—among the Doukhobors, for example—even a Government agent employed on no more than the preparation of a census return has at times to have police protection. These people came into the land with a promise from Government of certain exemptions. In event of war they would not be compelled to bear arms, and had the right of freedom in worship, and of religious liberty in education. Actually many of them seem

to think that they have the right of home rule, immune from the laws of the land they live in.

Live and learn. The Doukhobors, from Russia (*Dukhobortsy*: Warriors of the Spirit), have taught the Government the unwisdom of block immigration. But, by the way, we cannot generalise regarding all from the behaviour of one or another of the non-English-speaking peoples. Early Mennonite colonisation in Manitoba was financially assisted by the Federal Government with the sum of one hundred thousand dollars. That was repaid at the end of seven years with a six per cent interest. And visitors to many Mennonite settlements realise that hard toil in the field does not prevent comfort in the home, nor the beautifying of the home and its surroundings. There are races that seem able quickly to achieve where others would only disputatiously complain.

Adding to this problem of the peopling of the still waste spaces, statistics (in this case more easy to procure) show a very marked urban trend in the rising generation among the preferred peoples. Not only do they turn to the prairie cities, but great numbers of Canadians, and those of British descent, are removing to cities south of the line. Recently the United States passed a quota law with the object of limiting immigration. There were at once Canadians to demand that Canada imitate. And to that request there were those prepared to point out that Canada had as yet by no means reached the position in which it ought to do so, though the United States had. The United States wished to protect itself from a looming inundation of non-Nordic peoples, also to protect its farmers from agricultural over-production and, further, to protect labour and retain for it high wages.

But the trouble north of the line was not an imminent over-development, but under-development. The population of the United States was, for the moment at least, adequate, sufficient. Western Canada is as yet, considering her resources and her extent, undeveloped—or under-developed.

It would be unfair to stigmatise as softness this dislike of average Canadians, Britons, Americans, Scandinavians to enter into these new lands. The point is that they may feel themselves worthy of getting more out of life than such regions can immediately offer. They would have to wait too long, they consider, for their telephones, their electric light, the various other boons and blessings of our age. They would not have the leisure that they have learnt to demand. They are educated out of that sphere.

Plump and plain and to the point, it was said by one considered a leading student of this present problem—Sir Clifford Sifton—that the need in these

remaining areas is for "the fellow in the sheepskin coat with the big broad wife." *The Education of the New Canadian*, by Dr. J. J. M. Anderson, is well worth perusal if this subject of the alien interests you. And a small booklet, containing a series of articles by C. W. Peterson, its title *Canada's Population Problem*, and issued by The Farm and Ranch Review, Limited, Calgary, is worth much talk "about it and about." *European Seeds in the Canadian Garden*, by J. Murray Gibbon, a small booklet published by the Royal Society of Canada, is reassuring for those who have worried over the melting-pot element of the North-West, and provocative of humility in the minds of those of the preferred races who may read it. He speaks of one of the slogans of British races against the continental—that they enjoy the common heritage of Shakespeare, "supposed to be superior to that enjoyed by the continental heirs of Dante, or Æschylus, or Isaiah." The fallacy of the belief in that monopoly he points out by a list of Shakespeare's plays performed in Warsaw and Prague, as well as Berlin. He reminds us that in Sweden (though of course Scandinavians are of the preferred) there is a national holiday on the anniversary of its national bard—Bellman—but comments that so far Canada has proclaimed no national holiday in honour of any Anglo-Saxon poet. He shows us evidence of interest in more than dollars in the Ukranian Colony of Calgary, which staged a Ukranian play in that city. The colony numbers a thousand. There are more than a thousand Scots in Calgary, "but I find no record," says he, "of any Scots play being produced in that city." Self-criticism is an excellent thing. National criticism is excellent too. Without it a nation cannot progress. But it requires courage to voice it, for there are ardent nationalists who fail to realise that such criticism may signify an affection for the land even perhaps greater than theirs.

European Seeds in the Canadian Garden, though but eleven pages and no more, is provocative of thought, perhaps even of reconsideration of outlook on this subject for those not so narrowly national as to be merely annoyed by the evidence it offers. From another point of view it is a consoling brochure—seeing that, in the turn of events, the frontier spirit at ebb in the preferred races, and the willingness to toil in new lands active among the non-preferred, these will doubtless take up the white man's burden that he has dropped, till they too are sophisticated beyond the hoe. "When Adam toiled and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?" When we are all supermen who . . . but that's far ahead.

Talking over the matter recently with one who is a good deal of an authority on the subject, one certainly conversant with all the multitude of pros and cons, I found him not pessimistic, but hopeful. And towards an

ultimate absorption, the making of a nation, he cited as a sound procedure that while in earlier years these foreigners entered and settled *en masse*, in future the assimilation will be aided by distribution. A chunk of Southern Europe will not, as it were, be dropped into a vacant plot of the great West. Assimilation will be vastly aided by having such settlements smaller. It will be more necessary for these people to attend the country's schools, speak the speech of the land. More rapidly will they become part of the body-politic.

Yes, there is no doubt that for the prairie provinces, at this moment of their development, progress becomes problem. Work, hard work, accompanied by gaiety, fortitude, valour, often strenuous work of the sort to make or break a man, calling for endurance even, has brought this land to its present position and condition. And had all this taken twice the length of time it has taken for accomplishment it would have been a remarkable achievement. Still it will have to be a land of work. Cushions provided by others are hard to come by. Malcontents from other lands—malcontent not as of old by their ease, but by desire for more ease—rebelling at what endurance life demands of them there, shirking the arduous, are hardly of the stuff required for the building of this land's future. And for the Government of any other land to look upon it as a dumping-ground for its unemployed, without regard to their fitness, to be rid of them, shut of them, would be to insult its quality.

To gather in the harvests over these vast stretches, annually, for a short season extra hands are required on the farms. And for many years now it has been the custom of the railway companies to facilitate this work by issuing cheap harvesters' return tickets in Eastern Canada. (There is also an arrangement between the Governments of Great Britain and Canada for financially-assisted passages of immigrants, and the Land Settlement Branch and the Canadian Immigration Department are fertile with plans, schemes, propositions.) So far as the harvesters are concerned there is no doubt that, the harvest over, a proportion of these workers have always remained in the West, getting there cheaply, the cost of the return ticket being less than that of an ordinary single one. But many, the harvesting over, and their wages pocketed, return whence they came.

The sending out of harvesters from Britain causes another problem to loom. Quite a hubbub we had recently, hubbub in England and Wales, hubbub in Winnipeg, over a disillusioned or dissatisfied section of a contingent of unemployed miners that crossed the Atlantic for this very arduous work. And on hearing it stated that an English harvester had been convicted in his native land of a serious offence and given the option of a

term in jail or suspended sentence on condition that he departed with the harvesters, Westerners naturally felt aggrieved. The Canadian Immigration Act does not permit of the entry of those convicted of moral turpitude in the courts of their own land. The prairies are not a substitute for a penal settlement.

When the harvest is over, winter approaches. Men new to the country, not learned in its winter work and, finding it, not caring for it—considering it, perhaps, according to their standards, menial—or not finding it, may readily become a burden. No one can live indefinitely on the wages of a month's harvesting.

Already we find immigrants of the wrong type, not agriculturists, not adaptable, swelling the ranks of the unskilled labourers—or even creating a class of casual labourers—and flocking to the cities in winter clamouring for relief. This looming problem may not affect the prairie provinces only. Hearing of the milder winter of the Pacific Coast, such men, in late autumn, often pass thither in considerable numbers. Many of these, so as to save for winter's board and lodging the wages that accrued from the harvesting, "beat their way"—"steal a ride"—that is to say, travel without tickets, on the bumpers, or on the brace-rods underneath freight-trains or passenger-trains, or on the car roofs. Better, some say, the man in the sheepskin coat, stolidly continuing to till his acres, than these.

This is another reason why those who have studied the question of colonisation state that, actually, the peoples required chiefly for the further development of the vacant lands of the prairie provinces are the non-preferred rather than the preferred. Yet should the non-preferred overbalance the preferred there might be problem of another sort. Their absorption should keep pace with their entry. The whole subject calls for men, in the directing and organising governmental posts, with the good of the country at heart, and men with minds competent to weigh and consider its many aspects. But problem though there be, it is not insoluble. Transition period links with transition period. Nothing has been static here for long while. Here is not an impasse by any means. But in any book dealing with the West of to-day the situation has to be discussed.

I trust it is evident that my aim in this difficult chapter has not been to pronounce a final personal view on any facet of it. My views on all its phases are held lightly, for reconsideration and reconstruction all the while as arguments and evidence arise. My intention was to indicate that there are many views and opinions on the many-sided theme and to present the outstanding ones.

CHAPTER IV

A LITTLE way back reference was made to changes in the social life of rural communities due to the increase of towns and the advent of the motor. The position might be best indicated not by saying that the community social life has decreased, but that to it have been added urban relaxations. And what has been lost of communal social cohesion by having the towns provide that relaxation has been atoned for by an increase of commercial co-operation in the settlements.

Unless out of this book is to be left one of the most notable features of Canada West to-day, at least a few pages later must be devoted to some account of co-operation. But as prelude to that, a picture from the life of a rural community seems in order, an account of a visit made this year to a wide wheat-raising area.

We left the prairie city and its tramcars. We purred through its scattered suburbs into the ambient flatness. Yet every here and there on that flatness there were little dips, and in the dips were occasional sloughs, ponds of the prairie, reed-edged, small disk mirrors of the blue sky, squattered over by wild ducks. The road ran straight by the mile. On either hand was nothing but the wheat. But every here and there dotting that area of grain were little islets of trees. The last time I passed that way these trees were not there—nor was the wheat. Each of these copses meant a farmhouse. Shelter-belts they are called. Their object is primarily a screen against wind and the drift of winter snow, but they create sanctuary from the eternal vision of the plains for those who find it monotonous. Within the outer circle of wind-breaks farmers are now even planting fruit-trees. You step from the great billiard-board, the expanse of rectangular fields and long straight roads, into a grove where the birds are singing cheerily (in summer, that is), into an oasis where the garden paths twist for a change, and there are green lawns, and the billiard-board at once seems remote.

We drove along under the astoundingly high blue and glittering dome across the flatness. Three little knobs suddenly jumped up over the horizon ahead of us. The gravel under our tyres—or our tyres on the gravel—made a snapping sound (like the echo of prolonged distant applause) that became

part of our progress as the swirl and plop of water from a sailing-boat's bow is part of the fun of its careering rush. We slowed down slightly in the unending road between the unending wheat, and swayed on easy springs into another endless straight road crossing the one we had been travelling on. A gopher by the roadside who had not time to flee, or was transfixed by startlement, sat bolt erect and extended a fore-paw in imitation of a stump or bush with one twig. They all do that when surprised too far from their burrows simply to leap underground in a nose-dive.

My driver was thinking of wheat, not of gophers, vermin to wheat-growers. He held the wheel with one hand, speeding on again, and with the other waved to the field to right and said: "That field alone represents . . . dollars." I forget the noteworthy amount. I did not say, "Or will, when harvested." That was understood. He changed hands upon the wheel and waved the other way. "That field alone represents . . ." There was an ecstasy for him in all that money on the tall stalks ruffled now and then to changing tints of green and gold as a faint zephyr caressed the plain. There was new paint, I noticed, on the houses that peeped at us from their shelter-breaks on either side.

Not only wheat interested all of them here. There were cows in a field and high-stepping sedate hens pursued by their chickens. This field on our right represents . . .

We came to a rather dilapidated-looking farm.

"That field is not just lying fallow. He is neglecting it."

"What's the matter with him?" I asked.

He pointed to two big box sledges that stood there in the middle of the yard although it was high summer.

"He's a coyote hunter. He goes out in the winter with his hounds in these boxes. Does very well at it too. He's the sort of man who would get along excellently on the edges of settlement, where a fellow farms in the summer and traps in the winter, and turns his hand to all sorts of things."

But that man was an exception. Again by the mile it was wheat and more wheat, with an occasional field of oats or bearded barley. I looked for the three knobs and there were only two. One of these had eclipsed the third because of our changed direction. The other two had grown somewhat. By the time we came to another right angle, and veered, there were three once more, placed then about half-way to where our straight road passed into the sky, tall monoliths, revealed later as grain elevators. But on this road we

were not alone. Ahead of us another car snapped along, gravel spurting from its tyres and a wake of dust astern. Others were ahead of it. Others were astern of us. The car in front slowed down, a warning arm swung out from the window-space, an arm in shirt-sleeve that was drawn up from the wrist by a sleeve-suspender—one of these that caused a recent passing stranger, from a land where sleeve-suspenders are unknown, to comment, in his resultant volume of impressions and opinions, that here men are not above using the dropped garters of tourists to keep their sleeves up. For a hundred yards or so in the middle of that expanse car followed car, as it were the main street in town. We slowed down, almost stopped, and there was the lowing of cows and the whinnying of horses. The cars ahead were wheeling, one by one, their drivers sitting askew to delve in trouser pockets for the gate-money, paid to a rubicund man who stood there, a pink rosette in his lapel. We were there.

It was a country fair. The car heaved and bobbed over a field and took its place in a long rank with others. There was a half-mile race-track oval before us. To one side was a patch of earth surrounded by high net, the baseball ground. Beyond were corrals with many horses stirring inside.

As we arrived a parade of great farm wagons was taking place. They came trooping along, the horses groomed and some beribboned, and beside them the long-legged foals pattered and curveted. The adjudicators, rosettes in their lapels, stood in a knot watching the procession go past. And all the time more cars were arriving, and not a flivver among them. Were these cars paid for? Well, some of them were, and some of them were being paid for.

The heat was intense. Men got out of the parked cars and divested themselves of coat and waistcoat. They were almost all big, sinewy men, and the majority of them brown as Indians. They hailed each other by their Christian names, though the women seemed more prone to the Mrs. Wagons and teams having been inspected, the adjudicators, trailing cigar-smoke, moved away to a very solid corral to inspect the bulls, such bulls as would again have made Ralph Hodgson lyrical had he been there.

Round us were children who had discovered where ice-cream cones were procurable. A mounted policeman made a hazard that his services would not be urgently required in that genial throng, dismounted from his horse, and strolled leisurely across the great paddock. When I saw him again he was leaning up against the barrier watching the first horse-race.

They rode bare-back, in a whirl of dust. People craned at the barrier, the ice-cream atop their cones turning liquid in that heat. The women seemed

pallid with it, though it may have been with powder, for the lips of some, against that blanching, were the scarlet of lipstick. It was a happy throng, but one had only to look at these faces to know a hard-working one. One could pick out the successful farmers by their ease of carriage, but half of them looked as much gamblers as farmers. This field represents so many thousand dollars—when harvested, or if harvested, understood.

The whirling horse-races over, we all moved to our cars and sat in them as in a grandstand to watch first the baseball game (between the team of this community and one that had come from a hundred miles away in that ocean of wheat), and then the bucking-horses and their riders gyrating, contorting, sun-fishing across the cleared space. I noticed, after one tense exhibition of horsemanship, the faces turning in a certain direction, turning upward. I wondered if perhaps an aeroplane was passing over to add to the fun of the fair. But no. It was a little cloud that they had spied, these farmers who were also gamblers. They did not say anything about it. They just looked at it. But the next bucking-horse was out, and they let the cloud be.

A vicious one, that. Queer creatures, these bucking-horses. That very one, so crazily violent with a man upon its back, might in everyday life be a docile cart-horse. It gave what is called a caterpillar buck, an undulation of its hind legs, of its haunches, the sort of mounting squirm that, passing into the rider's body, frequently sends him soaring. This rider undulated, but did not soar. The undulation passed and there he was, still in the saddle, which astonished the horse, which maddened the horse. It leaped in air, bringing its four hoofs together, and as it came down spraddled them. Then, either by malevolent intention, or by accident, because of the sun-scorched grass being slippery, it fell upon its side.

We can all think what a man ought to do in such an event—unless we think silence is best, lest some day we be given opportunity ourselves to offer ocular demonstration and fizzle it. Of course what a man ought to do is to spraddle his legs out and let his heels hit the ground, even though at their impact he is sent soaring. But that sidewise flop was as quick as lightning. The horse slammed upon its side, the rider's leg pinned under it.

There was an intake of breath from all the ranked cars. But the attendant riders, who are called "pick-ups," were out of their saddles on the instant, and had flung themselves upon that horse. We craned and hoped. That crowd of agile men parted. The horse was up. The rider was up too, walking away with a limp. A sigh of relief passed along the line.

And then they remembered. They remembered the little cloud. Nobody needed to say anything. They all shared that cloud, directly or indirectly. There was a man leaning against the bonnet of our car—a financially successful farmer. He turned round, hands on hips, and casually he commented to us as he strolled away:

"I guess it's gone over. Oh, in another week, come mid-August, a person don't have to worry."

That was all. For the cloud was a little different from the others in the sky. It was one that might have meant summer hail, that hail the stones of which, as large as bantams' eggs, can beat down the wheat into a field so that it seems a steam-roller has passed. But we guessed it had gone over unspilt, and the time of possible summer hail was far advanced.

So everybody was happy with a new happiness and a new increased camaraderie. The women strolled over to the big pavilion to watch the adjudication of prizes for the best examples of cooking, and for the best sewing. And we ate the last of the ice-cream cones, a smell of much-stirred dust round us, the flatness turning eerie, and high clouds turning golden. The supper and dance committee became fussy and eager. Men led bulls away to their quarters for the night, calling assurance to some friend that they'd be *there*. Riders, bare-backed and a-saddle, accompanied by led horses that stirred anew the keen smell of dust before evening, saluted friends in passing and cried out—yes, that they'd be *there*.

And after having attended to their beasts, prize-winners or prize-losers, they were there, new-washed and groomed—at the settlement hall for supper, sitting, standing, moving to and fro, till from a corner came the sound of the tuning of violins. It was all stars outside, and the barking of a dog far off, and within the dancing. My friend who took me there and I were the only guests from the city. So, you see, despite the cities, the rural folks do still have their very own gatherings.

On the seemingly unending roads, the silence of the wheat on either side, stars over and round us, and at the base of the sky in one place three tall strips starless—where the grain elevators stood—we chirred away, mile after mile, our headlights running before us on the gravel road in overlapping cones, and ever and again a great prairie owl, flustered by them, flapping dizzily ahead of us for a hundred yards at a stretch.

North-West Mounted Police Patrol in the Eighties

CHAPTER V

AND now I would tell of that commercial co-operation among the farmers which knits them together in their communities at a time when, for social recreation, they are turning as much to the neighbouring towns as to the settlement and community hall.

What I refer to is, of course, the Wheat Pool.

Perhaps no land has escaped, some time in its history, a period during which those on the soil have come to the conclusion that between their sowing and reaping and the ultimate retailing of their produce, profits accruing to those handling it are unequally distributed along the line, and at their end—most important end—most inadequate. In British Columbia, for example, at the present moment many fruit-growers are anxious to know why there seems to be money in fruit for all who handle it except themselves.

To understand the inception of the Wheat Pool of the prairies, and the need for it—the present solution, after years of experiment, for its own aspect of that trouble of the man on the land—we have to glance back forty years. The railway spanned the continent. Farmers were in occupancy in productive wheat areas. The handling of the wheat soon became a problem. The need for erection of elevators for storage and shipment was urgent, and private companies were given concessions by the railway company for the building of these.

At the same time the loading of grain cars direct from wagons and sledges was prohibited. This, of course, gave the farmers no alternative but to ship their grain through these companies. After four or five dissatisfied years the wheat-growers called for a royal commission, the result of which was that a year later the Manitoba Grain Act was passed. By it the farmers were permitted to build their own flat warehouses, and to load direct into grain cars.

So far so good. The farmers had won their point. But in the exercise of it there came a hitch: railroad cars were not, to them, forthcoming for

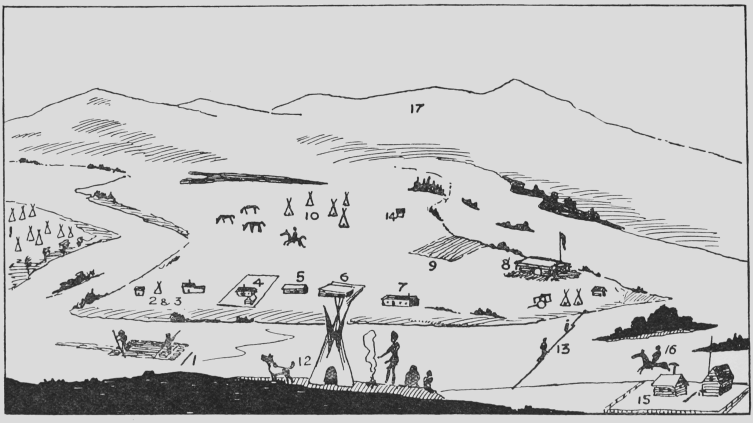
shipments, while the elevator companies seemed to have no difficulty in obtaining theirs.

A year later again they organised, and the Territorial Grain Growers' Association came into existence, and two years afterwards took action against the railway company in this matter of car distribution. But in that period the private grain companies had gained a strong hold.

Still the farmers were not baffled. In 1906 arose another organisation, the Grain Growers' Grain Company, which purchased a seat on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, and had its own representative on it.

Once more—so far so good. But very soon this company was suspended from the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. More fighting for a square deal. The Manitoba Government gave its backing to the farmers, and their company was reinstated on the Grain Exchange.

Came then another evolution: a proposal from these hard-working, hard-headed farmers, not to be beaten, for a chain of elevators on their behalf. The Government of Manitoba accepted this proposal and acquired close on two hundred elevators, but the Governments of Alberta and Saskatchewan withheld their aid.



THE SITE OF THE CITY OF CALGARY. *(After a drawing by an Indian, made in 1877)*

1—Indian Camp.
2 & 3—Roman Catholic Mission.
4—Interpreter's House.
5, 6 & 7—Trading Posts.
8—Government Post.
9—Garden.
10—Indian Camp.
11—Raft on the Elbow River.
12—Indian Camp.
13—Bridge across the Elbow River.
14—Wesleyan Mission.
15—Hudson's Bay Company.
16—Indian fording the Elbow River.
17—The Rocky Mountains.

After a year's work they were probably glad they had done so, for the Manitoba venture was a failure, and the Government decided, as a way out, to lease the elevators to the Grain Growers' Grain Company. Would that the man on the land might sow and reap, and there an end to his labours! But he has to be business man as well. With their ups and their downs they

struggled along, through fat years and lean years and the troubles incidental to any occupation into which there come middlemen between producer and ultimate buyer.

The Great War gave the farmers a hint, for as the war progressed the Government took control. The Wheat Export Company, representing the British Government, became the sole exporter of Canadian wheat. Prices were fixed by a board of grain supervisors appointed by the Dominion Government.

The end of the war did not bring the closure of the board. With the end of the war there was still control, the Dominion Government organising the Canadian Wheat Board, which set the prices and regulated the handling.

That was a successful board, educated out of experience and functioning, I believe, to the satisfaction of all—all save a few, and these few not among the farmers. At the close of the second year of its success up popped a delegation of the private grain people at Ottawa, requesting a discontinuance of the Wheat Board as undesirable. Undesirable for whom? asked the farmers. And up rose, then, the Canadian Council of Agriculture with a resolution to request that Government continue the functioning of the board. Hopes and fears then awaiting the result. When the decision came it was that the Dominion Government would restore the open market, and discontinue the Wheat Board.

Down toppled the wheat prices. And in the October of that disappointing year of 1920 the Canadian Council of Agriculture appointed a committee to consider the possibility of creating a new co-operative method of marketing.

What this committee submitted to the Canadian Council of Agriculture was a plan for a Wheat Pool, after the manner of one used successfully by wheat growers south of the line, in Washington, Idaho, and Oregon.

The war had been prolific of experience. It had also, I may mention, in one instance caused the farmers across these great plains to realise what they lost. For, during the war profits of private companies were made public. The balance sheet of one of the elevator companies caused them to think deeply: two million dollars of profits per annum.

That was pretty good. Nothing illegal in these profits—no suggestion of that. But two million of profits per annum by middlemen was doing very well indeed. Here would be a poor farmer hauling his wheat to the elevator of the company and receiving money down for the amount delivered. Here would be several poor farmers doing the same to get some ready cash. But

the wheat of a few of these put together made a car-load. The additional profits accruing from shipping in bulk—or from holding that wheat till there came a rise in price—went all to the middleman.

The farmers had seen and known all that, and this suggestion for the Wheat Pool, the farmer "marketing his own wheat in his own way," sounded good to them.

At the same time there were still those who demanded the re-establishment of the old Canadian Wheat Board, pleading its cause again at Ottawa. But the reply was that the board had been established as a special war measure, and that the constitution would not permit of its continuance in peace time. So that was that.

And while all this was going on, argument and dispute over two years, the prairie farmers sold their crops at a loss. In some parts disgusted farmers gave up the fight, went out of business. Their bitterness was accentuated by the fact that both the Federal and the Provincial Governments had besought them, for reasons both patriotic and humanitarian, to produce at their maximum effort.

The final years of the war, and the years succeeding, were bitter ones for them. But you have only to travel in that land and look in these men's faces to know that though they may be men who can stand hardship—endowed with endurance, conditioned for courage, the natural human product of its heat and its cold—they are hard men to drive, hard men to thwart.

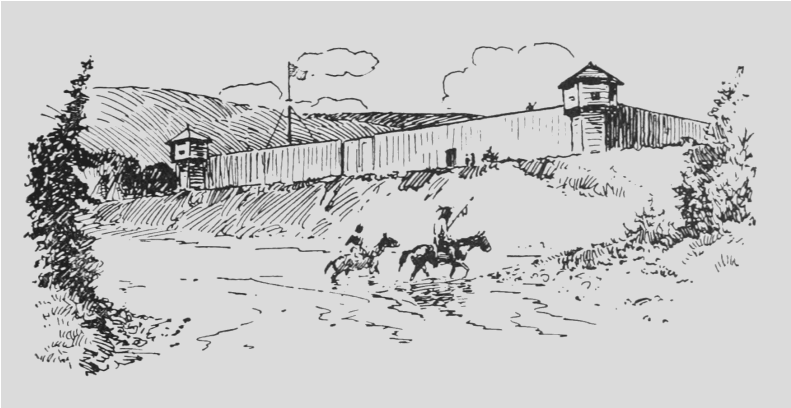
They were not defeated. They came up again with new plans, plans for co-operation. Committees of three were appointed in each of the prairie provinces. The pools became an established fact.

There are, of course, those who, though saying the pools are good, do not join them because they are born gamblers to whom wheat is their pack of cards; and the object of the pools is not the holding of the wheat for high prices, but an equable disposal of it. Or they may deal alone by reason of being ardent individualists, the sort of men that Johnson called not clubbable men. But the opinion among the majority of the farmers seems to be increasingly that in the pool is their hope; the pool is co-operation.

Not that it is a panacea for all their ills. Politics affect their lives, as the lives of all. You will hear from some that the present system of protection amounts to a protection of the manufacturers, but not of the farmers, and be given a staggering sequence of evidence to prove the contention. It seems, in

fact, impossible in any land to come upon a general course of action, a working basis, that is satisfactory for all.

As with individuals, so with countries—they are baffled in great movements and endeavours by small affairs and attritions. Know a man's means of existence and, nine times out of ten, you will know his politics. But in this book, the object of which is a general view, I have no intention to enter into party politics. What colours are in it are, to the best of my ability, those of the land, not of party.



Old Hudson Bay Post of the Last Century

CHAPTER VI

HERE, indeed, is a transformation in the memory of living man, of the pastures of antelope and buffalo. The marvel is that it should have taken place so smoothly. When people who have not visited them ask for a description in brief of the western prairies, one might respond: Imagine more than half of the Atlantic Ocean miraculously solidified upon a day when the eastern portion was calm and the western whipped by breezes—miraculously solidified and grown upon with grass.

Centre of its calm flat eastern portion stands Winnipeg, an astounding metropolis for the Scots settlers who came here under the auspices of Lord Selkirk over a hundred years ago, could they see it. The ruins of old Fort Garry, very squat, quaint and forlorn, looked down upon by tall business blocks, are a place of pilgrimage for those who realise that, "new land" though this be, it has its history.

Here are the official census returns of Winnipeg from 1871 to the last enumeration: 1871: 241; 1881: 7,985; 1891: 25,639; 1901: 42,340; 1911: 136,035; 1921: 179,087. The present population, not including what is called Greater Winnipeg, is estimated at close upon 200,000. Not only is it the leading centre of the grain business, but a manufacturing city and a financiers' and speculators' hub. And recent gold and copper discoveries in central and northern Manitoba have strengthened its position as a supply city.

Here is the University of Manitoba. Here are the men of law and of medicine, surgeons and specialists. The old Hudson's Bay Company's fort of Lower Fort Garry, on the Red River, is now a country club. Soon, according to a rumour—the country club's lease expiring—that historic old building may be made a museum by the Hudson's Bay Company. The one they have at present—"at this moment of writing"; always changes here!—on one of the floors of their huge city store, is well worth inspection by those interested in souvenirs of the days that were.

In Winnipeg, by the way, is the chief seat, for the West, of the T. Eaton Company, one of these great shipping departmental stores of the "needle to an anchor" sort that send their quarterly catalogues over the whole

Dominion from Atlantic to Pacific, from the borderline to the last trading post within the Arctic Circle. Visitors to the back-of-beyond, prepared to find their hostesses dressed in home-made frocks, are sometimes unable to avoid that quick upward and downward glance that is considered a transgression of good taste, on seeing the gowns in which they are received. It is significant of the westward movement that this great departmental concern, the rise of which is of the sort called a "romance of commerce," has now not only established itself in the city of Regina, midway across the plains, but as far west as Calgary and Lethbridge, in the foothills of the Rockies.

But, travelling west from Winnipeg over the great plateau, before we come to Regina, Brandon must be mentioned (with its sixteen thousand inhabitants), a typical farming centre, where there were not four thousand people in the first year of this century. There, visible from the train, is one of the many establishments for the education of the native Indian, and at Indian Head is one of the oldest experimental farms in the west, of six hundred and eighty acres, founded in 1886.

As for Regina, founded but forty-six years ago, and looked upon then by prairie people chiefly as the headquarters of the North-West Mounted Police, it stands now very much towards the great prairies in the relation that Winnipeg stood thirty years ago. In 1901 its population was two thousand two hundred and forty-nine, and is now forty thousand. It is a city of spacious streets.

Ancient history for Regina those days of Eastbound and Westbound train. It is the hub for twelve radiating lines of railway, a metropolis of the mid-plains, with such business concerns as its situation makes obvious, farm-implement companies with their huge warehouses of ploughs and harvesters. And for the sons and daughters of the farmers to whom it sells these it stands as a collegiate centre. One of the large mail-order houses, known throughout Canada, the Robert Simpson Company, has its western headquarters here.

Northward of Regina, on the middle-plains, is Saskatoon, with now over thirty-five thousand inhabitants—and in 1901 it had but a hundred and thirteen. It is the mid-western headquarters of the Canadian National Railways, and is served both by the Canadian National and the Canadian Pacific Railways. The area for which it is a wholesale distribution centre is estimated at about fifty thousand square miles, with a population of close on four hundred thousand. The University of Saskatchewan is situated there.

Speaking of Saskatoon reminds me of Manitou Lake, and the two together remind me to comment that in its rapid growth this great West can be in many ways self-sufficing, in a sense that has nothing to do with its commercial links with the rest of the world, its ties of exports and imports. In its relaxations, for example. Wealthy people here, like the wealthy people of other lands, can, for vacation, go on distant travel. But it has its own local summer resorts, though of course the distances thither may often be farther than from London to Cornwall, or Liverpool to Llandudno, or Glasgow to Dunoon. As Lac la Biche, and such places, for the people of Edmonton, so Manitou Lake is a favourite summer resort for Saskatoon people. Its waters are medicinal, giving an analysis very much like those of Carlsbad. There is indeed a firm with its plant installed there which ships the Manitou Lake bath salts, or crystals, to constantly increasing and more distant markets, as the curative properties become more widely known.

After leaving Saskatoon, travelling westward, you come to the waves of this solidified sea. Among rolling hills, perched upon a high bluff of the Saskatchewan River, is Edmonton, capital of Alberta, still a jumping-off place for the farther north, the Peace River country, the great Mackenzie River basin, an agricultural centre, a centre also for the fur trade, and the last sizable city on the tourist highway to Jasper Park. At this century's beginning it numbered but four thousand one hundred and seventy-six, and now has a population of sixty thousand. A bit of the old fort still stands, or did when last (to evade the personal pronoun in the manner beloved of Professor Saintsbury) the present writer was there. The Canadian National Railways' shops for Western Canada add to the city's business, and there are many packing plants. The University of Alberta is situated there.

About midway between Edmonton, north, and Lethbridge and MacLeod, south, stands Calgary, that they used to call the Remittance-man's Town, where the harum-scarum younger sons played polo and liquidated their quarterly annuity before the tolerant gaze of the men of the high saddle, the men of the ranges, and of the growth and changes of which I have already told you. Still, as at Regina and other farming centres of the plains, you may see there extensive stock corrals. For actually, to-day, though cattle-ranching on the old big scale is over, more stock is shipped than ever before, though not now chiefly to Britain, but to the United States of America.

To these cities of the plains, from Winnipeg to Calgary, come occasionally the world's celebrated musicians on tour, pianists, violinists, singers. Come lecturers too—though by no means, it has to be admitted, in as steady succession as to the more thickly populated cities south of the line

—from Hugh Walpole, a genial ambassador of letters on tour, to Bliss Carman, gently and with restraint talking his lyrics that have the colour and the delicacy of Indian summer in them. The motor-cars of the farmers who have come for miles to hear, as well as those of the citizens, are parked for a block or two by the sidewalks' edges.

Moose Jaw must be remembered, in the earlier days little more than what is called a "cow-town," and now columned with wheat elevators to a capacity of three million five hundred thousand bushels, as well as being the headquarters of the Saskatchewan Live Stock Pool, with stock-yards for the handling of seven thousand head daily at need. It is a live little city, a commercial distributing centre with twelve lines of railway into the surrounding well-settled vicinity, and has a library of twenty-five thousand volumes. The population to-day is about seventeen thousand, and that of Medicine Hat, farther west, about nine thousand five hundred. Medicine Hat is built over a reservoir of natural gas.

The prairie has its own jests regarding the growth of its towns. They tell in Medicine Hat of a man arriving there from Moose Jaw, full of excited talk about how that town was forging ahead. At last one of the listeners broke out with:

"Why, man, this is all exaggeration. I've just come from there myself."

"When did you come?" promptly inquired the talker from Moose Jaw.

"Just four days ago."

"Ah, there you are!" exclaimed the man from Moose Jaw. "You should see it now."

Travelling south-west from Medicine Hat you come to Lethbridge (with a population of over twelve thousand), a commercial centre with interests in coal, natural gas and oil, as well as in agriculture.

Still the immensity of this land is what chiefly strikes the new-comer. Where the early travellers spoke of their tented wagons as prairie schooners, to-day the conductors on the board-walks of the stations warn you of the imminent departure of the train with a cry of "All aboard!" It is a land of travel. There is difficulty here of striking a balance between space and time while the world rolls round. Consulting your time-table of the trans-continental trains, you find that you arrive at Broadview at six-thirty, but leave at six o'clock; that you arrive at Field next day at eleven-five, and leave at ten-twenty. New-comers are sometimes puzzled by this, and wonder

if for once the makers of time-tables, over the intricacies of their work, nodded. But it is only that—striking a balance between space and time.

CHAPTER VII

THE trains, because of their long journeys, are not mere casual conveyances. Their termini are as far apart as those of ocean liners. They are travelling villages.

The residents (locomotive engineer and fireman, conductor and crew, pullman conductor, baggagemen, and newsboy, and last—but somehow not least or not least interesting, with their individual as well as racial characteristics—these attendants who make our beds, switch us down, pocketing our gratuity with a show of gold tooth, or a profound bow, or grand negligence—the ebony porters to whom Philip Guedalla dedicated his book of American impressions) perhaps take their village more or less casually, though even for them, I know by many talks, the wonder does not die. The stewards pass down the aisles murmuring that it is the first, the second, or the last call for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. The black or dusky porters swill out the gleaming basins in the wash-rooms, come and go about their day's work, put fresh nests of paper cups in the containers for these beside the tanks of iced water. The village rolls on. Perhaps a baseball team, in summer, comes aboard out of that dry western ocean, or in winter a hockey team on its way to play a match.

This train-travel is a cure for self-consciousness, yet very seldom opportunity for anyone to transgress the bounds of travellers' courtesy and become a bore to his neighbour. The day turns pink and fading pink outside. At the hour when the scene, billowing past, takes second place to the reflection of your face peering out at it, and the lights, new-lit within, confuse the vision and add to an impression of ghostliness, you will see—renouncing the fading scene beyond for the life of the car—the negro porter bring to some family a small table, the cleats of which fit into slots under the window of their alcove. The travelling family in its own niche sits down to its evening game of bridge. And the train rolls on.

"Last call for dinner."

If your appetite did not cause you to respond with alacrity to its first call you rise then and stroll through the oscillating linked street of the village to the restaurant car. The dishes and the plates surely twinkle more than those

at home or in the dining-room of your stationary hotel at home, unless age has aged you instead of leaving you young, or unless you are very blasé. And if you know the story of this land the charm is increased. Dipping your fingers in the finger-bowl at the meal's end you think, the train swaying easily onward, of the old camp-fires beside the prairie schooners anchored during the dark hours in the seas of grass. The train rolls on, the waiters, and the cook in his galley, and you, all launched through space.

If you have already dined you get up and take a walk, stretch your legs, and while you are away George has got his linen closet open and is preparing your bed. Seat faces seat. With a couple of adroit jerks, what was once the back takes the place of the seat, and what was the seat glides forward to meet the confronting one similarly pulled down and along. Reaching upward, the porter inserts his finger in a ring and pulls down what by day was part of the car ceiling, turning it into a shelf. That's the upper berth. Between section and section he clips into place an upright polished partition, and before the berths he hangs heavy curtains. Your bed is prepared, if it be summer, with mosquito-mesh at an opened window at one end, so that your sleep may be airy.

The lower berth, because it has the windows by its side, is the true cave of enchantment. Lying there in clean linen, the light at your head switched out, you can raise the curtain a little way and count, instead of imagined sheep jumping over a gate, the telephone poles dimly flicking past. The abrupt loom of a grain elevator compresses the rumble of the wheels back upon you. Lights far off in the darkness, below the stars, twinkle and pass. Easily you may doze off before pulling down your blind.

I recall doing so once years ago, in a train rocking out of Ontario into Manitoba. I opened my eyes and wondered where I was. I was looking out on an expanse of ethereal quaking birches in a drizzle of strange light before true day. And from disks of blue glass, dropped among these, ducks rose. As they rose I wholly awoke and knew the blue glass was water, seeing it stippled with the drops from their feet. The train took a curve and brought in sight the pillar of cloud by day out of the Old Testament. Still it was all as a scene taken by surprise, or unreal. I rose upon an elbow and looked. That pillar seemed a mile high. It was a fuliginous, dusky blue. At the top was a cornice that mushroomed and billowed, yet remained. And just then the sun, coming up over the tree-tops, drew new colours out of the smoke of that bush-fire far off.

I remember another awakening in a lower berth, where the mid-plains become western plains. It would be about five in the morning. A radiance,

ever so faint, was here and there on the polished wood of the travelling-box. Little slits of it were vaguely at the edges of the blind, which I raised. A wind was blowing. Dust-pennants streamed. Tumbleweed, the branches of which break away from the parent stem in bunches, to dance across the expanse, hardly distinguishable in distance from a pack of trotting coyotes, scurried over the middle foreground. The immensity was empty save for these—the driving dust, and the tumbleweed that trotted through it. Then suddenly I saw a great herd of cattle being held by three cow-punchers. Two of them were on a coulée-top, statuesque and dim, backs to the dust, and the third lay along his horse, one leg hooked over its haunch, forearms folded on its neck—for a "cow-pony" is not a bucking-horse, despite its agility at need. That picture, dim on the tortured background, faded, was shrouded, and then for a few seconds the view was meshed by the white-painted bars of a long stock-shipping corral. The red station-house slipped past, and though I craned to see the name painted upon its gable, I missed it. It is all one of these memories without a location. Perhaps it was Swift Current, but that's vague. I had been long away from the West, too long, and the awakening to that scene let me know I was back again. Even to return to a day when the dust drove and tumbleweed came galloping to meet us was a satisfactory return. The West tugs one back. "The grasshopper will look good to us," sings Carl Sandburg in a chant of small things fraught with tremendous significance, and of happy return. The streaming dust and the tumbleweed looked good to me that unforgotten morning.

North of the provinces called Prairie Provinces, though their northern edges are not of prairie but of woods and dotted lakes and linked waterways and muskeg, lies a land of as great area—more muskeg, more lakes, more woods, then Arctic barrens: the provisional districts of Mackenzie, Keewatin, and Franklin.

Franklin, farthest north, is within the Arctic Circle, and for description of it one turns to the records of Arctic explorers, or the yarns of whalers, or reports of the picked men of the mounted police who have served there. Keewatin is an Indian fur country. On Chesterfield Inlet, which thrusts deep into it from Hudson's Bay, and is the outlet for various streams draining the land called the Great Barrens westward, is a mounted police outpost. Sometimes whalers winter in that inlet. Mackenzie lies north of the sixtieth parallel, stretching thence to the Arctic Sea.

Occasionally out of these great wide tracts, which are only partially explored and partially inhabited, comes a rumour of some wandering prospector having struck oil or deposits of some precious mineral. Here is

more work for the police, and throughout the western towns placards appear warning those who may be lured into the North that it is not a land for the novice, above all in winter, and giving notice that those intending to set out on prospecting expeditions should report first to the police at the jumping-off place. These people are in their care, as well as the far-scattered fur-trapping Indians.

Several of these lone wanderers I have met and talked with. One I recall especially, a very quiet man, of manners almost gentle, whose prospecting expeditions have extended from Idaho to the shores of the Arctic Sea. He was the product of a life in which all excitement is leashed and a man never loses his head. He told me, as have others of his kind, that far preferable is winter than summer travel there, because of the plague of flies and mosquitoes in summer. But such a preference obviously implies the capacity in a man to take care of himself, to pit his calm, his tenacity, against that of Nature. For that is no land for the tenderfoot in winter when the thermometer may drop very low and there is no shelter save what a man has skill to construct for himself. True it is that altitude has a very great deal to do with climatic conditions. Not long since I read a statistical account of temperatures, and some town of high altitude in Montana, or Idaho, if I remember rightly, appeared by these statistics to be a place much colder in winter than Edmonton, or even McMurray, which is farther north, or, if I do not err, even Fort McPherson, much farther north again. And it grows irksome to have educated men speak of Canada as "the cold dark North," especially in view of its sunshine. They forget its dryness too. They forget that though far northern parts of it are in the Arctic Circle, parts of it are in the latitude of the Scilly Isles and Paris. Norway, Sweden, and Finland are in the latitudes of Mackenzie.

Away down the Mackenzie River, and eastward thence into the Barren Lands (the name of which exercises a strange lure upon many men's minds), ever and again there set forth, apart from governmental exploring parties, geological, ethnological, or police expeditions, private expeditions of big-game hunters, or of men simply with the means to pander to the whim that can find in such a name an attraction inexplicable for others. In Warburton Pike's *On Snowshoes to the Barren Grounds* we read:

> To the man who is not a lover of Nature in all her moods the Barren Grounds must always be a howling, desolate wilderness, but for my part, I can understand the feeling that prompted Salatha to answer to the worthy priest, who was explaining to him the beauties of Heaven, "My father, you have spoken well. You have

told me that Heaven is very beautiful; tell me one thing more. Is it more beautiful than the country of the musk-ox in summer, when sometimes the mist blows over the lakes, and sometimes the water is blue, and the loons cry very often? That is beautiful, and if Heaven is still more beautiful, my heart will be very glad, and I shall be content to rest there till I am very old."

Warburton Pike, long before he went to the Barrens, used to appear at times in a little town near my western home in which I am writing this. Without telling anyone where he was bound for he would disappear, and reappear, erratically, walking down its main street in moccasins. There were those, by reason of this, who called him Crazy Pike. It is through the sort of craziness which moved him that discoveries are made.

But what discoveries remain to be made in that vast Northland will not be such as to interest the agriculturist, despite reports of crops of potatoes or cabbages or cauliflowers raised in the brief, warm summer by trader or missionary. Even the reports of the Government expeditions tell of nights when there was no sleep to be had for the howling of the wolves and the pestering of mosquitoes. It is primarily a fur country, and as such must remain indefinitely.

Other problems than those of the settled lands are here. The fur trade, over these past centuries depleting the Indians' and the Eskimos' food-supply, by causing them to kill far beyond the need of their larders, has brought up the question of their sustenance. Reports of the police patrols have, of late, made that question increasingly urgent, especially on behalf of the Eskimos. When Alaska was faced by the same problem the United States commissioned biologists and botanists to discover if reindeer could subsist there, and their investigations led to the importations of great herds of these animals, a new source of food-supply.

In 1926 the Department of the Interior of Canada sent two experienced travellers to Alaska to view the results there. In the spring of last year they extended their investigations to the Mackenzie River delta and eastward. This year, 1928, they are out in the Great Bear Lake country. And by the time this little book is published it is highly possible that imported reindeer herds will have been taken into these lands and set free, as food for the support of the fur-getting inhabitants.

A vast land truly. Up there: the Indians and the Eskimo, and the Government men, on behalf of these wards of the nation (who have, incidentally, added greatly to its wealth), experimenting on how they are to

be fed when the demand for fur coats, and muffs, and neck-pieces has put them in jeopardy. Down here: the wheat, and the spaces for more wheat (and the problem of who is to plant it there), and the mesh of railway lines, and telephone wires, and the motor-roads, and the motor-cars, these so numerous that the prairie towns now have their camps set apart for the travelling motorist.

A vast land. Vastness: that is the word, an Open Sesame to any adequate impression of it in one's mind.

CHAPTER VIII

TRAVELLING westwards from Edmonton into the Yellow Head Pass (the old *Tête Jaune Cache* Pass), or going from Lethbridge toward Waterton Lakes Park, merging on the Glacier National Park of the United States, or from Calgary toward the Kicking Horse Pass, we are still in Alberta.

Mentioning Kicking Horse Pass I must here interject, for the sake of old story, that it is not named, as some of the trainmen tell travellers, for a rock that you may—or may not—manage to see as like a kicking horse. In the early railway-construction days in this pass, Dr. James Hector, the famous botanist and doctor of the Palliser expedition (later Sir James Hector, Governor of the Windward Islands), unsaddling one day in this pass did not notice that he had only loosened the cinch-strap instead of drawing it free. Walking behind the horse as he tugged at the saddle the strap tickled and annoyed the beast, and out shot its hind legs. Kicked down a declivity, he was taken for dead by his Indian helpers. They were about to bury him when he opened his eyes. You need not worry over defective vision, or imagination, should you not be able with instant perception to see that rock so carefully pointed out to you by ingratiating black porters or kindly but misinformed trainmen as very like a whale—or a kicking horse. And the old stories may as well remain. Many a place-name is part of history.

Though Alberta ranks as one of the Prairie Provinces, it contains, just within its western border, some of the most memorable mountain scenery on this planet. The province, realising the value of these possessions, has set apart several large tracts as national parks, chief among these Jasper Park—five thousand three hundred and eighty square miles; Rocky Mountains Park—two thousand seven hundred and fifty-one square miles; and Waterton Lakes Park—two hundred and twenty square miles. Over the border, in British Columbia, are other great national parks, such as Kootenay Park and Yoho Park, and Glacier Park, where are the weird Nakimu caves.

Suppose we take the central pass—from Calgary—the one into which the exploring Assiniboines journeyed long ago. Coming up in the train, where the rolling prairies drive a wedge into the beginning of the pass, there are places that still seem empty. What barbed-wire fences are there it is not

easy to pick out. But looking out of the windows, seemingly into mere rolling space, you see, suddenly, a motor-car pursued by dust, another, and another, each with its dust-pennant. They are as beads slipping off a string. They glide away into a coulée. They were apparitions of cars. There is nothing out there—only a green hill rolling into the next. And the moral is that not in all this land, from east to west, can one come to any accurate or final knowledge of it from the train-windows.

Like ranges of pumice-stone and coral the Rockies rise from the foothills, their massive cornices and the tall cracks of their chimneys hinting that in time immemorial they were thrust up there unsolidified, dank, and dripped. I can imagine no one, going up to the Rocky Mountains Park from Calgary and seeing the actual original peaks of the well-known photographs, being disappointed in his expectations.

At Banff I have often to assure myself that what I look at is real. From the meadow on which the town is built the mountains surge abruptly. Their lower slopes are draped in the quiet of forests, while, above, the stark sundials wheel their shadows in slow motion from west to east all day long. Sometimes the quality of the light, reflected from the high cliffs and peaks, is such that it seems they are only painted on the sky.

Inside the Banff Springs Hotel there are certain other old rocks, or stones, worth considering. There are pillars there, and window-sills, and steps, and twisting staircases between one floor and another, scrawled over with the stains of seaweed and stencilled with ammonites and their kindred, trilobites and the shells of Sydney crabs, every little indentation etched in the stone—which came from the Tyndal quarries in Manitoba.

From the windows, looking east, the scene is theatrical. The back-drop was waiting for ages. The site was prepared, and obvious. The builders had just to build this hotel, and insert the tall, framing windows. You will remember—as well as the rides up Spray River valley, and the swims in the radium pool, and the golf (which, after all, can be enjoyed elsewhere)—the light of summer days clinging to that back-drop before dusk, in the sad and lovely way it clings to dusty roads and to rivers between woods at that hour. The reflected lamp-clusters, as you look out, hang among the tops of darkening spruce-trees and are spangled on the high ashen cliffs of the unbelievable scene. Bow River, below, ripples away, fading silver in the twilight, on its long journey to Hudson’s Bay.

During the summer the tourist camp on the plateau atop a distant bluff is dotted with cars from Manitoba and California. In February Banff is

thronged with those who come to see, or to participate in, the winter sports. Massive pom-poms of snow are on the trees, branch leans to branch in arches, snow-laden too. In the tunnel underneath is a suffused green radiance and the oddest sense of cosiness and protection. Usually, at this season, after the first heavy snowfalls, the days are cloudless, the sky a glittering silk, and the shadows in the snow are blue. The runners of the sledges trail thin parallel lines of blue behind. Because of a passing breeze, or because of the mere weight of snow upon it, a tree suddenly shakes itself, bows and returns, and for a moment there is a tree of snow beside it, snow glinting with rainbow colours. A gentle puff of sound and it is down.

I dropped into Banff this year towards the end of July, when the Stony Indians, of whose ancestry and migrations I have already told, were trooping in (most of them from their reservation that lies a little way eastward among the foothills, others from over a hundred miles northward) and pitching their tepees in the big meadow near the game corrals. Annually, in the last week of July, they come here for the fête called Indian Days. On the first day there are horse-races, and also archery tournaments. The gate-money all goes to the tribe, and the fee you pay for a seat in the rough diminutive grandstand also goes to them. You can imagine, without my telling you, the horses whirling round that circle, their copper-hued jockeys riding bare-back, canted forward, the semicircle of dust pursuing the pattering hoofs. In the grandstand are the white visitors, craning forward. Along its edges the Indian women, wrapped in their coloured blankets, look on, sometimes in primitive fashion raising a hand which they press upon their mouths as the riders surge past.

In the lulls between races your gaze may drift from the chromatic throng to the mountains round that amphitheatre, unbelievable mountains, their pinks and greys looking so frail at times that a puff of wind might, it seems, blow them away.

Since time immemorial the Indians have been devoted to such gatherings —tribal and intertribal—a gregarious people. And I think one would be acting as a sort of special counsel for the offensive who sniffed at Indian Days as a put-up job. If it be somewhat arranged, that is all to the good. Even for a little bridge-party to be not a failure there must be invitations. And regarding what element there may be in it of what one with sinister outlook might call, at a stretch, exploitation, the people of Banff are entirely frank. When the Indians ride up to Banff Springs Hotel in the glory of their treasured war-bonnets, dreadful as an army with banners, their fringed and beaded buckskin coats, breastplates of hollowed bone, leggings decorated

with porcupine quills, to receive prizes for their attire—as in sophisticated communities rewards are given midway in the evening at a fancy-dress ball—the speaker on behalf of the Indians tells us that these Stonys are by no means a wealthy people, that the gate-money we pay to see their sports is very welcome to them as an addition to tribal funds, that the merchants of Banff give them assistance on the occasion, and that the Canadian Pacific Railway contributes prizes. So that's that—and all that is at all in the nature of exploitation in Indian Days.

The second day is Visiting Day, when the Indians keep open house—or open tepee. On that day you may buy from them (though if you don't, and merely visit and make your bow, there is no evil-eyeing) various articles of native manufacture, arrows, knives made of bone, hide-scrapers of stone with horn handles, the junctures of these effected by the old method of twining new raw hide which, in shrinking, tightens, from one to the other.

There is a dignity about these people, retained even while white visitors drop five- and ten-cent pieces into the palms of the shy papooses pottering at the lodge doors. In other parts of the world you may see the children of even more sophisticated peoples turning cartwheels or diving for pennies. These Indian children do not solicit doles, though entirely pleased to receive what alms the white people may be desirous to disburse. You realise that they are not beggars.

A few of the elders can speak hardly any English. A few can but, conservatively, won't. Most, however, can explain themselves in our tongue, if haltingly; and among the younger men are many who speak it fluently, working as cowboys on neighbouring ranches, perfectly able to take their place among civilised communities, and proud of being Indian, as proud as ever Englishmen of being English. The people of this tribe, according to those who have been in touch with them for many years and know well their history here, are of pure Indian blood.

A brooch worn by one of the women, made of a lustrous pierced shell, caught my attention, and I was curious regarding its origin.

"Your brooch is made of shell, is it not?" I asked.

She frowned and considered, then touched it with a finger.

"Yes," she said. "Shell."

"Where it come from?" I inquired.

"Yes, shell," she said again.

"Where from?" I persisted.

She shook her head.

"River?" I prompted. She shook her head once more. Then—

"Oh, no," she said, with a singing inflection of voice implying I was clearly on the wrong track. She thought again. "Lake," said she.

Still I was puzzled.

"No, no," she corrected herself. "*Big* lake."

She looked round for aid to the Indians near, glanced from one to another, and apparently realised that none of those in the vicinity could help. A nuisance, this strife of tongues! Out of the corners of her eyes she implored the blue sky for aid, and had it.

"Ocean!" she brought out triumphantly, and pointed westward.

Still do they trade their goods for such jewellery—shells passed along from tribe to tribe through the interior, even from the Pacific Coast.

But shortly after that I had an interpreter for any further talks, meeting Tom Wilson, a celebrated old-timer who, for the greater portion of his life, has moved to and fro in this part of the West, trapping and trading. He was, in fact (for here, as on the great plains, much has happened in brief space of time), the first white man to stand on the shores of Lake Louise, where now is a great tourist hotel, led thither by some of these very Stonys. He knows them all by name, and their liking for him is marked. To get to the heart of any tribe one must know its speech. The next best thing here, in the lack of my knowledge of Stony, was to be presented by Tom Wilson.

It was a memorable visit, and I was thus granted something more than just the dignified Indian greeting of Visiting Day. One of the Indians had arranged the inside of his lodge in such a manner that, should he be asked by visitors how they lived in these tents in winter, the reply, to aid his mere smattering of English, could be given by a movement of his hand left and right. This side summer, that side winter.

To one side—that side summer—was just the canvas, pulled up from the ground a little way over the tripod of poles, for the admission of air. To the other—that side winter—affixed to the poles with buckskin thong was a dado of deerskin, which not only came to the ground, but folded back inwards there, making a carpet. There was a couch constructed from the branches of the lodge-pole pine, made comfortable with pillows of dried moss; and a great bearskin was cast over it. Another service of this inner

dado is the creation of an upward draught between the outer canvas and it, over the heads of those in the tepee, which helps to carry the smoke away through the hole in the tepee's apex, where the supporting poles meet. Outside are two additional poles, each with ear-flap attached to the top, which can speedily be moved to and fro, setting these flaps in the manner of cowls, to prevent down-draught or what's called back-smoke.

So far from it being probable that Indian Days at Banff will pass into desuetude it is likely to become a more important event. For I heard that the Stonys intend to invite their neighbours the Sarcees and the Blackfeet (the people whose ancestors penned their ancestors in here but, finding them too valiant, left it at that) to join them in future gatherings. The reservation of the Sarcees (they are now almost all, by the way, actually half-breeds) is a little way south-west of Calgary. The reservation of the Blackfeet (they are still preponderatingly of pure Indian blood) is east of Calgary, near Gleichen. It is an honest penny these people turn during Indian Days, not only with their gate-money and the grand stand charge, but in the sale of their native implements. These are the honest work of their own hands, not imported goods. In fact, by the third and last day, all they had for sale was gone. Quite in vain when informed *not for sell, not for buy*, regarding what you might see then, from old calumets to war-bonnets, to offer a seemingly tempting price. Not for sell, not for buy, was not a bluff of barter.

THE OLD ROUTE TO THE WEST.
HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S "DOUBLE NORTH" CANOES ON INLAND WATERS
These birch-bark craft carried a crew of fourteen men, passengers, and over three tons of freight

Not only the tourists who happen to be in Banff during Indian Days attend that celebration. Many old-timers, in whose hearts is the spirit of the

old West (whether they may talk much about it or not), drift hither then for the sake of days that were—although, to be sure, there are other more intimate gatherings at times, off the beaten track, local "stampede days" and "frontier days," at which tourists are accidental instead of in the majority.

I think I am right in saying that in this Far West you will find many whose mental image of the land, as related to a map, is one of height not breadth. For them it runs from Edmonton to New Mexico, down through the eastern foothills of the ranges. The heraldic device for that strip might be the high-saddled horse and the broad-brimmed, high-crowned Stetson hat. Some spirit has remained there from those old days of the old North Trail, when restless cowboys punched cattle for a season in Alberta, and then rolled their blankets in the ground-sheet and were gone even as far as to the Arizona ranges, perhaps curious to see the tall cactus of which they had heard.

You can tell where a man's heart is by his treasures, his *lares et penates*. Pictures by the cowboy artist of Montana (Charles Russell) are not only to be seen in homes of retired ranchers in Great Falls, but in houses of old-timers in Calgary. And it was in the house of an Alberta stockman that I first saw the wood-carving of Mr. Clark (whose home is in the Glacier Park), two examples in fact, one a rampant grizzly bear, about eight inches high, at a glance recognisable for something very different from the little wooden bears, made in Switzerland by the gross, that you may buy in curio shops; another a piece of wood carved into the semblance of a cliff, and in a niche of that cliff a Rocky Mountain goat.

There are those to whom all sentiment is mock-sentiment—sentimentality—and a deplorable thing. But this that I speak of here is not of that genre. They will keep their thumbs on it if they think you lack the capacity to understand. For myself, I am not immune. Easily these know me for sympathetic toward their leanings. I was wearing, at Banff, a silver ring made from a Mexican silver dollar, with a green desert turquoise inset, an example of Navajo Indian work. It signifies to me that old West and the spirit of that West. The wife of a cattle-man present, noting my ring, held up her hand and nodded. She too wore one, not hefty as mine, a feminine one, slender, holding a blue turquoise, and on either side of the stone were typical Indian markings. As that squaw I told you of (who was, by the way, a belle of her race and from white standards also, in the colloquialism, *easy to look at*) had her shell brooch from the Pacific Coast for its beauty and perhaps more, we had our Navajo rings—for their beauty, and implications, suggestions, symbolism, from the other end of this strip of earth between the plains and the peaks. To many that West is not *away out there*; it is their

here, and it runs from north to south with the Rockies for a wall. Eastwards is only *away back there*. And they recall the names of old brands, old ranches, the hills where their calling may still be pursued, as Scotsmen the Grampians, or Derbyshire men the Peak. Porcupine Hills sounds well to them.

All this that I'm driving at is something like having more than the palate's pleasure in the wine of a country, Chianti in Italy, cider in Devon. Many of the guides at the tourist centres, the hotels and bungalow camps, are of the old breed, adapting themselves, as best they may, to the changing conditions. Treated as mere servitors they will give but service; treated otherwise, through them the visitor to these lands may tap that spirit.

But of course it is possible for one to go west, from his world's centre, wherever it be, to *away out there* and even marvel at the scene (photograph the segregated splendour of the pile called Castle Mountain, or the peeping pyramid of Assiniboine) and be no more than dimly aware of that spirit. In the rotundas of the modern hotels it is shy. In the last cattle- and horse-ranches, where something of the earlier life remains, or on such fête days as these when the Indians and the white men who know them forgather, may the passing stranger realise, overhearing some fragment of talk in a group here and there, that this land has a life apart from that of the Circle Tours, and the Grey Line, and the Lariat Trail. Here still are those whose instincts are toward corrals and away from grain elevators. The horse, for them, was designed rather to be ridden than for haulage, or at least not for hauling anything more weighty than a democrat rig. They do not look right in motor-cars. But Frankenstein has made his monster. You will see even Indians whirling past in their automobiles now, erect at the wheel, gnawing perhaps upon chewing-gum.

Change everywhere, change here, so rapid that before age comes to a man he is (at least at heart) a survival. And the old have lived many lives.

CHAPTER IX

AFTER the Indians had gone I sat for an hour or two one day with Tom Wilson in a room on the shelves of which almost all the books were of that old West, many of them *rare* and *scarce* in the booksellers' catalogues. I saw there the *Travels of Alexander Ross*, and the Earl of Southesk's book, and the journal of David Douglas of Perth and Kew Gardens, whose name lives in the Douglas firs.

The West Tom told of was not so bloody as that of a certain sort of Wild West yarn, in which the six-guns are seldom silent. A sanguinary one he did tell, to be sure, in no more than a few sentences, but it had a humorous twist. A man arrived on the north-west prairies fifty years ago making inquiries for another. He was informed that the man he sought for had been shot and that, by common consent, it had been *coming to him*. The new-comer agreed, explaining that the slain man had killed his father, and that he had been seeking for him to have revenge. And now, said he, the man he wanted to get hold of was the one who had, by killing his father's murderer, *cheated* him.

There was another story, about a marshal of Fort Benton and his deputy. The deputy, seeing a wanted man in town, stepped up to him to make an arrest. But the arrest was resisted. The wanted man being unarmed, the deputy chivalrously did not compel him to come at the point of his gun. They wrestled. They fought with their fists. Across the street suddenly appeared the marshal; but, looking on, he decided that it was a fair fight. His deputy did not shout for aid. Besides, the deputy had a high opinion of his own capacity, as the marshal had noticed. So he lit a cigar and, sitting on the sidewalk's edge, looked on. That's part of the old spirit.

And Tom told us how, once, travelling south, with a partner, through the foothills from MacLeod with a string of pack-ponies, skirting a high bluff they looked down upon the old mud fort on Sun River (one of the early palisaded forts) and saw on a flat meadow a mile or so distant a sudden rushing to and fro of Indians in the midst of a large encampment. Riding slowly along the edges of the bluff, he and his partner then saw a horse at full gallop heading from the Indian camp towards the fort. As it pounded

closer they saw that upon its back were two riders. Behind came a galloping mob of pursuers, fiercely "ki-yi-ing." But the leading horse had had a good start and, though bearing a double load, retained the lead in the sprint demanded of it. It reached the fort, surged into the courtyard, and the great gates immediately swung shut. The pursuers reined in, yelling, at the walls.

Here seemed to be what's called trouble. But even if you were a little dubious of what might be coming in those old days, you hid all evidences of what anxiety you may have had. Tom and his partner did not turn back. They rode on, down to the meadow, and there made camp while, in small parties, the baffled losers in that race returned to their encampment, sullen, a little "ugly." Some passed Tom without a word, others nodded, but curtly, their faces gloomy.

What was it all about? we asked, for he had paused and was staring into distance as if that was the story's end, more tantalising than Stockton's celebrated one of the lady and the tiger. He told us. There had been a good deal of sickness among the Blackfeet down there, and in response to requests from the agent a doctor had been sent to tend them. He was a skilful practitioner. He cured where the medicine-men failed. The number of invalids was rapidly diminishing. The tribe had accepted the doctor as a friend. It happened that that day, just in a social way, they were having a war-dance. You may see the war-dance still when Indians gather here and there. It is wild and vivid. There is a quick motion of the right hand, as the dancers circle to a definite throbbing and agitating rhythm, which signifies tomahawking. And there is a lighter one, a pointing flick, which means *counting coup*—touching the fallen enemy. And there is a motion as of lightly swinging an old-time hook, or sickle, signifying scalping. And there's a wriggling of the body, macabre, weird, accompanied by a fierce gazing left and right called *looking for the enemy*.

On the occasion of this dance they carried white-man rifles, which of course they all then possessed, and in place of the action of tomahawking they had been making motions as of shooting their rifles, even sometimes, as they danced, actually shooting into the ground. The little doctor was dancing with them and inadvertently shot one of the Indians. Abruptly the dance stopped. But the chief acted on the instant. Grabbing the doctor by the arm he dragged him with him, running to the nearest horse, flung the doctor on to it, leapt up behind him, and headed for the fort. He knew his people. In another moment, excited as they were with the dance, they might have riddled that white man with bullets. But the chief was aware that him they would not shoot. Or if he did not know for certain, he took the chance. And,

at any rate, a chief felt himself a miserable man indeed if anything untoward happened to a guest in his camp.

That was the moment of Tom Wilson's arrival. That was the explanation for what he saw. And this is the sequel: after giving a little time for the cooling of hot blood, the chief rode back to the encampment, carrying with him the doctor's infinite regret. And a little later a deputation returned to the fort to take the doctor back again, forgiven.

There were one or two sitting by, listening to this story out of the past, when Tom Wilson mentioned, casually, knotting up the loose threads, that the doctor had given twenty dollars, or fifty perhaps, to the mother of the buck who had been killed, she having been supported by him.

"And that squared it, eh?" one of the listeners remarked.

"What is our life-insurance?" another immediately broke in. "I don't think we can snort at the old squaw over that. And the main part of the story, to me, is the chief's quick action. He ought to have been a chief, too. I expect he was a chief just because of that capacity for quick thought and for nerve."

Tom Wilson made no comment. His gaze was away in the past. When he returned from where he had been, looking through that bookshelf instead of at it, he told us one more, with a chuckle. Into a ranch bunk-house, on a day of stinging blizzard, there came a cowboy who was an Englishman not long out. He drew off his mackinaw coat with a gesture of one weary, but even more disgusted than weary. He divested himself of his chaps with two violent prances, and as from his very soul he remarked:

"God's country! God's country!" He looked round the room. "Yes, he gave it to the Devil." He glared at them. "And the Devil gave it to the Indian." He included them all in a withering glare. "And you Canadians stole it from the Indian."

But it seems that Englishman did not go back to England, despite his harangue. When last Tom heard of him he was retired, as many of his kind, in that astonishingly changed little city of Calgary.

At Banff, and for many a mile to follow, we are in a tourists' paradise—with room for all who come. In fact Banff, for all its beauty, is but promissory. Hints of other activities are provided by freight-trains upon sidings, waiting, with hissing escape of steam, for the passage of the passenger-trains. You see, eastward bound, flat-car after flat-car, laden with sawn timber, or with telegraph or telephone poles. Or you see, headed west,

grain cars on their way to the shipping elevators at Vancouver. Or if, instead of passing through by train, you view the land from a motor-car on these gravelled roads that swerve through the same pass as the railway, you hear in places the high corries of the rocks echoing back the panting blasts of the great locomotives hauling a quarter of a mile of freight-train. Up the grades they come, puffing, as the children tell you, "I think I can—I think I can—I think I can," reach a level and roll on to the triumphant snorting, as the children say again, of, "I thought I could—I thought I could. . . ." You hear the scream of the wheel-flanges at curves, echoed again from the higher precipices and, dwindling away into the gorges, receding, receding, the engine's mellow hoot, like that of an owl, before the innumerable bends. We are here in a tumbled region of forests and saw-edged peaks and roaring creeks, styled, by some, the Switzerland of America. Anywhere here you could leave the train and, granting the capacity to carry provisions on the way or, when these failed, to live on the land like an Indian, or a prospector, pass on for weeks on end through a labyrinth of mountains to where the Endicotts look down coldly and forlorn toward the Arctic Sea. In Switzerland you know that there is a village in the next valley. Here you know the chances are that there is not.

Not but what here there are even Swiss guides come from their native land to convoy mountaineers over the glaciers and on to teasing summits. There are several glacier expeditions taken by many during the season under the guidance of Swiss guides, such as that one from Lake Louise to Lake Oesa, through the utter loneliness and devastation of Abbot Pass, accompanied by the fixed stare of affronted peaks. That one is tiring enough for the novice. On such expeditions the guides can come by a gauge of a client's wind and endurance. They have others in abeyance for those proved climbers who have the capacity for them. And, as for themselves, there is always some peak called impregnable, the impregnability of which (in a sort of busman's holiday) they are questioning from this side and the other by chimney and ledge, when there is nothing better to do, no client to take out. If you want to risk breaking your neck, they can take you to places the final charm of which is in getting back safely.

Here is wilderness. Here you are still, in a sense, at the beginning of things, though a railway and a motor-road twist through. The tracks of spring avalanches, havoc of snapped trees, and the grey wedges of rock-slides, or the emerald of recent growth of berry-bushes (where bears love to feed) over earlier rock-slides, tell you what manner of gardening is done here. Even out from Lake Louise, going down the Sheol Valley towards the Paradise Valley, among rafts of avalanche-felled trees and toppled boulders,

you come on a warning by the trail side—a sort of wilderness equivalent of the signs at the railway-crossings of "Stop, Look, Listen"—informing you that the rock-slide ahead still moves at times, and that it is not a place where it is advisable to take an afternoon nap. I forget the wording. Had I known that I was going to write this book I would have taken a note of it, for the pleasure of textual exactitude, when last I trudged down there—great hoary marmots (the largest I have ever seen in the province) watching me pass, not even troubling to give their warning whistle, hardly troubling to get off the trail. This region has been so long a game-preserve that it seems they know they are safe.

Even train-travel here leaves pictures in the mind for life. The wilderness does something to the inside of the coaches even. Its spirit invades them, as on stormy days at sea the ocean menaces, with wild lights, the grandeur and assurance of mahogany cabins and berths. Across the years from my first visit I still have a memory of a crescendo of a peak slashed with a glacier, and backed by the dwindling fire of sunset, wheeling away from view on one side and building up again upon the other, the roar of our passage in a rocky cut falling away and we in space, out on a high trestle bridge over an avenue of water that poured down out of the unchancy deepening dark of a forest below that we saw as hawks and eagles might. There is here too much for us to tuck away in the places within us where memories are kept, unless we alight and linger.

The last time I passed this way to Lake Louise, I found that for a day or two all I wanted to do after arrival there was to sit down quietly and make order out of the chaos of impressions provided by no more than the three prior days. Strange blend: there was a memory of the departing Stony Indians who had come in to Banff for Indian Days from northward, stringing away with their pack-ponies in Indian file, jig-jog, through a great patch of mauve fireweed towards a blue shadow in a grey range of rocks. There was the memory of a lonely mountain that sloped up upon one side, the southern side, like a tremendous and steep roof, and upon the other was precipitous, even sloping inwards. It looked as though it leant there against the north wind. The modern hotels dropped in these places provide strange contrasts. I recalled walking round the mezzanine floor at Banff Springs Hotel to the dining-room, and hearing music played in such a way that it pinched the heart. Who was playing, and where? And then between two pillars I saw the musician: somebody's chauffeur, by his uniform, a negro (his ebony face as black as the ebony of the piano), who had found that instrument in the alcove and was expressing himself on it, wrapt and lost. There was that in his playing, though it was not negro melodies that he evoked, which perhaps

only his people could bring out—the same sort of thing that you find in the work of such poets as Countee Cullen.

Lake Louise invites you to sit and meditate. At the Château there it is as if one saw the mountains and old forests from the windows of the Berkeley Hotel. Divans, shaded electric lights, and quiet carpets within; and without, the Icelandic poppies, exotic, swaying, and, beyond, the peaks. Now and then they tear a bit off the sky; a flimsy fragment of it trails from a projecting tooth, like cobweb.

Each place has its own especial glory, and though the Lakes in the Clouds, a little way above Louise, I suppose one never forgets, nor the ride or tramp over the Sheol saddle, and up the well-named Paradise Valley, and on to Lake Annette (that is ruffled and smoothed all day by little winds, lying lonely under Mount Temple), the great thing about Lake Louise is the dawn. First notice of it is upon the peak of Mount Victoria. Night passes and day is there in a moment. The glacier blazes white. And immediately, before you, in Lake Louise is the reflection. It is day on Victoria Glacier, and there is reflected day in the lake. Yet despite the abruptness of that first illumination, and the celerity with which the sun runs down over the *névé* and ice, night lingers below. The lower woods have not wakened. The deep shadow-wedge of Fairview lies black on the flank of Lefroy. And still the woods below have not wakened. Day is on the summits of Mount Victoria and Pope's Peak. Day, upside down, is on the green mirror before you, but in the woods night has not yet had notice to quit. On either side of Lake Louise itself you can see the night evaporate.

Passing on from Lake Louise, still in what is essentially a tourists' domain, we leave the hotels and come to bungalow camps. At each of these there is a large central building, a sort of community-house where we dine, or read, or write letters, or sit on the veranda telling other guests that they should go to places in the neighbourhood we have been to if they have not been there, then pausing to give them a fair chance to tell us of places we should go to if we have not been there.

For the first of these bungalow camps—Lake Wapta—you alight at the halt called Hector. The conductor has telephoned ahead that you are coming. If you be the only arrival they take you across in a row-boat. If there be a party a launch is waiting. It is from Wapta that you start out on horseback for Lake O'Hara. They say that when Sargent went up there his canvases remained unpacked for several days. I was glad to know that, for the solace of a painter I met there who informed me, his eyebrows up in his forehead, that he had come to paint, and couldn't. I communicated the Sargent story

and it eased him. There was an excitation of the whole spirit, this painting-man told me, that he found he would have to restrain before he could work.

No great hotel fronts Lake O'Hara. There is just the community-house perched on a knoll among the spruce-trees, and to one end of the lake, among the shore-side trees, a semicircle of small log sleeping-cabins. At O'Hara alone one might stay for many days, as Sargent did, even with no picture to paint at the end, and wonder how an artist could ever seize that beauty. For an outstanding characteristic of these mountain lakes is that they are at one and the same time mutable and immutable. They give you the impression of having been there, as indeed they have, serenely for ages. But all through the hours their colours are changing. Still days, windy days, and days of little occasional passing gusts work their own changes on the water; and cloudless days and cloudy days, and the drift of the light of the days, decree the tones on the high rocks where the glacier crouches looking across at you. People ask each other: "What colour would you say that is now?"

Above O'Hara is another lake, McArthur, that offers you, in place of a blent grandeur and loveliness, a stark austerity. Riding up there even in the company of other human beings, the still small voice of that cirque in the rocks under the debris of fallen cliffs, the lonely peaks, and the reeling sky, is subduing. If you go alone it talks very intimately to you, and you ride quietly back with a strange store of incommunicable knowledge.

Above these lakes again are others to which you cannot ride. You have to scramble over rock and screes. The highest of these is Oesa, like a tarn in the moon. This is the little lake I mentioned when telling of the glacier expedition through Abbot Pass from Lake Louise. And when you are there you may see, coming down from a gap in the ice, certain moving small dots that are men, a Swiss guide leading, who have made that trip. In fact, because of the twistings of the railway, and the tumult of these peaks, stupendously wrinkled and dimpled with greater and lesser high and low valleys, one has frequently to turn to a map to see just precisely where one is in relation to other places. At Lake Louise we are still in Alberta. At Wapta we are in British Columbia.

Wapta, O'Hara, Storm Mountain, Vermilion Pass, Radium: these are some of the bungalow camps that dot this tourist centre, if an area so vast can be called a centre. Westward again from Wapta one alights at Field, under that great rocky hump of Mount Stephen where motor-cars wait to carry us either to Emerald Lake or to the Yoho Valley Bungalow Camp. *Valley* is somewhat misleading, unless one recollects that in such mountainous countries there are upland valleys. Yoho is one of these, its

name simply the Stony Indian ejaculation for wonder or amazement—the Cree Indians' too, by the way, though they have a different inflection.

When I last rode to the wedge end of that valley there was a conspiracy between the clouds passing over and the ice of Yoho Glacier so that, mounting the last rise of forest before the dip under the forefoot, I saw it (framed between two tall spruces, one on either side of the trail) the colour of amethyst. And the shadows in its *séracs* were a translucent purple. This is a high valley of many waterfalls, one called—and aptly—Point Lace, a drapery of foam over a cliff. Twin Falls is another. You see it, looking up from Twin Falls Cabin, as two jets of foam pouring out of the sky through twin notches of a precipice above. And there is Takkakaw, that drops a sheer thousand feet, and on windy days is blown out like a gauzy pennant, or marble dust. The great fall itself comes out of a high font, filled by a lesser and a higher fall; and the sound as of thunder that you hear in the valley sometimes, distant thunder, yet thunder with a difference, is of chunks of ice, melted off the Daly Glacier above, tossed into that rocky cup, splintering along its edges.

There is a place of which I must tell, on what is called the High Trail, a saddle-horse trail along a shelf of the mountains from a hundred yards to perhaps a quarter of a mile in breadth, all quiet under hoof with heath and Alpine flowers, where sight is all and hearing nothing. The snow-field of the Daly Glacier lies across the space that is over Yoho, mile upon mile of undulating white and nothing there but the shadow of a passing cloud. Silence. You dismount and step on to a small buttress of rocks, and at once there is uproar, clamant yet subdued, like the thunder of wind in leaves. Out of the valley you hear them all, their voices blent—Yoho and Takkakaw, Angel's Stairs and Point Lace, Laughing Falls and Whisky Jack. That last, by the way, has nothing to do with any toper of that name, but is the name of a bird, *wiss-ka-tjan*, as white folks have with levity rendered it. You step back and it is as if a door closed. Silence again, the roar of waters and the sigh of wind obliterated.

Round the shoulder of Mount Wapta, that rocky hump to south, by Burgess Pass, geologists have found in the limestone a storehouse of trilobites, and Sydney crabs, and even delicate jelly-fish—Middle-Cambrian fossils.

At Golden (beyond Field, getting back to the railroad), a branch line goes southward into the Upper Columbia Valley, though another way thither is from Banff on the Banff-Windermere highway, by motor-car. In that valley, beside the red cliffs of Sinclair Cañon, where people go mostly to

swim in the open sulphur bath, there is a bungalow camp. Others there are by the banks of Windermere, the whole region becoming more and more a summertime playground. At one of these camps one sees, through the blazing Julys and Augusts, the daughters of wealthy Americans from the east (for whom specially it caters, with resident instructors and instructresses) learning to ride and to swim, and canoeing, and being browned by the sun and storing up vigour in the healthful air of these parts.

It was on June 30th, 1807, that David Thompson, the explorer, from the head-waters of Saskatchewan, and through the Rocky Mountain passes, arrived here. He was looking for the Columbia. He found it—and was unaware. That it ran southward to its mouth in the Pacific he knew. But here was a broad river flowing deliberately the wrong way. That hairpin turn of the Big Bend was beyond imagining. About the same time, by the way, Simon Fraser was upon the river that now bears his name, paddling northward, under the impression that he was on the Columbia.

Could Thompson return, what would he think of the motors trailing their wakes of dust on the Banff-Windermere highway, and of descendants of the Indians he knew at the wheel of the devil-wagon—as they called the automobile only a few years ago when the first one (taking the place of the old horse-stage from Cranbrook) honked past? Eliminate the cars and the camps and the little dotted towns (Invermere and Athelmere, Wilmer and Windermere) and the scene is the same as Thompson saw: to west the forested Selkirks, to east the stark Rockies, and in the valley between, tufts of yellow sage spilling their aromatic scent, and still, heedless of the cars, the loons calling from the lakes with that haunting cry that has been called a laugh, that has been called melancholy, that has been called joyous.

I have known travellers awed and astounded by the many close-ups of beauty northward (O'Hara, Louise, and the rest) coming down this valley and relaxing, and in that act—or inaction—discovering how tense they had been with all that grandeur close at hand. Here is something different; here is tranquillity.

On the other hand I have met people who whirled the length of this valley in motor-cars like travelling-boxes with the lid down, and their memory of it was chiefly that it was hot and dusty. Eyes on the road, they had been unaware of what lay backward on either side. Yet there are many who come here yearly for the swimming, the boating, the golf, though to some, golf here must seem a whimsical impingement, especially those who know it is a jumping-off place for trips into wilderness.

Situated outside of the national parks, in which hunting is prohibited, it is a base for those who come with rifles instead of cameras to snap trophies. The camera-bearing tourists go. There is a lull. And then the big-game hunters arrive. Moose, black bear, grizzly bear, goats and sheep are what the sportsmen ask the local guides to introduce them to. My own big-game hunting has been chiefly through a camera-finder instead of along a rifle's sights, but many times now I have been *out* with Walter Nixon, one of the leading guides there, into the domain of these creatures.

He is of a type, reminiscent of Owen Wister's Virginian, at home with horses, at home in canoes, never at a loss before the hazards of the wilderness, and with a dry turn of wit. The motor-car has introduced caps where but recently were the big Stetsons, so that now you see occasionally a man in a car wearing a "four-gallon" hat, and a man on a horse sometimes wearing a cap.

"Why do you wear chaps?" I heard a motoring visitor ask Nixon once.

He explained their value, proven here, these long years, by horsemen who have to ride through brush, sometimes wet brush, proven also, far south, by those who have to ride through cactus and thorny scrub. The answer satisfied.

"And why do you wear that big hat?" was the next question.

"To bail out the fords on the way," Nixon replied, in his even-pitched and slow drawl.

Some years ago I went with him to the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers, at the head of Horse-Thief Creek, when there were fords to take instead of corduroy bridges. My wife was one of the first women to go there, and meeting him a year or two later, after these—shall we say improvements?—had been made, telling her of them—"Ah," said he, "that was sure a he-man's trip in those days."

My memories of that trip are many, and they being of the life of the land I shall give you a short inventory of them: At one of our camp places we arrived while a twilight like blue dust was sifting among the bottom pines, though high above day was yet golden on a steep roof of mountain. Our cooking fire was lit, and as the smoke ascended there came, very shrill and far-carrying, a lonely whistle, an eerie whistle. The dog leapt up, looking this way and that. No man there. It was only the warning of a sentinel marmot on some slab of rock up there, warning his fellows of our arrival.

In the middle of the night in that camp I woke. It occurred to me I might never be there again, and I would fain see the place under all its aspects. So I slipped from the blankets and looked out of the tent. I remember the stars in the high cloudless vault of the South Atlantic. This was as astounding. There was no moon, or only a slightly assisting sliver of it, perhaps hidden away from my direct view somewhere behind these peaks and ranges that, there, were close to us. There seemed more stars than sky. And on the silhouetted steeple of that slope (on a rock of which the marmot had whistled of our arrival a few hours before, when that rock would be warm) there was a planet like a beacon. Only the cold drove me back to my blankets.

When I woke again there was a crackling sound outside. The stars were being put out. A hint of morning passed among them. Down where we camped only the near trees were individually visible. Horse-Thief Creek was a whisper going past, a gurgle, a leaden streak. The crackle I had heard was of a fire being started, Nixon up betimes. There is a witchery in all hours, but this one took me by surprise. I did not wish to break its spell. I felt that both the stealthy morning and I watched Nixon leave the fire and step down the bank. I saw him, sitting on his heels, in silhouette against that water, washing his hands, slowly, unaware that anyone was looking at him. Behind him the fire blazed up. A column of smoke rose from it, straight at first. And then what was not a wind but a current of air plucked at its top, caught it. The column was bent, drawn out to the creek; and above the creek, in the draught created by the run of water, it moved deliberately away. Among the tree-tops of the converging mountain ridges I could trace the farther course of that stream by the twinings of the smoke.

It was still chilly and I began to dress, standing at the tent door. When I came out Nixon tossed me a mackinaw, and its warmth was welcome. We were getting high in the world, and water left in a pan overnight had frozen. Nixon dropped it out.

“There’s a shaving-mirror for you,” he said.

Then the light of morning smote back from the peaks above, and it was as if a shutter was drawn down on them. The last of night was thrust from the slopes by an avalanche of gold. It filled our hollow. And within a minute —within a minute—there was again the hum of bee and fly. Another day was brimming in British Columbia, blazing and warm. I took the coat off. It would not be needed again all day. Up on the rock-slide, that seemed in distance of little pebbles, though of boulders as big as houses canted at all angles, it warm again under the fierce glow, a hoary marmot who was invisible whistled, the very voice of loneliness.

These memories are even more deep, I think, than those of the journey's end, impressive though the ultimate spectacle was as we rode out of the last forest on to an upland meadow of bryanthus, or false heath, and Alpine flowers, and saw the Hanging Glaciers before us. Hooked on to the last ridge they hang round a great horseshoe of mountain cul-de-sac; and at the base of it is a wall of ice (a hundred and fifty feet from the water up, I was told) which reminded me of the engraving of the Great Ice Barrier of the Antarctic in an old atlas of my boyhood, the margins of the maps in which were decorated not only with cuts of ships in good anchorages, but with thumb-nail pictures of such scenes.

Up north, in what I have spoken of as the great tourist centre on the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and again, farther north, Jasper Park way, where the Canadian National track runs, there are what can well be called close-ups of majesty and beauty. And one should see Mount Robson as one should see Niagara and the pyramids, perhaps.

To compare grandeur with grandeur, beauty with beauty, is foolish. All I would say is that to look at the ranges from below and afar is very different from looking down from them, and on Panorama Plateau (to which one rides up from Invermere) the vision is of immensity.

To people surfeited with scenery, but without that deeper thing, love of nature, I dare say the first day's ride may seem to be nothing in particular. For it is up a long valley where the spring snow-slides have felled the trees by the mile, snapped them off, rolled them downward, to pile them higgledy-piggledy like spilt matches. But on this expedition the great thing is the climax. By the lie of the land one is able, without tiring the horses, to ride all the way to an altitude of eight thousand five hundred feet. Still, as in all such trips, there are the tremendous trifles on the way. Things much smaller than peaks and horrible great slow glaciers assail the heart after their own fashion, some with a pang, the cause of which might take a deal of explaining and we leave unexplained: a shred of moving mist passes on its last journey into the cleft of a high and lonely corrie; a cluster of purple pentstemons hang over a hollowed boulder that a little creek trembles into and spills out of all day long, blending its reflected colour with the wavering amber of the pool. Still, here the climax is, without doubt—the climax.

Passing upward out of the last thinning woods there is nothing ahead but a sere knoll. One wonders, what next? To go farther the horses would have need of wings like Pegasus. I say there is nothing farther than that knoll. Yet that does not convey the impression. There is. There is the sky. And on the day I mounted there, there were banners of clouds on it making enormous

gestures upwards, and one came leaning on nothing to meet us, sinister, laden with calamity, the very hue of fear. Nixon looked up at it.

"Too high. It will pass over," said he.

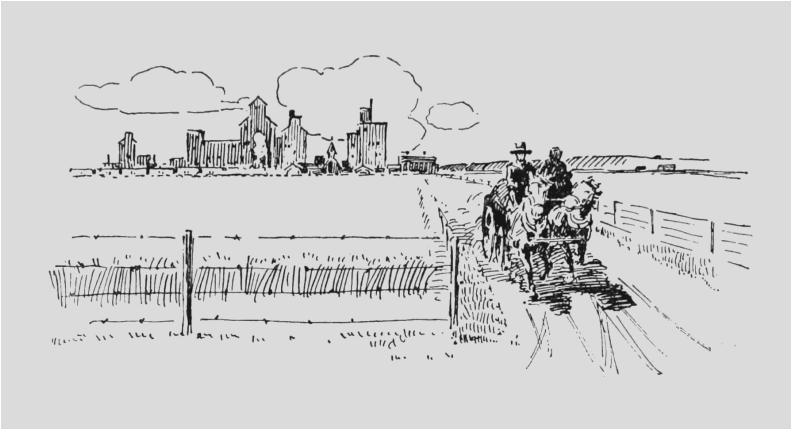
Came then the climax as we rode on to this dome of short, sere grass. Everywhere the peaks bobbed up. We looked out across the valley of the Upper Columbia at three hundred miles of the Rocky Mountains from north to south. We called the peaks by name. We saw Assiniboine to east, ribbed with snow and rock; far south was Crow's Nest mountain; we called Mount Goodsir, northward, by name. We picked out the pyramids above the Valley of the Ten Peaks, and ranges beyond Lakes Louise and O'Hara. This was the moment for Nixon to take from his saddle-horn a pair of binoculars. And wherever one looked through these to north, between the last notches in which, with the naked eye, there had been only space, there rose up other peaks, and other snow-fields.

There was nothing to say. We could only look.

I was reminded of a man I know in another part of this great province, a lumberman employed upon what is called the pole and post business—that is, telegraph poles and fence posts. He had been high in the Selkirks "timber-looking," and asked me if I had ever been into a part of the ranges from which he had just returned. I told him I had not. Very quietly, his manner suggesting that he felt the need for what is called the efficacy of understatement, he said:

"You haven't? Oh, well, you should go up there some day." By his look he was remembering it. "When you get up above timber-line," said he, "and see what lies above you still, all the sweep of that basin, and see the ptarmigan fly with their chickens, you just look at it and you say—you say —" he sought for words, "you say, 'My, oh, my!' "

It is like that on Panorama Plateau.



Prairie Elevation

CHAPTER X

To statistics, above all to comparative statistics, it is unwise, perhaps, to accord a belief beyond reconsideration. Some it is easy to come by. In the securing of others there are difficulties. Recently I saw a statistical return that tabulated the three leading means of support of British Columbia in this order: lumbering, tourists, mining. I should not be surprised if it were accurate. But I wrote first of the tourists because, making our approach from east, their special domain came first in the order of our going.

And now lumbering, for another reason, will wait. Mining has place of seniority. It touches much more closely the history of the land.

In the years ’59 and ’60, wandering prospectors already in the Cariboo country had found placer gold in such quantities as to create what was known as the Cariboo Rush. Old Californian Forty-Niners hurried northward, some travelling all the way overland, others arriving on coastal vessels at New Westminster to continue on their way along the banks of the Fraser River, where to this day you can trace, in many places, the rut of their passage, the original Cariboo Trail. Others came from the Eastern States, from Eastern Canada, from Britain, these trekking all the way across the prairies, passing into the Cariboo country chiefly through the Yellowhead Pass.

There were also, after the American Civil War, bodies of restless ex-soldiers roaming in the province looking for fortune in gold. They passed into the Columbia Valley, washing for gold-dust at Wild Horse Creek, and continued northwards as far as the Big Bend. Very little seems to have been recorded of these men, their doings chiefly in family tradition. But I have met mining men who have come upon sluice-boxes (dove-tailed and fitted together without use of any nails) in places where there was no record of there having been any prior prospecting, probably the work of these wanderers.

The Cariboo rush is one of the greatest gold excitements in the history of placer-mining. Of the Cariboo road, to the building of which there came from Britain by request of the colony of those days a company of Royal Engineers, you may read in any volume of history dealing with the province.

But for an understanding of the present conditions of mining I think one need go back no farther than thirty to forty years, when the prospectors for precious ore were prying everywhere throughout the land.

There were among these many alert, self-sufficient young men from the colleges specialising in mineralogy and geological courses, but more numerous than these were men whose college had been just the rocks themselves, or talks with their fellows in the hotel sitting-rooms of the last frontier towns, heads together, passing one to another hunks of stone which they fished from their pockets.

Prospectors on the Old Cariboo Road

I wonder why most of these men seemed very old. Perhaps it was as much because many of them did not shave when out in the woods as because I was very young then. My own youthful wanderings in the province were of no commercial importance. I was not looking for gold or silver, I was just looking at the land. A rolling stone gathers no moss, but it may get polish. So another wanderer—the province was full of them—told me when I once voiced a doubt regarding the wisdom of our roving existence. Always, in that wandering, there were these prospectors. They were everywhere. They have impressed themselves on my memory as men

sufficient to themselves (I don't mean bombastic egoists, anything but that), quiet men, who face the music alone, do impress themselves on one's memory. Exceptions were those among their number who were great talkers when in town. Usually they just sat resting in the arm-chairs set in the windows of the hotels of these diminutive mountain cities, looking straight before them, hardly twiddling a thumb, rising only at the sound of the dinner bell and, the meal over, returning to rest in their chairs again.

I remember a remark of one of these: a row of us sat upon a veranda while the mosquito-hawks veered overhead, as they do before twilight, most of us young and full of spirits. There was talk and laughter. Beside me an old man sat seemingly heedless of us. That others laughed did not make him laugh. Only when something really witty was said a couple of chuckles in his chest announced that he was not so far from us as he might seem.

The dark fell, and in place of a visible world of immensity we had only the tom-toming of a creek, an everlasting sound beyond the dotted lights of that "city." Then, before us, very high, a portion of the sky took fire, became incandescent. And as we watched that glow the rolling of the world brought up a full moon. The ridge-top trees were each clearly stamped upon its disk. The banter of the young men slackened. They expressed their appreciation in such comments as "Gosh!" or "Some moon!" And then one of them said: "It must be queer up there in the woods on a night like this."

Then came the old prospector's remark.

"Yes, sir," he said, "a man thinks powerful up there." That seemed to be all. "Nights like these," he ended.

And then he rose and left us.

I looked for him next day, but he was gone, back into the mountains, on the quest for mineral, and, unless I am greatly mistaken, drawn also by a lure of more than mineral. They were everywhere then. I remember going down the Arrow Lakes thirty-two years ago or so, on the stern-wheeler. Few of the wharves or jetties that now thrust out into these lakes were in existence then. But up in the pilot-house the skipper kept a watch upon the shore.

On to one of the beaches walked a man and waved a towel. To let him know he had been seen the skipper responded with a blast of the siren. Echoes of its roar came dropping down to us from high gulches above timber-line; and as these were falling the man on the beach looked back, and up, as if the echoes might be visible. The shallow-draught stern-wheeler

pushed its nose into the sand. The cleated gang-plank was thrust out and he climbed on board, his pack-sack slung upon a shoulder, in one hand the inevitable prospector's short pick, and in the other a bulging sack of that tough canvas that is used for carrying ore-specimens.

They were everywhere, sometimes picking among the rocks for "floats," that is to say fragments of ore carried down in rock-slides or under spring avalanche, or in creeks; and, a float found, they would work upward, seeking for another that might lead them to the mother-lode. Or they would try a creek for *colour*, shovelling sand into the pan, swilling it round with a practised motion. This they would do even on creeks that did not promise any great quantity of placer gold. But if any gold was there it had come from somewhere. They were *getting warm*.

They numbered in their ranks a good many Cousin Jacks (old Cornish miners) with this mania in their blood for unearthing rich mineral. Some of them, in a word, were queer. I recall meeting one such on a rather lugubrious trail of the Boundary Country, Kettle Valley way. These were dark trees. It was a dark forest. I was trudging uphill, pack on back, head bent. It was the click of a hoof on a stone that caused me to raise my head, and there, coming down towards me, beard upon chest, his steely eyes peering at me under the brim of his hat, was one of the breed. Behind him, head lowered, fumbling a way down, came his pack-horse, like a dog at heel, laden with the stereotyped grey blankets and the grub. To one side of the saddle protruded an axe and a prospector's pick thrust under the rope, to the other a Winchester rifle; and flat, centred on top, was the pan.

Nixon, by the way, talking of these old fellows in camp one day, remarked that some of them were great on packing horses. "There was one of them old fellows," he told me, "just when he was leaving camp came on a spoon and a fork that he hadn't packed, so he tucked the fork in on one side of the horse and ran around the other side to put the spoon there, so's to keep the load still balanced just right!"

Be that as it may, and to return to this old man: He stopped abruptly, almost too abruptly for the horse, its broad forehead bumping him in the small of the back. He leant against it, eyeing me, and then he squatted down by the trail side.

"How-do?" he said.

"How do you do?" I said.

He made a grave inclination to the other side of the trail as though there were a chair there for me. So dropping my blanket-roll I sat down on it, and we had a conversation, a curious conversation. He asked me a question, with apparent friendly interest, about myself, and when I began to reply his gaze was away off in distance, the steely look gone out of his eyes and a haze there. He interrupted me to inquire: "Have you heard from anybody if there's anything in this rumour of gold in the Similkameen?" I told him I had met one or two going thither, but the sharp gaze passed. He looked vaguely away, informed me I was a young man, and asked me what was taking me through the country. But again I had hardly begun to reply when, sharply, he spoke:

"There was a man telling me," said he, "that he'd heard of somebody up in the Lardeau making a strike. Have you heard anything of the Lardeau?"

I had heard nothing of the Lardeau—then—and said so, at which he averted his head and stared at the side of the trail as though I disappointed him, or wondering what my interests in life might be—anyhow. Then he rose, said he guessed he'd better be stepping, turned round and looked at his horse which was pulling some odd tufts of grass from the trail side, and informed it also that he guessed they'd better be stepping. He told me, over his shoulder, for a valedictory remark, that it was nice to have a talk with somebody on the trail once in a while, wished me good luck, and trudged on, his pack-horse at heel—one of a type still lingering here and no more.

Their cabins were dotted throughout the country then. And in their cabins they were more loquacious than when in town. I think the reason is that it took them some time to get accustomed to crowds round them in town, but up in the mountains any wanderer happening along was a boon and a blessing like Man Friday to Crusoe who talked to himself. On the edges of the high country, among the last woods, or even beyond, among the rocks, these cabins were built by them whenever they came upon a lead that they considered worth working.

Arriving up there in that queer world of the ptarmigan, the goats and the hoary marmots, coming to a cabin and finding its occupant at home mixing the dough for his bannocks, or filling his pipe and staring out at the tossed landscape, or hurrying out of his tunnel in response to your formal hail of "Anybody around?" the beginnings of converse were desultory to be sure. Unless one knew the breed one might imagine that the lulls between remarks were intended as opportunity for the stranger to say his adieu and move on. But if you did move on, the chances were that the prospector, with a look of amazement, would cry out: "Why, man, won't you come on in?" And if the

afternoon was far spent there would be an invitation for you to stop there for the night.

At first there would not be much talk, but a meal would be eaten; the canister of tobacco would be passed and pipes lit. And then, if the *cliché* may be pardoned, the flood-gates would be opened. Talk!

For illuminant, as the night brimmed up out of the forested bottoms and wiped the last glow of day off the high cliffs, there would be a candle in a candlestick made out of a file that had been shaped on an anvil, and very neatly and cleverly, with thimble to hold the candle, and hook to hang it up by, and sharp point so that it could also be thrust into a log, or into a timber of a prospect-hole. All these old prospectors and miners had their own candlesticks that they had thus made. The carbide lamp has relegated them to the category of old junk—or souvenirs for some of us. I have two of the usual sort. An old miner told me he had one that he would not part with for anything, a present from a partner of those days when prospectors were explorers, another sentimentalist—the thimble of which could be removed. There is a special charm about things that men make with their own hands, because of the individual stamp that the machine-made thing lacks. But this is a long aside upon a candlestick, a bit of old iron, old junk, discarded by progress.

Such, then, were the men who immediately preluded the mining industry as it is in British Columbia to-day. Most of their old cabins are ruined, for not every hole in the ground in which they worked was the beginning of a going concern. High in the mountains you come upon them when fumbling on some disused trail. Squirrels run upon their roofs. You step inside, and there is nothing there, at first glance, but the mouldering logs of what was once the bunk. Sometimes, if you pry round the walls, you will notice, on a few of the logs chipped flat by an axe, old pencil writing: “First snow this year——” and the date; “Heard first marmot whistle to-day——” and the date.

In those days the dream of the prospector, frequently realised, was to sell his prospect outright for a large sum. Placer-mining requires but little capital. That is why the colloquial phrase for it was Poor-Man Mining. But with ore-mining (or lode-mining) it is otherwise. It requires capital. Ways have changed here, however, as elsewhere, during the years, and the outright purchase of a claim is unusual. In the earlier days, too, a financial man sometimes, because of the success of others of his kind in a mining venture, would buy without sufficient inquiry, and making nothing, abandon the place. That does not mean there was dishonesty on the part of the

prospector. These men had faith beyond any men in the world. And, indeed, the assay of their ore might actually infer greater profit than that of the successful mine that prompted a purchaser to buy. Yet on inquiry it might be found that overhead charges would be such as to run away with profits.

Some of these prospectors, with an astounding belief in the speedy opening-up of the land, staked claims in the most unget-at-able places. Alone, they wandered over glaciers even, to have a look into some valley they had spied from another range. They thought largely. Their mine would be such that it would not merely require the erection of a gravity tram down the rocky slopes to carry the ore to a concentrator, or to a road on which it could be hauled. By the eyes of faith they saw railways pushed all the way to their Golconda, and a smelter erected there.

Prospectors of that type are going. Many of their old leases have lapsed. The log cabin, below the abandoned tunnel that mountain goats walk into, and perhaps cougars, following them, moulders at timber edge. The hot summer sun cracks the roof of shakes (split cedar) and the weight of winter snow at last thumps it down inside the walls. And yet, with the extension of railway lines and practicable motor-roads through the province, it is frequently worth while for the prospector and miner of to-day to inquire into these lapsed workings.

The modern way of capital is to take a lease upon a promising property, its owner receiving a percentage of profits. If the profits are satisfactory the lease will obviously be renewed. Though perhaps most of the mines are on high level, often above timber, there are many wealthy properties at lower altitudes, some by lake shores where shipment may be made of ore direct from the mine on to barges. Often, in the forests of these parts, you will see a long straight swathe, a scar on the hill from base to crest and over it, and in that swathe observe scaffoldings that have been erected at regular intervals. These are the wooden towers built to support aerial tramways that work by gravity. In a gaunt, barn-like structure, perched on the rocks beside the mine, a great grooved wheel turns horizontally. In the groove is a wire rope. From the rope, at the end of projecting curved supports, depend large iron tip-buckets. Into this barn of a place a narrow-gauge set of lines runs from the mine, and there the ore is loaded into the buckets. Their weight sets the wheel revolving and carries them down. At the base of the mountain the buckets, circling round another grooved wheel there, are tipped, and return uphill again empty.

The leading placer-mining districts are now Atlin and Cariboo. The chief lode-gold-producing districts are those of Nass River, Portland Canal,

Skeena, Rossland, and the Osoyoos. The neighbourhoods of Slocan Lake and the Kootenays, east and west, are at present producing chiefly lead and zinc. The most celebrated mines are the Premier, near the end of the Portland Canal (gold and silver); the Granby Company's mine at Anyox (copper, gold, and silver); the Belmont Surf Inlet mine on Princess Royal Island, off the west coast (gold and silver); the Nickel Plate at Hedley (gold); the Sullivan at Kimberley (zinc-lead and silver). Enormous bodies of iron ore exist but have so far not been worked. In 1927 the production of coal in the province was 2,453,827 long tons.

At the time of widespread ore-mining activities thirty or so years ago, sledge-hammer and drill were the implements used to prepare for the blasting, and still these are used. But the modern method mostly in vogue is air-drilling. Plants are erected, called compressors, which compress air into pipes leading to the workings. The motive-power for these plants is water, in this land of mountain torrents ready to hand.

Here, as in the prairie provinces, the motor-car has made great changes. In those old and yet so recent days there were livery stables in all the little mountain cities. To go to a mine you hired a horse. You went out on the road. You passed from road to trail. You continued slowly upward, through the scent and the silence and the roar of turbulent creeks. You rode all the way to your mine. Arrived there, unless the way was too long, you took the bit from your horse, tied it and the lines round the saddle-horn, and heading the beast downhill dismissed it with a smack on the haunch; and home it went, pausing perhaps in a natural meadow here and there on the way for a lunch of grass, then loping on downhill. It was no uncommon sight in these little cities to see a whole string of pack-horses with pack-saddles empty, one or two saddle-horses along with them perhaps, quick-stepping downhill into the streets, pit-patting along in Indian file, swerving into their stable and each turning into its own stall to await unsaddling by the livery-stable men.

Now, to visit a prospect, you go by motor-car as far as it can take you, and on the last lap pack your belongings to the mine upon your back. Massive ore-trucks sway and reel down the mountain roads from the working mines to the shipping points, either railroad lines or steamboat landings.

Other changes there are. Enormous water-power that, in the phrase of utilitarians, is *going to waste every minute*, is harnessed wherever necessary for electric-light plants. Electric light and telephone wires are strung to camps that still, by their wilderness surroundings, are really remote. Other changes there are in the way of caring for the workers. They have bathrooms

such as that earlier period did not offer them. We know better now the dangers of lead-poisoning. The hours of toil are shorter.

In those earlier days the ore used often to be brought out of the hills in winter-time by a method known as raw-hiding. Cowhides, turned up at the edges, and frozen stiff, provided cheap and fairly long-lasting sledges.

Some mines treat their ore in concentrators before shipping to the smelters, but many, without concentrators, ship the ore itself. Many smelters were built during those hectic years of ore-mining activity. The little town of Nelson had one. There was one at Grand Forks. There was one at Greenwood—and there were others. But this is also an age of stabilising and organising. In 1906 what is known as Consolidated Smelters was incorporated. It bought out, one after another, many large producing mines. In 1911 it took over one of the wealthiest mineral propositions in British Columbia, namely the Sullivan Mine, by buying the control of the Fort Steel Mining and Smelting Company.

That was in East Kootenay. Over in West Kootenay, at the same time, it purchased the highly valuable property, showing vast bodies of ore in place, of the Le Roi, in the famous, and perhaps a little notorious, old Rossland Camp. The Sullivan Mine was admittedly wealthy, but for some years the treatment of its unusual ores was a puzzle to the smelter's technical staff. As a result of their experiments a great concentrator was erected at Kimberley. This Sullivan Mine now, I believe, is the largest zinc producer on the continent of America. The output last year was between three thousand and four thousand tons per day. The ore in one part of the working is two hundred feet thick, in a few places even expanding to two hundred and forty. The ore first passes through a coarse crusher plant at Sullivan itself, then goes on to the Kimberley concentrator to be subjected to fine crushing in the plant there. Lead concentrate is shipped to Trail, where is the great smelter of this Consolidated Company.

The technical staff there is never content, constantly experimenting, and constantly making new discoveries in the treatment of ore. One effect of these experiments and successes is that many small companies, that formerly had to sort their ore and ship to the smelters only the high grade, are now shipping low grade ore with profit. The rapidly growing Trail smelter does not handle the ore only of the companies with which it is directly affiliated, or those it has bought up, but also smelts that of a great number of independent customers. In the earlier years of the mining industry all the excitement was in pursuit of what are called the precious metals, but to-day, though the output of gold and silver is considerable, the chief interest

is in the base metals, in lead, in zinc, in copper. With the increase of metallurgical experiment and knowledge during those years it has even proved profitable to turn attention to the tailings of certain old properties, these being now of value. At the St. Eugene Mine, for example, the tailings are now being dredged with greater financial returns than those of the original workings, of which these tailings were but waste matter.

It is this advance of science that has made profitable on the west coast a property that for many years was looked upon in financial circles as a mere burden to its owners. I refer to the Britannia deposits, first discovered by a trapper as far back as ’98, and in ’99 acquired by a Victoria speculator, who formed a syndicate for the exploitation. Each of these members subscribed one thousand two hundred and fifty dollars for ten shares at a hundred and twenty-five dollars par value each; and again, for a second allotment, at the same price. Later they had an opportunity to sell these original shares for anything from eight hundred to fifteen hundred.

It was the entrance of a man with expert knowledge from the great smelting town of Butte, Montana, that gave fresh impetus. He, with a New York banker, secured controlling interest at the rate of fifteen hundred dollars a share. A concentrator was built on the beach, a smelter on Vancouver Island. It was found that water concentration was not practicable for treating the ore, and at that time such a thing as oil-flotation was not known. But the work went on, and after four years of drifting and cross-cutting they came upon ore-bodies of sufficiently high value to justify smelting.

At that time experimenters at Butte and in Utah evolved oil flotation. This meant a tremendous change in the handling of copper. It became feasible, and financially profitable, to operate copper “propositions” showing less than eighty to a hundred pounds of copper to the ton. The Mineral Separation Company, having patented their oil-flotation method, the Britannia people made arrangements with them for the application of it. And to-day the daily tonnage of the Britannia is over forty-four thousand.

Such as the Britannia, and the Granby Company, with its smelter at Anyox, as well as “The Consolidated,” are large producers. But in their own way, perhaps, the small workings throughout the province are not without interest. Three or four men, having worked for wages and saved those wages in the employ of a big concern, club together with what is called a “grubstake.” In their case it is something more than that; the word survives from the days of the lone prospector. It is not only the “grub” they wish to have the price of. They wish also to take a lease upon some property. It was

of such men I was thinking when I said, a paragraph or two back, that not in all the mines are the drills worked by compressed air. The air compressor at the mine of their choice is perhaps in need of repair, and they have not the price. No matter. They get their lease, and they set to work, each man a boss, each man a worker, swinging the hammer and turning the drill in the old manner (a job of sheer muscle, unassisted by modern inventions), putting in their blasts, and returning again into their tunnels with the tense excitement of men in a poker game. And then the ore is shipped to the smelter and they await their cheque. As well as the big going concerns that figure in the stocks and shares columns of your daily paper there are a great number of such lesser operations being carried on.

Down at Trail a great cloud of smoke hangs day and night, and the fumes make the grass wilt and wither over a wide area. A committee, as I write, is sitting to consider what can be done about that. This is the butt-end of it, as it were, the thin end of the wedge of which was these old prospectors I told you of, pottering through the mountains with pack-horse at heel.

CHAPTER XI

A VERY interesting pamphlet or brochure, entitled *The Art and Industry of Newsprint*, giving pictorial as well as textual impression of the magnitude that may be achieved by some lumbering concerns in this forested land, was recently issued by the Powell River Company, the producers of the now famous Powell River Newsprint. The silver screen has familiarised many with the vast lumbering activities of the province, showing to movie devotees the felling of trees, the haulage by caterpillar tractors (wallowing rhinoceros-like on their way, dragging their strings of log-laden trucks), or by squat locomotives, the puffing donkey-engines at work, perhaps in snow-floored woods, where the trees stand tall and straight as monstrous masts.

The forestry department compiles records of the annual bush-fires and their causes, and should you see at any time, in one of their admonitory leaflets, among the list of calamities that follow upon the tossing away of an unextinguished match, that so many "donkeys" last year were destroyed by fire, these are the donkeys referred to—the donkey-engines of the lumbering concerns.

The distance that felled trees are hauled to the saws varies greatly. Bluff tugs may even tow a boom from inlets far up the Pacific to mills in the coastal cities. Or it may be that next door, as it were, to where the tree is felled the sawmill stands with its steadily spaced puffing of steam. On the travelogue movies you miss the scent and the sound of it. All day long there is a hum mounting higher, ending in a shriek, and then again the hum, the crescendo shriek, and through that the steady pulsing chug of the engine. The saws are at work. There are districts in which you come to one sawmill after another, as on Burrard Inlet, drawing near to Vancouver, and in Vancouver itself, not because the trees are felled close at hand, but because of the transport facilities, all the ramifications of inlets probing back into the forested country. By such inland waters again as Shuswap Lake there are many sawmills, the booms of logs brought to them down the fiord-like arms. But usually Mahomet goes to the mountain, not only the lumber-camps, but the sawmills and the towns created by these all in close proximity—as, for example, on Powell River.

To give some account of one of the lesser lumber concerns (apart from the big and spectacular ones that attract the moving-camera men) I must tell how, coming down through the mountains one day from a camping trip, I met by the trail side two men, pack-sacks on back, one carrying a small axe, such as might be used for blazing trees when fumbling through unknown woods to facilitate a return. We exchanged the civilities of the trail with that friendliness that appears to affect most men when encountering their fellows in these lonesome places.

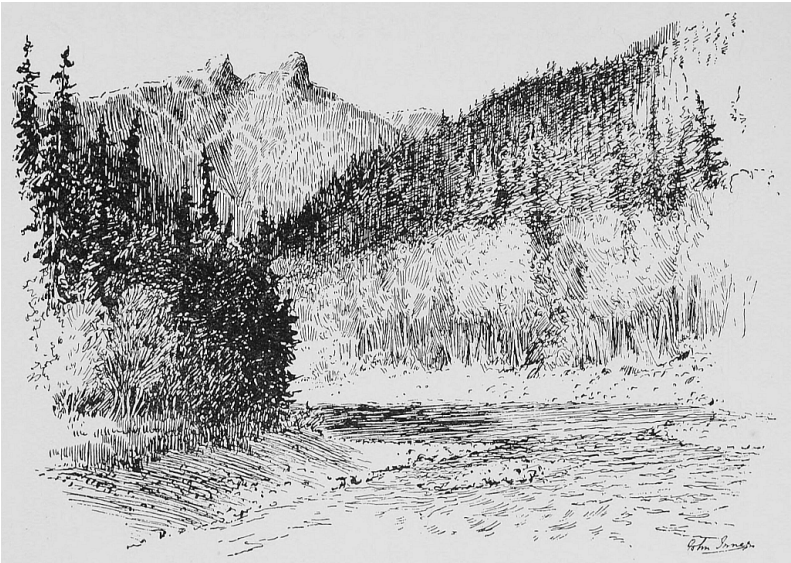
But they did not ask my business and I did not ask theirs. All we talked of was the trails and their condition. One of them casually mentioned that when I went on a little way I would see a sharpened stake by the trail side, and that it indicated that back in the forest a hundred yards was a deer, recently killed by a cougar. He had put the stake there on the off-chance of meeting someone who might be out hunting, so that it would be a signpost by which to give directions.

A month or two later I went back that way, and by a little mountain lake, where some beavers were at work, a patch of white upon a tree-trunk attracted my attention. It was one of the forms issued by the water rights department, duly filled in, proclaiming that So-and-So had filed a request, on a given date, for the deflection of so many gallons of water *per diem* from the creek So-and-So. Business evidently was to be done in this haunt of the squirrel and the bear.

A year later I came, on the high road, to where that trail debouched. There was no trail. There was a road. And on either side of it was a placard in shrill red, warning: BEWARE OF THE TRUCKS. A few hundred yards up was a clearing in which were tall stacks of sawn lumber, and beside it one of the juggernaut trucks of which we were to beware.

Two men were at work unloading it. And as I passed one of them called after me: “There’s another truck coming down. Watch out at the bends.” As I mounted upwards a distant crackle as of a sewing-machine announced the coming of the next truck. It died away. It came again, louder. Round a bend ahead the long skeleton truck roared, stacked with great new masts, telephone poles. The driver could not spare a hand from the wheel to wave, just wagged his head and grinned, as it riotously passed with a final metallic clink and clatter of the loose ends of the securing chain. After it had gone (its crackle only distinct again when, out of some bay of the mountains, it swept round a lower cape) all the squirrels took heart once more and chattered vociferously about that din. At most of the bends I noticed trees on the outer side had been felled, but at some, where they had not, I could see

new white bruises on the stems, beads of sap trickling down. The road was not broad, and it had many sharp curves. It was wise to beware of the trucks by the evidence of these abraded trunks. The best place to meet them was on a straight stretch. At the bends obviously the long timbers swung out over the hillside road.



The Lions and Capilano River, Vancouver, B.C.

I have heard the same men who ask, travelling on a forest track, if there is *nothing going to be done in this wilderness*, wax eloquent, when they come upon what is being done, upon *the desecration of the forest*. After all, when I arrived within the company's timber limit, *desecration*, I thought, hardly seemed apt. I saw no mountain-side shorn of all its trees. Lumbering is not wholesale but selective in its methods. The forests still stood up green and lonely. Here and there were side trails showing the tramping of horses, and where these emerged there were stacks of other poles, either awaiting shipment as poles, or to be taken to the mill for sawing. No, it was not wholesale slaughter. There is a forestry department that sees to that, even presuming that all lumbermen are short-sighted vandals—which they are not.

It was afternoon and, in the narrow lateral draws, or glens, on the shaded sides there was a bloom over the forests like the bloom on a peach. The next I heard was that old familiar sound—the hum, rising to a scream, ebbing, rising again, and steadily through it all the plug-plugging of steam. As a boy I had worked in lumber-camps and—but this is not a personal record.

Coming out on the open slopes of brush beside the little lake I saw the spaced gusts of steam rising from a roof, and the smoke from the debris-destructor sifting away like a lazy blue scarf along the receding valley, the long revolving belt carrying to it the flotsam from the mill and dropping that into its flames, over its top a mesh to prevent the egress of sparks. Back some way from the lake shore was a high wall of planks, to keep the sawdust from sifting down into the water and poisoning the fish.

As I walked into the camp I saw a man, his back to me, moving to and fro with that manner of one who says to this man "Go," and he goeth, and to that man "Come," and he cometh, but genial withal. He turned—and I knew his face.

"Hullo!" he said. "How-do? Did you see the deer the cougar killed?"

He was one of my friends of the trail of the year before. This is what he had been up to that day—timber-looking. The looking had decreed this scene of activity in the heart of the wilderness. For old-times' sake I asked if I might have a glance at the work in the mill. Sure! Come along. And we went to the house with the open shed-like upper story where the steam puffed and the saws hummed and the scream rose and died. To one end, below, was a little old man throwing wood into a furnace. He slammed the door shut, then folded his arms, and his goatee beard pointed upward as he gazed at the steam-gauge.

We climbed a ladder to the level above. And I watched the logs being dragged up the skidway, dripping from the lake, pass into the operating theatre with its simple but perfectly efficient machinery, and pass out at the other end, logs no more, but planks—an astounding evolution. As we came down the ladder again the boss was called aside for a moment by his timekeeper. The timekeeper in his time plays many parts. He does not only note the hours of labour of the men, keep the pay-roll, but is also storekeeper and, as the law demands, must hold a first-aid certificate.

"You'll stop and eat?" said the boss.

The whistle blew. There was an end to the hum and the scream. The quiet of the surrounding forests crept close again. Men trooped over from the mill, picking splinters from their hands. Men came trudging from the surrounding trails, leading big, plodding horses. Blent with the scent of newly-sawn wood there were wafted odours of cooking. Half a mile away, drifting on an air current along a forested gorge, was an unattached wisp of blue smoke from the destructor.

In the regulation manner, and in the regulation way, the cook at the cook-house door smote on the pendent iron triangle that is the dinner gong in these places, and we trooped in to eat, sitting on rough forms before tables covered with white American cloth. Soup, potatoes, beef, a salad of grated carrots and cabbage, beans and peas, an assortment of pies, rice pudding: such was the menu. And down the centre of the table as the meal progressed the waiters—the "hash-slingers"—set plates heaped with sugared cakes and cookies. Most drank tea from the first course to the last, from cups the size of small basins. Then one by one they rose (with some such remark as, "Well, I feel better now," or with none), strolled to the door and, as in a ritual there, stretched a hand to an egg-cup which stood on a ledge containing wooden toothpicks.

Sometimes from the decks of the steamers that ply on the lakes of the interior (the impression of their speed varying according to what your eye may rest upon—rapid, flurried indeed, if you are watching the shore or the wake, but leisurely if your gaze is upward on one of the peaks that for a long while may keep travelling along with you) you may see, where the plane of polished water and the green precipices meet, a sudden fleck of white as though a fish had jumped. But that, you consider, would be a phenomenally large fish. And it, or another, while you are wondering, spurts foam again in the same place. That is one hint of the hidden lumbering activities. There is a flume there coming down the long slope under the covering trees, water from a creek deflected into it. Lumbermen are at work somewhere in that reddy green. The felled trees, their branches lopped, are tossed into the flume by aid of cant-hooks; and that flick-flicking of foam indicates log after log striking the water. Across the bay into which they thus precipitously plop, though it may be invisible from the deck of the passing boat, there is a moored floating fence of other logs tied end to end, a containing-boom.

There are many good reasons for those travelling in the woods to learn by heart the warnings of the forestry department tacked to the trees, often, by their assiduity, even in most outlandish places where you'd think more squirrels must wonder what they are than men read them, such as this:

DANGER AHEAD

From matches, camp-fires

AND CIGARETTES

Not only on high peaks does the forestry department, through the long summers, keep look-out men stationed, watching for the first smoke of a fire, but wherever practicable there will be an airman making his daily observation flights in aeroplane or waterplane.

Forest fire is not only a menace to humanity in the vast woods, but has its sequel of consequences. Where fire has swept, until the new growth rises, the natural reservoirs are destroyed, in the spring the snow melts rapidly away, and after rainfall on the peaks the creeks swell and speedily diminish.

The grandeur of the spectacle of a forest fire when the flames have taken hold and along a whole mountain-side every tree is a torch—the heat of that holocaust buoying up in air, a thousand feet above, millions of dancing sparks—most of us do not wish to see, well aware what it entails: birds perishing on their nests, the fleeing porcupine, its quills inflammable as celluloid, turned into a living bonfire, Hell in the woods.

In very dry summers, when lightning storms not followed by rain cause a percentage of the fires, the smoke of these conflagrations sometimes veils the country in a haze; the world seems encased in a dusty blue shell. The eyes smart, not only because of the smoke, but because of the eerie suffusion through it of the light from the hidden and baffled sun above. All the available man-power is then impressed for service in fire-fighting crews.

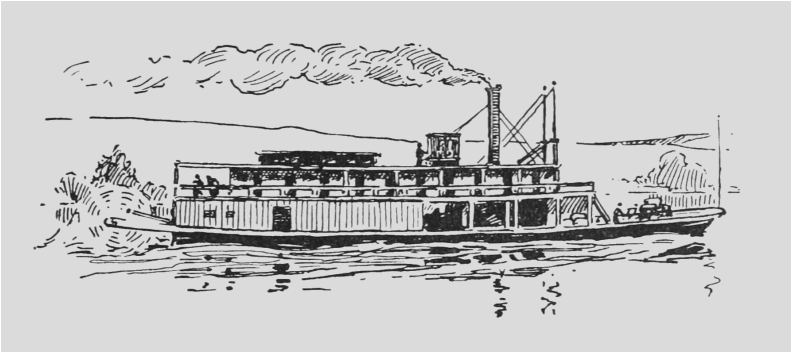
By the records, reforestation lags behind commercial depletion. It is that fact, no doubt, which makes the fire-wardens increasingly alert through the land, and the provincial police increasingly sedulous in pursuit of convicting evidence when a fire has obviously been started not by natural causes, but by man, whether by intent or carelessness.

Canada comes second in the countries of the world in lumbering activities, though, by the last records, now leading in one branch, namely the pulp industry; and of all the provinces of Canada British Columbia has priority of place. Methods of work, however, differ in certain ways from those obtaining in the timber areas of Quebec and other lumbering provinces. Although there be here innumerable rivers that provide power for development, these are seldom suitable for what lumbermen call *driving* logs. In the east logs are sleighed during the late autumn, after the snow has come, and through the winter, to frozen lakes and rivers, and stacked on the ice. After the break-up in the spring they go on their way down stream, each branded at end with the mark of the company to which it belongs. At what

slack water there may be *en route* the companies concerned install a tug to take the logs, in booms, upon their way.

These British Columbia rivers are seldom serviceable for such a method. Hence the logging railways of the far-western forests, and forestry operations that are, in many parts, independent of the seasons, donkey-engines hauling logs by cable, narrow-gauge logging locomotives, caterpillar tractors, and motor-trucks.

The most recent production-value returns available—that is for the calendar year 1925—are: lumber, $39,675,841; lath, $558,185; shingles, $9,758,820; and, in pulp production, a total, that includes groundwood, sulphite bleached and unbleached, sulphate, and screenings, of $8,233,085.



OLD STYLE RIVER BOAT

CHAPTER XII

MENTIONING the lake steamers in the last chapter reminded me that somewhere in this book there must assuredly be some account, even if brief, of the inland voyaging on our historic stern-wheelers.

Some day there will be no more of them. They are really graceful things, swanlike in the water, with their coats of white paint, in spite of the fact that they may be said to be simply large shallow-draught, barges built upon with tiers of cabined decks, a smoke-stack protruding atop, and a big paddle-wheel astern. One by one they cease to ply on lakes and rivers of the West as the railway lines stretch along the shores of these.

They are in the lineal descent from the steamboats of the pioneering era that used to churn up the Missouri to Fort Benton. More than one of them, but fifty years ago, in the days before railways had stretched so far, went snaking through the great plains on the Saskatchewan. Inland voyaging indeed! Lethbridge once had a shipyard where was launched, in 1883, a stern-wheeler of two hundred and ten tons, with engines of fifty horse-power. She was one hundred and seventy-one feet long by thirty-one broad. At Medicine Hat, in 1884, two others were built. The commercial purpose for which these were intended was the transportation of coal on barges from outcrops on the Belly River. These stern-wheelers are used not exactly as tugs in the wonted view of tugs—to haul; but can thrust barges with them on their way. The shallow waters and swift currents of Belly River baffled that enterprise. But in the Riel Rebellion of 1885 the Government found these vessels of great value in the transportation of troops and supplies. Battleford and Fort Pitt and Edmonton saw them in those old days. Miners going into the Cariboo country up Fraser River knew them once upon a time. Engineers had to play with them sometimes, battling upstream with a pressure of several pounds beyond what was stated as the maximum by the boiler-makers. I believe Mark Twain tells somewhere of a “nigger” sitting on the safety-valve of steamboats in like predicament on the Mississippi. On Fraser River they had no “niggers,” but would tie down the safety-valve, or keep it jammed with a wrench, “take a chance,” stoke up and forge ahead, while passengers, aware of what was going on, would look overside at the rush of

water and laugh the laugh of adventurers. Columbia River has known them, not only in its lower but in its upper reaches, where it flows between the Rockies and the Selkirks. A historic one—now a sort of glorified house-boat and souvenir of the days that were—lies in a bayou of Windermere, beside the home of an "old-timer," the present Lieutenant Governor of the province. Skeena River has, or certainly recently had them. Seekers for oilfields up in the Arctic Circle go aboard them on one stage of their journey down the Mackenzie River.

There is one on the Peace River. Another churns out of Carcross (away up on the Atlin district of the Yukon) after dinner every evening of the summer months, through the exquisite slow twilight of that north, bound for Taku Landing, which it reaches in the morning.

In southern British Columbia they ply on the Arrow Lakes, Slocan Lake, Kootenay Lake, and Okanagan. Please pronounce this, for old-times' sake, and to preserve tradition, Okan*aw*gan, as, indeed, many spell it south of the line, the Okanagan being on both sides of the boundary. It is not an English word, but an Indian.

It is fitting that with old Indian names these craft should often be christened, such as *Kuskanook* and *Nasookin*. They are navigated by the system known as clock and compass, so that even on dark nights navigation is safe. The boat travels at a definite rate of speed. Her whole route is charted. The pilots know to a second what length of time she has travelled in any given direction. Some of the pilots, or skippers, have been all their lives inland-water men, but many served their apprenticeship and spent their early years as blue-water seamen.

Progress in these regions has been astonishingly rapid. The little busy city of Nelson, on the West Arm of Kootenay Lake, was only "the camp on the West Arm" fifty years ago. On the shores of Okanagan Lake there were then only ranches in the old sense—horse and cattle ranches. Now, where the men used to appear on the beaches of Arrow Lakes, waving a towel or at night a brand from a fire to "flag" the boat, jetties have been built on stalwart piles projecting into the water.

Voyaging by day among silhouettes of resin-scented mountains, shipboard life so far inland seems at times as out of a dream, and to most there is something unforgettable in night-landings when the steamer's siren roars into the dark and the echo replies, and her searchlights sizzle up and throw a circle of radiance on the scene, picking out of nothing a wharf, the scattered buildings at its end, the tall firs or drooping cedars beyond. Add to

the scene, in imagination, the rich night smell of the forests, the balsam odour, the clang of the engine-bells (the authentic sound of engine-bells the world over), linking one with the steamboat travel of the seven seas—and you have it.

The lower berths on the sleeping-coaches of the trains are to some of us fascinating caves in which to waken. But there is a fascination also in going aboard, in mid-continent, and with tall forests on either side, a boat in which stewards, wearing stereotyped white jackets, lead you to a cabin, a cabin in which there are bunks. To see these vessels from the shore at night, going past with their tiers of lights, and the reflections of these, pendent gold strings below them, is also memorable, and part of the life of the land.

"But," you may inquire, "what about all the freight trains? What happens to them when they arrive where the rails go down to lake-sides? Have they to be unloaded?"

That depends upon the cargoes. Way-freight for delivery to lake-side wharves is removed on trucks by deck-hands or stevedores on to the main deck, noisy while they run to and fro on it. But by these lake termini there lie great barges with railroad lines on their decks. On to these freight cars are run and, having received its complement, a barge is lashed to the side of a tug. Sometimes, indeed, the tug may have one of these large scows on either side. Churning along upon her way she looks like some unconscionably small duck, with two unconscionably large ducklings in her care.

CHAPTER XIII

THAT the soil of British Columbia can in many parts bear a profusion of fruit there is no denying. The wild strawberries are witness, tiny though they be, as is the way with wild fruit. Every summer the Indians pass away from their reserves to scatter in small parties for the picking of the wild huckleberry. In West Kootenay you find not only orchards in the valleys, but on the lower mountain benches, where a mere thirty or forty years ago there was only forest. In the Okanagan country, in place of horse and cattle ranches, are now fruit farms, mile upon mile.

The prairie farmers seem to be drawing near solution of the wheat-marketing problem. The British Columbia fruit-ranchers have still to find a solution for their problems. And fruit is perishable in a sense that grain is not.

I met not long since a man who had been a retailer of fruit on the prairie. Observing what profits accrued from British Columbia apples, it occurred to him that there would be more at the other end. So he came west into a fruit-growing region of this province and purchased a prepared ranch, loved the place as a home—who would not?—but having dropped three thousand five hundred dollars in three years, he returned then to the other end of the fruit industry. And he will not have to lie awake o' nights over the sale, for he disposed of his beautiful place—the beauty unquestioned—to a man who wanted just that, a beautiful place, a summer home, in an earthly paradise, to which to come on vacation.

It is too frequently the custom of hurrying travellers, usually precisely those who dismiss in an aside some really hopeful undertaking of the land (perhaps not in evidence from the car-windows on the beaten track), coming to a region in which they see the apples heavy on the boughs, without inquiry to enter a note for their resultant articles or books that here is a great orchard land. It is—with a difference, here indicated, which they do not state.

What are by some, somewhat narrowly, called "the facts" regarding fruit —that is to say statistics of amounts shipped and a computation of their money value—are interesting in their own way. But there are other facts,

and the discussion of these as I write is loud in the land. It is being voiced in the Provincial Parliament and discussed in the press of the West. It is engrossing the attention of business organisers who have the best interests of the land at heart. They are asking what is the reason that retailers, wholesalers, middlemen, packers, pickers, shippers profit in fruit and the grower is in difficulties. They are interesting themselves, *pro patria*, in the questions raised by the discrepancy between the profits accruing to all these from fruit and the losses (yes, often losses instead of even meagre profits, especially regarding apples) of the growers. Here, also, they point out, are "facts" as well as in the statistical returns of the quantities exported. May the result of these inquiries be, ere long, for the harassed growers the reward that their fortitude deserves.

Thinking of the pros and cons of co-operation as applied to farmers' adversities turns the mind to those able co-operators, the communal Doukhobors, who are here as well as on the prairies—Finns and Austrians in many of the mines, Doukhobors on the land. Canadians, Britons, and North Europeans do not take kindly to seeing their womenfolk toiling in the field. And their womenfolk would not take kindly to it either. The Doukhobor is very much Sir Clifford Sifton's "man in the sheepskin coat with the big broad wife," and there is no denying that in their fields he and his big broad wife and his big broad daughter can make many sorts of fruits grow where only fir-trees grew before. They go on their knees to it from the peep of day till dusk, picking out the weeds with a little hook, very broad and apparently highly contented. They are a great deal happier than in Russia, but conceive of a farmer of the "preferred races," to say nothing of an ex-officer of the British army, in a similar position. He would not be happy. He would feel himself like a modern Nebuchadnezzar.

As for these Doukhobors, they have cleared, they have planted, they have reaped in communities. But they achieve their success not only because of their frugality, but because, though they resent interference by the Government of the land of their adoption, they recognise the autocracy of their rulers. Yet not all of them. Constantly members of the communities break away. They go out working for white ranchers on an arrangement something in the nature of profit-sharing. By their unflagging toil, under the fruit-trees of some ranchman who has required his pension or the assistance of an annuity to get along, they will raise such great crops of truck-garden produce—this, by the way, used to be the thrifty Chinaman's corner in the life of the West—from cabbages to radishes, that they can even send the young hopeful of the next generation to High School. What he will think of going back to the land remains to be seen.

The Doukhobors on entering this country were granted (as I mentioned when writing of the prairie provinces) various concessions by the Federal Government, and seem often to be under the impression that they were granted even more—autonomy. They have a whimsical way, when called to order over any of their departures from the law, of protesting by disrobing *en masse*. It gives one a new view of the human form divine—the man in the sheepskin coat divested of it and of all, and his big broad wife. There is a particularly disputatious section of these communities, with the thrawn bent of those with a fixed idea and little mentality. But the more enlightened seem to look upon them (they call themselves Sons of Freedom) as in the nature of fanatics.

In view of the state of affairs among fruit-growers it is easily understandable that when Doukhobor communities recently made shipments of their fruit at rates below those decreed by the Marketing Control Board, the ranchers wondered what would come next to balk them, and the shipments were stopped by law. But the Doukhobors have thus another grievance. Yet a sympathetic attitude to them (however difficult, at moments, of attainment) seems the large and human one.

But considering them in relation to the land, what do we find? We find large tracts that were of the sort called wilderness, or even waste, turned into field and garden. They have been called dirty, and indeed some of them seem to look upon floors of trains and stages (jitneys) as made for spitting upon with a bovine assiduity. When train conductors or jitney drivers protest they look up, half sullen, half bewildered, like models for illustrations to Russian novels. What! Must a man, then, swallow his own spit? Dismally they swallow, and strew the floor instead with pea-nut shells. On the other hand, to refute such charges of dirtiness, their defenders, reporting on visits to their jam factories and cannery plants, assure us that these are models of cleanliness. And those in touch with the financial side of the province inform us that if their custom were withdrawn from the commercial towns of the southern interior in the vicinity of their settlements—Grand Forks, Trail, Nelson—the turnover of the tradespeople would show that withdrawal very markedly indeed; that their activities are of definite commercial value to the province; that they buy small fruits from ranches for their canneries, their own supplies not being sufficient; that their annual expenditure on sugar, cans, agricultural implements, clothing, foodstuffs, and freight transportation runs into hundreds of thousands of dollars. It is also pointed out that they are eager patients of the dentists, their teeth—some say because of their vegetarian diet—requiring much attention. Going to the dentist certainly seems to be almost a passion with them. They are, by the way, vegetarians

because they object to the taking of animal life, but this does not prevent them from treating animals—horses and cows and dogs—with cruelty.

Were they not settled where they are, the chances are that these wide acres they have tamed and tilled would still be wilderness, waste, considered unproductive, passed over by the English-speaking farmers. With enlightenment, instead of burning schools they begin to ask for schools. To note the progress of the more progressive is to have an optimistic view of the future of these people. And a great deal of the dislike of them is doubtless due to our own primitiveness below our thin veneer of a pseudo-civilisation, our tendency to international hates that not all our churchgoing seems to stifle. International acrimony, we know, is voiced even by our parsons. That a man shall hate his neighbour as greatly as he loves himself might, it seems at times, have been part of the creed of the Galilean on whose doctrines our lives are ostensibly built. Envious of those who equal us in a pursuit, jealous of those we know to be transcending us, condescendingly pleasant to those beneath our heel—a concession to brotherly love—that is often our way. And confession is good for the soul. To profit by the presence of these people, and at the same time evil-eye them, and be impatient toward their childishness—yes, and perversity even—is no doubt unworthy of the nobility and chivalry and enlightenment of the self-styled noble, chivalrous, and enlightened races.

The light seems to be a little turned down in this chapter. But, after all, every land has its troubles as, no doubt, every individual too. And you may be wondering what sort of social life there is, and how the people find relaxation or diversion in the West. The men have their societies—the Rotarians, the Gyros. These are often active not only for the welfare but for the entertainment of the communities in general, social in object, arranging, for example, for the engagements of concert parties or musicians on tour. The women have their many leagues, and their afternoon teas. The Women's Institutes do much philanthropic work even beyond local needs, discovering the necessitous to aid them, making arrangements for the assistance of those incapacitated through illness. Hearing, for instance, of some community on the prairies impoverished through summer hail or early and severe frost, in a belt perhaps where farming should never have been taken up, they send thither their cast-off raiment, or turkeys for a Christmas dinner for the children. Here, as on the prairies, the women are great canners—which is the word, for some cryptic reason, for bottling. They bottle fruit and vegetables in the summer, and in the winter proudly educe these for the table. Even chickens and meat are thus preserved in the jars that you will see in great stacks in store windows during the canning season, to remind housewives of

that great task, lest they forget. But the reminder is seldom required. They vie with each other to be the bottlers—that's to say, canners—supreme.

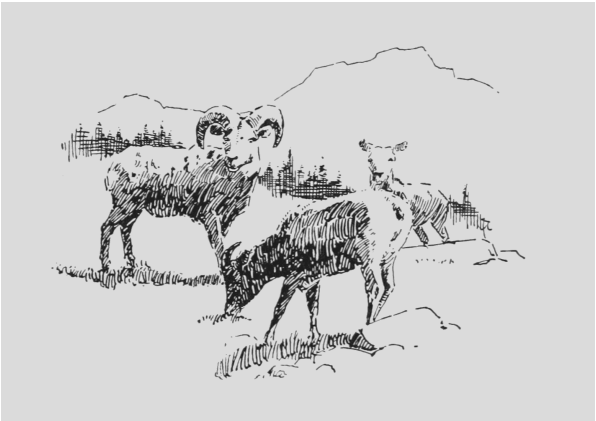
But what, you ask, are the methods of diversion? The answer is that they are those common to any civilised race, with the addition of others that the climatic conditions make possible and the lack of some for which facilities are lacking. The base is the same as among any progressive peoples. Bridge you may have heard of. That is one of the leading relaxations, with some, in fact, a grand passion. For a time it seemed as if Mah Yong might oust it, but bridge soon triumphed. Bridge and dancing are the leading relaxations. In summer there are swimming, canoeing, motor-boating, and baseball. There are picnics where a generation ago pioneers slashed out trails, anathematising mosquitoes and the barbs of the plant called Devil's Club.

For youth it is a carefree and untrammelled land. The motor-car has been the cause of as great a change in the sphere of divertisement as in that of labour. On the old-time wagon-roads of the province much work has been done to convert them into motor-roads, and of course new roads are constructed with the motor in mind. But even those that, were they in more tended lands, would be looked at askance and called lanes, are "good motor-roads." The opinion is sincere. Accustomed drivers find them so. The skill with which drivers handle their machines on twisting and narrow mountain tracks is as remarkable as that of chauffeurs who become expert in congested city traffic. People go on holiday in their cars, carrying camp equipment, or patronising hotels on the way, as they please. So common has this practice become throughout the whole West that the smallest town has its parking or camp site for touring cars. The automobile, thus used, appears as a lineal descendant of the prairie schooner.

In winter there are skating and curling, hockey and ski-ing. In summer there is tennis. In winter there is badminton. Nelson holds, every year, a tennis tournament to which competitors come from as far east as Calgary and, westward, from the Pacific Coast. Musical entertainments are organised in the small towns and settlements, practices giving additional object for vivacious social gatherings, and are always an unfailing source of delight to those who participate in their production. Here, as elsewhere, there is a diversity of creatures. I have heard it stated by many, and these long resident in the land (not merely itinerant collectors of impressions ready to pontificate even on subjects that can hardly be mastered at a glance), that there is a marked tendency in all these lands under discussion for the non-cultured, the uncouth immigrants to advance, often rapidly—which I think is undoubted; and for the cultured, as though to establish a common meeting-

place, to deteriorate—which may be so; but I think that, on inquiring into the actual subjects creating that view, it might be hazarded that their culture had never been dynamic, but superficial, a veneer.

But as for relaxations and diversions, by common consent dancing undoubtedly leads. Distance is no impediment, progress having endowed us with the motor-car. What is fifty miles in an automobile? On into the small hours dances continue, despite even the fifty or more miles' journey home again. The headlights bob and veer through the forests, lighting, sometimes, on a startled deer, hypnotising him for some moments during which he stands in the road staring, a deer of silver in the rays. Then he leaps back to the darkness of the forest whence he came.



BIG-HORN SHEEP, ROCKY MOUNTAINS

CHAPTER XIV

I AM advised that somewhere in this book a chapter should be inserted devoted to Hints, Advice, Information for (no aspersion in the word) the Tenderfoot. And here, before passing on to a consideration of the western seaboard, seems a place not inappropriate.

To recall my own tenderfoot days may be an aid. And I remember my uncertainty, not over the counting of money, which is simple enough—a hundred cents to a dollar, fifty the half of a hundred, twenty-five a quarter—but over cant or slang terms for money. Be it known that the catchword, slang, the colloquialism, is in this land, as in all. (We do not, for example, say here, "Ra-ther!" but we have its equivalent, "You bet!" or "You bet you!") I recall my perplexity when I was a tenderfoot on being told by the driver of a baggage-wagon that I owed him, for the transport of my luggage, "six bits."

I stared. And he, remarking my bafflement, knew me for green and elucidated: "Seventy-five cents—three-quarters of a dollar."

Once upon a time men in the American West spoke of a "long bit"—fifteen cents; and a "short bit"—ten cents. Hence "two bits" for twenty-five cents. Long may "two bits" endure, carrying history with it, despite the language prigs. A little knowledge of the purity of English in conjunction with a prunes-and-prisms snobbery is a dangerous thing. Not long since some people became agitated over the splendid old name of Medicine Hat. Their smug education had carried them away from appreciation of the value and romance (of reality) of such a place-name. It was Kipling, I believe (he who inadvertently did much harm to the Dominion by the mere lovely words "Our Lady of the Snows"), who was chiefly responsible for quashing that silliness. Medicine Hat, at any rate, it remains. But I wander from money. It is a nuisance, anyhow! This table may be of service for the tenderfoot:

Five cents—often called "a nickel." Some five-cent pieces are of the size of a British threepenny-piece. Some are of the size of a shilling, but of baser metal, of course. The value is about that of a British threepenny-piece.

Ten cents—often called “a dime.” It is of the size, and about the value, of a British sixpenny-piece.

Twenty-five cents is of the size and, roughly, the value of a British shilling. It is as often called “a quarter,” and often “two bits.” A tradesman in London, unless feeling what the West calls “fresh,” would not tell a customer that an article costs “a bob,” but a western storekeeper, with no faintest intention of “freshness,” will readily say “Two bits!”

Fifty cents is often spoken of as “half a dollar,” and not infrequently is referred to as “four bits.”

Seventy-five cents is usually spoken of as just seventy-five cents, but you will sometimes hear “six bits.”

A dollar is usually simply a dollar. The slang words for it are not in the currency of speech as is “two bits” for a quarter. They are spoken with a smile, but one may as well know them against emergency. They are “a buck” and “a plunk,” terms which, so far as I am aware, have not the historic defence and charm of “two bits.”

A cent, by the way, you may hear spoken of as *a penny*.

As for the best time to arrive in the land, whether with or without much money: the best time is not winter. To alight from a warm, or over-warm railway train—and in winter the trains are heated on the assumption that it is better to have some passengers saying that they are too hot than many complaining that they are too cold—at Winnipeg, perhaps, and find the thermometer at thirty-eight degrees below zero, and a wind blowing, is what may be called a chilly reception. People here dress for the seasons, but to make a beginning in such a temperature is not advisable. Suppose you went along the street and someone bowed to you in passing and remarked casually, “Pardon me, your nose is frozen,” the casual tone might be reassuring, but you would have to run after your informant to ask what to do about it. Better arrive in spring. You may find the summer pretty warm, but it is easier to stand heat of summer than chill of winter, and by the time winter comes along you will have made friends who will be able to tell you just how to meet it, and even enjoy it. In the cities many make no change of attire for winter. The houses and stores and offices are centrally heated. The street-cars are heated, the taxi-cabs too. All they do is to put on high galoshes on going out, and fur coat and cap. Workers in the open, of course, have to dress differently in winter. High stockings such as are used in

Switzerland and the Austrian Tyrol are in common use, and there is a coat called the Mackinaw that can keep one as cosy as though one were in bed. These coats are often lined with sheepskin or leather. Certainly anyone thinking of settling on the land should not arrive till spring, for in winter the land is not visible. The main motor-roads are kept open as well as the railroads, but the snow-drifts are on either hand.

Again, the vastness of the country has to be remembered. What is springtime in one part is not in another. Altitudes make immense differences. I would cite two almost adjacent valleys in British Columbia for example. You could soar from one and descend to the other in one parabola in an aeroplane. But in one the flowers are up in the gardens in April, and in the other the valley's central lake is not thawed out by then. The same applies to the prairie provinces. Arriving some time in May you will see the end of winter in one part and the beginning of spring in another.

Being on the subject of climate I must, before going on to the main theme of this chapter—hints for the tenderfoot—mention the sleeping-porches. In summer many people, perhaps most (it would be difficult to take a census on this head), sleep practically out of doors. The sleeping-porch is usually actually a balcony, screened against mosquitoes and flies. Sun-blinds project before it for additional coolness, and there are beds for summertime. There are hardy people, in some parts, who use that sleeping-porch even in winter, but they are of the tribe of those who break the ice in the Serpentine for their dip rather than miss a day of their record.

Another point about cold: I have known prairie people, accustomed to cold snaps of thirty or forty below, going to British Columbia and stating there that the British Columbia winter's snap of ten below seemed colder to them than thirty below on the plains. That is, of course, a matter of comparative humidity and aridity. I have entertained in January, while in London, visiting Canadians from the "bald prairie," and seen them crouch shuddering over a roaring fire, unable to keep warm; yet in London the thermometer registers no such low temperatures as it does during a North-West winter. They could not be frost-bitten in London, but they were chilled to the bone.

Regarding travel: A first-class ticket on the trains entitles you to enter only what is called the *day-coach*. If your journey is of length necessitating sleep on the trains you pay an additional sum for a berth either in the Pullman car, which is the more expensive, or the Tourist car, which is equivalent to second-class. In both Tourist and Pullman cars, however, the sleeping-berths are clean and comfortable. Travelling with a Pullman sleeper

ticket you have the right to pass into the observation, or parlour, car, and occupy an easy-chair there, or sit on the rear platform in the open air. With only a first-class ticket one has to pay extra for that privilege—about seventy cents for a hundred miles. Those travelling in the Tourist car, if they do not wish to go into the diner, can avail themselves of the small cooking-stove provided for travellers in a little room at one end of the coach. It is not expected that one will cook a seven-course dinner on these stoves, but you can prepare tea or coffee, or boil or scramble eggs. The porter will set up a small table for you, on request, should you wish to partake of a meal in the Tourist car. Travellers by Tourist car can, as well as those having first-class (day-coach) tickets, use the observation car on paying the extra amount.

This leads to the subject of baggage transport. The system in Canada West is that obtaining throughout the continent. Baggage you do not require on the train—and few people care for the clutter of unwanted suit-cases, satchels, and hat-boxes—is *checked*. That is to say, you show your ticket to the station baggage-man shortly before going aboard the train, and point out your belongings to him. For each piece he gives you a ticket with a number on it. A duplicate ticket is affixed to each article, and you are rid of them. On arrival at your journey's end you present your numbered checks to the baggage-master there and he hands over your luggage, which has travelled with you in the baggage-car. Some other countries have the same system, but as some do not it is mentioned here among the Tips for Tenderfeet.

Regarding schools: Because of changes constantly being made in the educational methods (at the moment of writing the School Act of British Columbia, for example, is being discussed with a view to amendment), and also because of variations between province and province, I had better indicate broadly, instead of in detail, the educational system of this West.

What used to be called "public schools" here will probably soon be called "elementary schools," "high schools," "superior schools." "Public school" in this country never meant what it means in England, but what the name with more exactitude implies. What in Old Country schools are called "standards" or "classes" or "forms" are here called "grades." Roughly the educational system is as follows: Children start going to school at six years of age, and attend elementary school for eight years. Education is free. Textbooks are also free. Only scribbling-pads and writing-books have to be paid for. Where six pupils can be gathered together the Government installs a school. For children in the most remote regions, segregated hinterlands, these last backs-of-beyond where six cannot be gathered together in the decreed radius—and for children unable to attend schools—there are

correspondence courses. After elementary school came, till recently, high school, for four years.

What is called "junior high" is at present under development. Junior high school education lasts for two years, children beginning at the age of fourteen or fifteen. High schools are situated in cities. The motor-car has made it possible for a great number of young people to attend high school who would formerly have come to an end of scholastic education in the last year of elementary school. For children of residents in the cities there are no fees charged. Textbooks have to be paid for in high school. For children coming from surrounding districts the fees are three to five dollars a month. Formerly these fees or charges were borne by the parents of the pupils from the rural districts. One of the changes in the system will cause these charges to be paid by the school district from which the pupil comes, out of the local school tax. (Taxation, by the way, is light in comparison with that in Britain. It is difficult to crowd everything one might say into the compass of this volume but, as indication of the political economy methods of the land, having touched here upon taxes, I might mention that funds accruing from the taxation of motor-cars in British Columbia were aptly applied last year to the construction and upkeep of roads.)

High school, the continuation of "junior high school," lasts two years and includes business courses and technical courses. Again, education is free, but a nominal charge is made for sitting for the final matriculation examinations. University education of four years offers practically all courses except those of medicine and law. To Toronto for law, to McGill for medicine is the usual procedure. There are many opportunities in the universities for scholarships carrying their winners to, for example, Smith College, or the Sorbonne, or to Oxford as Rhodes Scholars. Apart from all this under Government, there are in the leading cities private business colleges with day and evening classes. And the universities hold summer courses for those who, in vacation, would brush up some special subject. There are also a few excellent private schools.

Regarding the teaching profession: In the third year of high school there is a Normal course entrance. Those who pass examinations, to become elementary-school teachers, take a year's course at Normal School. A fifth year at a university qualifies one for examination to become a high school teacher. Teachers from Britain must sit for examinations, and are usually advised to take at least a half-year course at Normal School.

Those who chance to be interested in current literature can subscribe to such journals as *The London Times Literary Supplement*, *The Observer* (for

the critical essays of J. C. Squire), the Thursday issue of *The London Evening Standard* (for Arnold Bennett's book causerie), *The New York Times Book Review*, *The Bookman*, *The New York Herald Tribune's* weekly literary supplement called *Books* (international in its hospitality and outlook), and, if possessing anything in the nature of what may be called literary tentacles, can thus be aware of the issue of books they may wish to read. *The Vancouver Province* is a newspaper that would be remarkable for any city, and contains literary pages. *The Winnipeg Tribune* has a literary causerie as one of its features. *The Calgary Herald* is aware that there are those who do not live by bread alone. *The Toronto Saturday Night* issues periodically a large literary supplement. Where book-stores are lacking there is such a thing as the mail service to bring books to those who need them sufficiently to buy them. *The Studio* and kindred journals give a certain response to part of that "strange necessity" for art in life—should it be felt. There is a department of the British Columbia Provincial Library at Victoria, which lends books, on request, to readers in distant parts of the province that are not served by a local public library. This is an admirable undertaking, its activities limited, I should imagine, only by the limits set to the amount of governmental money apportionments obtainable for service. The books are mailed free. The reader pays return postage. Lesser public libraries—that is, the libraries of small towns—can also have, thence, periodically, batches of books on loan for decreed periods. Those with a troubling anxiety for new gospels can have all the testaments of all the new gospels sent to them by booksellers anywhere. New philosophies with varying profundity to suit various minds penetrate in these days of perfected postal service to all parts. And those who go away on vacation to the great centres of other lands can always bring back full details of epidemical gospels, suitable to them, discussed in those circles they have dipped into while away, and even set up as missionaries on return, expounding them not only to those who have not heard of them, but to those who have been aware of them by the aid of the postal service aforementioned. Here come, only a day or two late, from the various places of their origin, new thought, new gospels of diet, new belief, new unbelief, new credulity, new incredulity, new agnosticism, new wisdom and new tosh.

Regarding houses: The usage is to buy, not to rent. The cost of houses varies greatly, according to locality, as a house in Westminster costs more than a house of the same size in Exeter. And here (Canada West) we are dealing with a country as large almost as all Europe. The usual method of procedure is: A part payment made of, say, five hundred dollars down, or one thousand dollars down. Then each quarter, or month, a sum decided

upon is paid to the owner. The arrangements usually read: “Such and such an amount quarterly—or monthly—or multiples of that amount.” Thus a minimum money payment is fixed. On the balance to be paid a small interest is charged. Obviously with the decrease of that balance, the interest chargeable decreases. Let us presume that the purchaser, for some reason, wishes to leave the house before he has completed payments. He then looks for a purchaser who will pay him, cash down, what he has already paid (the phrase for that is *realising equity*), and agree to continue the payments to the owner. Many people, of course, buy land and build their own homes on it, or have them built for them. You will find indoor sanitation of a kind to delight that connoisseur of indoor sanitation, Mr. George Moore, even in regions relatively remote.

In the cities and small towns many live in what are called “apartment houses,” and what in Britain are known as “flats.” For these apartments (varying in size from two rooms and bath-room to eight or nine rooms) an inclusive rent is paid that covers heating, thus avoiding all fuel troubles in the winter. The most recently-built of these apartment houses are fitted with electric grates in the sitting-rooms, and such comforts as refrigerators and “built-in” ironing-boards in the kitchens.

Regarding costs of living, again, the extent of the land has to be remembered. Prices vary greatly. A generalisation here would be the best answer to all. After the war of 1914-18 for some years the cost of living was markedly less here than in Britain. Now, all things considered, it is about equal. Some articles are more expensive, but these are few. Some are cheaper. Meat is cheaper. Medicine is much dearer. Clothes bought locally are about the same price as clothes imported from Britain with the impost added, which suggests that clothes are cheaper in Britain. But taking the cost of living by and large, the showman’s adage fits: “What you lose upon the roundabouts you make up on the swings.” Still, I may make the attempt to give some concrete examples. The prices I shall quote are about average. In some parts they would be considered high; in others, costs might be even a little higher. Distance from wholesale centres and the cost of transport (and perhaps sometimes the advantage taken by tradespeople to charge a little more than necessary, where distance and cost of transport can be cited should one object to prices) causes prices to vary:

Bacon..... fifty cents (two shillings) a pound.

Flour..... $5.40 for a hundred-pound sack.

Eggs..... according to season, twenty-five cents (a shilling) a dozen, to seventy-five cents (three shillings) a dozen.

Rolled oats..... eight cents a pound.

Rice..... fifteen cents a pound.

Oranges..... according to the season, thirty-five to fifty-five cents a dozen.

Potatoes..... $2.50 a hundred-pound sack.

Sugar..... (granulated) $7.50 for a hundred-pound sack. Lump sugar, fifteen cents a pound.

Tea..... eighty cents a pound.

Coffee..... sixty cents a pound.

Raisins and currants... twenty cents a pound.

Prunes..... fifteen cents a pound.

Biscuits..... forty-five cents a pound.

Marmalade..... a dollar per four-pound tin.

Worcester sauce..... seventy-five cents for a ten-ounce bottle.

Tobacco..... eighty cents a half-pound tin.

The charges for goods bought locally are, of course, higher than for those bought from the great departmental shipping companies in Winnipeg, Regina, and Vancouver, which, dealing in quantities, can undersell the private dealers. At the same time there is a tendency, in some parts, for local tradesmen to exact what many consider undue profits. One of their answers to that charge is that in a credit country high prices are necessary. An instance of what I speak of—without these excuses—was remarked by many not long since in a smelting city of the West. The smelter went ahead rapidly. A system of bonuses was floated for the employees, then of shareholding by employees. The workers began to flourish. Several of the storekeepers did not see why they should not flourish in proportion, and so increased their charges. The smelting company promptly coped with that by inaugurating its own co-operative store, to the chagrin of those storekeepers who had wished to get what's called "a rake-off" on the increased earnings of the smelter employees. There is a brief merry jest you will sometimes hear in such places: *How much is that?—How much have you?*

There is a good deal of trust in trading here. Lumber men and mining men will sometimes run long bills for food for their camps, the payments to be made when the contracts for the lumber work expire and the contractors receive payment, or when the ore being taken out is treated and the "smelter cheque" arrives. The general impression I have come by of the average trader here is that he dislikes dunning and, if aware of the probity of a customer, can be very indulgent in transactions. Much of the life of the country—farming, lumbering, mining—has qualities of gamble, also of patience. Many experience periods of financial tightness between times of reaping. Of course some take advantage of these conditions, and would rather buy a new car than pay a debt when the money comes in. If these are pressed for payment by a tradesman, I do not think one can call that tradesman simply callous.

I do not know who it was who some time ago referred to the North-West as not the Great *Lone* Land but the Great *Loan* Land. There is some truth in the witticism. Banking here is very different from that in many countries. Not that the banks run risks. The security has to be evident. But many an undertaking is financed on bank loans. Till the loan is repaid the bank is the actual holder of the security. Banks on the prairies finance the farmer on many undertakings. Banks in British Columbia finance mining men and lumber men who can show the necessary security.

In all the towns are practically all denominations of churches, the Anglican, I believe, considered the most *distingué*, though perhaps not the best attended; and the Methodist, I have been told, the best for business. To the women's societies, with their charitable activities as well as social converse, I have already referred. In the same place I mentioned the Rotarians, and the Gyros. Toc H, more recent here, grows in membership. The actuating idea of these clubs is not one of individual worship or ritual, but of comradeship and service to one's fellows. A great deal of social, charitable, and philanthropic work is done by them in a human way without either ostentation or inference of heavenly rewards. Most of the towns, even small ones, have a motion-picture house, and many of them have also an opera house, in which touring companies and local amateur dramatic and operatic companies play.

The Old and the New Travel in the Yukon

Those thinking of settling in the country are often exercised regarding the proximity of doctors. There are persons who, for one reason or another, dread living far from doctors. It may be because they have none of the spirit of "living adventurously," or it may be because they are invalids or elderly and subject to some recurrent malady. There is probably out here less tendency to consult medical practitioners over every little pain and ache than in some civilisations. And some entertaining stories I could tell of men really at the back-of-beyond setting up as their own physicians. Their pharmacopœia in some of these instances consisted solely of a plug of tobacco, or the beads of balsam off trees, or of pitch from a tree. I have also known of some very interesting cures of white men by Indians, with distillations of certain leaves, or with plasters made by pounded leaves of certain shrubs. A friend of mine was healed of a very painful malady by an Indian, whom also, by the way, I happen to know; he camps now and then on the beach before my western home, hauling up his canoe there, and pitching his tepee among the willows. There are those who pooh-pooh such remedies as though they were but part of the old incantation and magic of medicine-men—which, of course, they are not. Even the Indians' sweat-lodge (in the nature of a Russian bath) is acknowledged by the highly civilised as worth consideration in certain illnesses.

But all this is apart from the question of the proximity of doctors. The stretching telephone is a great aid in times of sickness. It traverses long distances. Government, besides, makes it compulsory for first-aid men and

first-aid kits to be in all camps. Doctors in towns can be consulted by 'phone. And to visit the ailing, when these are far from towns, they avail themselves of all manner of transport facilities. In times of illness there is no callousness about the typical westerner. Again I could fill pages with stories from the life of men performing arduous journeys, in mid-winter, to take sick men to town and hospital. Most of the doctors have that old western spirit which, in times of trouble, is marked—the spirit that makes a man consider that he is his brother's keeper. Not long since there came a ring on the telephone to a doctor in Nelson from a mine some thousands of feet up in the mountains and, by road, eleven miles or so away. A caretaker, alone there for the winter, had fallen ill. The road was snow-covered. In the valleys were three feet of snow; it was obvious that the higher one went the more snow would be met. Drifts at that altitude may be twenty feet deep. The doctor (I see no reason why I should not mention his name—it is well known in the West), Dr. W. O. Rose, got a driver who was willing to see how far a car could go. They set off, wheels heavily chained. For several miles they had a road made at least passable by travel over it of logging teams. Farther on they had in places to get out and fill ruts with logs to make clearance. About a mile and a half from the mine they stuck. The doctor went on on foot (I understand without snow-shoes), trudging to the mine. He had told the man by 'phone to stoke up his fire and go to bed and wait there till help came. It may be invigorating to plough knee-deep through snow at these altitudes, tread, every few feet, on what seems crisp surface only to find it yielding, and still keep going, but it is also very tiring. The keen air is both a tonic and exhausting. Doctor Rose got to the mine, wrapped the man in blankets, and carried him down the mile and a half to the waiting car on his back. That is but one example of what a western doctor may do at times. If he reads this he will probably say I need not have mentioned it. And such practitioners there are throughout the land.

Doctors go to distant cases by train and boat—motorboat now. Or, if it happens that there is no train on a line, and the case calling them is urgent, the railway company agent will ring up a section-gang foreman, have him get out the gasolene (petrol) speeder, and off goes the doctor on that. Most of the medical men keep up-to-date, posted on new discoveries, aware of new methods of treatment in their profession. There are specialists in such cities as Winnipeg and Vancouver, Calgary and Regina. And even many of the smaller towns possess well-equipped hospitals.

By the way, sport in this West is much less restricted than in many lands. Each province has its own game laws, but anyone may hunt his legally permitted number of deer per season without owning a deer-forest; or shoot

ducks to the permitted number; or go fishing without owning a trout stream, or salmon water, or knowing someone who does and who invites him to cast a fly on it. There are regions in which many people add to the larder their own venison and bear meat and can (that is to say, as explained elsewhere, bottle) their own wild ducks; and have the various fish in their season fresh on their tables for breakfast.

This reference to hunting and fishing reminds me that I have said little of trapping apart from the mention of it when writing of the farther north beyond the prairie provinces. In British Columbia, as well as in these regions, a good number of men, in the winter months, establish what is known as a trap-line, registered, to prevent overlapping and for collection of the permit or licence dues, at the local government offices. In some cabin of the deep forests beyond the last settlements they live for the winter, trapping the fur-bearing animals. Cougar-hunting is also practically a business with some, the Government having placed a bounty on these great and handsome cats, they being very destructive to the deer. It is said that a cougar seldom returns to a kill, being a gourmet for fresh meat. In the course of nature doubtless what he leaves behind is the fodder of less finical eaters, such as the coyotes. But because of their havoc among deer the bounty has been placed on cougars. I met last year a cougar-hunter who had “cleaned up,” as he said, fifteen hundred dollars in cougar bounty in six months.

But this chapter was not intended as the receptacle for omitted minor details of the life of Western Canada, but as one of Hints for Tenderfeet. And the tenderfoot is hardly likely to begin his western experiences with trapping. Therefore, with this deflection from the chapter’s main purpose, it had better be closed.

CHAPTER XV

ALL this, so far, has been of the interior—the region which nowadays the people of Vancouver speak of as The Upper Country. Once upon a time a considerable percentage of those in Vancouver had come there from that Upper Country and did not call it so. They had arrived at the coast at the end of a careless westward drifting, by the accident of what was called "itching foot." Or they had gone thither during some boom in land in the hope of buying town-lots cheap and, in a short space of time, selling—not cheap. And many did, which is easier and more exciting than work. Or they had simply gone down to the sea in trains, to have a look at the new city beside it. Meeting people there in those days, and inquiring whence they had come, the reply would be: "From the Okanagan," or "from the Slocan Country," or "from the Yukon," or "on the Skeena" (*River* understood), or "Cassiar," or "the Kootenays."

Vancouver was looked upon as a place in which to winter by men up north, in the days when songs were sung and patter was produced in the old music hall there about the Chilkoot Trail, and the weariness of packing loads through mosquito clouds, or snow—that men might laugh at the memory of their endurance. They went there from these parts to sit in hotels—some after a preliminary "blow-out"—till the snow had gone from the places whence they came.

But Vancouver is now more and more a sort of Liverpool of the Pacific Coast, and more and more people go there from the East on the jump, only looking out of car-windows at that Upper Country through which they speed. Its population is two hundred and fifty-five thousand. Somewhere about forty steamship lines have vessels plying to it. Its harbour is one of the most secure in the world, and offers twenty miles of water frontage. When cities come to this size there are quarters of them where the sensitive traveller taps the sinister. There are side streets that lead you at night to stages prepared for a certain sort of motion-picture, districts of blue lights and macabre shadows, and the glint of cold calculating eyes out of them. You almost look round for the camera man. A Chinaman slithers into an alley; a hazed light shows a face drenched with powder, and with lips

carmined as if they had been struck a blow, stamped with an intense and grievous introspection. You surmise an underworld. The recurring police inquiries of the city ratify that surmise. Some queer stories are here. You may even hear rumours of secret liaisons with that underworld among some who live where there is nothing sinister on the surface.

For some reason the people of Vancouver seem to be very touchy if one no more than mentions that it rains there. There are those who like rain. And frankly enough the old-timers spoke not of its winter, but of "the rainy season." Standing as it does so near the coast, with salt tides washing into its inlets, there is something robustious even in its wet days.

As for its rapid growth: Store clerks of Cordova and Hastings Streets in old Vancouver of a mere handful of years ago were wont to make up picnic parties to what they called *the North Shore*, or *across the Inlet*, paddling thither in canoes, with baskets of sandwiches and tin tea-kettles. Now when you look across the Inlet you see the houses of North Vancouver, and great bluff ferry-boats plying constantly to and fro carrying not only passengers but ranks of motor-cars, some of them, for certain, bound for their great show place of Capilano Cañon, with its dizzy swinging bridge. Across the second, the farther inland, narrows a bridge has been built. Company-owned, it is a toll-bridge. The charges are five cents to each pedestrian using it and twenty-five cents each car (which includes the driver), with an additional five cents for each occupant apart from the driver. It is of about five hundred feet in length over water, that is apart from the approaches, and is of interest to engineers. It is a construction of concrete and steel, and has a central portion that rises, cantilever-fashion, for the passage of shipping. Vancouver is no longer a frontier city that happens to be situated by the sea. It is a seaport with the massed Upper Country behind it—that Upper Country that to a great measure supports it. The centre has a ceaseless aspect of bustle. The great lobbies of its tall hotels are thronged like the depots at railway junctions; meeting-places where the page-boys pass all the while chanting the names of those asked for at the desk. The University of British Columbia is situated here.

Members of the Vancouver Mountaineering Club announce, with a pride in their locality, that between the closing of the office on Saturday afternoon and the opening on Monday morning they can have all manner of Alpine adventure on glaciers and peaks. And members of the Vancouver Yacht Club, over at Coal Harbour Bay, between Stanley Park of the Big Trees and Dead Man's Island of the Indian legends, can fill the tank with gasolene (petrol) and, in the same space of time, split the reflections of mountains up

Howe Sound seaward (or inland up the Inlet) and roll and crackle home again.

Utterly different is Victoria, capital of the province, on Vancouver Island. In Vancouver is a clinging suggestion of the cosmopolitan and always there is the central bustle, in fact at times bustle of a sort that makes shrewd observers wonder how deep is the cause for it. To Victoria, people retire. You feel there has been Something—with a capital—here and that, on a memory of it, heads are held high. Such traditions it is easier to retain on islands than on continents. Victorian memories, these—memories, that is, of the Victorian age—of a naval station close by and grandmothers who danced with the admiral. Faded airs of a Colonial town are in these elderly streets, surviving into the epoch of the Dominion.

At New Westminster, on the mainland, at the mouth of the Fraser, turning aside from the main streets, the rattle of trains, the linked honking of motor-cars, here and there one is in touch with something of the same sort. You think of a Cinque port, remember Rye or Winchelsea, and wonder why, examining your surroundings for evidence. It's faint—but there.

But as for Victoria: Here are the provincial Houses of Parliament, and here the Provincial Library. That library is worth visiting by those who are interested in the old lore of the West. It contains an increasing number of volumes on coastal history, many of the sort that booksellers' catalogues announce as "rare"—"scarce," in which, at turning of a page, you may be back far beyond those flounced and whiskered Colonial days, with the Russians on the coast, or the Spaniards, or come upon such strange knowledge as that bells for the Franciscan churches in the south-west were cast at Sitka, or that the peaches of Oregon came from stones brought from Juan Fernandez by people on ships that put in there for water, coming round the Horn from Britain. There you can read of Captain Cook on this coast, and of Vancouver, and Meares, and the rest. The ethnological section of the museum is not to be passed by, containing as it does a very remarkable collection of native handiwork representative of the whole coast and coastal islands.

I have known of a visitor in Victoria—an expatriate Englishwoman who had given her heart to the Upper Country—after a couple of weeks in that city expressing the wish "to return to Canada." Never had she been homesick before, she told me, but here there were too many suggestions of England, and these impressing the lack of its reality—the lack of too much that England offers. And why that Englishwoman wished to fly from it is precisely, no doubt, why many English persons (who, in England, would not

be interested in what it lacks of England, and happy in just what it has of England) like it.

The policemen in the streets are the London bobbies over again—helmets and gloves. The spirit of place is manifested even in such legends as these over doorways: "Exclusive Tobacconist" or "Royal Ice-Cream." In the windows of little houses that remind one of Tooting are cards announcing "Rooms to Let" instead of "For Rent," as in other parts of Canada. Even in Beacon Hill Park are recollections of the Serpentine, save that the leaves upon its lovely trees—drooping over swans and their reflections—are bright and not sooty. Beyond the park, on the foreland (going out to one of their golf-courses) you see, at its height in May and June, mile after mile of the yellow of the nostalgic broom. A vision of England: "the moving clamour of cathedral bells, *the broom upon the foreland*, the song of the river on the weir." And returning to town from the rattle and the ruffle of that broom in the sea-winds, or the popping of the bursting pods, there is a feeling of familiarity with the scene ahead. It is in a hundred old English engravings. Behind us is the piled grandeur of the Olympics across the water. Before us is an English common. The tall jungly patches of broom make, of course, fifty per cent of the illusion, but the green undulations of the smooth roads intersecting them are also party to it. The broom, and a twist of unfenced road and, beyond, house-roofs and peeping gables, and a twinkle of a clear window here and there, and the spikes of church spires: you can see the like in many a tinted print protected by tissue-paper in the old *Keepsake Albums* of Victorian days.

It is a city of gardens because of its climate, and the most celebrated are those of Mr. and Mrs. Butchart. A mistake not to go and see something just because multitudes of one's fellows do so! There are places that must inevitably become show places, and the Butchart Garden is one of these. It is only a few miles out of Victoria. To begin with there was a limestone quarry there and cement works. When the limestone was all abstracted the unsightly quarry-hole was turned into a sunken garden. There are flowers everywhere, vivid along the brim, cascading colour down its sides. And through the bottoms are twisting paths, ribbons of green. Through all the garden—the Italian garden, and the Japanese garden, where runnels of water meander, crossed by stepping-stones—the Butcharts allow visitors to wander, retaining as private only a small plot, hardly larger than a large room, beside the flower-trellised home.

I think it has to be said, regarding the Malahat Drive to which all visitors are advised to go, that an acquaintance with the motor-roads throughout

many parts of the interior (in the Yellowhead Pass regions, or in the neighbourhood of Banff and Lake Louise—the Banff-Windermere Road—roads in the Cariboo and by Fraser River, and the bold road westward from Nelson by Bonnington Falls, and roads through the Cascades) causes it to be but *quite good*. And my sympathy is with a certain passenger in a sightseeing car on the Malahat Drive route who very clearly thought it a mistake for the conductor to announce to the passengers, "Get your kodaks ready for the Indian village."

Many of them had, no doubt, seen Indian villages. When I say Indian villages I mean Indian villages. They may have seen them in Arizona and in Oklahoma. They may have attended Indian Days at Banff. They may have witnessed some gathering of the Blackfeet, the Bloods, and the Piegans for a celebration at Lethbridge. They may have visited Indian villages of the coast by the tall pillars of the carven totem-poles, the long cedar canoes on the beach. However, the kodaks are got ready. And then, behind a five-barred fence, behold but five copper-coloured gamins in store clothes, or second-hand store clothes, and across the paddock, at a barn door, one squaw, in print frock and apron, observing from afar.

After leaving this "Indian village," the sightseeing cars climb to the base of a final knoll, and passengers are asked to dismount and enjoy the view from it. I understood the feelings of the lady (on the day I made the trip) who remained seated and in response to the conductor's inquiry, "Do you not wish to get out, lady, and see a view?" replied, with acerbity:

"No, thank you. I do not think I shall trouble. I have seen your Indian village, and if your *view* as closely approximates a *view* as your *Indian village* an *Indian village*, I prefer to remain seated here."

"Thank you, lady."

Still—she missed a memorable enough view of a fiord and islands, and a wave breaking in a bay, and the moral perhaps is that one should retain faith and hope.

Victorians tell us that their city is not of merit only for itself, but to be considered as a place of departure for "the Island," meaning no other island than their own—Vancouver Island. Therefore at least mention must be made of the Island's west coast and its interior. That is a rugged littoral of wild promontories and sinuous inlets—and perhaps a salmon cannery to which, in the canning season, you see Japanese girls flocking to work—at the inlet's mouth, and at its end old forest. Port Alberni, one of the ports of call for coastal steamers, is the base for a large herring-fishing industry, and a

lumber centre; and thence also one goes into the interior, to Great Central Lake and Sproat Lake. Back to the Pacific again the steamer passes on to waken lonely villages with its siren and bring out the Indians in their cedar canoes from such places as Friendly Cove, where the bizarre carven totem-poles stand along the main street. Those who have read Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, or his *Totemism*, consider them with an additional interest. Here it was that Captain Vancouver, with all due ceremony of such appropriations, took possession of Vancouver Island.

Very beautiful are some of the baskets made by the Indians of these parts. The inhabitants of Quatsino engage, close at hand, in agriculture, farther back in logging, farther back still in trapping. Trees of North Vancouver Island become books in Tokio, for at Port Alice is a pulp and paper mill, the product of which goes chiefly to Oriental markets.

At the other end of the Island from Victoria are patches of wilderness so thick, so prolific, and humid withal, that it is hard to imagine forests more dense even by Amazon. To Campbell River, Alert Bay, and Nimpkish River big-game hunters go to secure the services of the local guides for bear hunts and cougar stalking.

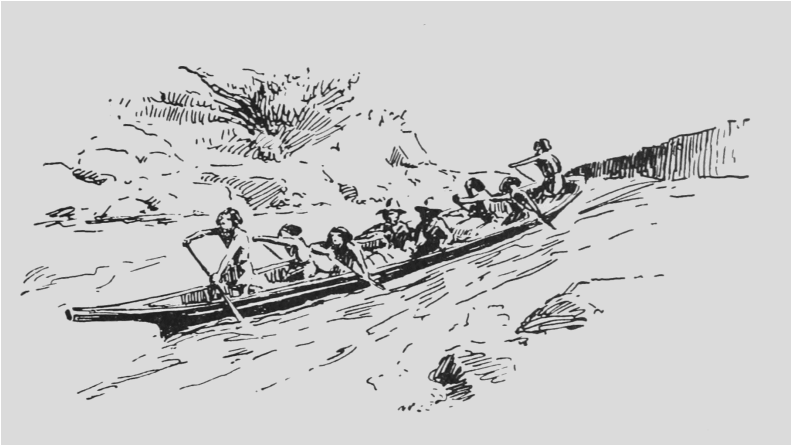
Yet, despite Euclid's seemingly simple and irrefutable dictum that the part is not greater than the whole, there are those to whom Victoria means the Empress Hotel. There are hotels that are world hotels. There is, for example, Shepheard's at Cairo. And there is something in the casual way in which our friends, when we visit London, suggest the Berkeley that is impressive. And someone (I think Irving Cobb) said that there are two hotels in the United States of America, and that one of them is the Davenport at Spokane. Whatever the other might have been, unmentioned, I'm willing to concur. The hotel at Havana where Mr. Joseph Hergesheimer, as he has narrated, had a bath before dinner and left the print of his bare feet, is perhaps another.

Many world travellers speak of the Empress as one of these. Why it should be so is precisely why the others are in the category: it is, in a recent idiom, *different*. Its individuality is created by many accumulative traits. At Lake Louise Château, and at Banff Springs Hotel, the custom of paging is not practised. In the Empress it is, but how diffidently! How different, these subdued requests for a guest inquired for at the desk, from the high, penetrating demands in the Hotel Vancouver! The voices of the page-boys do not here pierce with a chanting boy's soprano. At a little distance you would not know that they were paging at all. Only as they pass you do you hear them murmur a name, hardly louder than a whisper, as though paging,

here, were a concession. In the dining-room is leisureliness while the orchestra plays at the door. People are not in a hurry here as in Vancouver, and those who return to the Empress from the mainland to winter do so in great part because they are not in a hurry. There are waiters there who have the deportment of old English butlers, others who recall to mind Tennyson's "Head Waiter at the Cock," which is in Fleet Street, London.

As evening wears on the individuality of the Empress becomes more manifest. There are hotels that, after the dinner hour, are increasingly like railway stations. The lounge of the Empress, instead, becomes more and more like a large private drawing-room. This is one of the stately homes of —well, Victoria. There is an air as of a large family gathering. *Rotunda* won't do; *lounge* will hardly pass; it has to be *drawing-room*. It has its kinship with the "exclusive tobacconist" and the "royal ice-cream." The material of the great easy-chairs is appliquéd with a crown. In the orange carpets crowns are woven. You go up to your room by elevator, but, though the place is lit, of course, by electricity, there are candles in sconces by the bedside, and little old English bedroom grates, tiled round about—and you walk on crowns in your bedroom.

Outside, ivy rustles on the wall. You waken in the morning to that rustling, and the mewing of sea-gulls. It is all this, no doubt, that makes world wanderers, when talking of world hotels, add the Empress to the list.



Indian Spoon Canoe, West Coast

CHAPTER XVI

To see some stately liner, with its tourists from San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, Vancouver, Victoria, lying in an inlet of "the Island," or the mainland, beside a Tsimshian, Nasqua, Heiltsuk, or Kwakiutl Indian village, is to experience the sense of contrast, and to admit it even in face of the far-fetched explanation for feeling so according to Freudians—or those who have out-Freuded Freud.

Quaint juxtaposition: these interior fittings of luxury afloat, the wireless, the radio, and the barbaric totem-poles above the beach on which lie cedar (or, as sometimes, cottonwood) canoes, the canoes as featly fashioned, in their own way, as the liners. (Not but what coast Indians may be seen now in motor-boats even as Indians of the interior in motor-cars.)

At Alert Bay, first port of call out of Vancouver going north, Seymour Narrows passed, there used to be more totem-poles than there are now. Vancouver bought some for Stanley Park, but still there are a few to be seen there creepily akin to the stone effigies of Easter Island in their blind stare. And here you may have your first sight of a salmon cannery. In British Columbia (according to the statistics of the Department of Marine and Fisheries) there are one hundred and forty-nine establishments classified as follows: sixty-five salmon canneries; two clam canneries; seventy fish-curing plants, and twelve reduction plants.

We sight smoke and a pennon of steam at the base of some tremendous mountain and pass into an inlet where sawmills are buzzing and great booms of outer logs confine others that will become planks there. The immense lumber activities of Powell River I mentioned in the chapter on that industry. We come to more salmon canneries, very busy in the season and very deserted-looking after it.

Sir W. M. Conway, who knew the three great "inside passages" of the world, that of the Norwegian fiords, that of the far taper-end of South America, and that of this coast, was inclined to give the palm to this one. It is, perhaps, a tie between Chile's inside passage and British Columbia's. One marked difference is in the fact that from the Strait of Magellan north there is scarcely sign of human life, hardly even so much as a canoe of Onas

out of their latitude, utter loneliness of cliff falling to the sea and the whirl and suck of the tide-rips between the rocky islands.

Into Dean Channel one hundred and thirty-five years ago Captain Vancouver sailed, employed upon one of his many surveys, and boat parties under command of a lieutenant (Johnstone) examined the coast. Less than two months after they had sailed away Alexander Mackenzie arrived there, overland, wrote upon a cliff, with a mixture of vermilion and grease, "Alexander Mackenzie, from Canada, by land, the twenty-second of July, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three," heard from some Indians (not particularly friendly) of Vancouver's visit, and turned back again. Thus nearly did they meet. Had their times of arrival been reversed, how Mr. Johnstone would have stared at that inscription on the cliff!

Up here we churn into many a harbour, such as that of Prince Rupert, which some day (so say its inhabitants), though with a population at present of but seven thousand, may be as large as Vancouver. It is the terminus of the Canadian National Railways' trans-continental line that comes through the Yellowhead Pass, by way of the Nechaco and Bulkley valleys. Back in that interior, between Prince Rupert and the Rockies, according to recent reports of the Minister of Lands, there are vast grazing tracts, so far but of the wild moose, capable of maintaining two hundred thousand head of cattle. With the transport facilities constantly being extended it is highly possible that ere long, to the already existent activities, cattle-ranching on a large scale will be added in that interior. Prince Rupert is in the latitude, far north though we seem to be on arrival there, of London, England, with a climate somewhat similar. It possesses a dry dock six hundred feet long, and capable of lifting vessels of twenty thousand tons. It is a centre for halibut fisheries, with large cold-storage plants, and for the northland's fur industry.

Beyond Prince Rupert, up a twisting inlet lies Anyox, where is the smelter mentioned in the chapter on the mining industry; and up the next turning to the right, on that long twist of sea called the Portland Canal, that seems wishful to creep right into the interior, lies Stewart, centre of old mining activities, and of recent revival of these.

The forests with their tassels of dry moss mount up very high; at some places, where the trees grow symmetrically one above the other, giving effects as of trees a mile high. Through a notch the Coast Range flaunts, a gesture of rock teeth inlaid with snow. The mornings in these waters are memorable with a poignant quiet, and little plashing eddies inshore, and gulls calling, and undulating reflections, unless (there is an *unless*) the

voyager comes too late in the year, when the autumn mists have clamped down along the slopes.

There are wild fragments of history on this coast, red tales of feuds between sea-otter hunters of the old days, queer tales even of German biologists seeking for typical craniums among the Indian burial-grounds. One such I know—the most appalling blend of a circumspect glass case in a museum and whisky madness, and whangings on heads beside the plashing waves on a western inlet. Hearing of it from one who witnessed it, I had a new view of large-spectacled ethnologists.

Other stories they tell here are of the seal-poachers, such as that Danish skipper known as the Flying Dutchman. The ship of this Dane was built in Japan, owned by Americans, and sailed under the British flag. Naval commanders were dubious whether their home governments would congratulate them on arresting a poacher who offered such troublesome international complications.

The coast Indians, makers of beautiful baskets, are often, as for themselves, very ugly to look upon—according to our standards. Even if it be that the Amerind came hither from the centre of nations in Arabia ages since, he and the Mongolian originally of the same stock, these faces bear evidence, it seems, of infusion of Mongolian blood but recent as time goes in the making of races. A very different people they seem from, for example, the Stonys that we saw at Banff. And sometimes there are even hints of Polynesia (though more apparent than real, no doubt) lurking in some of the villages. The sight of a remaining nose-ring, perhaps, or a labret in the chin of some very old wrinkled lady, adds to the impression (whether biologically proven or not) of ancient traffic here with islands perhaps blotted out long ago over the sea towards Papua.

A little way beyond Port Simpson we come to a long strip of seaboard that is of the southern tongue of Alaska. But, passing through that, and on beyond Skagway, we are again in the territory of this book. The front door to the Yukon is here. The Yukon territory extends north-westward from the sixtieth degree of latitude (the northern boundary of British Columbia) to the one hundred and forty-first meridian—the Alaskan boundary. The Klondyke goldfields first made it famous. Placer-mining remains its chief support, but recently silver-lead ore, and copper, also coal, have been worked. Of the mineral wealth of the land there is no doubt. Of late, especially with a decline in the fur-getting industry, fox-farming has been taken up in several parts.

Leaving the White Pass and Yukon Railway at Carcross (for the time being paying no heed to side-turnings) we go down river to Dawson, in summer on a stern-wheeler, slipping down the Five Finger Rapids, where many early gold-seekers lost their lives in the torrent, and where the Government has blown out many once dangerous teeth. The winter stage route, cutting off corners, only here and there is on the banks close by. For the majority this northland stands for but one thing, the search for precious mineral, chiefly gold, and placer gold—"poor-man mining." Memories of spectacular strikes are vivid, hopes for future big strikes constant.

The gossip of these parts—I quote from the last issue of *The Mining and Industrial Record*—goes to this tune:

> Information has been received from C. L. Munroe, Gold Commissioner at Atlin, in a communication to the Department of Mines, of an important placer gold strike at Squaw Greek. According to word which has come through, Indians are recovering coarse gold, in some instances earning as much as $60 to $80 per day. A number of men have left Whitehorse for the scene of the new strike.
>
> Squaw Creek lies in British Columbia immediately south of the British Columbia-Yukon boundary, and is a tributary of the Tatshanshani River, a confluent of the Alsek. The location is fifty miles in an airline south-west of Whitehorse, and about seventy miles north-west of Haines, Alaska. Mrs. Muncaster, who operates a trading post at Dalton, has been appointed, by the miners, as Deputy Mining Recorder for the recording of claims. A trail from Whitehorse via Champagne gives the easiest route to the new strike, the distance being between seventy and eighty miles.
>
> This is the first occasion on which placer gold has been struck in that section. Information at present to hand is entirely insufficient to judge of the importance of the strike, but conditions appear favourable for placer gold deposits in that section. The Department of Mines is arranging for the District Engineer to visit the ground.

In one of the late Archdeacon Stuck's books there is an illuminating chapter telling of a prospector who became worried over the long absence of two others northward (one a *sourdough*—old-timer; the other a *chechako*—tenderfoot) beyond the Rockies' far end, into the Endicott Range toward the

Arctic Sea. It narrates how this man, Jack Cornell by name, finally decided to set out and look for them. Alone, over hundreds of miles he travelled and, despite the fact that the snows of two winters had fallen since their passage, traced the camps of the two men and found, apparently, the bones of one. The other, it seemed, had passed on to the Arctic shore in the region of the Mackenzie River mouth, or Herschel Island. Certainly a lone prospector did, by information obtained, in the prior winter go out to an ice-bound whaler, and on it, in the spring, perhaps, he sailed away. One wonders if the matter was ever further inquired into. Stuck does not say. A mystery of the north, it seems. I think the verbatim report of Cornell's quest, taken down by Stuck, should be kept alive in anthologies of the open air as well as Borrow's *Wind on the Heath*, and Hazlitt's *On Going a Journey* that we all know—though what would those whom a little knowledge has made chary of all but Pure English think of it as literature! This is how it begins:

> Hit was the rainiest season ever I seen, and the mosquitoes was a terror. I had a veil, and I honestly believe them mosquitoes eat it all up, for it went to pieces all at once. I honestly believe they eat it all up they was that thick and that venomous. The only chance to sleep was to travel so long and so hard that I fell asleep as soon as I stopped. . . .

Whitehorse, which has a population of six hundred, is the northern terminus of the railway division of the Whitehorse and Yukon route at the head of navigation on the Yukon, and there the river steamer takes up transport. Hootalinqua is one of the places of entry for the big-game country of the Cassiar. At Fort Selkirk the Pelly River flows into the Yukon from the Rocky Mountains, an old water highway of the wilderness, and up Pelly, or its left fork, the Macmillan, big-game hunters go for their trophies of moose and cariboo, sheep, and bear.

Dawson (usual population about two thousand, though a new strike or "excitement" may at any time at least temporarily alter these figures) is a changed place from the rush city of thirty years ago. Here are the government buildings and government departments of the territory, schools, and a Carnegie Library, and homes as tasteful as those among their lawns and roses on the celebrated Shaughnessy Heights of Vancouver. And to remind us that north does not mean cold all the year round we see, in these gardens, in August, humming-birds, a pinch of feathers probing with their spike beaks in the sweet-peas.

In the surrounding country, where the early placer-men scratched the surface with the tools at disposal and by the methods in vogue, are now corporations at work with highly modern hydraulic apparatus and dredges; and motor-roads twist through the mountains to their camps.

As for these side-turnings that were left in abeyance, one is at Stewart—the Stewart that is, of course, on the Whitehorse and Yukon route, not the one down the coast on the Portland Canal. Eastward from there development of mines has called for a branch line to Mayo. But unless for an experience, hardly would the average travellers care to go thither. In this north there are places somewhat lugubrious where after work is done the relaxations are limited. Lugubrious too are some of the Indian villages with their dirt and disease. In this north in early days it was not its best specimens that civilisation always presented to the Indian. To savage depravity was added sophisticated depravity. Government doctors in the hinterlands shake their heads over some of their cases.

For the tourist, as apart from the toiler in this land, the trip by boat to Dawson is the great affair. For the tourist also there is the lake district of Atlin country, which you go to along another side-turning, from Carcross. Atlin country is another greatest, grandest, sublimest region! As the men passing into the Cariboo, over the boundary from the States by way of Okanagan, turned aside to wash the sand for "colour" at Rock Creek, so here some of those on the way to the Klondyke, in the boom of 1897, turned aside to inspect Bennett Lake and its creeks, some penetrating far into the Atlin district. They found gold, but did not know whether they were in British Columbia or in the Yukon territory, a doubt which gave cause for much discord and litigation later, as a mineral claim in the Yukon was considerably larger than one in British Columbia, and the general belief was that they had passed on into the Yukon. The mounted police sent thither to maintain law and order in their camps thought so too. Claims of the Yukon territory size were recorded all through these parts. Then came the Government surveyors and discovered the error, with the result that there were all manner of little episodes in the nature of "claim jumping," grabbings of the spare feet, or overplus, of registered claims, that would give plots for many a wild story of the north, till a special commission was appointed to arbitrate on and untangle a hundred tangles.

The Atlin country so far has not been a Mecca for "poor-men miners." The pay-dirt lies too deep, necessitating capitalised hydraulicking companies. The summer tourists have found it; and its summer climate (that registers from sixty to seventy-five degrees) is gracious escape from the heat

of eastern and mid-continental cities. Those whose impressions of this land have been based solely upon narratives of husky dogs, the mounted police in fur kit, the hootch-peddler, the girl strangely involved and involving, are surprised by the wild flowers. There is something magical in these inlets, they find, deep green by day and phosphorescent in the steamer's wake at night, with globes of fire spinning and bursting astern.

There is a lodge in the wilderness for them—Atlin Inn, where the great logs in the open hearth flicker in the cool evenings that follow the northern summer days. Motor-roads twine through the woods to the surrounding placer-camps. Trails lead off into a green tranquillity that did not prevent some of the wildest deeds in the history of mining, whisky and six-shooters playing their part.

But with tales of these ongoings we need not alarm the tourists who, with their cameras, pass on now in the trig observation-boat to the south end of the lake, beyond the warm springs and the inlet where Pike stands (once Pike City, all agog with the gold fever), to see the Indian's "big ice," one foot of which is over the divide on the Pacific side, the Taku Glacier, the other here—the Llewellyn Glacier, plunging its white reflections in the jade water.

The Indian summer is a lovely period in such parts, when the leaves of aspens, birches, and cotton-poplars are yellowing and tremble in the slightest wind. Mile after mile we pass through golden lower woods, bright against the reddy green of the pines and firs. We carry away memories. We remember the high deliberate majesty of glaciers. We remember the frail beauty of a birch leaf spiralling downward in the quiet day.

THE END

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[The end of *Canada West* by Frederick Niven]