

NATIONAL PARKS OF CANADA DISCUSSED
BY HON. T. A. CRERAR

One of the Most Interesting Developments of the Present Century

The establishment of National Parks is one of the more interesting developments of the present century. Originally set aside to preserve the scenery, the natural and historical objects, and the wild life of the country, so as to leave them unimpaired for the use of future generations, they have proved to be one of the major attractions for the tourist trade, an industry which last year reached a value of more than \$250,000,000.

The popularity of our national parks, not only with Canadians, but with visitors from abroad, is reflected in the figures for tourist travel to the areas during the nine months ending December 31, 1936, when more than 896,000 visitors entered the National Parks of Canada. This is an all-time record, and represents an increase of more than fifteen per cent. over the total for the preceding twelve months.

The swift onrush of settlement, and the advance of industry have brought about, in many countries, needless destruction of natural beauty and wild life, and widespread alienation of public lands. When the necessity for conservation became apparent, Canada still possessed large tracts where primitive and unspoiled conditions prevailed, and wisely set apart large and representative areas for the benefit, education, and enjoyment of the people.

In these areas are preserved the scenery, the flora, and fauna, typical of that part of Canada in which the park is situated. From the snow-capped peaks of the Rockies to the surf-washed cliffs of Cape Breton Island, these great natural playgrounds offer to the visitor exceptional opportunities for the renewal of health and vigour in the stimulating atmosphere of the great outdoors.

The establishment of Canada's original national park grew out of an incident in the building of our first transcontinental railway. When the railroad was being pushed westward from the prairies, construction engineers discovered hot sulphur springs on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. The curative properties of these waters gave rise to many offers for the purchase or lease of the site; and in order to preserve the springs for all time for the people of Canada, the Dominion Government, in 1885, set aside a surrounding area of ten square miles. So impressed were early travellers with the scenery in the locality that the Government was urged to substantially enlarge this reservation as a public domain, and in 1887 an Act of Parliament was passed, establishing what is now the Banff National Park.

Since that time the system of National Parks has been built up by the addition of other areas, until it now consists of twenty separate park units, having a total area of more than 12,500 square miles, which is almost equal to the combined areas of the states of Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Within the parks, the Government is responsible for all local administration. This includes protection from the menace of fire, guarding the wild life, preserving the natural beauty of the landscape, opening up outstanding points of interest by the construction of roads and trails, and making provision for the convenience and comfort of visitors. Since the establishment of the first national park the Government has invested approximately \$30,000,000, including administrative costs, in developing and maintaining our national scenic and recreational areas. Canada is now receiving cash dividends on this investment through the expenditures made by the ever-increasing stream of tourists who annually visit these holiday lands, as well as dividends in health and enjoyment to her own people.

The great mountain playgrounds include Banff, Jasper, and Waterton Lakes Parks in Alberta, and Kootenay, Yoho, Glacier and Mount Revelstoke Parks in British Columbia. Here amid a sea of mountains are scenes of magnificent alpine grandeur. Majestic peaks, many of them snow-capped, with glacier-covered slopes, rise to tremendous heights. In between lie beautiful valleys, clothed with the diverse greens of forests, and set with sparkling lakes, beautiful in colour. On the upper slopes are the alpine meadows—wildflower gardens with a profusion of colour. Madly tumbling torrents rush down the icy summits, and waterfalls drop for a thousand feet down the sides of canyon and gorge.

Within the area of the mountain parks is the great Columbia ice-field, the accumulation of snows and ice for untold centuries, the area of which has been estimated at about 110 square miles. Lifted high on the shoulders of a score of mighty peaks, it forms the geographical centre of the water system of one-quarter of the continent, and feeds the glaciers

that move slowly down to the valleys below. It has been well called the "Mother of Rivers," for from this sea of ice issue streams which take their way finally to three oceans, the Pacific, the Arctic, and the Atlantic through Hudson Bay.

The prairie provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba also have their share of National Parks. North of the great grain belt in Saskatchewan lies Prince Albert Park. Here scores of lakes, ranging from tiny rock basins to bodies of water fifty miles long, are woven into continuous waterways by innumerable small rivers. With this background of romance and adventure dating from the days of the fur trade, Prince Albert Park has a particular appeal to the camper, fisherman and canoeist. Along the water highways that lie like a network over the northern part of the park, the trader, trapper and voyageur travelled to and from the Mackenzie Valley and Hudson Bay.

Riding Mountain Park in Manitoba is located north of the most thickly populated area of the Canadian prairies, and attracts many visitors from this section, and from the Mississippi Valley in the United States, which is served by the famous Jefferson highway that stretches from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border. Its picturesque scenery and typical wild life, together with its happy location on a well-forested tableland, containing several delightful lakes, 1,500 feet above the surrounding plain, provide an attractive change to the dwellers of the level prairie lands.

The recreational parks in the east offer to the people in that part of Canada, and to residents of nearby cities and towns across the International Boundary, opportunities for relaxation comparatively close at hand. Consequently these parks are extremely popular, and the number of visitors runs to hundreds of thousands each season. In Ontario there are three National Parks, namely, Point Pelee Park, extending into Lake Erie; Georgian Bay Islands Park, consisting of a group of islands in the famed Georgian Bay region; and St. Lawrence Islands Park in the Thousand Islands area, comprising a number of islands and a mainland reservation.

The Dominion Government, with the co-operation of the two provinces, has recently been able to establish parks in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. The Cape Breton Highlands Park in Nova Scotia includes an area of 455 square miles in the northern part of Cape Breton Island. Its many attractions include the rugged, but picturesque coastline, with its mountain background. The Prince Edward Island site is a strip approximately twenty miles in length along the north shore of the island; and through its establishment as a Park area some of the finest salt-water bathing beaches in Eastern Canada will be preserved as a national playground.

It was early realized that one of the first essentials to the full enjoyment of the parks development is the construction of roads and trails leading to outstanding points of beauty and interest. Since the inception of the National Parks Service, more than 700 miles of motor highways and secondary roads have been constructed. At the administrative centres of the larger parks picturesque towns have grown up, in which the buildings erected harmonize with the beauty of the surrounding landscape.

The demand for good roads is one of the developments of modern motor travel. Realizing the importance of providing dustless all-weather routes into the national parks, the Government of Canada is co-operating with the Provinces of British Columbia and Alberta in the improvement of approach roads to the parks in these provinces. The aim is to provide in British Columbia a dust-free standard road from Kingsgate at the International Boundary to a western gateway of our National Parks Mountain highway system at Radium Hot Springs; and in Alberta a similar road from the International Boundary at Waterton Lakes Park to connect with the Calgary-Banff highway on the east. When these roads are completed visiting tourists from the United States, who are accustomed to travel on dustless roads will have opened up to them some of the finest scenic attractions on the North American continent.

The many natural advantages of the parks have been fully utilized to provide facilities for outdoor recreation. Boating, bathing, mountain-climbing, hiking, and trail-riding in the summer, and skiing in the winter are forms of sport, the enjoyment of which requires but little more than Nature's handicraft. Fine golf courses and tennis courts have been constructed in six of the western parks, all of which provide opportunities for the enjoyment of these popular forms of recreation. Bathing pools and supervised swimming beaches, commun-

ity buildings, park museums, and playgrounds also add to the pleasure of visitors. Excellent hotel and bungalow camp accommodation in many of the parks has been augmented by well-equipped motor campgrounds situated in the park townships and along the Park highways.

The Banff and Mountain Revelstoke parks are now regarded as notable winter sports centres, and each season thousands of enthusiasts are drawn to these areas. The winter carnival held annually in Banff attracts skiers, curlers, skaters, and other participants in winter sport from Canada and United States.

One of the great attractions of the parks is the variety and extent of their wild life. All National Parks are maintained as sanctuaries for wild animal and bird life, where no trap may be set and no gun fired. The protection afforded the creatures of the wild has resulted in large increases in their numbers, and many areas formerly depleted of game have been re-populated with species native to the region.

The absence of pursuit or violence of any kind has freed the animals from fear of man, and in many parks they have become quite tame. Deer, elk and bear approach to within a few yards of human habitation, and on the mountain highways bighorn sheep allow visitors within camera range. The parks are thus becoming reserves for big game, and the overflow which spreads beyond the park borders is restocking the surrounding districts.

In order to preserve for the future such species as the buffalo and the antelope, whose habitat is the open prairie, the Dominion Government established four wild animal parks in Alberta. Buffalo Park near Wainwright and Elk Island Park near Lacombe contain more than 7,000 buffalo, which were developed from a small herd of about 700 head, purchased in 1907 when the species was on the verge of extinction. The Nemiskam and Wawaskesey Parks contain fine herds of pronghorn antelope, a species which only two decades past had almost disappeared.

Another phase of National Parks activity of increasing importance is the preservation and restoration of our historic sites. By the selection of sites commemorative of events of outstanding importance in the history of the Dominion, not only are they preserved for the education of future generations, but by constantly reminding us of the glories and the sacrifices of the past, they contribute to national pride and love of country. Canada has been fortunate in saving these memorials before it was too late. In the work of selecting sites worthy of marking, the Department of Mines and Resources has the advice of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada—a group of eminent citizens who are recognized as authorities on the history of the different sections of the Dominion which they represent.

More than a thousand sites have been considered by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board, and of these well over 300 have been recommended to the Department for marking and preservation. From the Atlantic to the Pacific stirring events in the history of our country are being recalled by tablets and monuments erected by the Department; and at Fort Anne in Nova Scotia and Fort Beauséjour in New Brunswick, small national parks have been created to mark forever the events with which those old names are associated in Canadian history.

In this hurrying age, when the stress of life is sometimes almost unbearable, and when much in which we have placed our faith seems uncertain, we do well to turn from time to time to the beauty and the majesty of Nature, unspoiled by the hand of man. I am sure you will agree with me that, quite apart from their commercial importance, they have an intangible value as a restorer of mind and spirit. Long centuries ago the Psalmist in his perplexity turned his eyes to the hills:

"Where silence hushes discontent,
And petty fears are lost in space . . .

By following his example we too may perhaps rediscover the poise and the vision, and the sense of ultimate values which alone can make our nation great.

In the National Parks the people of Canada have a spiritual as well as a material resource which, if wisely preserved, will be forever a foundation upon which to build and maintain our national character.

Vernon Bartlett On Spanish Situation

Vernon Bartlett will describe the actual conditions in Spain at the present time on the radio broadcast, "Canada 1937," under the direction of Victor George, over a national network, Sunday, Feb. 28, at 5:45 to 6:30 p.m., EST. Mr. Bartlett has personally visited many of the embattled areas under official auspices during the past two weeks and unless he is prevented from returning to London in time, will tell Canadian listeners what he has seen in Spain. This is the second time the foreign editor of the "London News Chronicle" and European commentator for "Canada 1937" has visited Spain since civil warfare broke out there.

KATHLEEN KIDD
LIFE HISTORY

The record of this charming young CBC star is no Cinderella story. Kathleen Kidd gained her top-flight rating as a radio dramatic artist through crowded years of strenuous apprenticeship and most of her life spent in the world of the theatre. But, with a fine record in musical comedy, the legitimate stage, and even in pictures, she still attributes much of her success to "lucky breaks." In the past two years she has been heard in many CBC presentations, originating in the Toronto studios, under the direction of Rupert Lucas. She has played "the love interest" in a number of the "Forgotten Footsteps" programmes and in the "Drama" series. But she travelled far before gaining a place in the Canadian radio spotlight.

Kathleen made her stage debut in London as a fairy in a Drury Lane pantomime and the precise work of this ballet mite, stepped through the lovely scenes of "The Sleeping Beauty," procured her further employment. She came to the attention of C. B. Cockrane and for three years trained under the famous producer in singing, dancing and elocution. Then the first break: an understudy in "Pall Mall" at the Ambassadors Theatre, she stepped into the lead and played it for three weeks.

"Charlotte's Revue," which brought such stars as Gertrude Lawrence, Beatrice Lillie, and Jessie Matthews to American fame, also carried Kathleen along in its brilliant stride. Canadians will recall that Gertrude Lawrence was stricken with an appendicitis which the revue was playing in Toronto. Jessie Matthews, a dainty sprite from the chorus, stepped into her role and Kathleen Kidd, who had in the meantime taken up residence in Canada, stepped into the chorus. She was assigned several of Miss Lawrence's songs so that the leading part would not prove too heavy for the young understudy and for eight weeks on tour Kathleen shared the spotlight of "Charlotte's Revue" as it gleamed its way through the larger American cities. Again, the next year, the revue did a grand tour and Kathleen was with the show when it landed in Hollywood to open at the new El Capital Theatre. She made her screen debut when the girls of the show were asked to appear in ensemble scenes of "What Price Glory."

The little English girl who had travelled to Hollywood via a "lucky break" in Toronto, decided that she liked the coast and there was another gallant spirit in the company to encourage the rather daring plan. When the troupe was all aboard and ready for the trip east, Kathleen and her chum, having snatched their baggage right from under the eyes of the company manager, dashed from the platform as the whistle blew. Two smart girls went job hunting in the city of sky-rocket fame and Kathleen's chorus days were ended.

She played bits in several pictures and then joined the west coast company of "Oh, Kay" where she almost got fired for failing to control her laughter at the antics of Elsie Janis. Instead, she stepped into a leading role as the sophisticated Charlotte in "Hit The Deck" and created a stir in blase Hollywood as the girl with the monocle.

A tour East in "Good News," playing "Pat," led Kathleen to the stage door of the "Grand Street Follies" at the Both Theatre, New York, where she played in the Harlequinade as Pirrette opposite a charming and aesthetic Harlequin, later to be known as Number 1 Blonde-slapper, Mr. James Cagney, of picture fame.

Kathleen has nothing but the best to report of Jimmy but it was right after "The Grand Street Follies" that she had a nervous break-down (the only "unlucky break in this story") and she was obliged to come home to Canada for a rest. And she seemed content after that to turn her talents to radio and the home scene. She played leads with John Holden's company at Bala before that able young actor-manager took his plays to Winnipeg and she is so engrossed in her work as a radio dramatic player now that she has almost completely forgotten the humorous admonition of Cecil DeMille when he said "My dear, by no stretch of the imagination can I picture you as a siren," and then dismissed the prospect of Kathleen as a vampire on the silver screen. Blonde, blue eyed, and five feet two, Kathleen has the same sweet sincerity of expression that first distinguished her in the Drury Lane ballet not so many years ago and makes her now such a sympathetic heroine in the CBC's radio dramas.

Edwin C. Hill, veteran reporter appearing as the Spectator with Harry Sosnik's Orchestra on NBC Sunday nights, is famous for his resonant voice, yet he never spoke in public until he first went on the air in 1931. The richness of his reportorial background, his wizardry with words and his flair for vivid and graphic prose made him a radio sensation overnight.

TO BROADCAST
DVORK'S "DUMKY
TRIO" FROM CRCM

MONTREAL, February 24—CBC's "Chamber Musicale," to be broadcast from the Montreal studios March 3, at 10 p.m., EST, over the national network, will present the Montreal trio in Dvořák's "Dumky Trio" in E Minor, Opus 90. The selection will be played in five parts: (a) Lento Maestoso; (b) Andante; (c) Andante Moderato; (d) Allegro; (e) Lento Maestoso-Vivace. The Montreal Trio is composed of Edmond Trudel, pianist, Maurice Ouderet, violinist, and Jean Belland, cellist.

DRESSING FOR DINNER

About 3,000 Afridis armed with rifles had attacked Pesawar, the north-western tip of India. They burned a few buildings but were repulsed by British Gurkha troops with about a hundred casualties.

When I reached the bungalow of Barry Lawther, chief of the intelligence service in the northwest frontier, the cantonment was in a state of tension. Toward dinner time I saw Lawther's servant laying out his evening clothes.

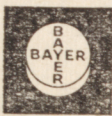
"You're not going to dress for dinner?" I asked Lawther in surprise. "Yes, we'll dress for dinner," he replied, quietly. "I've invited in several officials you might like to meet. I had often read of the British dressing for dinner in the depths of Africa or come what may, but that was the first time I had encountered it. Half a dozen of Lawther's friends arrived dressed in white dinner jackets. From time to time during the dinner they would hold telephonic conferences about the expected Afridi attack.—Webb Miller.

I have never sung down to any audience and do not believe it necessary for any singer to do so. Radio and the screen have educated American audiences to the highest plane of musical appreciation"—Gladys Swarthout, opera diva now starring on NBC

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