MOUNTAINS, IN THE RAIN

THERE'S no use saying it never rains in the Canadian Rockies. You couldn't have such wealth of great timber if there wasn't plenty of moisture. The tourist who comes to the mountains with no alternatives but a parasol to keep off the sun and a pack of cards to keep off the blues, is unprepared for the best part of his holiday.

I'd had good weather all through the Rockies—one glorious shouting sunshiny day after the other. Then, half way between Field and Glacier, somebody tipped over the rain barrel and when we reached Rogers Pass the combined tourist soul was a mighty sponge of woefulness.

In the pouring rain we got off at Glacier, did a swift dash for the hotel and stood around in mentally-dripping and mournful groups gazing at the big log fires.

"Do you ever rent raincoats?" I asked the charming white-haired hostess. "I don't see why I should stay in and play patience, with all that waiting for me," and I waved a vague arm in the direction of Mount Sir Donald, who was probably chuckling or dancing or doing sacrifice behind the curtain of his seven cloud veils.

"Certainly," I was told, "you can get a raincoat in the curio tent."

In the curio tent they gave me a big black light rubber coverall and a rakish hat to match. I had thick shoes anyway—and that was all I needed to complete my costume. An umbrella would have spoiled the whole party. There's something fascinating in starting out to follow a trail that you've never seen before. It's like reading a serial story. But in the case of the path to the Great Glacier you see the last chapter first—chunks of blue sky with white clouds whipped in, frozen stiff and tumbling over the top of the world. That's the Illecillewaet, 9000 feet at the skyline, obligingly pushing its huge head down into the valley so that the tourist has only two short miles to go to be able to climb up and pat this prehistoric monster of the Glacial Period that purrs so tamely in the very backyard of the hotel.

Notice the strange white mud underfoot—ground rock brought down doubtless by old Illecillewaet himself in the days of his youth, when he filled the whole valley. Draw in lungfuls of the aromatic breath of millions of trees, yielding up their spices to the mist. The forest never smells like this on a dry day—wet cut wood of the bridges; giant firs, cedars, spruces; crumbling white rocks; the tossed glacial river; every fern and star-eyed flower. They all fairly *swim* in the rain and give out a most heady and thrilling perfume! Animals draw much of their knowledge of the world through their sense of smell, but it's the rare human who ever gets the sense to think with his nose. The path winds upward past big rocks covered with white-starred bunch berries, across unexpected bridges, by beckoning benches, till the trees thin out and grow smaller and the air freshens. It was clear, clean-washed, before. Now there's the snow thrill in it. The path bursts out of the trees into a region of tumbled boulders with mad little streams running hither and thither among them. Strange deep crimson flowers look shyly at you over the top of big shiny rocks, and the path is Irish-Gypsier than ever, with its staccoto turns and upleaps.

At the head of it is the immensity of the blue-white glacier, with a swallow's nest hole in the side of it which must be the ice cave. Over to the left is a little white tent, with a Union Jack fluttering bravely in front of it. All this belongs to the Swiss guide, a big Newfoundland-dog sort of a fellow who makes up in smiles what he lacks in English. You're his first tourist to-day. "Tea?" says Christian, showing his white teeth flashingly. He has two tin cups of which one is half full. You've interrupted him. Now join him please.

He cuts a slice of bread and you butter it with his jacknife. Oh, certainly, strictly against the rules. But this isn't the hotel's affair. It's Christian's own little treat 'cause you were mountain-mad enough to come out in the rain. He loves you for it. You're a tourist after his own adventurous heart.

Tea over—yes, you took three slices, don't you remember, and two cups!—you and Christian go up the frozen grey-mud-covered steps to the very self of Greenland's icy mountain. There's the side door to the Glacial Period, that cave that Christian's own axe cut out. He worked at it for a month.

The opening is as blue as ten August skies sizz-sizzling together. And yet when you go in, the cold catches you by the nose till you have to open your mouth to breathe! At the end of the cave is a Christmas tree on whose top there's another Union Jack in cold storage.

When you reach the outside world again—*it's all pink for three crazy seconds!* Don't ask me why. Something about complementary colors I suppose, but if you stop to reason it out you lose the Alice-in-Wonderland sensation.

There are five figures emerging from the trees away below the tumbled-boulder field.

"Ah," says Christian, waving his hand and smiling as though you were the cavalry leader for sure, "they follow!"

You go home by the other-side-of-the-river-trail, a still lonesomier way, with more moss, more bunchberries, more glad-to-be-all eyes than ever.

B. T.

The illustrations show scenes amongst the Canadian Pacific Rockies.

BIRDS IN THE WAR ZONE

ARE NOT FRIGHTENED BY HUMAN HORRORS.

Ornithologists Note Strange Facts In the Battlefields of Europe—Intrepid English Sparrows Were Not Afraid of British Tanks Which Terrified People Who Saw Them First.

HOW do the birds of a belligerent country fit into the eternal scheme of things military?

"Fine," answer the British and French ornithologists.

Over the masses of moving troops back of the allied lines the birds of France and Belgium fly, build nests in abandoned trenches and seem perfectly at home in the air, punctured by whirring bullets and bursting shells.

The horrors of war have been spared the birds, and they regard it as one of the attending consequences of the evolution of time and country. This, at any rate is the unofficial view that bird experts give of the matter as they deduce their ideas from the habits and customs of the subjects of the feathery kingdom.

The jackdaws and crows are much at home where shells fly. The common house wren builds her nest in a temporary hut or in the more stable buildings in the rear of military activities. The sparrows follow the food trains, pick up crumbs that Tommies and Poilus throw to them and seem perfectly contented with a vagabond mode of life. Since the Germans occupied parts of northern France and Belgium thousands of birds have lost their homes. Houses shelled by the enemy have pulled down with them the homes of birds which build close to man. Barns burned have destroyed the nests of martins, sparrows, wrens and other species of birds which build in cities and villages of Europe.

Not unlike their two-footed comrades and protectors, the soldiers, the birds learn to become accustomed to the rapidly changing modes of warfare. The sparrows are the most daring of all winged creatures that fly over the battle lines, according to soldier bird lovers who have had opportunity to observe them.

The huge British tanks, terrifying objects to the human eye, held no terrors for the intrepid English sparrow. He built his nest right under the alcoves into which the machine guns or rifles are drawn when the big tanks are at peaceful repose. When the tanks were put into action the nests, of course, were destroyed.

Observing the practices of birds in war time has led many officers and enlisted men to a deeper appreciation of birds. In civil life the average individual pays little attention to the creatures. The soldier has more time to observe them and, according to reports the birds make friends with the troopers more quickly in war than in peace. This fact is accounted for by the ornithologists, who say that when a man is in battle, or in preparation for it, his heart softens to defenceless animals and birds and he feels a greater sympathy for them.

Birds as a war-time factor have a two-fold value. They destroy bugs, insects and even rodents, which are a menace to the community health.

They remove the bodies of dead animals, which are a menace to health. They kill insects which eat the farmer's crops, and thus aid in conserving the food supply.

Birds are naturally very friendly to man. They make friends easily, and unless violence is threatened them they never forget a kindness or favor. Once food is placed on a window sill in the winter, when food for birds is hard to get, they return time and again, even though the individual forgets to place morsels within their reach.

To-day every one is awakened to the necessity of forest conservation. Birds in the United States weekly kill millions of insects which destroy tree growth. Of the vast sums of money now being spent for forest conservation much of it is set aside to kill the insects which birds destroy.

Interesting stories have been told of the quaint social features of bird life. The social intercourse of birds is a subject which bird lovers study with especial consideration. Man was not the first, it appears, to devise a tribunal for the trial of some one accused of crime. If the ornithologists are correct, he was at one time in medieval history, far behind the feathery tribes in the system of meeting out justice to wrongdoers.

Rooks hold court when one of their number is caught in theft or other misdemeanor. The culprit sits within a circle of rooks who cry out against him. He proclaims his innocence or guilt, as the case may be, by shrieking loudly. If he is considered guilty by the bird assembly at a signal the flock pounces upon him and tears him to pieces.

Justice is not done halfway by the birds.

The rook court has been actually observed many times by bird students.

Blackbirds hold council meetings apparently, to decide upon important questions. They seem to prefer a thick forest for these meetings. Incidentally blackbirds will not remain where there is powder smoke and they can smell it at a great distance, it is said. They have chiefs of the groups of tribes who fly above the others and keep on the watch for danger. Some naturalists claim that these birds send scouts ahead to see if there is an enemy within sight and if the country is supplied with sufficient food to feed the hosts.

Even the birds who live upon the water have their courts of justice. The flamingo are noted for their court trials. The flamingo is a common bird in the low, marshy lands of Bengal. They gather in these marshes when some tribe brother commits a wrong against the majority. Punishment is swift and effective. The bird accused dies, if his guilt is proven.

Sparrows are said by naturalists to also make judicial inquiry into the faults of their fellows. However, it is assumed that they are less formal in their deliberations than the grave and wiser birds which probably inaugurated the practice.

Ornithologists who have made serious study of bird conditions abroad declare that a deeper understanding of bird life will be born among the people after the war, and that the importance of the preservation of the various species of the feathery tribes will be realized by all.

IMPRESSING THE SWEDES.

Germans Carry on Propaganda Work In Stockholm.

German propaganda in Sweden and other Scandinavian nations no longer is ill-directed or inefficient, in the opinion of the statesmen of the countries in which it operates. In the early days of the war the entente powers and America extracted considerable amusement from German methods of propaganda which seemed based on an almost absolute failure to understand the psychology of the non-Germanic peoples. Undeterred by failures the Germans have kept at work in Sweden and have organized a system of propaganda which is regarded as tireless, intelligent and, without a doubt, effective. The organization centres around three undertakings, all organized by Germans, but, in accordance with Swedish law, directed by Swedes. These are the magazine Jorden Rundt (the World Around), the Picture Central, and the Polar Star Biograph.

All three undertakings are housed in the same quarters. The exploits of the German army are graphically illustrated by word, by picture and cinema films. Gigantic maps, with events kept up almost to the hour, show the progress of the German armies. The newest bulletins are displayed. Visitors are loaded with pamphlets and books, some of them of such character that they form permanent additions to a reference library. Whenever a German soldier does some individual act of kindness a cinema operator is there to record it and the Swedish patrons of the Polar Star have opportunity to admire it. Two large printing firms turn out vast quantities of pamphlets, with which the Swedes are inundated.

The German legation has trained journalists on its staff, and Baron Lucius, the minister, is himself a keen, wide-awake individual, fully alive to the value of printers' ink and alert to seize every opportunity to make propaganda or to explain anything that requires explanation.

To offset this propaganda the allied powers offer comparatively little. Since America entered the war an effort has been made from Washington to get adequate publication in Sweden of important speeches by President Wilson and other leaders, and reports of important decisions of different bodies, progress of recruiting, etc. These efforts, particularly as regards speeches, are foredoomed to failure by the fact that the speeches are cabled too late.

President Wilson's speeches have reached Sweden from two to four days after summaries of them had been received elsewhere. No Swedish editor, after having used a 500-word summary will half a week later, devote much space to the text of the same speech.

Horse Is Popular Again.

To avoid the use of petrol needed for war work, the Queen and other members of the royal family have been using horses in London for over two months.

A big family barouche that looked as if it had come out of a fairy tale stood outside a Knightsbridge draper's shop the other day. The well-groomed but elderly horses were driven by a coachman of the old dignified type in the family livery, and a tall footman stood with a fur carriage rug, while three little girls in white fur capes were as pretty a bouquet as ever a carriage held.

A passing closed carriage and pair was driven by a coachwoman who with her "footman," a bright-faced girl, wore dark green livery. An open victoria was seen in Regent street.

"There is very little jobbing by the month or year now," said a job master; "charges are too high. We hire out instead single-horsed broughams at 12s. 6d. for two hours, 16s. for dinner and theatre, 17s. 6d. for dinner and supper. These are nearly double the pre-war charges."

Reeds for Paper-making.

To meet the war-time paper shortage in Great Britain paper manufacturers are experimenting with the river reeds found along the banks of the Tay near Dundee, Scotland. Information received by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce is to the effect that paper, at least that of rough fiber, can be manufactured from this material, the only difficulties encountered being the brittleness of the grass and its tendency to break into short pieces after it has dried. It is thought, however, that a "steeping" process may be adopted that will overcome these drawbacks and render the grass capable of being converted into good salable paper, and that in the course of a few months a new and fairly important industry may be established on the banks of the Tay.

A Generous Father.

Everywhere men who suddenly attain prosperity spend money foolishly. A story is told in Commerce and Finance illustrating the point in the case of a southern darky who had made money as a result of the high price of cotton. He went to buy a phonograph. "How many children have you?" asked the phonograph man during the transaction. "I has eight," was the answer. "One phonograph for eight children!" exclaimed the salesman, "that will never do! You need two." And he sold them to his credulous customer.

WARLIKE BABOONS.

Social African Monkeys Resent Presence of Human Beings.

If we are to credit the testimony on the subject offered by naturalists, man is not the only animal who carries on his warfare by means of organized bands, and calls in the forces of nature to assist him. There have been witnessed in Africa fights that were conducted in an orderly a manner as if the warriors had been really men, instead of only somewhat like them in form, i.e., baboons.

One naturalist was stoned out of a pass in a very few minutes by these creatures, who sprang upon ledges and stones, looked down for a few moments on the valley, growling, snarling and screaming, and then began to roll down stones with so much vigor and adroitness that the intruders took to flight. The baboons evidently knew the value of co-operation, for the naturalist saw two of them combine their efforts in order to set a particularly heavy stone rolling. One monkey, bent on making the most of his missile, was seen to carry a stone up a tree, that he might hurl it with greater force.

Once, while some baboons were crossing a valley, they were attacked by dogs, and, as is usual during a march, the females and young were in the centre, the males heading the column and bringing up the rear. As the dogs rushed upon them the males turned and faced their enemies, growling, beating the ground with their hands and opening their mouths wide, so as to show their glittering teeth. They looked so fierce and malignant that the dogs—Arab greyhounds, accustomed to fight successfully with hyenas and other beasts of prey—shrank back. By the time they had been encouraged to renew the attack, the whole herd had made their way, covered by rear guards, to the rocks, one six-months-old monkey excepted.

This little monkey sat on a rock surrounded by the dogs; but he was not long left in his perilous position. An old baboon stepped from the cliff near by, advanced toward the dogs, keeping them in check by threatening gestures and sounds, picked up the baby monkey, and carried it to a place of safety on the cliff, while the whole crowd of baboons watched the act of heroism and shouted their battle cry.

How Foy Met Hitchcock.

Shortly after Raymond Hitchcock made his first big hit in New York, Eddie Foy, who was also playing in town, happened to be passing Daly's Theatre, and paused to look at the pictures of Hitchcock and his company that adorned the entrance. Near the pictures was a billboard covered with laudatory extracts from newspaper critics of the show.

When Foy had moodily read to the bottom of the list he turned to an unobtrusive young man who had been watching him out of the corner of his eye.

"Say, have you seen this show?" he asked.

"Sure," replied the young man.

"Any good? How's this guy Hitchcock, anyhow?"

"Any good?" repeated the young man, pityingly. "Why, say, he's the best in the business. He's got all these other would-be side-ticklers lashed to the mast. He's a scream. Never laughed so much at any one in all my life."

"Is he as good as Foy?" ventured Foy, hopefully.

"As good as Foy!" The young man's scorn was superb. "Why, this Hitchcock has got that Foy person looking like gloom. They're not in the same class. Hitchcock's funny. A man with feelings can't compare them. I'm sorry you asked me. I feel so strongly about it."

Eddie looked at him very sternly, and then, in the hollow tones of a tragedian, he said:

"I am Foy."

"I know you are," said the young man, cheerfully. "I'm Hitchcock!"

Whale Oil in Butter.

The Norwegian Government has recently arranged to import about 16 tons of butter per week from Denmark at a price of $1 per pound. This is to be mixed with margarine made from whale oil and will be distributed by the Government.

The kerosene and gasoline situation is acute in Norway. There is no oil for lighting private houses, and the signal lights for railroads and ships are much curtailed; even some of the lighthouses are being discontinued. A large number of thrashing machines and motor ploughs are expected to arrive from the United States this spring, but they can not be used unless some new supplies of petroleum and benzine can be obtained.

Poet and Politician.

Recently elected a director of the Northeastern Railway Co., England, Viscount Grey of Fallodon, is a man of great personal charm. He hates swank and often displays an amiability which can even tolerate a bore. He is said to be the most cordial host that ever welcomed a guest. A mystic and a poet at heart—he has been accused of writing clever verse under a nom de plume—he is a politician by command and duty, for it was the late Mr. Gladstone who insisted that with such brains he owed it to his country to busy himself with affairs of state. Formerly he indulged in championship form at lawn tennis; now he is the leading exponent of fly-fishing in England.

Camouflage.

"Talking about camouflage," said a detective in a lecture on disguises, "I heard a good camouflage story the other day. A colonel said to one of his men on the Western front: 'Griffiths, have you had my dug-out camouflaged?' 'Yes, sir,' said Griffiths. 'I saw to it myself, sir. We've made it look exactly like a concealed six-inch gun.'"

Fuel in Paris.

In Paris fuel is so scarce the people are buying wood by the pound, there being no coal to be had.