

# An Interesting Talk on the National Parks of Canada

The lectures and pictures of the Canadian National Parks given by Mr. D. W. Johnson of the National Parks Branch of the Department of the Interior, Ottawa, in the Lyric Theatre Wednesday, May 9th, were not only interesting but highly instructive.

"I have come to remind you of the wonderful playgrounds right at your own front door," said the speaker. "They are your own playgrounds set aside by act of parliament for your use, benefit, and pleasure. Do you realize what these parks mean to you and Canada? They are not only the greatest recreation grounds in the world, but they are also one of the finest assets you possess, not only from a national standpoint, but also from a financial standpoint. In Banff National Park, in Jasper Park in the north, in Waterton Lakes Park in the south and in Yoho Glacier and Revelstoke Parks in British Columbia, you have an heritage that contains grander, vaster and more glorious scenic beauties than Switzerland with its Alps. Great explorers and travellers like Lord Bryce, Professors Cojeras, Sir James Otram, Professor Wilcox, and many others have stated in books, speeches, and other writings that in your National Parks there are scenes that cannot be duplicated anywhere in the world. All these scenic features have been opened up by scenic roads and trails, and in Banff Park, and in fact in all the Parks, most wonderful scenes and flowers await the tourist and Canadian. See your own Canada first, and best of all see and play in your own playgrounds that lie right at your own front door—easy of access by rail and beautiful auto roads."

Continuing, the speaker said: "Have you realized just what an asset these wonderful Parks of yours are, and to Canada, and particularly to the Province of Alberta? France, Switzerland, Italy, and the New England States, clearly realize the value of their scenic features and they advertised them to the world. What was the consequence? Thousands of tourists came from all points to see, live, and play in in these countries. The annual revenue of these countries purely from the tourist traffic standpoint was astounding. France, until the outbreak of war, actually produced \$500,000,000 for its tourist traffic; Switzerland, \$150,000,000; Italy, \$100,000,000; Maine, - \$40,000,000; New England States, \$100,000,000; that is, they sold their scenic wares and added that much to the wealth of their country. We Canadians have scenic features equal, if not grander, to the nations just mentioned, and just the same as they did, we are advertising our wares to the world with good results. For the tourist traffic of Canada in 1915 actually amounted to \$50,000,000. Banff Park alone actually had 321,000 tourists within its gates during the last five years who actually left and expended in Canada \$25,000,000. Does this not mean much to Canada? Are the National Parks not of value to the people? They will produce in time a crop as great as the agricultural industry, as our mines and forests, and therefore, purely from a monetary side, do and will occupy a very important place in the nation's growth."

"We now have 58 miles of the great auto road built into Banff and beyond," said the speaker. "This gives the people of this province one of the finest auto scenic routes in America. In Banff Park, and in Waterton Lakes Park in the south, both easy of access by automobile, there have been reservations made whereon tourists and others who do so desire may pitch their tents and live during their stay in the Parks, if they do not wish to patronize the hotels. There they can bring their supplies, or if they wish, purchase them from the merchants of the Park, and live and spend their holidays just as cheaply as though they were living in their own home towns. 'Get the Park habit.' See your own Canada first, and best of all, come and see the wonders and glories of your own beautiful Parks, and in playing in them, get into your hearts and souls a greater love for your own province and Canada," concluded the speaker.

The Parks Lecturer will speak again in Red Deer, and date will be announced later.