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The Pleasures and Benefits of Travel

PEOPLE TRAVEL because they want to go somewhere else, to see something different, to have an experience in recreation, to delve into history, or to study people.

Travelling, whether to absorb the sun on a Caribbean beach or to examine antiquities on another continent, is mind-broadening.

To cruise the Trans-Canada Highway is to experience contact with many cultures, many ways of life, and to enjoy scenery of lake, prairie and mountain unsurpassed anywhere else.

To hike, motor or camp in one's own province, or to cross the boundary into an adjoining province, is to experience the thrill of seeing new places and new ways of doing things.

To join a tourist sight-seeing bus for a trip through a city — even a city where one's home is — is to find beauty spots, historical sites and eye-opening glimpses of life one did not know were there.

Travel is relatively easy in an affluent society. Higher incomes, paid holidays, leisure, pension schemes, new plans of savings accounts at higher interest rates, and greater facility in using credit cards and credit: all these combine to make a travelling vacation easy to come by.

There is nothing new about travelling for pleasure. Tourists visited the pyramids in Egypt, then 3,000 years old, in the time of the writer Herodotus, who was born in 484 B.C. Tourism is not new, but newly easy, and it has become one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world.

People are taking advantage of the recently-gained ability to travel swiftly from any part of the world to any other. There were 102 passengers on the "Mayflower". They came from Europe to see America, and their voyage took more than two months. Today, hundreds of jet aircraft carry up to nearly 500 passengers at a time from America to see Europe and they make the crossing in 6 hours.

Young people know the ease with which journeys can be made. They grow up with a desire and the opportunity to travel to an extent unparalleled by any previous generation. They find it exciting to go to

far-away places on a shoe-string. They hike from hostel to hostel, or are given car lifts by kind drivers.

Moving around is not the complex undertaking it was when their grandparents were young. For example, the relaxing of fuss about clothes means that a tote bag will substitute for a trunk.

Hostelling provides them with an attractive world travel service. The Canadian Youth Hostels Association arranges five- to eight-week tours in Europe. The Canadian hostels have sleeping quarters, a recreation room and a kitchen. They supply blankets, pillows, cooking utensils and cleaning equipment. The service is self-service.

World's greatest travellers

Canadians are, on a per capita basis, the world's greatest travellers, but many of them have never visited in any province but the one in which they live. This situation is improving steadily as people realize that the attractions that bring millions of visitors to this country are here for Canadians too.

The pleasures, the cultural and the recreational advantages of travel are becoming available to more and more people in Canada. All across the country they are invited to enjoy parks, forts, restored villages, exciting caves, the Badlands where dinosaur skeletons are dug up, world-famed mountains, waterfalls, lakes and scenery.

Since 1968, ten new national parks have been opened, bringing the total to nearly 50,000 square miles. The Canadian Government Travel Bureau, Ottawa, publishes a booklet called *Something Different in Canada*. It lists sights and attractions in every province — 36 pages of them.

Canadians should be interested in expanding tourist services that will be attractive to visitors from abroad. Here is a way to bring foreign money into the country without using up natural resources.

Every community, however small, can benefit by persuading tourists to visit it. If a town or a village can attract two dozen more tourists a day throughout the year, that will be economically comparable to

acquiring a new manufacturing industry with an annual payroll of \$100,000.

There are, of course, hospitality duties to be done. When a tourist crosses a border, wide-eyed in anticipation of adventure and pleasure, he has his pen poised to sign travellers cheques, but he wants to be sure that he gets value.

People who cater to tourists, and that includes stores as well as hotels and motels, should know their jobs so as to give efficient service; they should know their environment so as to help tourists to find entertainment, culture, history, or whatever they are specially interested in; they should go out of their way to give smiling help.

Courtesy and thoughtful personal help above and beyond the techniques of catering to travellers' needs are individual good qualities that contribute mightily toward enhancing the image of Canada as a nice place to visit.

Embarrassment of riches

One of the most exciting things about the world is its variety. Everything is offered that is necessary to enable human beings to avoid monotony and boredom.

This variety has an embarrassing feature for the would-be traveller, because the more there is to select from, the more difficult it is to choose. He has to make sure that he knows clearly what he wishes to obtain through travel. Some people like climbing mountains or scuba diving or surfing; others prefer less strenuous physical experiences and would like to visit a casino, examine ancient ruins, or tour art galleries.

Vacations are looked upon as the time for recreation, and recreation means to revive, to refresh, to reanimate and to delight.

The person is cheating himself of the benefit of travel if he plays truant from his job and then chides himself for not being at work. The recreation he chooses must be interesting enough to hold his attention.

Pleasures diminish unless they are varied, and for variety we must move. It is unrewarding, as the proverb tells us, to row a boat with one oar in the water and the other on land.

Peace of mind

Travel is prescribed for ills of both the body and the mind, because new sights and new ideas divert you from old emotions. When you travel for rest or convalescence after illness, set out with the idea of making time an annoyance to be brushed aside like a nagging fly. Let go your worries, your tensions, your conflicts and your disappointments.

How free you are when travelling! Free because the people you meet know nothing about your affairs: you are incognito. At home you are John Doe, brick-layer or salesman, living on Crumbling Street, driving a four-year-old car, a charter member of the Old

Tyme Service Club doing civic good turns, a member of the Bridgeside Church. You are tabbed, ticketed and pigeon-holed. But here, on the beach at a resort in the Bahamas, or strolling a street of whitewashed houses in the Canary Islands, or sitting on one of the marble blocks outside the Senate in the Roman Forum — perhaps the very rostrum from which Mark Anthony made his oration — here you are a person, John Doe, world citizen.

Some people seek solitude. Sitting on a hill alone is to some healthy-minded men and women a cure for worry, a breeder of peace, and a source of inspiration. "If anyone hates to be alone with himself", wrote R. H. Schaufler in *The Joyful Heart*, "the chances are that he has not much of any self to be alone with."

The solitude that helps is not isolation from humanity but separation from the stress and turmoil of accustomed life. From that sort of solitude one always comes back refreshed. Adam said to Eve in Milton's *Paradise Lost*: "Solitude sometimes is best society, and short retirement urges sweet return."

Search for differences

What makes travel interesting is the differences one finds. One is likely to be first shocked, and then fascinated, by the small departures from conventional patterns.

If you are going to travel in a strange country, take soundings as a sailor does when entering a strange port. Except where morals and health are concerned, the traveller will enjoy himself more who adopts the ways of the countries he visits.

Foreign customs are not the same as Canadian customs, and it is not well to make yourself a self-appointed ambassador, teacher, critic or proselytizer to change them. They have come about through age-long adaptation to the pressures of environment and the necessities of life.

It is all very well to look with indulgent eyes on your native land or province, but no one experiences the best joy in travel if his principal aim is to live precisely as he lived at home. It is a waste of time and money for a vacationer to travel to a far country and there spend his days talking about the comforts of home sweet home.

If the narrow sidewalks in some European cities annoy you, and you contrast them with Canadian sidewalks on which four or five persons may walk abreast, consider this: the narrow sidewalk in Florence leads to Giotto's Campanile, in London to the birth-place of parliamentary government, and in Paris to the Cathedral of Notre Dame.

Touching hands with history

Travel gives you the opportunity to associate for a week or two with the greatness of statesmen, warriors, scientists and pioneers through their buildings, their

monuments and their writings.

There are occasions when, wherever you walk, you set your foot on history: the Appian Way out of Rome, the Royal Mile in Edinburgh, the Chilkoot Pass into the Yukon, and Plymouth Rock in the United States of America.

The visitor will try to see not only the stone and brick but the hopes, aspirations, doubts, loves, and hates that moved those who walked here. What amused and vexed them, gladdened and saddened them?

As the guide tells you that here is the beach on which Columbus first landed in the Caribbean, or here is the pass in the Alps through which Hannibal led his elephants to invade Italy, let your imagination roam. See the great adventurer pushing the prow of his little ship into the lonely sand where thousands now frolic; people the mountain pass with 50,000 soldiers and the elephants. It is by pictures reflected in the imagination that we realize ourselves as part and parcel of the long reach of history.

Myths are a sort of history. Tales that seem strange today had their origin in events of the past. Many colourful stories survive in every country. It does not matter that today's scholarship says that they have no basis. They represent beliefs, hopes and fears that have coloured the culture of the people. What does it profit anyone to destroy the exciting legend of Helen of Troy by lowering the Trojan war to the level of a minor tribal war? Certainly not the holiday-maker pacing the walls where Hector walked.

Beauty has its big place in a vacation. On whatever continent you travel you are surrounded by sights about which poets have had many things to tell.

When you gaze upon a beautiful scene on an ocean beach or from a mountain top, make the most of the occasion, for here is the experience of a moment of time that may give a new aspect to your life.

It is easy to travel

If you were wealthy in the 18th century you travelled in your own carriage, with running footmen to prop you up at dangerous places in the road. Today, the travel agents and their representatives abroad are constantly by your side to make your journey pleasant.

The first thing is to know where you are going and why you want to be there. The explorers did not fumble around an ocean in the hope of hitting a continent.

Do some reading about your destination. If you go to a place cold, without having found out what to look for, whether it be Crossroads, Quebec or Paris, France, you will fail dismally to find anything memorable. There is no more sense in travelling with an empty mind than with an empty purse.

Annual festivals or special events should be noted and your vacation arranged so that you take in one or more. Examples are: the Gaelic Mod and the

Antigonish Highland Games in Nova Scotia, the Quebec Winter Carnival, the Calgary Stampede, the Canadian National Exhibition, and Indian Days at Banff. There are regattas, carnivals and rodeos, music and drama festivals, concerts under the stars, sportsmen's weeks, and blossom weeks. Every country has its own specialties, like the Joust of the Saracen at Arezzo, Italy, and the Mardi Gras carnival in New Orleans, U.S.A.

There is an important supplementary value to planning so as to take in noteworthy events: you have something special to talk about when you return home.

Making plans

After imagining the sort of journey you want, you come down to the hard-headed planning. The fact that you are so eager to make the best of every day requires you to plan your main activities in advance. You must be selective. Do not feel compelled to visit a place that has nothing of interest to you, even if it has four stars or a whole galaxy of stars opposite it in the guide book.

You need a master plan for the whole operation, with smaller, more flexible, plans for its parts. A tiny investment in planning will make the journey smoother, save hours of mental effort, avert many troubles, and leave you carefree to enjoy yourself. Allow everyone participating in the holiday as much voice as possible in the planning of it.

You will be compelled by newly developing circumstances to modify your plans. Some will have to be re-edited in the light of changed conditions or of things you learn. Chatting in the hotel with other tourists may alert you to attractions of which you did not know.

Something is bound to go wrong once in a while, but even if a speck of hardship should intrude upon a holiday it can be taken with calmness. People facing hard times together seem to get some fun out of it. When a strike paralyzed meal service on the Orient Express, the passengers seemed to enjoy the experience. The most nimble leaped from the train at station stops, bought up everything edible from the food barrows, and shared the booty.

Making things easy

The person who is accustomed to bearing a load of decision-making at home hopes to be relieved of it when he goes on holiday. He is willing to leave the details to the travel agent and his representatives.

There is a growing demand for pre-packaged tours offering well-organized trips at reasonable cost. To many persons these make the difference between a dream and a nightmare.

When you book through a travel agent for a pre-packaged tour you know for certain what the trip will cost you; you wash your hands of all the bother of lining up for tickets, planning your itinerary in detail, booking hotel rooms, getting from the airport or the

dock or station to your hotel: in some cases even tipping is taken care of by the agency.

Cost is the first item to be considered by most people. Many believe it is better to see other places and other lands on a small budget rather than never to leave their own cramped environment, but that is something for the individual to decide.

The distance one may go and the style in which one lives are dictated by the availability of funds to pay the way, but this is a decreasing handicap. New resources have been opened for payment, new attractions to save in advance are offered, and ways to travel now and pay later are available.

Everyone will wish to be as provident as is consistent with his resources and his having a good time. A couple can spend two weeks in a resort in the Barbados or Jamaica in the spring for an outlay of about \$600, covering air transportation, transportation to an hotel, a luxury room, and many fringe benefits. A one-week stay at Monte Carlo, including these same services, can be enjoyed for about \$700 per couple.

For those who seek a really rugged holiday, a news item in the *Montreal Star* in October reported that the cost of a three-week expedition to the Mount Everest base camp, at 19,000 feet altitude, is less than \$1,000, including air fare from New York to Delhi and light airplane to Kathmandu.

To rest and recreate is not necessarily to cease all activity. To go for a walk is rest from a desk or work-bench job. As to how far to walk, here is the opinion of John Ruskin, written before the days of motor cars and airplanes: "To any person who has all his senses about him, a quiet walk along not more than ten or twelve miles of road a day is the most amusing of all travelling."

There are places like Delphi in Greece and the provincial and national parks in Canada where the traveller is tempted to make his walk as long as possible, because there are new sights or old memories at every turn.

Travelling by ship has many values: rest, quiet, peace, and the opportunity to read favourite books without a sense of being rushed or of stealing time from something you should be doing. Travel on or with a donkey was described amusingly by Robert Louis Stevenson in 1879. People who seek a holiday free from the discipline of reaching hotels and motels at specified hours are turning increasingly to trailers, tent trailers, and camper units.

About getting ideas

Besides recreating the body, a holiday can enliven the mind, Wilferd A. Peterson, author of *The Art of Living*, reminds us that Newton was loafing under an apple tree when he saw an apple fall and got the gravitation idea; James Watt was loafing in the kitchen when the kettle boiled and he got the idea of the steam engine; Galileo was letting his mind wander

from the sermon while he watched the lamp swinging in the cathedral at Pisa and developed the pendulum principle.

The person who travels with his mind relaxed from the narrow circle of his daily pursuits is well on the way to thinking up new ideas and developing ideas that have been buried in his mind under the load of daily work.

Travel contributes to our largeness of view and our breadth of mental vision, and gives us true perspective. By shifting our point of view we learn that we are members of a world society of human beings of all nations, colours and creeds.

All this is the fruit of the habit of observation. An ideal vacation will store your mind with thoughts to be imaginative about in future months and years, if you are alert for the little out of the ordinary things and incidents, like the chance to talk with a man in Ireland who is driving an ox in a two-shafted cart laden with turf. Take note of the graces of the people as well as of the grandeur of their monuments. On the rickety bus that carries people from Florence to the ancient Roman amphitheatre on the hill at Fiesole, a teen-age girl gave up her seat to an elderly woman who had the maple leaf brooch on her jacket.

Anticipate happiness

To quote as authority one of Canada's best-loved characters, Anne of Green Gables: "Looking forward to things is half the pleasure of them."

This requires imagination, one of the necessities of human life. Napoleon, one of the most ardent realists, said: "The defect of our modern institutions is that they do not speak to the imagination." It was imagination that first suggested to you the possibility of getting away from everyday life to see and experience something new. It will be imagination that will make the holiday memorable.

But one has to get rolling. Inertia, our school books told us, is that quality in virtue of which a piece of matter will not move from a position of rest until a force acts upon it. Anticipation should stimulate as well as brighten effort.

All around is an horizon beckoning. Whatever path you take away from your front door leads, like those from the Golden Milestone in the Roman Forum, to the ends of the earth. The World is full of varied things that are beautiful, dramatic, comic, or bizarre; surprising things to attract every sort of person. To pass them up would be to forego one of the most delightful benefits that life has to offer.

You will come back from your dream holiday measuring it not in hours or in miles travelled, but in its happiness-value. You will have satisfied your intellectual curiosity far from the limitations of textbooks and school curricula; you will have seen many aspects of life, passion, beauty and drama; you will have in your mind the making of stories, poems, paintings and music, as well as facts and theories.