

PARKS THE MECCAS OF THE AUTOMOBILE TOURISTS
*Scene of the public camping ground in Mount Rainier National
Park, visited annually by thousands*

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

A Glance Backward at **NATIONAL PARK DEVELOPMENT**

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AS THE tenth anniversary of the organization of the National Park Service passes into history it is interesting to pause and look back at the achievements of the last decade. Experiments, new developments, a few temporary discouragements, all go to make up the last ten years of national park history. But through it all is progress, and the increasing use of the parks by the people of the United States.

It was in August, 1916, that Congress passed the organic act by which the National Park Service was created, but not until the following Spring were funds made available for the actual organization of the new bureau, which was "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein

and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

In 1915 there were fourteen national parks, and eighteen national monuments. During the 1915 travel year 334,799 visitors to the parks were recorded.

Since that time several national parks have been created, bringing the total number to nineteen, and Congressional authority has been given to the creation of four additional parks under certain conditions. The total number of national monuments administered by the Interior Department is now thirty-two. To these reservations, during the 1926 travel year, came a total of 2,314,905 visitors, a gain of five hundred per cent over the re-



NATURE HIKES ARE POPULAR IN THE PARKS
A group of Nature and outdoor lovers on the trail in Mount Rainier National Park

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corded travel in the playground areas eleven years ago.

The matter of supplying accommodations of various types to park visitors is no small problem. Experience and careful study have proved that the most practicable method of handling the public utilities in the national parks is to permit private capital under long-term franchise, to furnish the necessary hotel, lodge, and transportation accommodations.

Although private capital goes into these enterprises, they are conducted under strict Government supervision and rate control. In the case of actual physical construction, our landscape engineers cooperate with the operators in studying plans and selecting locations so that none of the structures will be inharmonious with its surroundings, or out of place in a national park. Here, too, difficulties have been encountered as in several of the older parks structures were erected before the organization of the Service which were not at all in keeping with the ideas of the landscape engineers or the present park administrations. It has taken many years to remove some of these eyesores, but they are being gradually cleaned up.

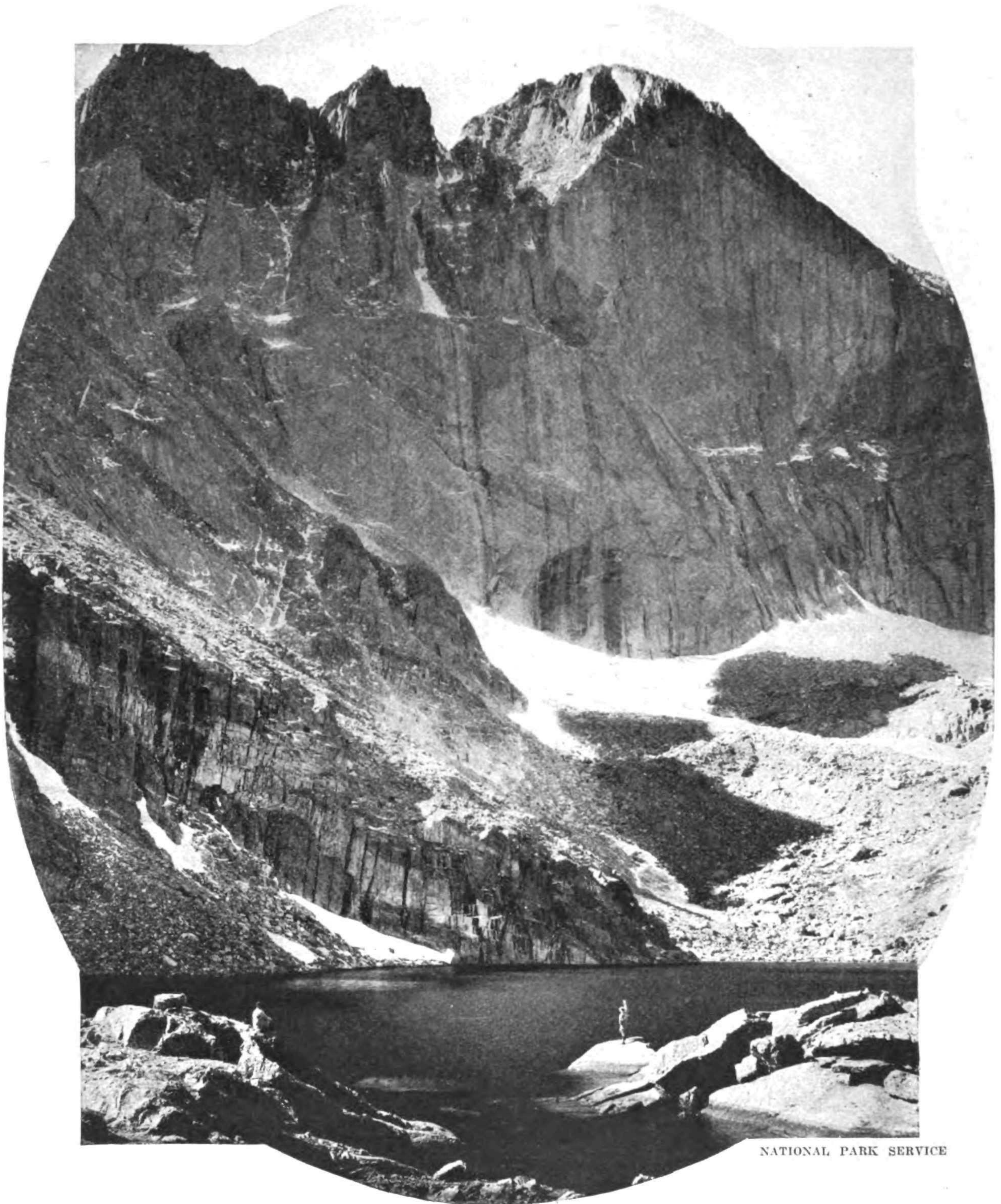
With the increase of motoring throughout the country, the number of automobilists entering the parks greatly increased, and in an effort to accommodate them roads have been improved and where necessary new roads constructed to the features of outstanding interest. It is not the purpose of the National Park Service to gridiron the parks with highways. Just the reverse is the case; the greater part of the larger parks will always remain wilderness areas, reached only by trail, either on foot or horseback. It is proposed, however, to have such roads as are available brought to the highest standards.

One of the big problems that has faced the National Park Service is the adjustment of park boundaries. At

the time some of these reservations were established, back in the Nineteenth century, definite surveys of the areas had not been made, and boundaries were arbitrarily set, without regard to natural topographic features, such as rivers and mountain ranges. Lack of natural boundary lines often complicated administration of the park, and recently several boundary revisions have been made by Congress to rectify this condition. In other cases scenic areas of major importance, such as the Teton Mountains south of the Yellowstone, were left out of the park at the time of creation through lack of complete information regarding them and bills to incorporate such lands have been introduced in Congress. No park boundary, of course, can be changed except by act of Congress.

It happens that in many cases lands desirable for inclusion fall within adjacent national forests. In order that there might be no conflict between the interests of the two classes of reservations, two years ago the President's Committee on Outdoor Recreation appointed a committee to study the question of adjusting park boundaries when national forest lands were involved. Study was made on the ground by this committee of several proposed boundary changes, and acting upon its recommendations the Sixty-ninth Congress passed laws changing the boundaries of four national parks. These were the Grand Canyon, Mount Rainier, Sequoia, and Rocky Mountain.

The committee also recommended the enlargement of Yellowstone National Park to include the Teton Mountains and the headwaters of the Upper Yellowstone River. This project, however, failed of success because of the efforts of Idaho irrigation interests to secure, in the bill making the addition, the elimination of the Bechler



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MERE MAN AND THE MIGHTY MOUNTAIN
*Long's Peak in the Rocky Mountain National Park as viewed from
 Chasm Lake*

River section of the park. This is a scenic portion of the Yellowstone and meets the requirements of national-park status. Its elimination from the park is strongly opposed by the National Park Service.

Misapprehension seems to exist in the minds of some people regarding the withdrawal of lands from definite economic use and their preservation as national parks. The total area of the national parks is only 11,804 square miles, while the total area of the United States is

2,056,676 square miles. Slightly more than one-half of one per cent of our country, containing its most magnificent scenery, is not too much to set aside for perpetual preservation, to serve as bird and animal sanctuaries and to preserve for all time bits of the native wilderness as it existed at the time our forefathers came to America.

There seems to exist in some minds an idea that in order to preserve the beauty of the national parks, economic developments, which supply the necessities of life,

are thwarted. Such is not the case. It is true that irrigation or power interests would reap private benefit were they permitted to develop park waters, and that local communities might temporarily benefit by such development. The country at large, however, would suffer irreparable loss were its scenic riches given over to commercial use. The same economic developments can be secured by using waters outside the parks even though it could not be used so cheaply. It is being gradually realized that the national parks play an important part in protecting the watersheds of streams important for economic use, including many commercial developments and the protection of farm lands from drought. Many localities so recognize the value of national parks that they are urging the inclusion in the system of areas that do not measure up to national park standards.

Another land problem which has caused some difficulty in administering the national parks to the best advantage has been the existence of private lands within their exterior boundaries. With the exception of the Yellowstone National Park and Hot Springs, which were created before any of the lands desired for original inclusion had been settled, practically all of the national parks contain private lands. Whenever bona fide private holdings exist within the park area at the time of the park's creation, they are always protected, as private lands within these reservations are as much the property of their owners as is land elsewhere. The Government can not, and does not wish to take it from them or regulate its use so long as such use is not contrary to national or State laws.

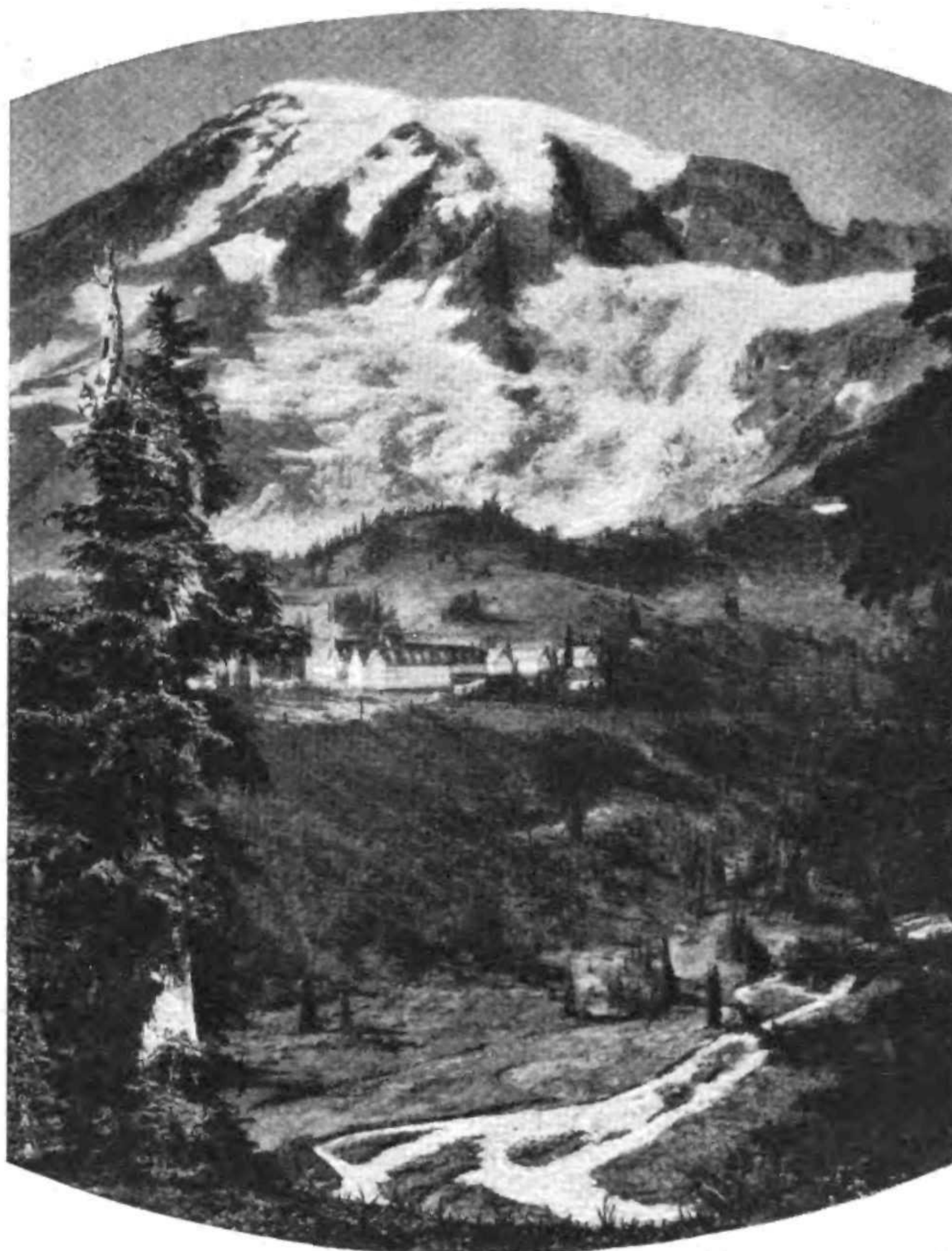
During the twelve years that I have been connected with the administration of the national park system, continued efforts have been made to obtain private holdings within park boundaries for donation to the United States. Private contributions amounting to \$150,000 have been secured to purchase the magnificent stands of *Sequoia gigantea* and other private holdings in Sequoia National Park. These were turned over to the United States to be added to the park. The only appropriation made by Congress to purchase lands for park purposes until this past year was in 1916, when an appropriation of \$50,000 was supplemented by \$20,000 subscribed through the National Geographic Society to purchase an important stand of trees in the Giant Forest of Sequoia Park. This year, however, Congress recognized the importance of consolidating park lands by the

elimination of private holdings, and appropriated \$50,000 for the purchase of privately owned lands within the boundaries of any national park, to be expended only when matched by equal amounts by donation from other sources for the same purposes. This I consider one of the most constructive pieces of national park legislation that has been passed in recent years.

In some cases where private holdings along main roads or in places of strategic interest in the parks contained valuable lumber which the owner planned to cut, it has been possible to secure this land by exchanging for it timber in other portions of the park where the scars from cutting would not be so conspicuous. Congress by law has authorized such exchanges, and the parks have benefited by them. It is regrettable, of course, that any one should have the right to cut timber in any national park, but when this timber is private property there is no way of preventing its owners cutting it except by securing it through exchange or by purchase through donation or the appropriation of Federal funds. It would be a worthy act, and a patri-

otic one, if those people who are sincerely worried over the cutting of timber on private lands in the parks would devote their efforts to raising the necessary funds to purchase the lands and donate them for park purposes.

It is unfortunate that our country has not yet fully awakened to the economic importance of our national parks. Their value lies, not in exploiting the lakes and rivers for the sudden enrichment of a few individuals or corporations, or even a neighboring locality which constitutes but small portion of the national domain. It consists not in cutting a few forests, so as to get an immediate supply of lumber which would be ridiculously small when compared with the output from the national forests and from private lands. Rather, the economic value of the national parks lies in offering to American travelers objects of such general scenic interest as to lead them to see and explore their own country first, thus keeping at home millions of dollars which would otherwise be spent abroad, and which spent in the United States in travel brings increased taxes into the Federal Treasury, as well as increased prosperity to the various industries serving the public in and en route to the park, and to the neighboring communities. Foreign countries long ago capitalized their national scenery. The United States can do the same, by protecting parks from commercialization and providing facilities.



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PARK PLAYGROUND OF THE NORTHWEST

Paradise Inn in Rainier National Park with the majestic peak in the background