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The Ascent of Mount Lefroy, and Other Climbs in the Rocky Mountains.

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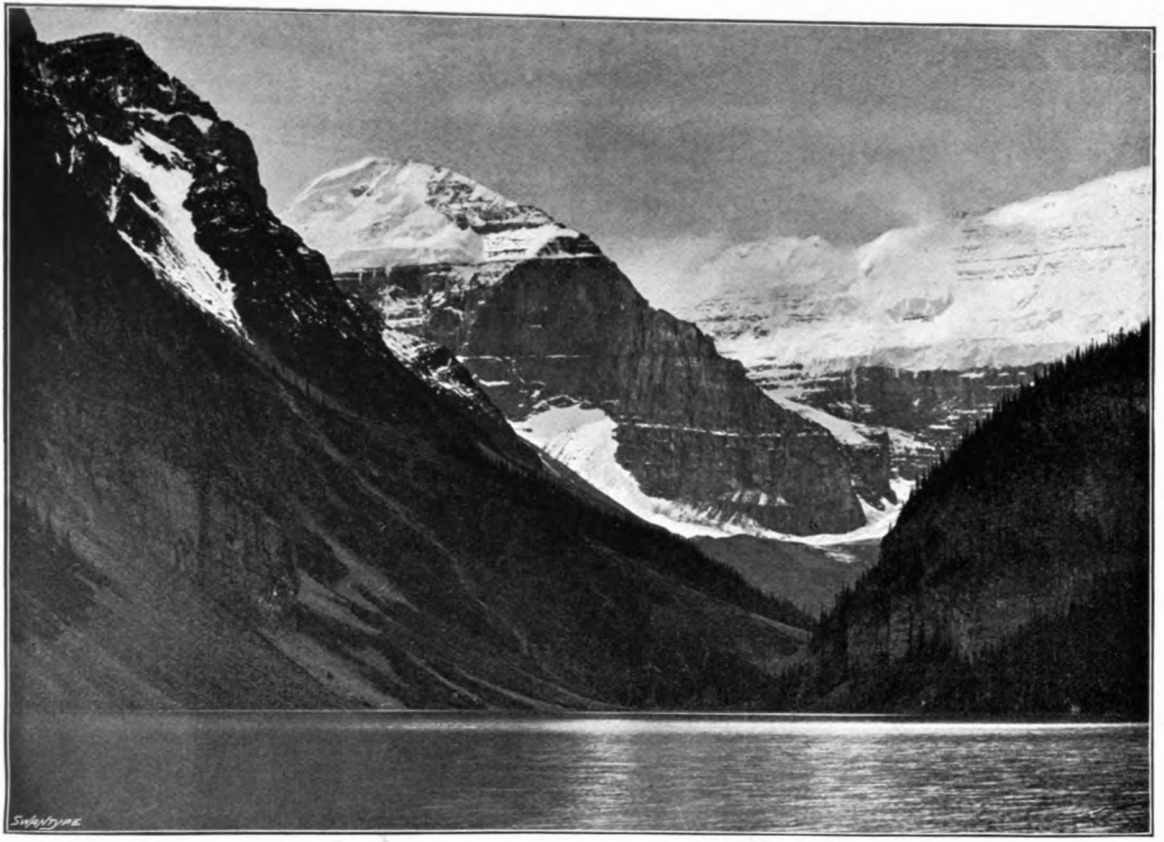
MY trip last year to the Rocky Mountains might be called a sentimental journey. It was made in fulfilment of a promise to attack Mt. Lefroy in company with my friend Philip Abbot, who, alas! perished on the mountain at the very time I was making plans for our expedition in the following year. A life of more than ordinary fulness and a friendship of peculiar attractiveness to me were cut short in that fatality. In Philip Abbot high intellectual attainments were combined with a singular nobility of character. Simple, courageous, a keen lover of nature, no wonder such a man delighted in the mountains. After a successful season in Switzerland, with Peter Sarbach as guide, Abbot found the scrambles of the Apallachian Club in the White Mountains too tame, and for two or three years had led a party of its members in pioneering climbs among the Canadian Rockies, of which he sent me glowing accounts. His fall near the summit of Mt. Lefroy (the first fatal accident in American mountaineering) cast a gloom over the Club, and it seemed not improbable that the loss of its most active member would lead the Club to renounce its yearly exploration in the West. Luckily wiser counsels prevailed. To clear up the mystery of his fall, and to complete if possible the attack he had planned, were matters of interest to his family and friends. I undertook to bring a party from England, while one of his companions on the fatal day, Mr. Charles Thompson, of Chicago, himself anxious to renew the assault, spared no pains to make the expedition a success.

On receiving the detailed accounts of Abbot's last expedition, it seemed advisable to make our party as strong as possible. I therefore resolved to take with me Peter Sarbach, of St. Niklaus (who had been my guide in Switzerland for some years), and looked round for some suitable climbing companion. It is not an altogether easy matter to make up a new climbing party for so distant an expedition, and even the added attractions of the British Association Meeting at Toronto failed to permanently entice some of those in whose eyes Science and snowfields form a judicious blend. For some months hope and despair alternated, but at length I was fortunate enough to enlist Dr. Norman Collie, who only bargained that he should take over Sarbach to his own use when I returned east to Toronto.

The American continent has not yet superseded the effete countries of Europe in articles connected with the climber's craft. Collie and I spent some serious hours over lists of impedimenta and eatables. Tents, sleeping bags, with spare ropes, nails and ice-axes, were put in hand, and condensed soups and delicacies were ordered from Silver. Scientific instruments took longer to settle. Collie has invented a very pretty (and effective) barometer which folds into his pocket. I rather fancy a sextant. These instruments headed our respective lists. Our American friends undertook to provide a plane table, while a chronometer, telescope, aneroids and compasses were included in our kit. Then came the 'camera' question. Collie had ordered a new one, a dainty thing of aluminium and cunning hinges and foldable qualities. Mine is bulky and feels (to me) uncommonly heavy. For the good of the expedition I struck mine off the list.

Sarbach spent three days with me in Manchester before sailing, and I passed some anxious hours when he went out, for skill in guiding others above the snow-line has not conferred on him the power of locating himself in a large city. In the end, however, he never failed to turn up, full of admiration for civilisation in the shape of shop-windows and more particularly of the fireworks at Belle-Vue Gardens.

On July 24 Sarbach and I left the train at Glacier House in the Selkirk Mountains, after sixteen days' journey. We had been joined that morning by Professors Fay and Michael of Tuft's College, and Messrs. Van Derlip and Noyes, members of the American climbing-party. We found most comfortable quarters at the hotel, which is, of course, owned and managed, like everything else out West, by the Canadian Pacific Railway Here we spent a very delightful week, making



Messrs. Notman, Montreal, photo. *Swan Electric Engraving Company.*

MOUNT LEFROY, FROM LAKE LOUISE.

acquaintance with the Selkirk Mountains in a leisurely and rather distant way. For twenty-three hours out of the twenty-four Glacier House is a quiet Alpine chalet. Once a day the hotel verandah—*i.e.* the station platform—is invaded by a motley crowd from East and West. Worn and travel-stained, consumed with hunger and thirst, this crowd appeared to be always consumed by a still greater curiosity. The fame of our expedition had been noised abroad, and it was rumoured that a party of Swiss guides had been imported by the Government or the C.P.R. (the same thing) for the benefit of the passengers. Once or twice this midday horde had possession of Glacier House when we were going or coming from an expedition. 'Off to Klondike?' was its usual greeting on observing our accoutrements, but the better-informed 'guessed' we were the Swiss guides, and would not permit such *rarœ aves* to escape without careful examination. I shall long preserve a mental picture of a distinguished member of this club the first day he appeared among us on the platform—newly shod, well greaved, very beautiful. The ladies spied him. Even his almost Indian *sang-froid* could not stand up against the curiosity of these travelling Eves. Next moment his person reclined in a low chair, the centre of an admiring circle, while two fair dames, each supporting on high one of his neatly bandaged legs, tested with dainty fingers the sharpness of his Mummery screws.

Two small paths led from the hotel—one to Marion Lake on a ledge of Mt. Abbott, the other to the foot of the Illecellewaet Glacier. In every other direction a road had to be forced through the primeval forest, and I was soon initiated into the mysteries of following a blazed trail, which Mr. Green has described with no less fidelity than force in his delightful book. My American friends were here in their element. They swung themselves along by the pine-boughs with the practised ease of the 'Bandar-log' of another jungle. Sarbach and I toiled painfully behind. If by a desperate effort we followed them close our eyes were swished by the resilient boughs released by the man in front; if we kept a respectful distance we lost the trail with surprising rapidity. Meanwhile the mosquitoes improved the shining hour, until, hot and bruised, out of breath and out of temper, we emerged into the upper air and our miseries were over.

Between the two great glaciers, whose waters unite near Glacier House—the Illecellewaet and the Asulkan—a ridge of

rock forms an excellent observatory, sufficiently high to be above mosquitoes and forest, and yet low enough to be an easy walk when a path is cut to it. On 'Glacier Crest,' the future Gorner Grat of the Selkirks, we sat and discussed our luncheon and our plans. Opposite to us rose the sharp peak of Sir Donald, with Uto and Eagle and Avalanche on its left. To the N. the Hermit Range closed in the valley with a line of rocky teeth. These peaks would necessitate camping out, and other premature hardships—they were evidently 'not for us.'

To the S. the high snowfield hid the Dawson range, but to the W., across the Asulkan glacier, and within easy reach of the hotel, a long broken rampart of rock and snow attracted our closer attention. One rounded parapet of rock (which had been christened the 'Dome') presented a sheer cliff on the face turned towards us. This cliff looked quite inaccessible, except at one point, where a sharp arête of snow leant against the mountain near its northern end. A little to the right of the arête the sky-line was notched, and two shaded lines indicated cracks in the cliffs leading upwards to the notch. The sun was off the eastern face, and we could not distinguish with the glass whether it would be possible to traverse from the arête to the nearest chimney, or indeed whether the chimney afforded a practicable route to the notch. Still it looked promising, and as no one had yet attempted this ascent, we resolved to try the 'arête and notch route.' At 3.30 A.M. on July 27 we filed out of the hotel. For an hour and a half we pushed up the Asulkan valley, through alder scrub and long grass; then we successfully bridged the stream with a pine trunk, and for a hundred yards had better going. But immediately afterwards we turned upwards into the forest, and life became a burden. I cannot describe the next two hours; I only know that as I stumbled and struggled through the wood I made solemn vows I would go on till breakfast time, but not a step further. At length the trees began to thin out, and at 7 A.M. we emerged into the air. I never remember feeling so exhausted and generally 'out of it.'

Choosing the nearest rock as a seat, I endeavoured to recover my breath, and finally made a poor attempt at breakfast. I felt more interest in the aneroid, but was disgusted to find we had only ascended 2,300 ft. from the hotel. After half an hour's rest we proceeded up the ice, and thence on to the snowfield leading to the col between the Rampart and the Dome. The change from the forest to the ice was delightful,

and I daresay the feeling that one was no longer 'out of it' had a stimulating effect. In a couple of hours I felt remarkably hungry, so we halted for a second breakfast on a patch of rocks 4,400 ft. above Glacier House. Looking upwards at the cliff which we were to attack, we could plainly see the sharp white arête end abruptly against the wall of rock; some distance on the right an unmistakable chimney led up to the notch. As the morning sun fell obliquely on the face a large shadow was thrown by the southern wall of the chimney; and the shadow was as the shadow of a man, and as we advanced, lo! the shadow of the man held in his hand a large bottle. There could be no doubt the omen was a favourable one!

From this point we turned southward to the sharp arête, mounted it, and followed it to the top. Below us, on the left, the snow fell with a beautiful sweep into a kind of bay, on the right it fell with remarkable steepness towards two enormous schrunds. As we advanced the angle of our ridge increased, and we edged over a little on to its southern slope. At 11 A.M. we stepped from the arête on to a flat rock projecting from the face and looked round for a ledge to traverse into the chimney. A few feet below us a practicable ledge was found, and we cautiously lowered ourselves and worked into the chimney. Then followed a scramble up steep but good rock, with no lack of firm hand-holds; it might have been a piece of the Riffelhorn from the glacier.

But the top of the chimney came as a surprise. As each man drew himself on to the rock which formed the base of the notch he looked down a chimney on the other side of the mountain, which fell sheer to the snowfield below. One could literally bestride the mountain at this point. The only thing at all like it that I can remember is on the Tower ridge of Ben Nevis. We had still to extricate ourselves from the notch, and this did not look so easy. One flake of rock partly separated from the mountain seemed to offer first a hand-hold and then a footing from which the wall might be scaled. But Sarbach distrusted its appearance. Balancing himself beside it, he began levering it out with his axe, and finally prized it over into the western chimney. Its empty place afforded a good ledge to stand on, but no hand-holds could be reached from it. Sarbach traversed obliquely along the face to the right, into an angle in the rock overhanging the chimney, and was soon on the top. This was the only bit where hand-hold failed and balance was required. From the top of the notch—reached at 12.30—we followed the ridge

of the mountain, except where easy traverses on the W. face saved time, and in 20 min. more were on the summit.

The altitude of the Dome, 9,800 ft. above the sea, is sufficient to give a magnificent view, not only of the Selkirks, but of the main range of the Rocky Mountains, stretching in an unbroken line of snowy peaks as far as the eye can see from S.E. to N.W. It was hard to tear ourselves from such a spot, and later on that day we regretted the hour's daylight we allowed to slip away so joyously. We made the descent by the W. face, which affords many easy traverses, and reminded me of the Schönbuhl rocks below the ridge of the Dent Blanche. We reached the snow at the highest point of the Lily Glacier, and from there made a line for home by skirting the rocky sides of the Rampart and 'Alfton,' and traversing the long ridge of Mt. Abbott. Light was failing as we began to descend Mt. Abbott, and a mistake extinguished our last chance of clearing the forest by daylight. We reached the hotel at 10.30 P.M. My experience goes to prove that tweed is not a good material for garments intended to be worn in the Selkirks at night, and that surgeon's plaister is an excellent medium for sticking the pieces together again. I have to confess that I did not attempt anything more of a serious kind in the Selkirks, but we just frivolled about and enjoyed ourselves. Nor was there any lack of pleasant guests at Glacier House to aid us in these efforts. Picnics and teas were set on foot by the ladies, with whom Sarbach was soon installed as favourite and prime minister. And, what was of high importance, our hostess, Miss Mollison, entered fully into the spirit of our plans. I have seldom sat down to a better luncheon than one which appeared from several rücksacks on the further side of the Asulkan Pass, probably crossed for the first time by ladies on this occasion. As we sat on the S. slope scanning the steep snows of Mt. Dawson and its wondrous snakelike glacier opposite us, some one pointed to fresh tracks in the snow just below us. We examined the footprints. A large bear had been that way earlier in the day.

On July 30 Collie arrived from England, and on August 1 we turned eastwards towards our rendezvous at Lake Louise, where we were to meet Thompson for our attack on Mt. Lefroy.

The beauty of Lake Louise has not been exaggerated by travellers. Its charm lies in the wonderful contrast of the near and distant view. The deep blue waters at our feet rest unruffled in an amphitheatre of pine-clad hills, which

J. N. Collie, photo. *Swan Electric Engraving Co*

LOOKING BACK FROM THE DEATH TRAP.

open out at the further end and frame a picture of sternest precipice and overhanging glacier. Right across the opening in the hills the cliffs of Lefroy and Victoria stretch in an unbroken wall of purple rock, on which scarcely a ledge exists to break the vertical height. From the highest part of the cliff on Mt. Lefroy the snow falls sheer 4,000 ft., while the lower cliffs of Mt. Victoria are crowned by a wall of ice—the edge of a glacier continually being pushed over the precipice to recruit a larger glacier which fills the valley below.

Viewed from Lake Louise Mt. Lefroy looks most formidable. The N. face itself is impregnable, and those who have explored its eastern face report that it is equally unassailable on that side. Three tongues of snow run up from the glacier into angles in the wall near the N.W. corner; in the furthest of these Abbot had discovered an easy path leading upwards between Lefroy and Victoria to a high col, which had been previously reached from the S. by Mr. S. E. Allen, who called this snow-couloir the 'Death Trap.' From this col—fitly named Abbot Pass—the peak could be attacked by snow-slopes and broken cliffs on its western side. It was on this slope that Abbot met his death when a few hundreds of feet only from the summit. On August 3, the anniversary of his death, we completed the ascent by the route he discovered.

Leaving the chalet at 2.40 A.M. we rowed up the silent lake, steering by the stars, which shone with marvellous brilliancy from the cloudless sky. After making fast the boats at the head of the lake we pushed up the valley in the darkness, now jumping streams by the treacherous light of our candle, now struggling in alder thickets, until at length we reached the rough moraine of the glacier as the faint light of dawn stole over the mountains. Then we kept straight up the almost level ice towards the N.W. corner of Mt. Lefroy, but lost much time in getting entangled in crevasses. It is better here to keep well to the right, nearer to the cliffs of Mt. Victoria. The view eastwards along the great N. precipice is extremely striking. A huge trench paved with ice separates Lefroy from Mt. Aberdeen. The end of the trench is blocked by a black mass of rock—the Mitre—leaving two steep and narrow couloirs, one on either side, forming possible passes into Paradise Valley. Passing the two snow couloirs which descend from chimneys in the N.W. cliff, we entered the so-called Death Trap—a wide slope of snow leading up at an easy angle to Abbot Pass. As we breasted the slope we were met by several small erratic pieces from the upper rocks of Lefroy, which came skipping down the snow

with unpleasant velocity, giving us an early warning of the unstable state of the limestone ledges above. After 5 hours steady going we stepped on to the narrow ridge which joins Lefroy with Victoria, and caught our first view of the precipices of Hungabee and Goodsir to the S. The aneroid gave our height as 4,200 ft. above Lake Louise, 9,800 ft. above sea-level.

From the col our route upwards was in plain view. The steep slope was snow-covered, except where limestone ledges cropped out, roughly marking off the ascent into three sections. The slope is best seen in the photographs taken by Dr. Collie two days later, in his ascent of Mt. Victoria. Having breakfasted we roped up in three parties, and struck straight up the snow to the first patch of rocks. The slope gradually steepened as we rose, but the snow was good, and we could kick firm steps in it. After a steady grind we reached the rocks, which proved to be both steep and rotten. For a few minutes we enjoyed the variation of wriggling our bodies over the ledges, though it would have been quicker to go round. The buttress of rock held up the snow above it at a more favourable angle for a little distance, but the slope soon became severer than before. As we approached the second patch of rocks great care became necessary. A bad slip here would have been difficult to check, and our path now lay above the S.W. precipices. On reaching the second rocks we passed up a snow couloir near their right extremity, and found ourselves on the steepest part of the face, lying at an angle of 60°. Above us to the right frowned the cliff which Abbot had tried to scale. Between us and that cliff the snow no longer gave a foothold. It loosely plastered the steep ice, which showed in patches through the surface. But against the outcrop of rock, which formed an overhanging cliff on our left, the snow still clung firmly, filling the angle between rock and ice. We crept round a ledge of snow beneath the overhanging rock and then kicked a ladder up the snow till the top of the cliff was gained. The steps held, but we had a distinctly uneasy feeling that we might not find them so firm on our return, after the sun had been on them for a few hours. From the top of the cliff a little arête of snow led upwards at a gentler slope to the corniced ridge of the mountain, and at 11 A.M. we clambered on to one of the two rocky prominences (some 50 yards apart) which form the highest points of Mt. Lefroy. The aneroid gave the height as 11,600 ft. above the sea, but the mercury barometer brought it down to 11,420 ft.

The air was beautifully clear—for the forests to the west had been singularly free from fires during the summer. Two mushroom-like patches were visible on the northern horizon, the stem produced by the heated column of smoke which flattens out as it cools. Of the mountains near at hand the most striking is Hungabee, which offers a first rate problem to climbers. Looking at it from the commanding height of Lefroy, none of us could suggest an even probable line of attack. Away to the S.E. the black precipices of Assiniboine were distinctly visible. To the N. Mt. Balfour, rising from the great Waputtekh snow-field, attracted greater interest, for we hoped to conquer it in the next few days. The thought of our snow-ladder gradually melting in the sun cut short our enjoyment of the summit.

We descended easily to the end of the arête, where, planting an axe firmly in the snow, we paid out an extra rope (with a turn round the axe) attached to each man as he stepped cautiously down the ladder. Sitting on the arête I had leisure to study the broken cliff opposite where Abbot fell, and to fit together the accounts of the accident with the configuration of the rock. The chimney which he climbed is near the profile of the cliff. At the top of the first part of the chimney a snow-covered ledge bears to the left, on this Professor Little stood. Abbot continued the climb up the chimney now seen slightly to the left of the line of the lower portion. The chimney ends at a ledge cut off by a few feet of steep rock from the snow slope above. Abbot must either have attempted to climb this rock or to work round on the ledge. Neither course would appear to present any difficulty to a man who could climb the long chimney below, *had the rock been firm*. But the limestone rock which crops out on this face is extremely rotten. I can feel no doubt that a rock gave way suddenly with his weight, just as he was pulling himself to the top of the cliff. He had taken to the rocks to avoid step-cutting in the ice. A photograph and sketch of Abbot's cliff were taken from our arête.

From the top rocks downwards we were mightily polite to the snow of Mt. Lefroy. I cannot speak for all the party, but I know that three men, including Sarbach, came down 1,500 ft. with their faces to the mountain. A final glissade down the lower slope landed us on the col at 3 P.M. After a second luncheon a rapid descent of 2½ hrs. brought us to Lake Louise.

On August 7 our party collected in the little station at Laggan. Here we were to leave civilisation behind and take

to tents. We had arranged with Tom Wilson of Banff to supply us with a camping outfit. Our 'packer' Peyto and his men had gone on with our camp while we waited for G. P. Baker, who came by train from the east. We left our luggage at the station, but the 'few necessaries' we were loth to leave behind quickly amounted to a goodly pile. Accordingly two horses were requisitioned, one for the 'necessaries' and one for myself, as my leg was stiff from a cut on the knee inflicted by a falling stone—a parting memento from Mt. Lefroy. We started in high spirits after a good meal unexpectedly prepared for our entertainment by the good lady of Laggan.

Our route lay northwards up the Bow Valley. At first we made our way through burnt forest, over and under the fallen

'THE ROAD' BOW VALLEY.

trees, winding round masses of piled up trunks and looking back at the white helmet top of Mt. Lefroy. Occasionally we hit on 'the road,' a cutting made by prospectors, but found it more impassable than the forest itself. At one place we counted eleven large trees piled criss-cross on one another. Meantime the sun beat down on us and the still air hummed with mosquitoes. The hot afternoon passed, and the sun set behind the mountains just as we came to more open ground. Here we advanced rapidly for a time, but the ground became softer and it soon became

difficult to get the horses along. Then the moon cheered us for a brief spell, and we made an effort to get off the swamp into the forest. But the pack-horse sank to his girths and remained immovable, and before we could remove his pack the moon disappeared and progress was impossible. Then two of our American friends volunteered to push on to the camp and send back Peyto. The rest of us prepared to spend the night in philosophic contemplation. But in the course of an hour or so we were cheered by the bark of a dog, and presently Peyto made his way to us through the muskeagh. He told us it was hopeless to get the horses through to the camp, so we unsaddled and left them on a fairly firm patch of ground to be recovered in the morning. Half an hour's wading through bog and stream brought us to the camp about midnight.

Next day we spent in idleness at the Lower Bow Lake, bathing, fishing and photographing. On Monday a steady march of 7½ hrs. brought us to the camping-ground at the Upper Bow Lake. As we rose higher the forest became less dense and the ground firmer. The only difficulty on our march was the fording of a rapid stream which falls into the Bow River, but this was accomplished without mishap. During the day we were made acquainted with one of the vagaries of the Rocky Mountain pack-horse, which has impressed previous European travellers. Wonderfully agile, sure-footed, and knowing, these Indian horses pick their way with great skill over broken and precipitous ground, and through the intricacies of fallen trees. But occasionally a horse will give a shriek (as of fright), rear up and topple over. If this happens on a steep place horse and pack go rolling over and over until brought up by a tree or rock. Authorities differ as to whether the shriek follows on a slip, or whether shriek and fall are consecutive pieces of 'cussedness.' So far as I can learn the horse is usually found not much the worse for his rapid descent; but the scientific instruments, the camera, the kettle, and everything in the pack that the traveller cherishes, are unrecognisable. Dr. Hector describes just such a performance by an 'old grey' in his first passage of the Kicking Horse Pass in 1858; was it a descendant of this old grey whose 'troubled look on his battered countenance' we caught in our camera last year?

The valley of the Upper Bow forms part of one of the series of longitudinal valleys which, lying in the length of the main chain, divide the mountains into successive ranges. In these broad longitudinal valleys the rivers flow nearly N. and S.,

making short breaks to the E. or W. through narrow defiles. To the W. of the Upper Bow lies an extensive snow-covered table-land, hidden from the valley by a precipitous wall which holds back the snow. From this snow plateau several high peaks rise, forming the Waputtekh range, the most conspicuous being named Mt. Balfour. Along this range lies the continental watershed. So far as we could learn no one had yet explored any part of this range except by means of photographs from a distance.

At the W. end of the Upper Bow Lake a gap is torn in the mountain-wall, and through this gap the snow is pressed in a fine glacier which descends in two large ice-falls to the valley. From our camp no high peak was visible beyond the crest of the glacier, but in a short reconnoitring walk we descried a sharp peak towering above the cliffs which bastion the snow-field. Since its direction corresponded with the position of Mt. Balfour we resolved to make its closer acquaintance.

The night of August 10 gave no promise of a fine day. The rain beat on our canvas, and the thunder re-echoed from the cliffs, while the lightning fitfully illuminated the interior of our dark tent with surprising brilliancy. But with morning the storm passed off, and our first sleep was broken by Sarbach with the news that the clouds were clearing. We grumbled, but turned out of our sleeping bags. At 5.30 we were fairly off.

Crossing a low wooded spur—once the terminal moraine of the glacier—we descended into a stony valley left by the retreating ice. There was no difficulty in walking on to and up the lower slopes of ice, which we crossed to the left. On the further side we scrambled on to a steep moraine, and walked up its ridge, and by this means passed the lower ice-fall. We were now in a position to study the upper ice-fall. The moraine we were standing on ends in a sheer cliff, and between the ice-fall and this cliff a steep snow-slope leads upwards. From below it seemed that we might reach the upper snow-field by means of this slope, but a close inspection showed it to be very steep and awkwardly crevassed. We looked round for a more enticing route. To the left of the cliff we might have forced a way, but it would have been necessary to make a considerable descent and a long circuit up another glacier. The other side of the glacier seemed hopeless, for the ice-fall seemed to abut on precipitous cliffs. Accordingly, after some delay, we made up our minds to attack the ice-fall by a direct assault. Roping up in two parties, led by Collie and Sarbach, we got half way up without

much difficulty. Then the crevasses became wider and more intricate, and compelled us to make long traverses. And thus it happened that while Collie edged more and more to the left, Sarbach worked to the right, and we presently lost sight of one another amid the seracs. At length, after nearly two hours' exciting work, Sarbach brought our party on to the snow, and we yelled a paean of triumph. In a moment our yell was answered by a faint cry which proceeded from some black dots just topping the snow line at the further side of the glacier. Honours were easy. Both parties could claim that no one had previously set foot on the Waputtekh snow-field.

By converging paths we advanced up the gentle slope, and then, as the view opened out, we saw that a second mountain rose beyond the sharp peak which had been our aim. Meeting on the snow we proceeded to discuss the new claimant. A long snow dome to the right, connected with a sharp rocky ridge which fell away sheer to the left. This corresponded with the distant views of Mt. Balfour, and we immediately turned towards it. Should we attack the snow dome or the rocky ridge? Thinking the snow would be easier to descend, we decided to try the rocks, and began by making a second breakfast on the snow near the foot of a broken rock cliff we named 'Beechey Head.'

An easy snow slope led upwards to a col between our original peak on the left and the rocky end of the second peak. We made straight for this col, and on reaching it scrambled up the easy rocks to the right. At 12.50 we stood on the broken summit. A rapid glance showed us that we were not on Mt. Balfour. That mountain stood up well above us some four miles away to the S.S.E. It had been completely hidden till this moment. Between us and it a wide gulf was fixed—not to be passed in an August afternoon. Though disappointed of Mt. Balfour, we had a new peak of our own, which we proceeded to make the best of. In the first place, a proper cairn had to be built, and there was no lack either of stones or of labourers. Next the mountain had to be christened, and this was duly accomplished by emptying a bottle and placing an inscription within. Unfortunately, the name we selected—Mt. Aberdeen, after the genial Governor-General of Canada—we afterwards found had been appropriated by the Canadian Survey for another peak near Lake Louise. Since American citizens were members of our party, this might have led to international complications; but Lord Aberdeen, on being appealed to, was equal to the

occasion. He suggested that, since our object was to pay him a compliment, he would be equally gratified if we called our mountain by his family name, 'Gordon.' Future travellers who open our bottle will kindly read 'Mt. Gordon' for 'Mt. Aberdeen.'

In Captain Palliser's general map two peaks are marked close together some 5 miles N. of Mt. Balfour. These nearly correspond in position with the two summits of Mt. Gordon.

The E. peak we now stood on rises some 10,600 ft. above the sea. It commands a magnificent panorama, except in two directions. To the N.E. the distant mountains are hidden by the ridge of the near mountain we had first seen, which, from the green colour of its upper rocks, we named Mt. Olive. No doubt Mt. Murchison was hidden from us by this ridge. To the W. the snow-dome of Mt. Gordon itself rose above the line of sight. Just to the right of the snow-dome (and bearing slightly N. of W.) a fine double-headed snow peak is visible. Large glaciers pour down its E. face. We called it Mt. Mummery.

The most striking peak that is visible from Mt. Gordon bears N.W. Its sharp rock summit rises far above the snow peaks between it and us. If the average height of the higher snow peaks in this region lies between 11,000 ft. and 12,000 ft., as most observers agree, then Mt. Forbes (with which this peak was afterwards identified) must be not far from 14,000 ft. in height.

An hour quickly passed away in sketching and photography. Then, while Collie and I set up the barometer, the Americans went off along the broad snow ridge to complete their work with the plane-table from the higher snow summit. And then occurred the only accident in our expedition, one which might have been serious but for the skill and resource shown by Collie. Stretching across the ridge, a little below the summit, a snow-covered crevasse crossed our route at right angles. The party in front, who were without ropes, saw the crevasse, and proceeded to leap it. All crossed in safety but the last man, who broke through the snow and disappeared. Through the hole the wide mouth of the crevasse was revealed, showing the danger of trusting to the frail bridge. It was obviously dangerous to recross without a rope, so his companions signalled to us for help, but for some time we failed to observe their signals.

Though stunned by the fall, our friend was not materially damaged, but he was in a sufficiently awkward fix. Jammed between the narrowing walls of ice, he was unable to move a

limb except his right arm. The crevasse did not drop perpendicularly, but the ice wall bulged out from the side we stood on, and then curved over out of sight; we could not see down more than 18 ft. We stood in a little semicircle at the hole, and one short sentence was spoken: 'Some one must go down.' We looked at each other. Sarbach and Baker are large and heavy men: it was obvious they must 'pass.' I am of lighter build; I proclaimed my eleven stone and readiness to go. But Collie went better. 'I am nine stone six' was his deliberate statement. There was no means of seeing if this was a bluff, so we threw up our hands—the trick was his. Tying a stirrup loop for one foot and a noose round his waist, Collie attached himself to one rope, which was then joined to a second. Meanwhile the Americans were brought across the crevasse by the aid of another rope, and axes were fixed deep in the snow in suitable positions to fasten the rope to. Then we let Collie down as far as he would go. An anxious moment followed. 'I can't reach him,' came Collie's voice from below. Then, after a few minutes, 'Send down a slip knot on the other rope.' We made the knot and lowered the rope. How Collie managed it I don't know, for he could not reach his man, but he threw the loop round the prisoner's right arm, and then called to us to pull. At the second haul we felt something give, and our friend was pulled into an upright position, where Collie could just reach him with his left hand, and with this he tied a knot above the elbow of his right arm. By this knot we hauled him out of the narrow crevasse and on to the bulge of ice without difficulty. But as we pulled the rope cut into the snow, and we could not raise our burden within 6 ft. of the surface. Then, while the rope was held taut, one of us worked the handle of an axe along under the rope by sitting on the snow and pushing it forward with his feet. In this way the rope was loosened, and we could haul up another 3 ft., and then Sarbach, leaning over, reached his collar, and our half-frozen friend was deposited on the snow with an assortment of flasks while we fished out Collie from his uncomfortable position. They were both very wet and cold, but no bones were broken, so two of us roped up with the wet ones, and the quartette raced down the snow towards the glacier. In an hour warmth was completely restored by our rapid motion.

In our descent of the glacier we took the upper fall on the extreme left (looking down)—in fact, we avoided the steepest part by climbing down the rocks at the side. In the morning these rocks had looked most uninviting from a distance, but

Collie found a way down them, and so on to the ice. Sarbach following with the rest found a still quicker way between the rocks and the ice. We reached the camp at dusk, as a thunderstorm began muttering along the rocky wall we had succeeded in scaling.

And now the time had come for me to return to the E. We retraced our steps down the Bow Valley, and I left Sarbach with Collie and Baker, who resolved to explore the ranges we had seen to the N. from Mt. Gordon.

I had had a dip into a new and wonderfully interesting region. A few miles from the railway track scarcely a mountain has been scaled. To the N. whole ranges are still unmapped. This happy hunting-ground will be annexed (in a climbing sense) by our cousins of New England, for I fear that the Canadians have not yet reached that state of over-civilisation which drives people to climb for the mere fun of the thing. And judging from those I have seen, I believe the Americans will make good use of their opportunities. They are quick, wiry, and confident. They don't make such a solemn business of it as we do, nor do they stand quite so punctiliously on the order of their going. But they enjoy roughing it, and with practice on snow mountains I feel sure they will work out suitable methods, and the Canadian Rockies will be opened up by their enterprise and energy. I envy them their chances.

Two months later I saw Sarbach off from Manchester on his return to Switzerland. I can speak most highly of his conduct, skill, and temper during all his work with us. No *contretemps* disturbed his equanimity; his constant care never slackened. I think the new conditions of travel unconsciously altered some of those views on climbing that are traditional with Swiss guides, and I sincerely hope that his experiences with us will do something to modify the alarm with which he faced the prospect of a distant journey. Thinking of the many grand effects we had witnessed by sea and land, I asked him at parting: 'What is the finest thing you have seen, Peter?' He had crossed the ocean, he had threaded the wonderful islands of the St. Lawrence, had passed the Great Lakes, he had even scaled an unknown peak and left his name in memory thereof on 'Pic Sarbach'—but he answered without hesitation: 'Oh, sir, the finest thing I have seen are the fire-works at Belle-Vue'!