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MOUNTAIN TRAVEL AND CLIMBS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

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(Read before the Alpine Club, June 11, 1901.)

TWO years ago Dr. Collie read a paper in this room describing climbs and explorations on the eastern side of the Canadian Rockies in 1897 and 1898; and you may remember that in the second of these expeditions we failed to reach any of the highest peaks of the chain owing to their lying too far to the west of our base camps in the Saskatchewan and Athabasca Valleys. After our return to civilisation from the 1898 trip I went to Donald, and spent some time in making inquiries as to the best means of getting into the mountains from the western side, but the information I gathered amounted to very little. There was said to be a good trail, as I supposed, down the Columbia, though people at Banff had denied it; but of the lateral valleys leading up into the mountains only the vaguest and most meagre details could be obtained. Everybody agreed that the difficulties of travel would be far greater than on the eastern side—the rivers and muskegs, or marshes, more formidable, and the timber much denser—but this we knew before. Obviously the trip could be at best but an experiment, but it promised, at any rate, to be an interesting one, and, from a geographical point of view, could hardly fail to add to our knowledge of an entirely new region.

The existing maps gave little information, and that little proved to be largely wrong. My first idea was to ascend the Wood River Valley and attack the mountains from the N.W., but Collie very rightly pointed out that the valley of the Bush River offered a much shorter and more direct route. Accordingly, to make a long story short, it was for the Bush

River that he and I, accompanied by Mr. Spencer, started on July 29 last summer. Our outfit awaited us at Donald, and the men in charge thereof were Fred Stephens, headman, one of the best fellows it has ever been my good fortune to meet; Charlie Bassett, axeman; C. Black, cook; and one Alistair MacAlpine, an amusing broth of a boy, who persisted in asserting that he was a Scotchman in the richest brogue that ever cut the murky atmosphere of Belfast. There were some new faces among the horses, but I recognised several old friends of our 1898 trip.

Our start was a very bad one, Bassett essaying to mount a piebald cayoose, when the brute reared and fell back on him, causing such serious internal injuries that he had to be sent back to Banff; and so we lost our best axeman, whose services would afterwards have been invaluable in the dense forests through which we had to cut our way. We made a short day's march along the Columbia trail, after telegraphing for a substitute, who arrived that evening in the person of H. Lang. The trail does not follow the Columbia, but ascends the Blackwater Creek, some four or five miles east of the main river. The forest scenery was magnificent, the tall straight stems of poplar, spruce, silver birch, cottonwood trees and Douglas fir, some of them nearly two hundred feet high and ranged in long shadowy aisles and woodland corridors, their branches hung with long beards of grey and yellow lichens, screening all view of the outside world. The trail, too, was excellent, except where here or there some prostrate giant of the wood, lying across the path, had to be circumvented; and there were some deep mud-holes in which the horses got badly floundered. After three days' travel the forest grew less dense, and we saw something of the mountains on our right, while across the Columbia appeared the snow-flecked tops of some of the lower Selkirks, with belts and patches of bright emerald green running far up their sides.

On Friday, August 3, we reached the Bush, a deep, swift-flowing stream, a hundred yards wide, with high muddy banks clothed with the impenetrable undergrowth that has given the river its name. Here we passed a perfectly awful time with the mosquitoes. The air was

Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings,

and the hum of bees on *Hymettus* can have been nothing to the buzzing of these multitudinous pests. The night was a night of ceaseless torment. Spencer, like a sensible person,

had brought a piece of mosquito netting. Collie and I, being unprovided with any such luxury, of course jeered at him for his ridiculous effeminacy, and lay awake and cursed, while he slept soundly and blended the most resounding snores with the buzzing of the flies.

Next morning we fled. The jungle and muskegs along the river being absolutely hopeless. Collie conceived the idea of retracing our steps five or six miles along the trail, and cutting our way over the shoulder of the mountain which forms the angle between Bush and Columbia Valleys. This we accordingly did, but it proved a tedious job. The ridge was over 1,000 ft. high and very steep, and three days were spent in cutting a track and getting the horses and outfit up piecemeal. The trail was indeed 'a daisy,' as Fred Stephens expressed it, and the fallen logs, rotten timber, bog-holes, and rank undergrowth gave the men plenty to do. At the summit we mounted a rock, which Collie named Mount Pigsaw, and saw the promised land we were about to enter. It did not look at all promising. Beneath us the Bush Valley lay spread out, very broad and strangely flat, but hemmed in by lofty pine-clad mountains; and down it the river curved and twisted in innumerable windings amid shingle flats, clumps of firs, and very unpleasant-looking muskeg. Away in the distance the valley forked, and in the angle, filling the exact centre of the picture, rose a magnificent rock and ice peak, which, if the maps were correct, we supposed must be Mount Bryce.

Following the ridge awhile, the horses, with part only of the baggage, crept down into a narrow cleft between the rocks, and we commenced the descent. It was terribly steep, and the timber very bad in places. One horse, carrying all our bacon, broke away into the forest and was seen no more that day. This episode naturally caused us much anxiety. We camped in muskeg near the banks of the Bush. Three more precious days, one of them soaking wet, were spent in saving our bacon and getting the baggage down. The bacon, or rather the quadruped entrusted with it, was found in a natural pen of fallen timber, into which he had jumped, and it required many blows of Fred's axe to extricate him. On Saturday the 11th we started up the valley along the steep muddy banks of the now flooded river, tediously making our trail as we went. Every now and then a horse would fall or plunge wilfully into the water, and have to be got out at the expense of much labour, profanity, and perspiration. In the afternoon we forded a branch of the river on to an island,

and Fred, with Lang, essayed to ford the main stream. Starting somewhat too hastily, he was followed by six or eight of the horses before we had time to secure them. Near the other side the stream was over 5 ft. deep and flowing very strong, and Fred's horse, trying to scramble up the slippery bank, fell back with him into deep water. Fred's foot got caught in the *ladigo*, or leather thong of the saddle, and for a few anxious moments we feared he was done for; but, shaking himself free just in time, he swam ashore. Nothing daunted by this mishap, as soon as he reached dry land he shouted to us to remain, tethered the horses that had crossed with him, and proceeded to construct a raft wherewith to ferry back Lang and himself. A few water-sodden logs were his only available material; and in the stream the raft became unmanageable and was sucked into a narrow and deep rapid. Here poor Lang lost his balance and fell off into the ice-cold torrent, and, but for Fred's nerve and skill, would soon have found a watery grave. Below the rapids the two men, benumbed and exhausted, might have floated down to the Columbia if Collie had not thrown them a rope.

We spent a cheerless night—seven men packed like sardines in one small leaky tent. The valley reeked with damp exhalations from the marshes; it was raining cats and dogs outside; and the horses, with half our outfit across the stream, could be heard whinnying to their companions through the darkness. Next morning Fred constructed a splendid raft of fresh pine-logs, and ferried himself across alone, drove the horses across to us, and by evening the whole outfit was *in statu quo* on the island again—a very fine day's work.

The following day we recrossed the branch stream, and continued slowly up the S. bank, the logs, jungles, and quagmires seeming to have no end. The horses, too, were a great nuisance, and one or two of the mares were especially troublesome that day—I am sorry to say it is generally the ladies who give most trouble on these occasions. There was old Molly, for instance, the bell-mare, a plump matron of mature years, generally with three or four hundred pounds on her back, but always lively and skittish as a kitten. Well, two of these females, finding it rather warm, took a header into the torrent where it was running like a mill-race and 10 ft. deep. One of them—needless to say she carried the flour and bacon—was almost drowned; and it took half an hour's hard work to drag her, half suffocated, up the steep

bank. We camped on the spot in a quagmire and not the best of tempers. The loss of our axeman, Charlie Bassett, was now making itself felt. Fred Stephens was a host in himself, immensely strong, and always willing and cheerful, while Collie continued to display that desperate energy which I have long ceased striving to emulate; but there are limits to human endurance, and we sorely needed another expert axeman.

If the trials of our journey were great, we had our compensations, and the scenery was very fine. Deep valleys, with bold rocky peaks between them, descended on either side from the glacier-clad offshoots of the main chain. Down the Bush River the view was bounded by the Selkirks, with a grand Weisshorn-like pyramid in the centre. Some weeks later I had a good look at this unnamed monarch of an unknown region from the top of Sir Donald, and it is undoubtedly the highest peak of the Selkirk group. At the head of the valley, getting nearer to us every day, was the splendid mountain we supposed to be Mount Bryce. We might have more greatly admired the very real beauty of the forest foliage if it had not been so abominably troublesome. They have a strange fascination of their own, these mighty woods of the wild West, but the charm is apt to evaporate when you are cutting trail.

There was one more bad day in store for us before matters began to improve. The river was still in flood, and its banks finally became so hopelessly impassable that we were forced high up into the forest on the mountain-side. Fred and Collie went on ahead in the morning cutting trails, and in the afternoon the outfit followed. This was perhaps the worst bit of the whole lot, not so much owing to the timber or undergrowth as to the steepness of the ground and the excessive rottenness of the soil, which seemed to be composed exclusively of decayed tree-trunks and other vegetable matter. The descent from the shoulder of the hill was a most parlous operation. Hearing a noise behind me at one bad spot, I turned and saw a small avalanche of ponies slipping and tumbling down on the top of me, the result being that I was knocked over in a sitting posture into a bunch of devil's-club. The devil's-club, I should explain, is a long trailing creeper, with broad leaves and poisonous spikes. It abounds in the British Columbian forests, and—well, it isn't at all a good thing to sit down upon. The horses, meanwhile, were tumbling about all over the place, jammed among logs, struggling in bog-holes, and having a bad time of it altogether.

Once at the bottom, however, our worst troubles were over for the present. Two days' fording the river backwards and forwards with a moderate amount of chopping took us to the head of the valley, where we camped near the junction of the forks, a splendid site in an amphitheatre of mountains, with the great peak towering right above us. Our height was only 2,800 ft., which is remarkably low for a valley running right up into the heart of the mountains, and it quite upset our calculations. The head waters of the Saskatchewan and Athabasca were 2,000 or 3,000 ft. higher, which gave us so much the less timber-work. The weather was bad, and we



FORDING PART OF THE BUSH RIVER.

stayed four days at this camp. In the early mornings and evenings I amused myself hunting for bear, whose tracks were fairly plentiful in the valley, but without success. There were also wild swans, geese, and ducks in marshes hard by.

On Sunday, Collie and I, taking a couple of horses, forded the river, and then proceeded afoot through the most horrible timber up the south bank of the Bush. The river is narrower and more impetuous in its higher reaches, and below the junction of the forks it boils and rushes over boulders between high rocky banks. After an hour or two's toilsome scrambling we reached a splendid gorge which the South Fork has cleft for itself through the hills a short distance above the junction. Looking up the North Fork we saw a high and beautiful

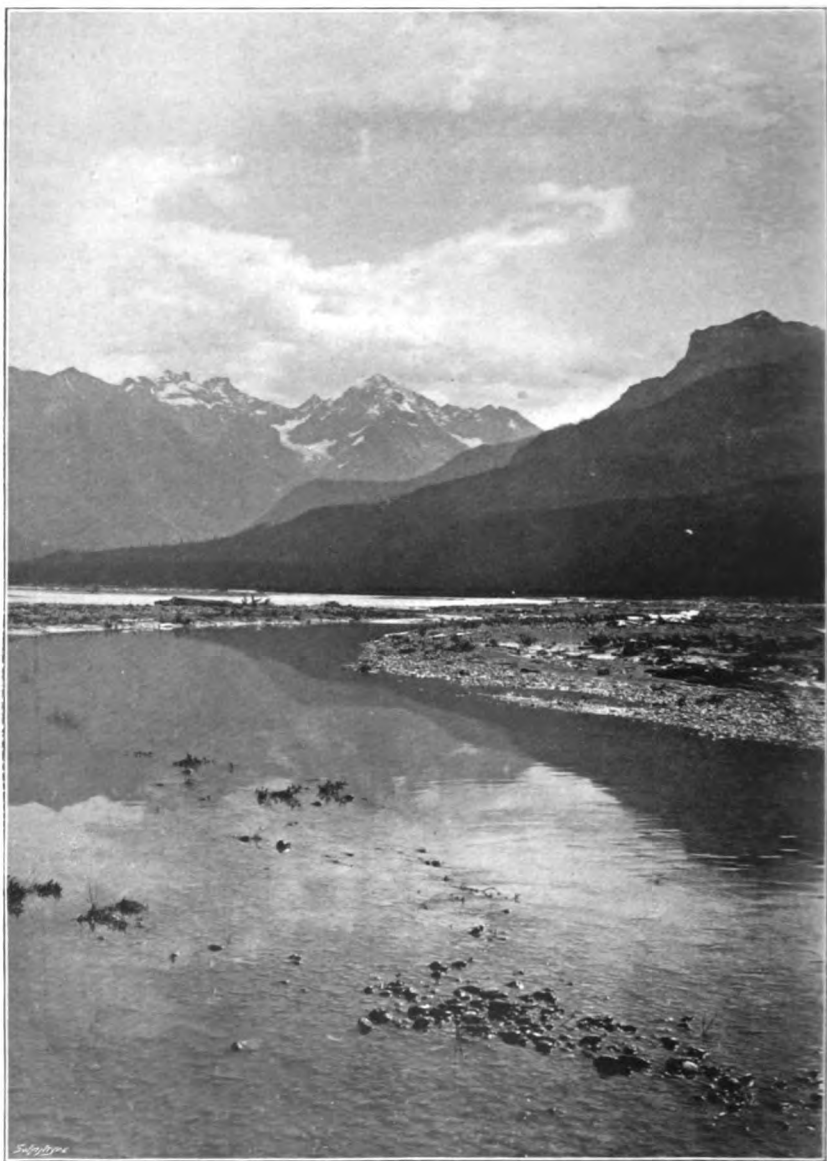


Photo by Sydney Spencer

[Swan Electric Engraving Co.]

THE BUSH RIVER VALLEY AND BUSH PEAK CANADIAN ROCKIES.

pyramid of snow rising in solitary grandeur out of an immense ice-field. There was no mistaking it. It was beyond all doubt the chief goal of our expedition, Mount Columbia; and, to our dismay, it was at least twenty miles distant, when it ought, if the Bush River was correctly located, as the Americans say, on the map, to have been only eight or ten. There was evidently something wrong somewhere. Next day the mystery was explained, when Collie, Spencer, and I started to climb a peak north of the camp. I took the gun and shot a fine Canada goose on the way. We had a tremendously hard climb through the woods, and, my legs giving out below the summit, I gave it up and returned to my goose-hunting. Collie and Spencer had a glorious view, this being absolutely the last clear day of the whole trip, and they made important discoveries. The existing map was all wrong; the head of the Bush Valley was marked on it ten or twelve miles too far to the north, and we were that much further off our destination than we had thought. The supposed Mount Bryce was not Mount Bryce at all, but another peak twelve miles south of it which we had seen from the Columbian icefield in 1898, and which Collie has named Bush Peak.

We had a council of war that evening and decided to *cache* half our provisions and baggage, so as to travel as light as possible, and push on next morning as far as we could up the North Fork of the Bush. Half an hour from the start the timber got very bad, and Fred essayed to ford the river, but it was too deep and rapid, and the attempt had to be abandoned. Ahead the ground sloped precipitously to the level of the river; the timber looked as though a forest of scaffolding poles had fallen across each other, and further progress along the banks of the stream would, at the best, be at the rate of about a mile a day. Accordingly Fred conceived a somewhat bold idea. Striking up the hill in a torrent of rain, by dint of hard work and skilful guidance, he conducted the whole outfit up 5,000 ft. of timber-covered mountain-side to the foot of the peak which Collie and Spencer had ascended the day before. His idea—an impracticable one, as it proved—was to find a passage above timber level, and along the benches of rock which lined the face of the mountain. We camped in a nice enough spot, with one drawback—there was no water; and Alec had to fetch snow in buckets for every meal from a place some hundreds of yards off, a labour he strongly objected to. While the tents were being pitched I wandered off through the rain in search of an old Rocky Mountain goat which Collie had seen the day before, returning drenched to

the skin, and without any meat, to a most uncomfortable dinner in our leaky little tent. Next morning the weather had improved, so I went off early after goat, as our meat was getting very low. I saw no game of any description, but had some gorgeous Elijah Walton-like views, through the mist, of Mount Columbia: now a sharp pyramid whose graceful contours were in marked contrast to the flat-topped mountain it appears from the northern side. Nearer, the triple-peaked Mount Bryce—the real Bryce, named by Collie in 1898 after our President—towered majestically over the narrow valley. The view reminded me somewhat of that from the Brevent, but it was far more extensive, and the mountains rising steeply 11,000 ft., or more, from the low-lying valleys, formed a far more impressive panorama than anything we had seen from the Saskatchewan or Athabasca.

Returning to lunch, I found that the others had sighted three goats browsing on a hill not far from the camp. Descending into a deep valley, I climbed up the other side, and, after an amusing stalk, managed to bag the biggest of the three. The beast rolled, stone dead, head over heels down a steep shale-slope to the brink of some rocks 1,200 ft. in depth. A few yards more and he would have gone over the edge, and we should have seen him no more. With some trouble I got down to him, but moving the carcass alone—it weighed over 150 lbs.—was out of the question. However, an hour later Black and Alec, hearing the shots, came to my assistance with a rope, and we managed with infinite trouble and some risk to haul the beast up a few feet to a safer position where we could gralloch him. The rescue of that goat from his parlous position afforded me the most exciting climbing experience of the whole trip. It was impossible to get the carcass home that night, but there was much jubilation in camp at the prospect of fresh meat after three weeks' uninterrupted salt pork.

That night the weather, which had misbehaved itself all along, went hopelessly mad. It rained and sleeted all next day, and we never stirred from camp; but the following afternoon, taking a horse part of the way, we went, and after much trouble brought in the goat, returning, as usual, drenched to the skin. In the night the wind went round to the north, and the driven snow and sleet forced its way into our miserable little tent, the ground in the morning being covered to a depth of several inches. Our exposed camp was not a joyous habitation now—at least the men grumbled a good deal; personally I did not mind it at all—and our

prospects of serious mountaineering grew fainter and fainter. We had uninviting glimpses now and then, through the rolling masses of vapour, of the Bush Valley far below, and the muddy torrent tearing along between the shingle flats and muskegs ; but for a whole fortnight the mountain tops were never clear, and travel in the deep snow was out of the question. I forgot, though, there was a brief sunset one evening, one 'crowded hour of glorious life,' when the mountain world displayed itself to us in all its splendour. I had had an interesting afternoon's scramble on the peak after goat, and was within two or three hundred yards of camp. The landscape was



CAMP ON GOAT PEAK.

wrapped in a white mantle of freshly fallen snow ; the clouds suddenly dispersed, and the sun went down, not in the conventional blaze of green and gold and orange, but with a soft saffron effulgence, more suggestive of dawn than sunset, that shed a strange unearthly radiance over peak and glacier and snowfield. I had taken the cartridges out of my Mauser in order to climb some rocks, and was sauntering on towards the tent, my mind absorbed in the weird witchery of the scene, when suddenly there bounded out of the bushes the father of all the goats, the finest old billy you ever saw, his long white fringe brushing the branches, as he lumbered heavily out of view. I am afraid I swore, and the splendours of the mountain world and the sunset seemed suddenly to

fade, for in moments like these the instincts of the artist and the sportsman, which ought to go together, seem somewhat to clash.

Early on Sunday the 26th we three started with Fred to climb a fine rock peak, about 11,000 ft. high, west of the camp. The morning was fairly fine, but towards midday the clouds rolled up as relentlessly as ever, and after wandering about aimlessly in the fog for some hours we gave it up and returned to camp. Time and provisions were now running out; our men, all except Fred, were the reverse of happy, saying that this God-forsaken valley was no fit place for civilised beings; so, as the weather seemed more hopeless than ever, we struck camp next day and descended again to our *cache* in the valley.

Lest I should seem to have painted too gloomy a picture of our week's sojourn in the high camp, I should here like to say that personally I enjoyed it exceedingly. I had most delightful scrambles over the wild craggy hills after goat, with occasional glimpses of the most enchanting scenery, when one or another of the great peaks coyly unveiled itself to view. It was very wet and cold, no doubt, but we always had a jolly big fire of logs outside the tent—wood is cheap in these parts—and so made ourselves pretty comfortable, while the absence of the mosquito pest made the hills, even in snow and slush, seem a sort of Paradise to me.

On the way home we ascended a peak on the south side of the valley—for the benefit of Collie in particular, and geographical science in general. The brushwood and timber were the worst we ever encountered, and the labour of climbing something awful, so I hope geographical science will be grateful. In two and a half hours we made barely 1,000 ft.; but when at length we emerged from the stuffy air of the forest into the open we felt as though we had wings, and, being all in excellent training, did the remaining 2,000 ft. or so with the greatest ease. The high peaks, as usual, were in cloud, but the valleys and lower ranges were all plainly visible, and Collie was able to correct and add many details to his map of the region. The results you have seen on the screen this evening. Although, owing to bad weather and other misfortunes, we had not done all we had hoped to do—one seldom does in this wicked world—our trip was by no means a failure from a geographical point of view, as you may judge by comparing the old map with Dr. Collie's present one. I may remind you that in 1897, before he went with Mr. Baker on his first trip, the map of the mountains ten

miles north of the C.P.R. was little better than a blank, while beyond Mount Lyell the main range was entirely unexplored. I think, therefore, you will agree that, as our Club now so largely occupies itself with mountain exploration and geography, we are much in his debt for these contributions of his to our knowledge of the Alps of Canada.

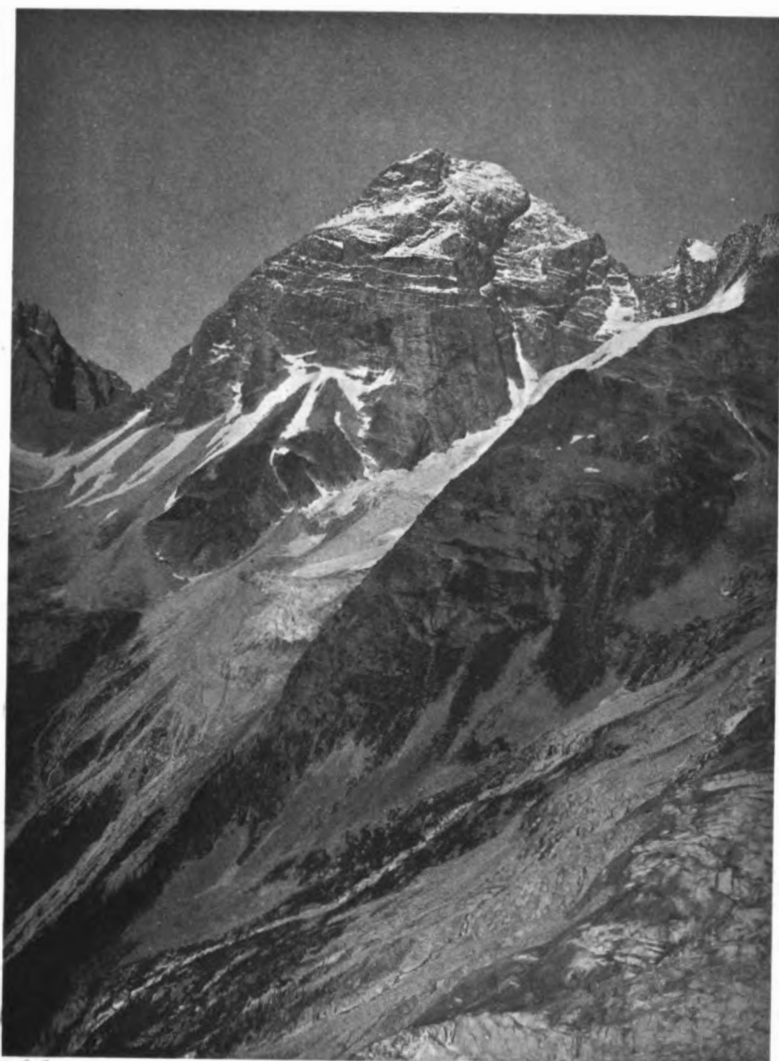
The trail being cut, and the river having shrunk owing to the cold, our journey down the valley, as usual on these occasions, was a comparatively easy matter. We had a most enjoyable day's trout-fishing on an extemporised raft in a small lake, and then on to Donald and civilisation in a down-pour of rain. 'No. 1,' the C.P.R. west-bound express, was twelve hours late owing to a landslide on the line—as a negro porter phrased it, 'the scenery had come down;' and after a night with the telegraph clerks at the station we reached Glacier at 6 A.M. Here we went our respective ways. The weather improved, and Collie and Spencer each did a new peak, of which they will no doubt tell you presently, and a few days more put Mount Sir Donald in a condition for me to attempt to climb it.

Before describing Sir Donald I should like to give a short account of a solitary ramble up its neighbour—Eagle Peak—by an unorthodox route, late in September two years previously. After our trip to the Athabasca I found myself alone at Glacier. Collie had gone home, and Woolley deserted me for the joys of Vancouver and the Pacific Coast. There was nobody to climb with, and my energies were at first centred in the pursuit of a huge grizzly, whose quite fresh tracks, with those of her two cubs, were visible not very far from the hotel. After three days' unsuccessful hunting I be-thought me of a modest climb up Eagle Peak. The then C.P.R. guide assured me that the mountain was impossible owing to 40 ft. of unscaleable rock on the arête. I said (in effect), 'Bosh;' and he then said he had a toothache, so I started rather late one morning alone. Being unable to get any information as to the route, I followed the valley leading under the N.W. face of Sir Donald, which affords a superb view of that mountain. I soon found I was cut off from Eagle Peak by a valley, with a small but much crevassed glacier at the bottom, and had to cut my way down a steep little ice slope to get on to it. After crossing the glacier a long couloir led up to the foot of the final rocks, and then it was an easy scramble to the summit. The view is, I think, finer than that from Sir Donald, as the latter mountain gives the picture a truly noble foreground.

An evil idea came into my head to try a new way down. All went well till at the very bottom of the slope I found myself cut off by cliffs, and had to remount a good 1,000 ft., the result being that I just reached the forest at nightfall; and then the fun began. The mountain-side was very steep, and in parts rocky; and the forest—well, like other British Columbian forests. There was no moon, and the faint starlight failed to penetrate the gloom of the huge cedars and pines. For eight mortal hours I felt my way down, tumbling over logs and into holes, and wondering when I should break a leg or sprain an ankle. How Collie will jeer, I thought, when he hears of it!—and sure enough he did. Some additional interest was lent to my nocturnal wanderings by the knowledge, during part of the time, that I was following the trail of the old grizzly; so, as these beasts usually travel by night, and it might be unpleasant if I stumbled on her in the dark, I just kept holloaing at intervals to let her know I was coming. There was no cause for alarm, as I found out afterwards that she had been shot that afternoon near Roger's Pass, two miles up the line, and measured 9 ft. 6 in. from snout to tail.

Before describing my climb up Sir Donald a few words on the previous history of the mountain may not be out of place. Long deemed inaccessible by people on the spot, it is now going the way of all such peaks, having been climbed half a dozen times, though not as yet by a lady. In 1888 Mr. William Green attempted the ascent by the Illecillewaet névé, and climbed the peak that now bears his name. The first actual ascent was made in 1890 by Messrs. Huber, Sulzer, and H. Cooper by a couloir on the N.W. face. For nine years the mountain remained unclimbed until in 1899 M. Leprince-Ringuet followed Mr. Green's route with success, descending from the col between Green Peak and Sir Donald, and joining the ordinary route up the rocks.

I arrived at Glacier from Vancouver on September 11 last summer. The hotel stands at the narrow entrance of a curious deep bay in the hills, and I know few more striking effects than when, as the train creeps round those wonderful loops in the line, and over the spider-legged trestle-bridges, the Great Glacier bursts into view, gleaming white amid the pines, with the splendid peak of Sir Donald towering right above you. With us came an American lady, who had ideas concerning the mountains. The crevasses of the Great Glacier, she maintained, were all artificial, and nothing could shake her conviction. Not a few Americans appear to think



J. Spencer

Juan Clinton Engraving Co.

Mount Sir Donald from Glacier Crest, Kilkirk.

that the glacier was put there by the C.P.R. as an ornament, and one citizen of the Great Republic actually asked the manageress of the hotel if it was there when she arrived! The season was waning, but the weather was fine and the opportunity too good to lose. I accordingly engaged two of the Swiss guides now stationed at the hotel by the C.P.R., Jacob Müller, of Grindelwald, and — Michel, and at 3.10 A.M. next morning we were off. A full moon lit up with a strangely weird radiance the beautiful forest path leading to the foot of the Illecellewaet Glacier—anybody who can pronounce, much less spell, that word ought, I think, to have a prize! The path soon ended, but there was a tiny trail beyond it which, as the dawn came up over the shoulder of the peak, seemed like a Piccadilly pavement after our experiences in the Bush Valley. We were soon above the trees and vegetation, and Sir Donald came into full view. A well-constructed moraine, very superior to the ordinary Swiss variety, took us to a glacier that leads up to the foot of the rocks. Here the most serious obstacle has to be passed—the schrund which stopped some of the earlier assailants of the peak. The snow bridge seemed quite equal to our weight, but it did not look at all inviting, and I can well imagine that in some seasons the crossing of it would be a difficult matter.

Just above the schrund we passed through a curious snow tunnel, then crossed one of the steepest little snow-slopes I ever was on, and reached the rocks. Here we had breakfast, and then zigzagged up the face on to the arête. The rocks are nowhere difficult according to modern standards, though very steep and always interesting. There was a good deal of snow still on the mountain, otherwise, I fancy, it might have been necessary to keep a sharp look-out for falling stones. We reached the summit at nine, when the guides amused me by at once claiming a record time for the ascent, which shows that modern Alpine ideas are already taking root in America's new mountain playground. The height of Sir Donald is about 10,700 ft., rather more than 6,500 ft. above Glacier.

The true charm of the Selkirks lies in their supremely lovely valleys, which are unsurpassed in any country that I know. Most of the higher peaks, apart from Sir Donald, lack distinction of form. Hence the view from its summit suffers from the want of any effective foreground. It is, of course, enormously extensive. One seems to be in the centre of a perfect world of mountains, a chaotic far-stretching wilderness of peak, snow-field, and valley, which in imagination you see extending hundreds of miles to the Pacific, nearly

a thousand miles northwards to Alaska, and Heaven knows how many thousands to the south. Bush Valley with its mountains, and the grand Selkirk peak we had seen from it, were quite clear, but a long thin line of cloud cut off the summits of Mount Forbes, Bryce, and other giants of the central chain, only the silver spire of Columbia piercing the vapour, and standing forth in solitary magnificence.

Some care was necessary in negotiating the steep slopes of now rapidly melting snow at the beginning of the descent, but, these passed, we made our way down without difficulty, and reached Glacier at two o'clock. I sat down to an excellent lunch, feeling very fit and hungry, and thinking that rock and snow climbing is, after all, a much easier and pleasanter pastime than battling with logs, devil-club creepers, and mosquitoes on the timber-choked slopes of the Bush River mountains. It was, however, not without a pang of regret that I reflected that this was to be my last expedition—for the present, at any rate—in this beautiful land, which is associated in my mind with so many delightful memories—hardships and discomforts, no doubt, not a few—yet these worse probably in the recital than the actual experience; pleasant hours that passed all too rapidly, as we spun our yarns round the big camp fire in the evening; incidents and adventures by flood and forest and mountain-side; and many scenes of mingled charm and sublimity. May some kind fate direct my footsteps thither again!

THE COUPE DE JAUIAC.

BY TEMPEST ANDERSON.

THE mountainous district on the right bank of the Rhone below Lyons comprised in the ancient Province of the Vivarais, and now in the Department of the Ardèche, presents many attractions to the lover of Nature. The mountains, it is true, are not of great magnitude, but their forms are as varied and their outlines as bold as those of many better known Alpine districts. The massif is much cut up into deep and often inaccessible valleys by the River Ardèche and its tributaries, and except the watering-place of Vals, which is a thoroughly modern place, the villages in them have retained many of their mediæval characteristics, including quite a specialty for bad inns, and, on this account mainly, ordinary tourists are almost unknown. There are, however, a few comfortable and passably clean resorts, notably Neyrac les