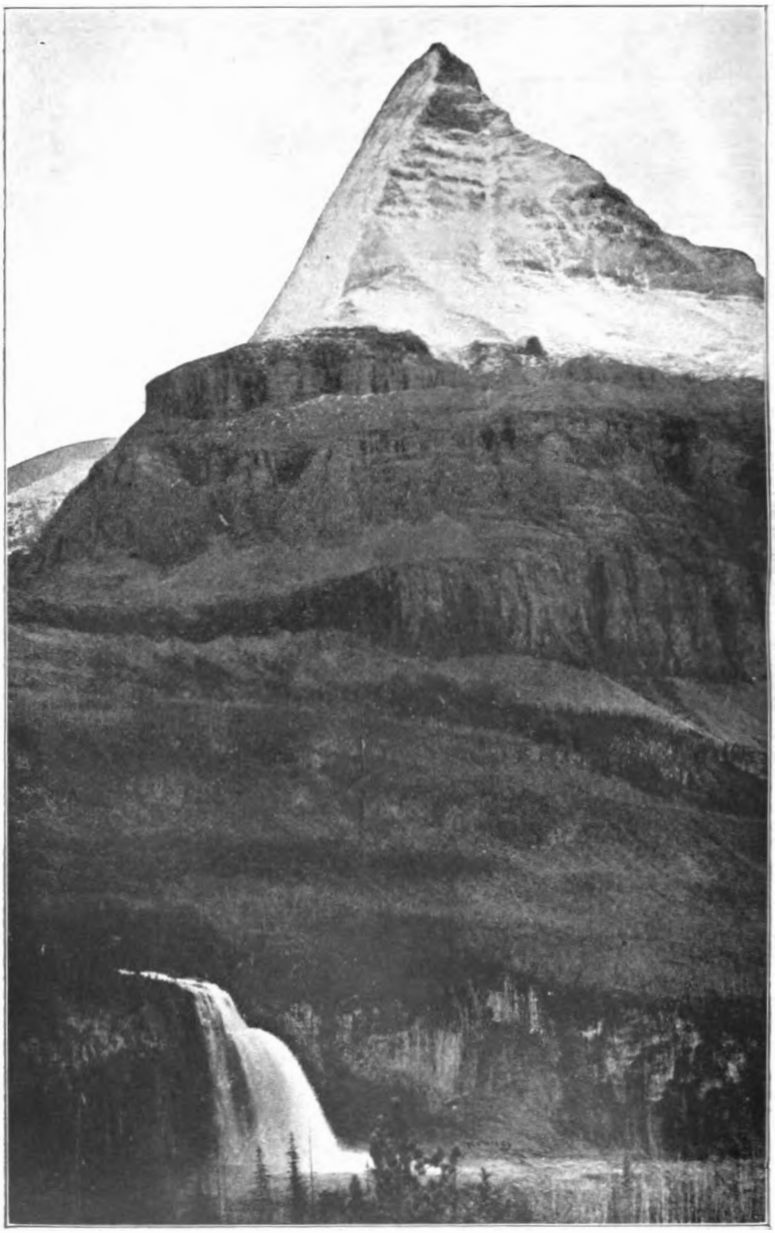


Rev. G. B. Kinney, photo. *Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*

MT. ROBSON, FROM THE NORTH.

Club on the death of his late Majesty King Edward the Seventh has been laid before Queen Alexandra, whose thanks I am to convey to you.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
(*Sgd.*) EDWARD TROUP.

THE HON. SECRETARY :
Alpine Club, 23 Savile Row, W.

AN ATTEMPT ON MOUNT ROBSON.

BY L. S. AMERY.

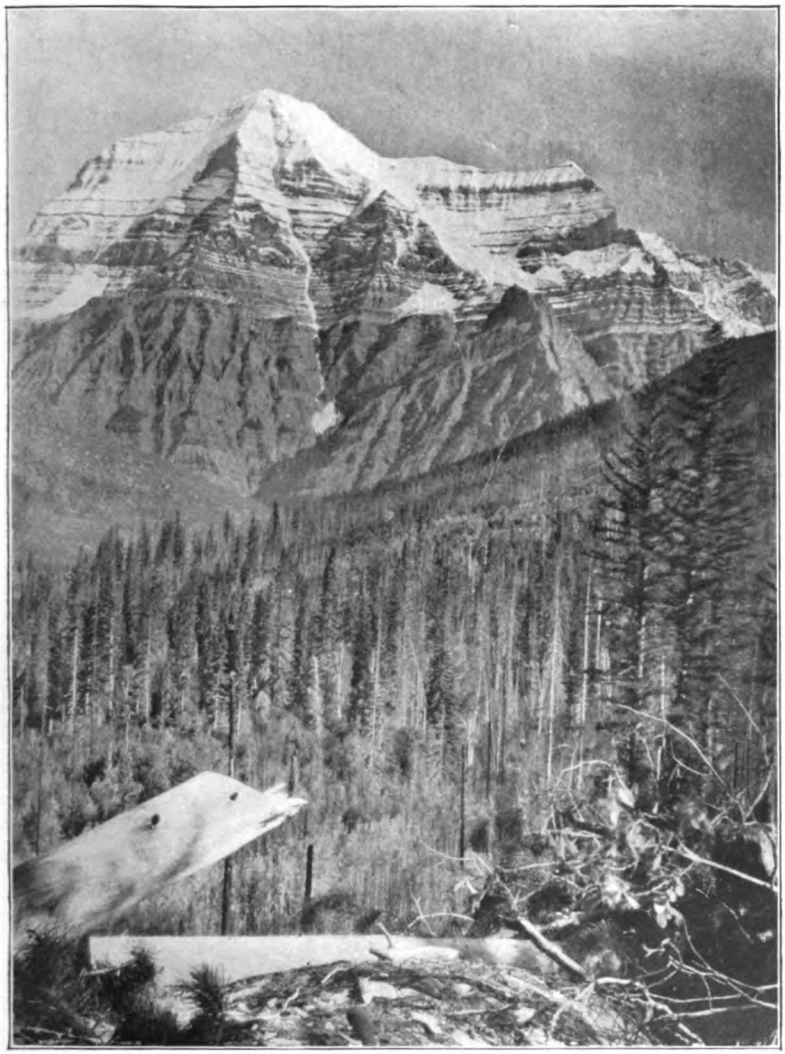
(Read before the Alpine Club June 7, 1910.)

MY object to-night is to give you a brief account of a very interesting, though not altogether successful, trip which Mr. Hastings, Mr. Mumm and myself made in the northern portion of the Rocky Mountains last summer. I shall not attempt to give you a general dissertation on the Rockies ; there are many members of the Club who are much more competent to do so than I am, and indeed I might run some risk of giving serious offence to the Club if I did not assume that most of its members were on terms of perfect familiarity with the main features of that great mountain chain. Though a comparatively new range geologically, the Rockies are no social upstarts. Nearly twenty years ago a friend of mine was walking in the Park behind an elderly dowager who was accompanied by a young scion of our ancient aristocracy, when he overheard the following words, which have remained deeply engraved on his memory ever since : ' Yes, Gerald, you are perfectly right to go to the Rockies ; all the best people go to the Rockies nowadays.' But another friend assures me that the vogue of the Rockies is even older, and has drawn my attention to what he considers a conclusive passage from Dickens. In the eighth chapter of ' Our Mutual Friend,' Mr. Lightwood, addressing Mr. Boffin, remarks as follows : ' Inasmuch as every man appears to be under a fatal spell which obliges him sooner or later to mention the Rocky Mountains in a tone of extreme familiarity, I hope you 'll excuse my pressing you into the service of that gigantic range of geographical bores.' The fatal spell in my case, gentlemen, was your secretary's command. I only hope when I have finished

my paper that you will not agree too cordially with Mr. Dickens as to the dulness of my subject.

The genesis of our expedition, I may say, was an invitation issued last year to members of this Club to attend the annual camp of the Canadian Alpine Club at Lake O'Hara. I am sure I am speaking for all of us who accepted that invitation when I say that our stay at the camp was one of the most delightful experiences we have ever had. The marvellous beauty of our surroundings, the glorious days out, the singing of songs and telling of stories round the blazing camp fire after supper, the well-earned rest on fragrant mattresses of springy spruce fronds, and, above all, the cheery kindness of our Canadian hosts and hostesses—these are indeed memories to cherish and a constant lure to draw us back again.

The theme of Mount Robson had been discussed between Mumm and myself before we started. It was discussed much more on the steamer, where we found that Hastings also had designs in the same quarter. All we knew was that Robson was the highest mountain in the Canadian Rockies, that it was within a few miles of the track across the Yellowhead Pass through which the Grand Trunk Pacific was destined to go, and that it was still unclimbed. In 1907 Dr. Coleman, of Toronto University, and the Rev. George Kinney made their way to the south-western foot of the mountain up the gorge of the Grand Fork River, from the junction of which with the Fraser Mount Robson can be seen towering overhead. In the following year they went up the Moose River, another tributary of the Fraser running in east of Mount Robson, and, crossing over a pass leading to a branch of the Smoky River, one of the tributaries of the mighty Arctic drainage system of the Mackenzie, reached the northern foot of the mountain. From that point they made two unsuccessful attempts on the eastern face, getting up to a height estimated by Dr. Coleman as 11,700 feet. When we arrived we heard that Mr. Kinney was off for another attempt, and, more serious still, that an American party was on its way from the Bow River resolved to plant the Stars and Stripes on a British summit. At Montreal I secured from the Grand Trunk offices a photograph of Robson as seen up the Grand Fork valley, a mighty rock face nearly 11,000 feet from summit to foot. Whatever difficulties and discouragements cropped up afterwards, a glance at this photograph was enough to give us fresh heart to continue our journey. My first misgivings already began at Ottawa, where I secured some maps of the route through the Yellowhead to the Fraser, done by



Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, photo. *Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*

MT. ROBSON, FROM THE S.W.

Up the valley of the Grand Fork.

the Geological Survey some years before, and realised that we had well over 300 miles to go from Edmonton before we got to the foot of our mountain. While the others went on direct to the camp at Lake O'Hara I hurried to Edmonton and made arrangements for the expedition, or, to be more accurate, threw myself upon the kindness of my friend Mr. Harry Evans of that town, who did for us all that warm-hearted enthusiasm and practical knowledge of pioneering conditions could do. After a few days at Lake O'Hara I came back with the rest of the party. On August 7 we started: Hastings, Mumm and his guide (Moritz Inderbinen), Mr. Priestley (a friend of Hastings', who hoped with rifle and fishing-rod to augment our store of provisions), and myself. A brother of mine was also somewhere on his way from the Soudan to join us, and we left word with Mr. Evans to despatch him in pursuit the moment he reached Edmonton.

Hearing that there was a road of sorts as far as Wolf Creek, 140 miles west, the furthest construction camp of the Grand Trunk Pacific, I had arranged for our pack outfit to go ahead to that point, and we left Edmonton in two buggies and two 'democrats,' or light four-wheeled carts. The first day we bowled along merrily at a rate that seemed to justify the assurances of Edmonton friends that we should get to Wolf Creek in four days. We took a week. Those of you who may run out in a few hours by train this summer can know nothing of the Odyssey of axle-deep mud through which we fared in seemingly endless forest. On one peculiarly unspeakable day of rain and slush Mumm had to be treated to a dose of the Robson photograph almost every hour to prevent a bolt back. A sunny afternoon at Wolf Creek, a delicious swim in the broad and tranquil Macleod, and, above all, the sight of our pack ponies grazing in a meadow banished all care. Alas! we little knew the ways of the pack pony or 'cayoose,' which provides the only means of land transport in these wild regions. The various characteristics of this ingenious but perverse quadruped can only be described in the language of the 'packers' who deal with him—that is to say, they cannot be described in this room. You may take it as axiomatic that some at least of your bunch of ponies will get lost every night, and will only be found after a search involving anything from one to six hours and a corresponding amount of profanity. Another two hours and much coaxing and cursing are spent in securely tying on the packs, which they with fiendish cunning spend the day in trying to dislodge. The 'outfit,' once started, is propelled by

alternate blandishment and blasphemy at the rate of about three miles an hour. Twenty-five miles is an exceptionally good march; fifteen is quite a good average. After a day or two all golden dreams of getting to Robson in a fortnight from Edmonton had vanished.

But to begin with all was hope. From the very first rise after leaving Wolf Creek we saw the long line of the delectable mountains in the distance: in front of us the gleam of the mighty glaciers round the source of the Athabaska; to the right, far away, a great solid mass, ending in a sheer cliff, Jasper Mountain of Roche Miette, guarding our gateway into the mountains. The first four days were spent ascending the course of the Macleod. Two days, one of burning heat and another of drenching rain, took us over a high divide into the valley of the Athabaska, where we found John Yates, who had been Dr. Coleman's guide and chief packer the year before, and whom a messenger sent ahead post haste had just managed to catch. There are few better men or pleasanter companions in the mountains. Two days more brought us past Folding Mountain to the foot of Roche Miette. The Athabaska here flows out right under Roche Miette, which rises over 5000 feet straight above it. On its left bank the mountains stand back a little, leaving a broad strip of open land on which once stood Jasper House, the great Hudson's Bay post in these regions, founded by the worthy Jasper Hawes or Howes in 1800. Above this pass the Athabaska spreads into a lake some ten miles long and three miles wide, known as Jasper Lake, girt by massive mountains and headed by a fine snow and rock peak, Mount Pyramid, some 9000 feet high. Jasper valley is, in truth, a most glorious entrance to this mountain region of the northern Rockies, and thoroughly characteristic of it in that spacious openness which is its chief charm. The beauty of the Rockies in any case consists less in the shape of individual peaks than in the general effect produced by the sheer rise of their great mountain masses from level valley floors, often occupied by the loveliest of lakes. This is the feature which chiefly distinguishes them from the Alps with their narrow, deep-cut valleys, and is even more marked in this northern region where the valleys are lower and wider and individual peaks higher than along the main line of the Canadian Pacific.

Above Jasper Lake live two or three families of half-breeds, descendants of old-time employees of the Company; and with the help of their 'dug outs'—the birch-bark canoe is unknown in these regions—we crossed the river, whose main channel

G. Hastings, photo. *Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*

YELLOWHEAD LAKE AND MT. PÉLÉE.

here was perhaps 350 yards across. The ponies, of course, had to swim. It was here that we heard that Mr. Kinney had climbed Robson, and a few hours later met him and his companion, a Mr. Donald Phillips, a young man who is training to become a professional guide.* After repeated attempts and prolonged delays, during which their supplies ran short and they were largely compelled to subsist on ptarmigan, marmots and 'gophers' (a sort of ground squirrel), they at last reached the summit on August 13 by way of the rocks on the north-west side. We heartily congratulated Mr. Kinney on a triumph won by such stubborn determination and such remarkable pluck. After all, the American peril had been averted. A few miles up the Athabaska we came to an actual farmhouse and to prosperous-looking cultivated fields, the home of an enterprising and inventive American called Swift, who settled up here in the wilds fifteen years ago in the conviction that sooner or later a railway must reach this valley and buy him out. Fresh eggs, milk, potatoes, meat—these luxuries were very tempting, and we spent a whole day at Swift's, resting, having our ponies shod, and listening to the racy anecdotes and descriptions of our kindly host. On the 26th we went on, passing the ruins of Henry House, the old North-West Company's station and rival of Jasper House below, and getting some fine glimpses up the valleys of the Maligne, where is a lake reputed to be the loveliest in the Rockies, and of the Athabaska, where are to be found those two remarkable depressions known as Mount Brown and Mount Hooker, once 16,000 feet high, but busily descending underground ever since. The trail then leaves the Athabaska and follows the relatively tame-looking valley of the Miette, getting at one point a fine glimpse of Mount Geikie (11,000 feet). The actual rise to the Yellowhead Pass is almost imperceptible, and it is said that the water in the forest on the pass itself sometimes runs east into the Miette and sometimes west into Yellowhead Lake and the Fraser. Both the pass and the Tête Jaune Cache, fifty miles further on, are called after a gigantic yellow-haired half-breed hunter employed by Jasper Hawes. While camping in the pass we met the American party, not mountaineers at all, but intent on minerals, and led by that admirable guide Jim Stephens. Yellowhead Lake is an exquisite spot. On its

* In the *Canadian Alpine Journal*, vol. ii. No. 2, pp. 21, foll., under the title 'To the Top of Mt. Robson' will be found the narratives of Revd. G. Kinney and Mr. Donald Phillips.—EDITOR A. J.

north side rises the sharply serrated crest of the Yellowhead Mountain; on the south stands a single peak, beautiful both in shape and in the rich colouring of its rocks, known as Mount Pélée (11,000 feet or so).

Shortly after leaving Yellowhead Lake we saw, over the summit of the Rainbow Mountains in front of us, a small crest of snow, which we suddenly realised must be Robson, though no one seems ever to have looked for it before from here. Next day (August 30) we struck up the beautiful valley of the milky blue Moose River and camped in a pleasant meadow some six or seven miles from the head of the west branch of the river, where half a dozen fine glaciers converge, in the middle of which rises a sharply defined and picturesque summit. The route to the northern foot of Robson, so Yates told us, now lay to our right up the eastern branch of the Moose, and involved a *détour* of three or four days. But we had seen Robson; we knew it was somewhere within a few miles to our left front, and we decided to make a reconnaissance up the head of our valley to see if it could not be approached by that route. But before that we resolved on an off-day, spent gloriously, bathing, washing and mending clothes, lolling about in pyjamas, and dreaming of great exploits to come.

At 12.45 A.M. on September 1 we started off. We crossed the meadow under a brilliant moon, and then plunged into the darkness of the forest. Hastings led with admirable skill with his lantern, but the forest grew thicker and thicker, and even he in one impenetrable wilderness managed to turn a complete circle. About 5 A.M. we emerged, and heaved a sigh of relief at the thought that the long hours of groping and crawling were over. An hour's scramble along the edge of the river in a rocky ravine brought us to a place where we could cross, and there we breakfasted. Another hour brought us to the foot of the glacier, where we put on our crampons and started off rejoicing. The glacier proved far more crevassed than we thought, and after two hours of extremely ingenious ice-work on the part of Hastings and Inderbinen we were driven off on to the rocks and moraine on the left bank. Presently we ventured back and got on to a snow slope up which we trudged till 1.30, when we found ourselves on top, with a great snow plain extending away for miles and with all view of Robson shut out by the peak on our left. Inderbinen and I tramped on a couple of miles to a gap, whence we got a magnificent view of Robson, not a rock mountain as in our cherished photograph of the western face, but a tremendous rampart of snow and ice

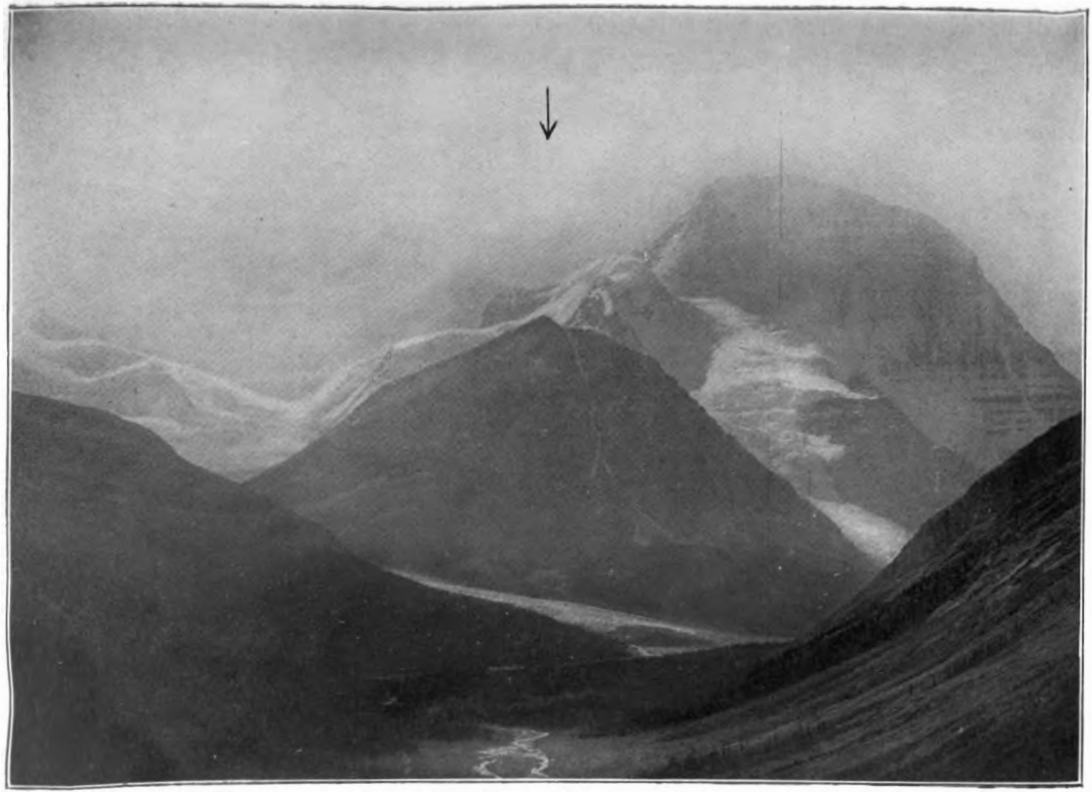
soaring up with a glorious sweep of outline that held me simply spellbound. Hastings and Mumm meanwhile went off to a ridge whence they got a somewhat less perfect view of Robson, but an equally fine view in other directions. It was indeed a marvellous panorama we enjoyed from here. To the south-west and south an endless sea of unknown peaks, the great mass of the Rockies and of that continuation of the Selkirks which runs north of the bend of the Columbia; to the west Robson and a fine pointed peak just beyond, and another wilderness of mountains round to the north and north-east. But we realised that even if we had discovered a good climber's pass from the Moose River to the glacier which runs along the eastern foot of Robson, it was no good for our immediate purpose of attempting the mountain, and that considerations of transport and supply would compel us to go round after all.

At 4.30 we bethought us of the return journey. The idea of the dark forest below filled us with a profound reluctance. A brilliant scheme suggested itself. We would walk over the snow right round the head of the glaciers, get off the most easterly on to the slopes of steep grass above the forest, and keep up on these till we were vertically over our camp and could drop straight down. The first part of the scheme worked very well, and by 7.30 we were at the foot of the easternmost glacier and making our way along slopes of grass and short scrub. A sudden lateral valley with precipitous sides forced us some way down the hill, and at 8.30 we made a fire near a stream, consumed a luxurious meal, and rested for over an hour. At this point I think an invocation to the Muse is required before describing the events of this night of nights. For a while we went on happily along the steep slope sprinkled with clumps of trees. Suddenly we emerged on a clearing, and were just preparing to rejoice, when the moonlight revealed the supposed clearing as a single smooth slab of rock, a hundred yards or more across, extending upwards to the mountain crest almost without a flaw, and downwards perhaps a thousand feet into the forest. There was nothing for it but to scramble down along its edge for some hundreds of feet till we found a horizontal crack, by which we hesitatingly fared across. Once more we struck upwards and onwards, crawling through tangled forest and brushwood set on the steep slope, our weariness receiving some consolation from a wonderful moonlight apparition of Robson towering above the mountains across our valley. Then came the unmentionable discovery of yet another slab, larger and steeper, if anything, than the first. Down

once more and once more across by a perilous traverse. And now came the climax of the night's enjoyment. Imagine a forest as thick as it is possible for a forest to grow. Pile in fallen trees between the standing ones in great heaps like spillikins. Fill in the chinks with brushwood and brambles. Set the whole on a slope so steep and slabby that you have to hang on with your hands most of the time. Lastly, illuminate by candle and serve up at the twenty-fifth hour of a hard day's climbing, and you may faintly realise that nightmare forest. An eternity—or maybe it was only an hour—of this taxed even Hastings' proud spirit, and yielding at last to our entreaties he consented to abandon the high level route and make down towards the river. A long and difficult descent followed, and at last we found ourselves at the bottom—on the wrong side of the forest which we had spent all night in circumventing and which we now found child's play compared with what we had been through. Soon afterwards daylight began again, and at 6 o'clock we reached camp, Hastings striding firmly ahead, myself, more than three-quarters asleep, crawling along in rear.

The next three days were spent going round by the eastern fork of the Moose and over a high pass into the valley of the Pipestone Creek, a branch of the Smoky, and so to the foot of Robson. It is a trip well worth doing: the open glades, the upland meadows full of flowers, including a strongly scented forget-me-not, the wonderful mountain views, culminating in a magnificent panorama of Robson from a jutting shoulder of mountain above the Smoky valley—all these ought to make this a great tourist's route in future. On September 5 we made our camp on a patch of tree-covered moraine at the foot of the great Kinney glacier, which descends along the eastern face of Robson from a high col to the south-east of the mountain. We were on the true continental divide. On one side of our camp the waters of the glacier ran off through a little lake to the Smoky and the Arctic Ocean, on the other they ran into Berg Lake, the source of the Grand Fork, and so eventually into the Pacific.

Next morning we started up the glacier on reconnaissance and soon got a capital view of the whole eastern face. The general slope of the summit ridge as seen from here, coupled with its appearance on the reverse side as shown in our photograph of the western face, indicated no serious difficulties. The question was how to get on to the ridge. The south-eastern end was an absolutely vertical cliff, and so all that remained



G Hastings, photo. *Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*

MT. ROBSON, FROM THE EAST.

Looking up the valley of the Smoky River. (The arrow shows the line of ascent).

was to find some way up the face. This looked appallingly steep and badly corniced. Even where the snow and ice had managed to hang, tremendous break-offs barred the way. Presently Hastings, who had been glued to the telescope paying no heed to all our discussions, announced that he had found what he wanted, and pointed to a little strip where the snow was continuous and where, he conjectured, the slope was a shade less steep than anywhere else. We all agreed that the solution had been found. To get to the foot of this slope was perfectly feasible, and had in fact been done by the brothers Coleman with Mr. Kinney and Yates the year before. Yates pointed out their route up the sides of a great snow-capped bulge of rock which he called the 'Helmet,' and we thought that looked as short as any other. Mumm and I both favoured the idea of camping as far up the glacier as we could get that afternoon. But Hastings has a theory that it is always better to start three or four hours earlier and have a comfortable sleep in the main camp than to sleep out in discomfort, and we complied. It is all a question of degree, of course, and of personal preferences. My own opinion, after two experiments with the Hastings method, remains in favour of advanced camps. However uncomfortable the night, one really sleeps more than one thinks, and in any case the limbs are rested; whereas the other plan means that one is already beginning to be tired when the main work of the day has to be tackled. We cached some provisions under a prominent rock on the glacier and returned, well pleased and convinced that if the glorious weather would only hold on a few days the peak would be ours. That afternoon my brother arrived with three packers, a dozen ponies, and substantial reinforcements in the way of supplies. He had done a world's record for the trip, Khartoum to Robson *viâ* Alexandria, Marseilles, London, Quebec, Edmonton, and his chief desire was to go straight on to the summit. But we were already four on the rope, one too many for rapid movement as it was, and we consoled him by the promise of a second ascent to be attempted later in the week.

We were off by 12.45 on September 7 and soon travelling rapidly up the glacier. The night was beautifully clear, but an ominously warm wind from the south caused us some anxiety. A whole hour was spent in trying to find our cache; and it was five before we had finished our first breakfast and made across to the foot of the Helmet, which we reached towards seven. The Helmet proved a long job. The warm night had spoiled the snow and we were sinking in knee deep.

In disgust we took to the rocks on the face of the Helmet, but I doubt if we saved much time, as I was disgracefully slow, not having touched rock for three years. The snow on the summit was worse, and altogether we must have lost a good two hours owing to its bad condition. Passing along just out of reach of some magnificent avalanches that came tumbling down the face on our right we made for our slope, which looked decidedly stiff. On the other hand, the wall of rock to our left was now seen to be ribbed vertically, and the nearest rib towards us, which projected through the ice down to within 300 feet or so of the bergschrund, did not look unreasonably steep. So we decided to begin with that and then work up by ice or rock, as might be most feasible.

The bergschrund was badly overhung, and Inderbinen, who was leading, had no little work in cutting a sort of slanting semi-tunnel by which we wriggled up. The ice was hard, very steep, and sufficiently covered with snow to add a great deal to Inderbinen's work cutting steps. About 11.30 we struck the rib, and for the next two hours made our way up, now on the rib, now in a gully on one side or the other, now on short patches of ice. The rock was rotten, covered with melting snow and very steep. But it was not exceptionally difficult, and a party in first-rate training would have got up a good deal faster than we did. As we ascended we noticed with satisfaction a small avalanche sweeping the slope we had originally thought of ascending. Presently the rock petered out and we came to a band of ice, perhaps 200 feet broad and steeper than anything we had done so far. Inderbinen afterwards vowed it was the steepest ice he had ever tackled, and certainly I have rarely felt quite so much like a fly crawling up a wall. Above us the last band of rock looked remarkably vertical, and the cornice above, ornamented with great projecting tusks of ice, seemed literally to overhang us. But, all the same, one or two chimneys indicated a feasible route by which another hour's work or less would bring us to the crest. Inderbinen had just reached the rocks when someone mentioned that it was nearly two o'clock. The party that calculates turns back. We found that we couldn't possibly reach the summit before five o'clock, and that meant a night out, possibly on the crest, certainly at the foot of the face above the Helmet. Had we known that this was to be our last chance I dare say we should have gone on. As it was, we decided reluctantly to leave the mountain for another day. Our one concern now was to get down as quick as we could, for at that hour of the

A. L. Mumm, photo. *Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*

EAST FACE OF MT. ROBSON.

(The arrow shows line of ascent).

day and in that muggy weather we had no business to be climbing up under that cornice at all. Five minutes later a crash and a couple of heavy volleys of small rocks and large lumps of ice down one of the gullies we had all but entered pointed a moral, which required no further comment, but effectually hastened our footsteps. By five o'clock we were safely over the bergschrund.

Instead of coming over the Helmet we made the return journey by way of the snowy col at the head of the glacier, from which point we enjoyed most magnificent views, both down the valley of the Grand Fork southwards and over the whole northern horizon, except where Robson itself shut out the view. I ought here to mention one very curious phenomenon. Going up in the early morning we had seen quite distinctly, though through a light haze, a steep pyramidal mountain away in the north-west towering high above everything else and looking as if it were at least Robson's equal. This interested us immensely, as it confirmed a story which Yates had heard from the Indians that there was a mountain higher than Robson nearly 50 miles or more to the north-west. Later on we were too busy to think about it, but when we came down in the afternoon we were amazed to find that no trace of it was to be seen, though all the other mountains in the midst of which it had stood were perfectly clear. Our only conclusion was that some refraction effect in the morning haze had lifted a peak, which was normally out of the range of view, right up over peaks in front of it. Whether the peak, therefore, is really an exceptionally high one or not it is impossible to say, but I must admit that my thoughts have been hankering after it ever since. From the col we found an easy snow route down on to the glacier and went down at a great pace. Towards eight we reached the spot where we had breakfasted at four in the morning, and supped, somewhat weary, at the edge of the moraine on the eastern side. A thunderstorm now started, and though it only rained heavily for a few minutes everything was pitch black, and it was quite impossible to see the mountains on either side of the glacier in order to get a bearing. Hastings, however, led us down the glacier for two hours with really marvellous skill. Towards the end our last little bit of candle began rapidly to waste away, and we only got off the end of the glacier with less than five minutes of candle to spare. A few steps more and we were in camp by 11.30, where we were met with cocoa and condolences. My brother related that he had been up the opposite side of the valley after goat in the

direction of a fine pointed peak fully 12,000 feet high, which we called the Great Gable, and reported that the glacier to the east of it was of enormous size, fully as large as the Aletsch. However, his memory may have deceived him.

Next day opened cold and rainy, and the next few days brought no improvement. Occasionally the weather lifted a little and allowed us to take photographs of the fine Robson glacier, which comes down tremendously steeply into Berg Lake, and of the steep pyramidal northern end of Robson. From here we could see fairly well where Mr. Kinney had gone up, and undoubtedly the route he chose, though involving some pretty difficult rock work, looked very much better than ours. At the foot of the pyramid is a splendid waterfall formed by the Grand Fork, the beginning of a tremendous series of cascades descending into the valley below, which runs right round the western foot of the mountain. As the weather seemed hopeless, and all of us were due to get home, we sorrowfully decided to break up camp. The rest of the party were going back to Edmonton. But I have a natural aversion to going back on my tracks and had from the first meant to go down the Fraser, thus following the future route of the Grand Trunk Pacific, or across from the Fraser to the Canoe River, and so down the Columbia. The party we met at the Yellowhead had informed us that they had been down some way from Tête Jaune Cache on a real boat, something much better than a ' dug out ' canoe, and that its owner and constructor, one Keller, was following them to Edmonton. At the ford of the Moose we left a letter for Keller in a cocoa tin tied to a pole telling him of my desire to go down the river and adding a map indicating our own whereabouts. He turned up a day or two after our repulse from Robson, ready for anything. With him I did a two days' scramble down the Grand Fork valley, thus making the first complete circuit of Robson. The Robson waterfall and the cañon below it, a beautiful little lake right under the foot of the mountain, and last of all the view back, in the evening light, at Robson itself made this a delightful though most laborious trip. At Tête Jaune Cache we were joined by my brother and started off. Our first idea was to get across to the Canoe River and so to the Columbia, and we picked up an Indian and with him ascended a small river, the MacLennan, which runs up to the portage. But the Indian, afraid of the perils and hard work of the journey, deserted. We were too few to haul a heavy boat over several miles of portage. So we turned back and went down the Fraser. How we fared down

300 miles of that splendid river, how after weeks of bacon and tinned meats we feasted royally off bear and moose, how we shot sundry most exciting rapids—these are matters not strictly pertinent to my theme. I only refer to them to suggest that in the Rockies other amusements can be very well fitted in with a climbing expedition. The weather unfortunately remained rainy, but we got sufficient glimpses up side valleys of glaciers and snow peaks to suggest a fine field for exploration. Judging by some slides, kindly lent me by the Grand Trunk Pacific, there should be other opportunities at the extreme western end of their line along the valley of the Skeena.

I am afraid I have kept you very long. All I hope is that I have succeeded in interesting you in a new and practically untouched alpine region, quite distinct in many of its features from the better known region opened up by the Canadian Pacific, and quite as beautiful.

An Ascent of Matavanu in Savaii (German Samoa).

By TEMPEST ANDERSON, D.Sc., F.G.S.

BEFORE leaving England for a year's wandering among the Pacific Islands I had heard rumours of a new volcano in the Samoan Group. In New Zealand I ascertained that the report was well founded, and also that the mountain was still in activity. I changed my plans, left out Japan, and took a passage from Auckland on the steamer 'Atna,' one of the Union Line, which trades once a month to the Island groups of Tonga, Samoa and Fiji. She proved extremely comfortable. At Tonga I had an audience with his Majesty King George Tubau II, the last of the dusky potentates in the Pacific. It was evening as we approached the Samoan Islands, and we could see the light of the volcano reflected on the clouds at a distance of nearly 100 miles. The captain very kindly took the ship somewhat out of her course to give us a view of the lava flowing into the sea, which we saw it do in twelve or thirteen streams of different sizes, with the accompaniment of frequent steam explosions, and in due course we landed at Apia, the capital of German Samoa. I presented my credentials to the Governor, Dr. Solf, lunched with him at Vailima, the former home of Robert Louis Stevenson, and was duly accredited to the Amtmann of Savaii. But here a difficulty presented itself. Savaii, though the largest island of the group, is also one of the most backward, and there is