

The Kasbek district is the most easily reached and Herr Schuster's very useful information as to the present conditions is very welcome. The 1912 edition of Bäder's 'Russland' contains useful maps of, and information about, the Caucasus.

MOUNT BLACKBURN (ALASKA), 16,140 ft.—The semi-weekly *Colonist*, of Victoria, B.C., of May 28, 1912, announces the ascent of this peak by Miss Dora Keen of Philadelphia on May 19. This is stated to be the first ascent of the great Copper River peak.

Miss Keen with her instruments and tents sailed from Seattle on April 10, and upon her arrival at Kennicott her chief of staff, John E. Barrett, superintendent of the Blackburn mine, was ready with his five men and two teams of dogs. The party encountered many storms that compelled them to remain under shelter for days at a time. On May 7 three of the party returned to Kennicott for fuel, alcohol and provisions, the supplies having become exhausted.

Miss Keen attempted to climb Mount Blackburn last August, but was obliged to turn back after she had discovered what she thought to be a feasible route. This route was followed successfully by the present expedition.

NEW RAILWAYS.—The line from Zweisimmen to Lenk was opened on June 8. The line from Ilanz to Disentis is announced to be opened on August 1.

BOOTNAILS.—The Allers pattern UHU Stollen are now made by Max Seib, Karlsruhe. I have used them for several years and find them admirable. They need attention to see the screws remain tight and they do not seem to answer for heavy men.

J. P. F.

SWISS ALPINE CLUB HUT BRITANNIA.—This hut, built on the Kleine Allalinhorn Saas Fee, will be presented to the Swiss Alpine Club on behalf of the British subscribers at the inauguration, which will take place on Saturday, August 17, 1912.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

The Canadian Rockies: New and Old Trails. By A. P. Coleman, Ph.D., F.R.G.S., Professor of Geology in the University of Toronto. London: T. Fisher Unwin. 1911.

Everyone who cares for Alpine literature (using that adjective in its most comprehensive sense) will give a hearty welcome to this genial and attractive volume, in which Mr. Coleman, one of the original Vice-Presidents, and the second President, of the Alpine Club of

Canada, tells the story of eight exploratory mountaineering trips, extending over a period of a quarter of a century, in the Rockies and the Selkirks. Its appearance is doubly satisfactory because, so far as we are aware, no previous account of the four earliest journeys has ever appeared before, and Mr. Coleman, though well known as the discoverer of Fortress Lake and the exposé of Mts. Brown and Hooker, has still hardly received the full meed of credit due to him as a pioneer. The present narrative of them is simply fascinating, and, belated though it is, breathes throughout the first fresh delight felt by the discoverer of a new playground.

In May 1884 Mr. Coleman started in the semi-weekly train from Winnipeg to pay his first visit to the Rockies, and he enchains the reader's attention from the opening page with a lively description of the journey (which occupied three days and two nights) across the prairie to Calgary, then a town of log cabins and about one thousand inhabitants. It was an interesting moment. Two or three months later some members of the British Association travelled by train to Hector on the Continental Divide, and two of them, Mr. R. M. Barrington, one of our own members, and Dr. Swanzy, continued the journey westward and made the first passage across the Rockies and Selkirks to the Pacific. A year earlier the first Canadian Alpine Club had been instituted by Sir Sanford Fleming and a few others on the summit of Rogers Pass, but these were all there primarily on business, as surveyors and railway-men; probably Mr. Coleman was the first traveller whom love of the mountains pure and simple (learned by him in the Alps and Norway) brought to the Rocky Mountains of Canada from the East.

After a short stay at his brother's ranche near Morley, he went on to 'Railhead,' which was then at Laggan, a few miles short of Hector, and thence climbed the nearest mountain with a Scotch engineer. 'It was only a commonplace mountain,' he says, 'about eight thousand feet high, without a name so far as I am aware,' but it was a beginning. Next day he visited Lake Louise, which had been discovered only two years before, and then descended into British Columbia with a pack-train. Mr. Coleman describes himself as a 'tenderfoot' in relation to this, one of the two principal methods of Canadian travel. In the other method, which prevails in the Eastern provinces, *viz.* canoeing, he was an expert, and in the arts of camp life and the whole business of taking care of oneself in the wilderness, he possessed ample resources, with an abundant reserve over for emergencies, which were varied and numerous.

He rafted over the Columbia and spent some time in the Selkirks, exploring the N. branch of the Spillimacheen River. On the way back he made the ascent of Castle Mountain near Silverton, and returned to civilisation full of enthusiasm for the mountains though by no means enamoured of 'packing' as a mode of travel. In the following year the railway took him to Donald, whence he drove over Rogers Pass to Revelstoke, with the double object of going up

to the Big Bend of the Columbia and seeing something of the placer-mining then going on in that region, and of exploring the N. portion of the Selkirk range. His idea was to make the river his base of operations, and thence to go on foot up the side valleys, carrying what was needful for a few days on his back. He did explore one of the creeks to its head, and had fleeting glimpses of 'wild ice-covered peaks apparently quite equal to the fine mountains climbed and mapped by Green and Wheeler near Glacier.' But the expedition was not altogether a success, and the N. Selkirks remained 'a tantalising mystery,' as indeed one may almost say they have remained to this day. It must be remembered that on both these trips he had no fellow-traveller with him, and on the second his only companions were men whom he picked up by chance at Revelstoke or up the river. This fact no doubt supplies at least in part the answer to a question which forces itself upon the ordinary Alpine reader, namely, why he took no steps to make a nearer acquaintance with the mountains which were within easy reach of him, the fine groups which he saw from Lakes Louise and Glacier. Here, one thinks now, were opportunities close at hand that might well have satisfied the most ardent and strenuous of explorers. Mr. Coleman might perhaps have come round to this way of thinking, but about this time he fell under the spell of those reputed giants, Mt. Brown and Mt. Hooker, which lured him irresistibly for three seasons. His first attempt to reach them, in 1888, was made from the W. 'One had, it appeared, *only* to canoe seventy miles down the Columbia from Beavermouth on the railway, and then follow the old portage trail up Wood River to the pass at the foot of Mount Hooker.' He found a comrade, inexperienced, but as staunch and courageous as himself, and in an astoundingly light-hearted fashion the two set off, making light of the warnings of a sagacious Beavermouth old-timer. All went well till they were pulled up short by Surprise Rapids. After some vain attempts to get round them, and an ascent of 'Surprise Mt.' (c. 8400 ft.), they actually shot these rapids on a raft of their own manufacture, but gained nothing by this reckless adventure except the satisfaction of having accomplished it and lived to tell the story (and a thrilling story it is). However, quite undaunted, they made another start along the E. bank, and only abandoned the quest through a shortage of provisions.

This experience persuaded Mr. Coleman to abandon his predilection for water-transport and reluctantly to accept the fact that 'the cayuse must be the canoe of the mountains.' His second expedition (1892) was organized accordingly, and comprised his brother, the Morley rancher, and two other Canadians, with two Indians and an outfit of packhorses. Wishing to reach Mts. Hooker and Brown as quickly as possible, they travelled as far as the Kootenay plains by an old Indian trail, well to the E. of the lines taken later by Mr. Wilcox and his successors, and thus never came into touch with the peaks and glaciers of the main chain till they reached the

Athabasca. But before this a cruel misfortune befell the expedition. One of its members fell ill and had to be taken back to Laggan, and an invaluable fortnight was lost. Ultimately the four remaining white men, leaving the horses and the Indians, started, heavily laden, up the first likely-looking tributary coming into the Athabasca from the West, in the hope that it might be the Whirlpool river and lead them to their goal. It was not the Whirlpool, but they had the satisfaction of discovering the beautiful Fortress Lake and ascending Misty Mountain, a snowy peak of over 10,000 feet, and then were obliged to return.

Next year nearly the same party set out again, leaving the Indians behind and taking with them an expert packer, also a collapsible boat which proved extremely useful. This time they managed to overshoot the mark, passed the Whirlpool river without seeing it, and went some little distance up the Miette valley, on the Yellowhead pass route, before they found out their mistake. Finally, however, the real Whirlpool was reached. On the way up Mr. Coleman met with a serious accident, and was bitterly disappointed at the thought that after all their trouble he would not be able to climb Mt. Brown. Then came the great disillusion: the Committee's Punch Bowl on the Athabasca pass was reached, and Mts. Brown and Hooker stood revealed as imposters and frauds.

Mr. Coleman sent a short account of this expedition to the 'Geographical Journal,' but it is hardly to be wondered at that Mr. Wilcox and others should have felt some doubt as to whether he had not again gone up the wrong valley, and even now the fact that these mountains figured in all the maps for so many years with those preposterous heights assigned to them remains about the oddest of the many odd things in mountain geography.

So, rather unsatisfactorily, Mr. Coleman's pioneering in the main chain of the Rockies S. of the Yellowhead came to an end. If the actual mountaineering results were slender, this is largely due to the Brown and Hooker imposture, partly also to some pieces of pure bad fortune (Mr. Coleman was dogged by quite extraordinary ill-luck), and partly to the delays and reverses which are practically inevitable where both the country and the conditions of travel are so strange and unknown. It must be borne in mind that Mr. Coleman's operations were over before those of his successors, Wilcox, Collie, Outram and others, had even begun. The work is by no means completed; considerable gaps remain to be filled up between the peaks round the Columbia Icefield and the Athabasca Pass, and the whole region between the Athabasca and Yellowhead Passes is still quite untouched. We know nothing at all as yet of its most conspicuous peak, Mt. Geikie, but the present writer, who had a pretty good view of it from the slopes of the Yellowhead Mountain some twenty or thirty miles away, believes its N. face to be one of the finest things in the Rockies, and is prospectively envious of the party, whoever they may be, that first has an opportunity of inspecting it more

closely. The presence of the railway and of a tourist centre at FitzHugh will of course, as Mr. Coleman points out, immensely facilitate further exploration, and the cross-country journey from FitzHugh to Laggan is bound to become in the near future almost as popular a trip as the 'High Level Route' from Zermatt to Chamonix.

After a chapter on a short holiday spent in the Brazeau range in 1902, Mr. Coleman goes on to tell the story of the two first visits to Mt. Robson, made in 1907 and 1908, which have already been more briefly described in the 'Canadian Alpine Journal' by Dr. Kinney. Little was accomplished on the earlier occasion except to dissipate the suspicion, not unnaturally entertained by Mr. Coleman, that Mt. Robson, too, might be an impostor; but the 1908 expedition, though not crowned with success, had important results. It opened the new route to Mt. Robson by the Moose River and Pass, which enables horses to be taken to the N. foot of the mountain, and led directly to the brilliant triumph achieved on it by Mr. Kinney a year later. The weather encountered was abominable; indeed there is only too much reason to think that Mr. Coleman is correct in saying that Mt. Robson's peculiar position gives it 'a remarkable climate of its own,' and a remarkably bad one. In his chapter on 'Later Ascents,' Mr. Coleman, when referring to the attempt of the English party in 1909, is unfortunately misled by the confusion into which they fell between the 'Dome' and the 'Helmet'; they did not in fact go near the 'Helmet,' but like Mr. Coleman crossed the Dome, and made their partial ascent of the E. face to the S., not the N., of the point where his party turned back. To bring this chapter up to date it may be mentioned that the guide, Konrad Kain, who accompanied Mr. Wheeler's survey party in 1911, ascended Mt. Resplendent as well as a peak on the W. side of the Grand Forks. He has thus probably inspected Mt. Robson from every side, and gave his opinion that the route from the E. taken by Mr. Coleman in 1908 and by the English 1909 party is the best one. On the other hand Dr. Collie's party in 1910 considered this route dangerous, and, had weather permitted, would have tried the mountain on the side climbed by Mr. Kinney. The book closes with a short geological history of the Rockies and a charmingly written sketch of the great ranges of North America (with which Mr. Coleman, who has climbed Orizaba, has a very extensive personal acquaintance), and of their mountaineering possibilities. There is a useful map, and the illustrations are numerous and well chosen.