

But suppose we discard the slow-moving steamboat and take air-line passage for the summit of Mt. Hood. Conspicuous by its central position among the high peaks of the northern Sierras, easily accessible by means of the old immigrant road which crosses its southern flank, and in full view from all the large towns of Oregon, Mt. Hood has been more often ascended, berhymed and painted than any of its majestic brotherhood.

Of the sixty miles which lie between it and Portland we need not speak, though the slender firs swaying at the slightest wind, the vine-maples draped with moss-wreaths, the brooks and waterfalls along the valley of the milk-white Sandy are very beautiful if not practically useful, and the lonely farms carved from the forest by years of patient labor, are eminently useful if not beautiful.

We must stop one moment, however, on Laurel Hill to breathe the sweet scent of the Mountain Balm, most beautiful of Oregon shrubs, and to view the zigzag road down which the immigrants of thirty years ago used to let their wagons by ropes. On this coast we make history as well as other things very fast.

To those immigrants of '45, looking eagerly from Laurel Hill out toward the maze of hill and plain which constituted the promised land, the only signs of life were Indian camp-fires and smoke of the prairie grass fired to startle game into the hunter's sight.

San Francisco, Portland, Walla Walla, to-day! Thirty years ago, a dismal range of sand hills, a tangled forest, an Indian camp-ground.

We cross the bright little prairies which lie at the foot of Mt. Hood, and make our last camp on the southern side of the mountain, at the edge of the snow. A clump of stunted hemlocks breaks the heavy wind, and a huge bon-fire mollifies the chilly air.

As night effaces the colorings of sunset, and the stars blaze with a brilliancy unknown at lower levels, and above all, when the rays of moonlight shoot across the snow-fields above us, scattering diamonds in their path, an overwhelming solitude settles down upon the lonely camp. The withered hemlocks writhe and groan in the icy wind, and the alpine blossoms cringe. For years, perhaps centuries, these stunted

evergreens have been struggling just on the edge of winter, and the bright little flowers have been fringing the very skirts of the snow-king himself.

On the other hand the glaciers have been, in their turn, creeping down towards the summer, and on the border land they trickle away drop by drop and loose themselves in the thickening vegetation.

The view from our camp by moonlight surpasses in wierd grandeur any of the daylight scenes. The inequalities of the wooded hills below us disappear in the imperfect light, and stretch away like a sea of ink, the uniform blackness relieved only by the sparkle of lakes here and there through which we seem to look into luminous depths far beneath.

Away southward, more fleecy than a cloud, lies the snowy mass of Mt. Jefferson. To the north the great dome of Mt. St. Helens seems to come nearer and nearer in the uncertain moonlight, until we imagine it hanging right above our heads, just ready to bury us beneath an avalanche of snow and rocks.

Some enterprising capitalist with a view to enhance his own finances by ministering to the happiness of the human race, will at no distant time establish a summer resort here. Every possible requisite for a mountain retreat exists here in its fulness. Groves of hemlock and of the beautiful *Picea Nobilis*, full of flowers and birds and an abundance of large game, lakes stocked with trout, sparkling mountain streams, everything, indeed, which can please the mind and eye and stomach of the lover of nature, has been bestowed here without stint.

Up in the morning in time to see the sun turn all the eastern flank of the mountains into a sheet of molten silver too bright to look at. Vast masses of fog rest on the seaward side of the mountain. On the east side there is not a vestige of cloud, and the great plain already begins to palpitate with the heat of the July morning, while we, in our breezy eyrie, six thousand feet above, slake our thirst with chunks of ice; for all the running streams have vanished during the night.

We must be armed with pike-poles, props and a hatchet; our eyes must be goggled and our faces blacked. After each has exhausted himself in laughing

at the grotesque appearance of the real, we start. For half a mile we follow a long ridge from which the snow has disappeared, while down the valleys on either side, run long tongues of snow, whose surface, dingy with glacial debris and with the dust blown from the denuded ridges, plainly shows that it has slid below its proper sphere.

The air is wondrously clear. We amuse ourselves in guessing at the distance of a huge drift rock in the center of the snow-field. It appears to be about five hundred yards. The guess of a mile is received with jeers. But for three hours that imperturbable mass of matter looked down upon our slippings and pantings and frequent prostrations full length upon the snow. It was over two miles, and very elastic miles too, from our guessing point.

We reach the Center Rocks or Sulphur Rocks as they are sometimes called, and now comes the tug of war. Only half a mile to the top, but we find to our grief that it is one of that class of half miles which count. The majority of Mt. Hood's visitors omit the ceremony of going beyond this point. They deny any imputations of exhaustion, but somehow they don't see that there is any practical benefit in exerting themselves just for the last thousand feet. The Sulphur Rocks are the remains of the old rim of the crater. The greater part of the crater walls on all sides except the north have crumbled away and been borne off on the backs of glaciers, as coolly if not as rapidly as Samson carried off the gates of Gaza. Still the sulphurous snorts which make these remaining shaggy masses quake, attest the presence somewhere under ground of the old volcano king, though perhaps he is not quite so regal now as in those old days, ages and ages ago, when Mt. Hood was shaking the last lingering spray of the ocean from which it had just arisen, off its steaming head. When the crater walls were complete on all sides, that volcanic crest doubtless shot up thousands of feet above its present altitude. Now only a few shattered columns remain to attest the colossal majesty of the ancient structure.

Behind us as we climb the broken fragments of the Sulphur Rocks lies a wondrous panorama; hills and valleys, lakes and forests. But we prefer to eat