

of Fraser in the grandeur of its scenery, and passes along Kamloops lake, Upper Thompson river and Shuswap lakes, and enters the Gold mountains [at Eagle pass, where the "last spike" ceremonies were celebrated on the 7th of November, 1885. This range is densely wooded, and the pass was discovered, with much difficulty, by following the flight of an eagle. The road descends the eastern slope of the mountains and crosses the Columbia river. (See page 455.) It seemed strange, indeed, to encounter this great river in the mountains of British Columbia, fully one thousand miles distant from where I had last seen it, in Oregon, and to learn that it is here navigable by steamboats. The river runs far to the north, and then bends sharply to the south again, around the head of the Selkirk mountains, finding its source in a system of lakes in the extreme southeastern portion of the province. The Indians never crossed the rugged Selkirks, but followed the course of the river, and when the well known engineer, Maj. A. B. Rogers, undertook to find a route for the road, they asserted that there was no pass. After two years of toil and hardship, he discovered the Rogers pass, the only practicable route across the mountains, and into it we plunged after crossing the river. Huge mountains, their sides densely timbered and their peaks covered with snow, rise up on every hand and seem to present an insurmountable barrier to further progress. Mt. Donald, the highest peak, and Mt. Glacier, are seen from the railroad, and present views of great magnificence. An ascent of six hundred

feet is made at one point within a distance of two miles, by what is known as "the loop" (see page 456), the lineal distance covered being nearly six miles. At the summit of the pass, the view is grand. Below, looking like a thread of green, flows Beaver river, while far above, rise the summit peaks. A commanding view is obtained from Stony creek trestle, an iron structure two hundred and ninety-six feet high, the highest railroad trestle in the world.

We descended Beaver river and Bear creek, to the second crossing of the Columbia, eighty miles by rail, and two hundred by river, from the former point of crossing. Before us, rose up in grandeur the main ridge of the Rocky mountains, the great backbone of the American continent, with Mt. Stephen (see page 424) towering far above the lesser summits. This great mountain range is crossed by the Kicking Horse pass, at an altitude of five thousand feet, being nearly three thousand feet lower than the highest altitude on the Central Pacific. The scenery of this range differs widely from that of the Gold and Selkirk mountains. Instead of the forests of huge trees and dense underbrush, huge rocky precipices appear. Great masses of stratified rock stand out in bold relief, their varying forms lending interest to every mile of the route, while snowy peaks and deep canyons call for constant admiration. Amid such scenes as these, the traveler bids adieu to British Columbia, as the train descends the valley of Bow river, to the great plains that lie to the eastward.

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