

THE DEVIL'S THUMB.

Just why his Satanic majesty should be honored, or burdened, as the case may be, with the position of god-father to an endless variety of freaks of nature in the west has never been made quite clear. The "slide," "foot-stool," and other objects thus associated with his name, and even the "punch bowl," might as properly have been christened with the name of some ancient saint as of him who took that headlong plunge to "bottomless perdition." Certainly the reason for naming the peak shown in the accompanying engraving "Devil's Thumb," can find no special warrant. Neither the water in the foreground nor the snow and ice above which it projects is suggestive of that long-tailed and double-horned gentleman and the region that owns his kingly sway. However, irrespective of propriety in its title, the object itself is a most striking one, and attracts the attention of every Alaskan tourist, sated though he may be with the wonderfully grand and beautiful scenery that has passed in procession before his eyes from the time he first took passage on the shore of Puget sound. Beyond all question, the Alaskan trip, with its almost continuous passage through narrow and sheltered channels, protected from the roughness of the open sea, and with its constant succession of vernal hills and Alpine mountains, is one of the most delightful open to the tourist, be he the most inveterate "globe trotter" that ever carried a binocular.

INDIAN RIVER, ALASKA.

To those who suppose Alaska to be a land of perpetual snow and ice, the summer resort of Jack Frost and his minions, the engraving of Indian river will come as a revelation. Could anything be more quietly beautiful or more suggestive of sunny skies and opening flowers? Could anything be more tempting to the enthusiastic angler than such a dashing stream, with its singing waters and deep, quiet pools under the shade of overhanging firs, where lurk the wary and sprightly trout? Alaska, at least that portion along the coast that falls under the tourist's eye, is in summer a land



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of sun-
shine and
flowers,
and in winter is
almost
constantly
veiled

in a mist of rain, instead of being buried beneath a mass of snow, while the little streams that leap down from the mountains to the sea seldom feel the fetters of the ice king. The terrible winter of Hiawatha, when

Ever thicker, thicker, thicker grew the ice on lake and river,
Ever deeper, deeper, deeper fell the snow o'er all the landscape,

familiar as it is to those who dwell in the region of the great lakes, is unknown on the southeastern coast of Alaska, though the latter lies 2,000 miles farther north. Across the range of rocky and snow-covered mountains that border closely upon the ocean, there are climatic conditions so radically different that Hiawatha himself might learn a few things about hard winters; and yet, in the summer time, for a few weeks, the almost continuous sunshine transforms even that bleak region into a land of flowers.

One of these typical coast streams is Indian river, whose beauty all tourists admire, and which many endeavor to carry away with them by the "you-press-the-button" process. Across the stream is one of those bridges of aboriginal construction so common in the western mountains before the more scientifically constructed bridges of the Caucasians supplanted them. These bridges are made by felling a tree so that it will fall across the stream at a desired point. Short pieces of saplings are then laid transversely across the tree trunk, at a distance of a few feet, and firmly secured by willow withes or thongs cut from hides. Upon these is laid a matting of brush, or, in later years, a footway of boards. When the stream is too wide for one tree, a place is selected where two of them stand on opposite banks in such a position that they can be felled so as to meet in the middle of the stream, resting upon some natural or artificial support. These bridges are such as would not inspire confidence in the breast of a timid man, who would hesitate to put his foot upon them, and yet in pioneer days those sturdy men who conquered the mountains and deserts of the west, often transferred their wagons across precipitous canyons and mountain streams upon bridges of a somewhat similar nature and constructed hastily for temporary use only. This, however, is not the only thing the pioneers did boldly and safely that those not reared in the same school of self reliance shrink from as impossible or too dangerous.

The reason for the mild climate on the Alaskan coast is the great Japan current, that river of warm water in the Pacific which corresponds to the Gulf stream in the Atlantic. Flowing northerly along the Asiatic coast from the tropics, it is deflected eastward and south-



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