Former parties, with the summit as their objective, must have instinctively edged *upwards*, while we bore, naturally, *downwards*. So, somehow or other, we had found the easy variation to a much abused route. Still, it is an awkward traverse, where the ankle must be greatly bent to enable the foot to cling to outward sloping slabs. Were it not for snow patches and dripping slabs, *Kletterschuhe* would be of splendid use. We had debouched on the Hörnli arête within 15–20 minutes' walk of the Solvay hut, where we made a prolonged halt. Mooser spent his time bending over the N. face and gazing into its ghastly depths.

Finally, we lazily commenced the descent by that route where sardine tins rattle down in avalanches. So slowly did we move at first that only the fear of a rescue party eventually quickened our footsteps. At 6.30 P.M. we entered the Belvedere. Thirst and many showers delayed us long in the Schwarzsee Hôtel, and our arrival at Zermatt was very late.

On the following morning a telegram despatched from Zermatt to the *Gazette de Lausanne* announced 'the first descent [17] of the *Z'mutt* arête.' Linus and Mooser were not the only disgruntled persons in that valley of Zermatt!

A Month in the Canadian Rockies.

By L. S. AMERY.

(Read before the Alpine Club, February 4, 1930.)

I BELIEVE it is a matter of dispute among historians whether the last words ever uttered by the younger Pitt were 'My country, how I leave my country,' or 'I think I could manage one of Bellamy's pork pies.' I can assure you, beyond dispute, that when the late Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs and the Colonies received his notice to quit, at the end of May last, his reflections on leaving Downing Street were not 'The Empire, how I leave the Empire,' but 'Now I can manage a climb in the Rockies.'

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[17] The first *descent* of the Z'mutt ridge was accomplished, Aug. 31, 1894, by two separate parties: Miss Bristow with Josef Pollinger and Mattias Zurbriggen; Captain Farrar with Daniel Maquignaz and (?) another. Miss Bristow made the ascent by the Hörnli ridge; Captain Farrar went up and down the Z'mutt. *A.J.* **37**, 226–7.—*Editor.*

The peculiar fascination of the Rockies is a theme on which more than one member of the Club, from Norman Collie downwards, has spoken in recent years, and I shall not attempt to descant on it at length or to attempt an elaborate comparison with the Alps. Suffice it to say that, broadly speaking, the Alps surpass the Rockies in the individual beauty as in the height of their peaks, but that the way in which the Rockies rise straight from their broad valley floors, or from the shores of the exquisite lakes that fill them, gives to the mountain landscape a massive dignity and a spacious harmony which are unsurpassed elsewhere. And if in the Alps both eye and heart rejoice in the constant contrast between Nature at her wildest and frugal, busy, cheerful human activity wresting from her every inch that can be tamed or utilized—while our more ignoble instincts complacently accept the fact that the way to and from our most glorious days of adventure are smoothed by motor buses and hotels, by paths and well-'bewirtschaftet' huts, by Bouvier or beer, by hot baths and sedulously attentive head-waiters—in the Rockies Nature is still absolutely by herself, untouched, untamed, and communion with her more continuous and deeper. There is a tranquil and mysterious delight in starting from a Swiss village in the still of night, hearing our boots clatter across the old bridge over the foaming torrent, passing the white-washed church and the dark silent houses, and so across dim fields to the upward path. There is also a fearful joy in doing Blondin by candlelight over a similar torrent on a single tapering tree-stem which feels more like a fishing-rod than a bridge, and then plunging through a jungle of alder bushes into a tangled forest where fallen trunks are piled up like spillikins. Each prelude to the day has its own charm.

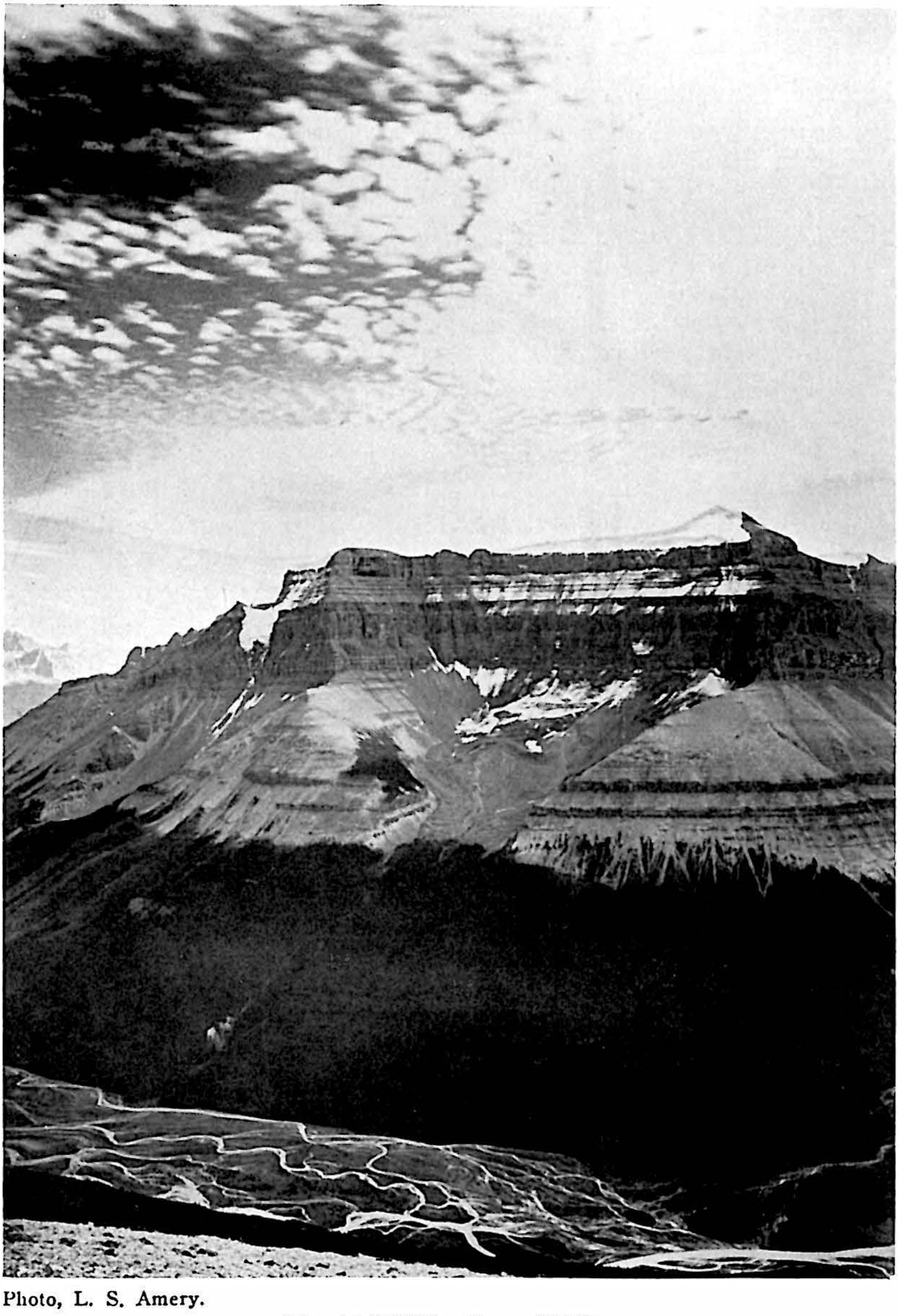
For my part, I was hungry for the Rockies. I had climbed a little in the neighbourhood of the main line of the Canadian Pacific in 1905, and in 1909 I was one of the party of our members who enjoyed the hospitality of the Canadian Alpine Club at their camp by Lake O'Hara—an unforgettable experience—and then, with Hastings, dear old Mumm and his faithful Moritz Inderbinen, walked some 400 miles from Edmonton to try to make the first ascent of Mt. Robson.[1] We failed and others succeeded. The railway opened up the wilderness we had traversed, and from that route at any rate I knew that the peculiar charm for me of the Rockies had

[1] *A.J.* **25,** 90–1; 293–305.

departed, to give way to luxurious hotels, to golf links and all the other attractions which have made Jasper so deservedly popular as a tourist centre. But I also knew that between the two railways lay some 200 miles of the main range still practically as untouched as when I gazed at its distant peaks twenty years ago, or for that matter when Collie and other pioneers first entered it a decade earlier. There are several more definite trails, and a certain number of trail riding and camping parties visit the region every summer—we met four in the course of a month's travelling. But there is still, as far as I am aware, not a single permanent dwelling between Lake Louise and Jasper, though a few log cabins have been erected for the use of the forest patrols or wardens of the two national parks—a wise provision of statesmanship, which we should do well to imitate—which cover the area between them.

This region contains most of the finest alpine scenery in the whole chain: the group of peaks round the magnificent Freshfield Glacier, the tremendous pyramid of Mt. Forbes, the Lyells, Mt. Alexandra, and above all the great Columbia Ice-field and the peaks around it—Mt. Columbia, the second highest in the chain, Mt. Bryce, The Twins, Mt. Athabaska, Mt. Saskatchewan, Mt. Alberta, to mention but a few—which form the real heart of the Rockies. From this great shield of ice, covering 150 square miles at an elevation of 10,000 ft. and over, the Athabaska flows away to the Arctic, the Saskatchewan to Hudson Bay and the Atlantic, and the Bush River towards the Columbia and so to the Pacific. Most of the main peaks have been climbed in the last few years. But there are still a few virgin summits to be conquered.

Among these was one which had for me a particular interest. When I passed through Canada on my official visit to the Dominions two years ago, I was informed that the Geographical Board at Ottawa had done me the honour of naming after me a fine peak of 10,940 ft. standing at the junction of the Alexandra and Saskatchewan rivers, and so at the very gateway of the Columbia Ice-field. The problem of nomenclature in new and uninhabited mountain ranges is no easy one. Our Anglo-Saxon powers of imagination have generally boggled at the task of inventing descriptive or fanciful names, and we have tended to fill up the map with personal labels. Occasionally a mountain is called after the first person to ascend it. But such persons are often young and not of sufficient note to rank as eponymous heroes. I can, indeed, myself



Photo, L. S. Amery.

Mt. AMERY. From N.W.



Photo, L. S. Amery.

"A_2". From Ridge to the S.
(Mt. UNWIN and Mt. CHARLTON in background.)

claim one of the minor peaks jutting out from the main mass of Mont aux Sources in the South African Drakensberg under this heading. But I have to confess that I had to wait twenty-five years for the label, and then I doubt if I really got it on climbing merits. More frequently they are called after more or less eminent persons who have never seen them, let alone attempted to scale them. In New Zealand, where public interest seems to have been almost non-existent a generation ago, an enthusiastic Teuton in the Government department concerned successfully baptized peaks galore after all the German soldiers, statesmen and scientists he could think of, and Cook and Tasman and Dampier are still wondering how on earth they came to be mixed up with Bismarck and Roon and Unser Fritz! In Canada things have been done better —does not a whole series of peaks immortalize members of this Club? But they have had to fill up with politicians and suchlike, and it was after one of that ilk, I suppose, that Mt. Amery was designated. The designation conveyed an obvious challenge. Why not raise Mt. Amery from the second to the first category and show myself justified in the appellation as a mountaineer, and not merely as a politician?

I reached Banff on August 13 and found that the kindness and energy of my friends, Mr. Murray Gibbon of the C.P.R. and Mr. Wheeler of the Canadian Alpine Club, had fixed up all my arrangements at shortest notice. A first-rate Swiss guide, Edward Feuz, with twenty years of Canadian experience, and a thoroughly well-manned and well-found pack train of Mr. Jack Brewster's would be ready to start within forty-eight hours. Mr. Wheeler himself, in spite of his sixty-nine years and a recent accident, was ready to come with me for the first ten days, and his incomparable knowledge of the mountains, gained by a lifetime in charge of the survey work along the mountain boundary between Alberta and British Columbia and by an ever-youthful ardour of mountaineering enthusiasm, made him an invaluable as well as a delightful addition to the party. As a third on the rope for the actual climbing Mr. Gibbon kindly offered to send along a keen young member of the C.P.R. publicity staff, Mr. Bryan Meredith. The forty-eight hours were pleasantly and usefully spent at the Canadian Alpine Club's beautiful little headquarters hostel at Banff, getting camp and climbing kit in order, and at Lake Louise, making final arrangements for the start, getting in a training walk, and above all enjoying the beauty of the place.

On the morning of the 15th we started: the company already

mentioned, our trail guide, Ray Lagacé, a couple of 'wranglers' to keep the pack train in motion, one of them an excellent camp cook, and two dozen ponies. The pack pony, or 'cayoose,' is, of course, the only possible form of transport in this country at present. It can scramble up and down the most impossible places, crawl or jump over fallen trees, wade bogs, ford or swim rushing rivers, and, above all, live on the country, finding grass where it can and leaves where it can't. The system has its defects. The carrying capacity of the individual animal is not very great. Marches have to be arranged to arrive for the night at some spot where there is a modicum of feed. As the animals have to be left free to gather their sustenance, they may take hours to collect in the morning; even a whole day may be lost in finding one or two artful dodgers in thick timber. Packing each animal takes a long time. The 'packers' have to be busy from before daylight to enable the 'train' to get away by 9.30. Once started, the train goes without a halt for five to eight hours at an average rate of 3 to 4 miles an hour over good track, but not more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour of distance on the map over ordinary rough up and down hill. Twenty miles in a day in the mountains is very good going.

Then comes the off-loading and unsaddling, the pitching of tents, the collecting and cutting-up of firewood, and of brushwood for bedding, and the preparation of supper. As family headquarters we had the regular Indian 'teepee,' or conical tent wound round a framework of poles. With its fireplace in the middle—the smoke curling up through a hole at the top—and beds and mats round in a circle, the teepee is the ideal centre for fireside talk, and an abiding refuge on wet days, of which we had not a few. Besides that I had a small tent of my own, 8 ft. by 6 ft., made for me by Messrs. Woods of Ottawa twenty years ago for our Mt. Robson expedition, and used in many parts of the world since. Weighing only about four pounds, this excellent little tent has stood every test of wind and weather. A couple of ground-sheets, a Kapok roll mattress and sleeping-bag and a couple of blankets made a portable and amply adequate roll of bedding, above all when the foundation of the bed is well laid with springy and fragrant fronds of spruce or balsam.

Four days took us to the Saskatchewan. The first two we ascended the valley of the Bow River, mostly through timber, with glorious views back at the mountains behind Lake Louise. Then a broad open strath, interspersed with trees towards the

top, took us over the Bow Pass into the picturesque valley of the Mistaya, dotted with a series of lakes, overhung with peaks of striking outline, and giving, through side valleys, on our left, glimpses of the great snowfields and summits of the main range. The afternoon of the 18th brought us down into the broad valley of the Saskatchewan, nearly half a mile wide here, as it divides into numerous channels with gravel flats between. We had been told it might be a case of swimming, hanging on to our horses' tails; but, beyond a ducking sustained by our leader in looking for the ever-shifting ford, we crossed over in no more than breast-high water with all our loads intact. Fording and re-fording rivers is, indeed, a great part of travelling in the Rockies, and the pluck with which the ponies breast the rushing icy water, and the skill with which they keep their footing, add pleasure as well as excitement to the experience.

The next day we marched up the left bank of the Saskatchewan and presently, rounding the base of Mt. Wilson, got our first glimpse of Mt. Amery. From the S.E. Mt. Amery looks a slender snow-capped rock tower. But by the time we reached the junction of the Alexandra its true outline became more apparent as an immensely solid bastion of terraced rock, whose steep concave northern face rises well over 6000 ft. from the flat valley of the Saskatchewan, crowned by a low gable or pediment of snow rising only a few hundred feet from the summit plateau: E. and W. it descends equally steeply into narrow lateral valleys. From the photographs which had been kindly supplied to me by Mr. Bridgeland, of the Canadian Survey, it seemed as if every attempt, whether by the flanking buttresses of the northern end or further along the main eastern or western faces of the mountain, would, sooner or later, bring us up against an impregnable band of cliff or an overhanging icefall. But it looked as if at the head of the western valley it might be possible to get on to the snowfield which forms the southern slope of the mountain. Accordingly with this plan in view we camped about 3 miles up the Alexandra at the junction of the torrent which comes down from this valley.

At 4 A.M. on the 20th Feuz, Meredith and myself pushed up the valley. Four hours going through thick timber and gravel flats brought us to a point sufficiently high up to see that there was no possible way from the head of the valley on to the snowfield. A tremendous amphitheatre of black cliff, overhung with glacier coming steeply down on all sides, made it

magnificent as scenery, but useless for our purpose. So we fell back on a study of the long western face, and presently Feuz declared that one of the ribs descending from it seemed more broken up than the rest and might offer a line to the summit ridge that was not completely barred by the last two most formidable tiers of cliff. So we breakfasted and discussed whether we should go back and bring up bivouac kit for an attempt next day, or start at once in spite of the fact that it was snowing hard above and the weather looking anything but pleasant. We came to no decision, but began drifting up the long slope of guarding screes. An hour later we roped where our ridge and the one next to the N. of it almost touched, making a cleft which opened into an amphitheatre which further up opened out into another even more impressive one. We traversed by shale bands into this lower amphitheatre and then back again to our ridge and so, by short steps of abrupt rock and zigzagging on shale ledges, made good progress till, about 12.30, we found ourselves up against the second and most formidable cliff band below the summit. On our own ridge the cliff cut us off abruptly. There seemed no feasible way out to the right, while to the left the cliff extended in a semicircle round the amphitheatre, black and forbidding, festooned with immense drip icicles and coated with vast sheets of glaze. Happily, just in the angle where our ridge joined enough snow had lodged on the drip ice to make a feasible chimney of 70–80 ft., which proved the key to the whole situation. More shale and another steep ice chimney with a traverse out to the left by good rock brought us to a broad shale slope forming the summit ridge (about 10,100 ft.). A raging blizzard hid everything from view and more than once nearly blew us off our feet. But there was no point in turning back, so we turned left up to where the shale joined the snow, and so on to the sharply defined but easy rock ridge leading to the final summit (about 2.45 P.M.). On a fine day Mt. Amery must offer a magnificent panorama of the main range which, from Forbes to Athabaska, curves round it. But a few hundred yards in occasional glimpses through the driving snow was all we got, and five minutes at the top to build our cairn was more than enough. The descent was uneventful but slow, as the snow-covered rocks invited cautious going. Then came endless screes to run and glissade, a tiring business for a first day out; and to find, when we thought we had nearly reached bottom, that there was an impossible cliff enforcing half an hour or more of traverse on scree, was vexatious to flesh and

spirit. However, at last we reached the gap by which we had come up, ran down the rest of the screes, and at 7.30 had our first reasonable meal among the trees. We pushed down the valley at 8, but soon decided that crawling and stumbling about by candlelight in the wood most of the night was not worth it. So we lit a fire and lay round it. The ground was wet and it drizzled all night, but one could always warm and dry one side, doze and then warm up the other.

On the 22nd we pushed up the valley of the Alexandra to the foot of the Alexandra Glacier and then to the right up the Castleguard River, finishing with a steep pull up to Castleguard Meadow. Some day Castleguard Meadow may become one of the chief tourist centres in the Rockies and boast its mammoth hotels, golf links and all the rest of it. But let me describe this mountain paradise as it is to-day, a week's journey from anywhere. The 'meadow' itself is an open valley or glade, 3 or 4 miles long and a mile wide, running roughly N. and S. at an elevation of 7000 ft. A few plantations of spruce are dotted here and there, and on its southern edge the meadow gradually merges into the dense forest of the slopes below. But for the most part it is covered by short heather and every kind of springy, cushiony herbage. At the end of August there were few flowers except Michaelmas daisies. But earlier in the year there must be abundance, not only of the white flower of the heather, and of a dwarf rhododendron—cousin to the alpenrose—but of columbine, purple larkspur, anemone and other Alpine flowers. Down this pleasant meadow runs a stream, in cold weather a clear rippling brook, when the sun melts the glaciers a powerful turbid torrent, which at its southern edge divides and falls in two picturesque waterfalls into a canyon, through which in a series of further waterfalls it reaches the Castleguard Valley 1500 ft. below.

My tent was pitched among the trees just beside the two topmost waterfalls. From it I looked S. over the steep wooded slope and the length of the Castleguard Valley at a series of lovely snow peaks, most prominent among them three summits of the Lyells, which with their folded mantle of snowfield and glacier recalled Monte Rosa as seen from above Zermatt. Then to the right, across the valley, the open view is blocked by the immense mass of mountain whose highest point is Mt. Spring Rice, a tremendous dark grey wall reaching up to the sky, its darkness and horizontal effect only intensified by a broad white band of hanging glacier along its whole face, and by the bold vertical steepness of a tower-like peak, the

Watchman, standing in front of it. Turning to the right again beyond this overhanging barrier the eye finds relief in looking down on to the summit of the Thompson Pass, with its lakes nestling close under the foot of The Watchman, and into the valley beyond with its far distant glimpse of the Selkirks. Then the sky is broken again by the soaring ridge of Mt. Bryce, the first part of it not unlike the great Mischabel ridge in the Pennines, the last a most formidable-looking tusk of white. Then relief once more in a low white saddle, an edge of the Columbia Ice-field, and then the castellated rocks and long snow shoulder of Mt. Castleguard itself. Thence, northwards, by lower ridges, lapped over by tongues of glacier, to the lofty broad peak of Mt. Athabaska and boldly serrated ridges above the Saskatchewan Glacier into which the meadow merges at its upper end. Last of all, closing in the meadow on its eastern side, is a series of four rock pyramids, in ascending scale but almost identical in outline, recalling the old step pyramid at Sakkara, not only in shape, but also in warmth of yellow and rose colouring as they light up with the evening sun.

The 23rd was a day of heavy rain and snow, and on the 24th Wheeler and Meredith unfortunately had to leave us. Feuz and I climbed Castleguard to take photographs and make plans. The peaks I had specially hoped to climb in this region were Saskatchewan, Columbia, and above all Bryce. Neither the 12 miles across the ice-field to Columbia nor the rocks of Saskatchewan were immediately inviting with all the fresh snow about, so we decided to fill in time by crossing over the Thompson Pass and reconnoitring Bryce from the S. This magnificent peak was climbed in 1901, along the whole length of its northern ridge from above Thompson Pass, by that tremendous pair, Outram and Christian Kaufmann, a feat that no one has ventured to emulate.[2]

Accordingly, on a glorious morning (August 25) we descended, with all our ponies and a few days' provisions, into the lower Castleguard Valley and thence climbed up, past the forest-framed deep greeny-blue mirror of Lake Watchman, to the summit of Thompson Pass (6700 ft.), where we lunched on the banks of the paler blue-green Cinema Lake, enjoying a panorama little inferior to that from Castleguard Meadow itself. From there an old trail, cut by Wheeler for survey purposes years ago and not used since, led down on the British Columbia side into the deep and narrow valley of the Rice Brook. This we followed, not without difficulty in places, to where it came

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[2] *A.J.* **21,** 464–75.

to a complete end at the head of a steep canyon by which our torrent discharged itself into the Bush River, one of the main tributaries of the Columbia. Next morning Feuz and I started off, loaded up with three days' provisions and some sleeping kit, to reconnoitre Mt. Bryce. Four hours' climbing up very steep grass and hard scree, with a sporting chimney or two to defeat such cliffs as we could not circumvent, brought us to the tree-line, where we selected a suitable spot to bivouac, with glorious views back across the valley at the cliffs of Spring Rice and at White Rose and a whole wilderness of nameless peaks W. of the S. fork of the Rice Brook. In front of us we could just see the summit of Bryce. An hour's climb brought us on to a moraine from which we had a splendid view of the whole S. face of our mountain.

In front of us was a great amphitheatre of rock curtained by two mighty ridges which converged on the right or S. angle of the final summit pyramid, whose S.W. face is a sheer wall of rock, its S.E. face a steep, very steep, snow and ice slope with patches of rock outcrop. From this S.E. face a tongue of snow and ice cuts the right-hand ridge and descends into the amphitheatre, broadening out into a steep glacier which presently spreads itself over the flatter valley floor. The right-hand ridge looked difficult of access, but two feasible routes suggested themselves. One was across the lower glacier and up the banded rocks of the main wall of the amphitheatre to the upper ice tongue and so on to the N.E. summit face. The other was by the left-hand or S.W. ridge. This merged into the impossibly steep S.W. face, but the field-glass showed snow patches which indicated a probable traverse to the right towards the ice tongue. It was a longer route, but free from risk of falling stones, so we decided in its favour.

We were off at 4.30 on August 27 by a bright but small moon and trudged steadily across to our ridge (1 hour), then for $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours along it, and breakfasted (8.45) by a patch of snow where the ridge is highest. From here the ridge runs almost level till just under the final pyramid. For the next hour we scrambled or balanced along the top of what was just a wall of loosely piled rock, nothing like so well laid as a stone wall on Dartmoor, but dropping down 2000 ft. to the glacier on one side and nearer 7000 ft. into the Bush River Valley on our left. The views from this aerial path across to Bush Peak and all the virgin district of which it is the centre, and up towards the S.W. face of Columbia, were magnificent, as was the view back southwards towards Mt. Freshfield. But anxiety about the shaky structure under our feet left little

leisure for contemplation. In places one was literally afraid of bringing the whole ridge away. At one point on the return journey the top of the ridge in the shape of a block measuring a yard or more each way slid from under me as I was sitting on it, and left me standing more or less in the space it had vacated. Only at the last where it joined on steeply to the face was there really difficult climbing, and here the rock, though still treacherous, was a good deal better. A final chimney brought us out, as we had hoped, at a ledge which, if not quite all we had imagined, still provided a feasible traverse to the right in three sections of 60–80 ft., each involving getting round a corner, interesting but not difficult. But these proceedings took time, and it was nearly 11 by the time we were on the snow near the head of the amphitheatre. We worked diagonally to the right and at the end of an hour were up on the snow saddle at the back of the final pyramid about 900 ft. below the summit. We made up the steep snow a little to the left of the middle patch or patches of rock, crossing the schrund with some care, the new snow not adhering too well to the ice beneath, and then bore across to the rocks. We went up these and then followed a well-defined snow arête of some 200 ft. joining the crest-line at a point perhaps 150 ft. below the final summit. The crest to our right, just below a sharp nick in it, was fantastically corniched over to the W. One great piece was like a huge maple leaf of snow curling boldly over on the far side; above the end of our arête the corniche reversed and overhung on our side. Progress up the arête was slow. The new snow was very deep, and each step required a lot of testing. Presently we reached a point where it could not be trusted and each step meant flogging away a lot of snow and then cutting steps into the ice.[3] The work got heavier and heavier, and about 1.30, when we still had

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[3] See Outram, *In the Heart of the Canadian Rockies*, p. 421: 'So steep was it (the S. slope) that it seemed marvellous how the glistening curtain of soft and yielding snow, massed on a slippery substratum of glare ice, could cling at such an angle.' Kaufmann, working along the main N. ridge, took the risk of not cutting through into the ice. But Outram's account shows that it was a great hazard, and on our steeper line of ascent, and with fresher snow, it would have been too great. On the other hand, reading Outram inclines me to the view that once on the main ridge, where the corniche overhung to the S.E., the going on the harder N.W. slope of the crest would have been better, and that this would have enabled us to get up more quickly than Feuz anticipated.



Photo, L. S. Amery.

Mt. BRYCE. S. Face.



Photo, L. S. Amery.

Lake "ULTRAMALIGNE." From Summit of "A_2."

another 100 ft. of our arête and 150 ft. of the final ridge to do, Feuz said it was no good going on. It would take another 2 or 3 hours to cut up to the summit, and it wasn't sensible to run the risk of negotiating our rotten ridge after dark, and possibly in bad weather, for the mere technical credit of completing an ascent which we had in fact proved, and when under better snow conditions we were not 20 minutes from the top. There are things one wouldn't have put up with in warm-blooded youth, 'Consule Planco,' but which middle-aged married men accept as sage counsel. But it took some days to shake off the gloom of that retreat. As it was, we were down in easy time and were in bivouac by nightfall.

On the 28th we made our way down early, trying a new route through the forest so as to avoid the terrific steep slopes and the cliff walls of our ascent. However, the wood was steep enough and not unprovided with cliffs. Along the edge of one of these which ran unbroken for some distance we followed a game track which suddenly came to a dead stop. Just opposite was the top of a tall dead spruce growing parallel to the cliff and not more than a yard from it, freely scored by bears' claws—the obvious ladder by which Bruin had solved the cliff problem. So we followed the wise bears and were presently rewarded by finding ourselves in acres of blueberries and raspberries, interspersed with the brilliant but unedible scarlet oval berries of King Solomon's Seal. And so back to camp. As no other peaks were accessible from this deep valley except by more trail cutting than we could afford time for,[4] we packed up and by forced marching were back at Castleguard Meadow that same night. The 29th, a perfect day, was given to taking our ease. Part of it was spent in a luxurious hot bath constructed by excavating a suitable hole with an ice axe and lining it with my waterproof ground sheet. To economise hot water all my washing joined me in the bath; the glacier stream alongside provided abundance of cold water to rinse us both. We then lay out in the sun, the washing festooned on bushes, myself in a natural armchair in the heather, blinking lazily at the strenuous mountain-tops and dipping, with an equal sense of contemplative remoteness, into the battles of the Iliad. The afternoon was given to the leisurely reconstruction of my torn and tattered coat with material secured by cutting the continuations off my breeches.

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[4] A trail could easily be cut down into the Bush River Valley, and so open up a wonderful new mountain field.

These days of idleness in camp between climbs and marches are always among the most treasured of memories.

Next day we were off before dawn to cross into Terrace Valley and tackle Saskatchewan. We made our way up the first line of cliffs at about the same point as Dr. Thorington in his first ascent (ours was, I believe, the second), but struck straight up from there to the W. summit—a route which avoided the tiresome shale terraces of Thorington's route and gave us some quite good rock work—and so along to the higher, E., summit (1.30 P.M.). The view was superb. Immediately facing us to the S. rose the immense western rock wall and low snow gable of Mt. Amery, our own line of ascent clearly traceable and looking absurdly vertical. Behind it soared the snowy pyramid of Mt. Forbes, then, peak on peak, the Freshfield group, the Lyells, Alexandra, Spring Rice, Bryce—our turning-point looking about a yard below the summit—the towering white mass of Columbia standing out of the great plain of snow spread between us, The Twins, Athabaska, Clemenceau, Alberta and a score more to the W. and N.W. Eastwards the eye rested only on occasional glaciers and snow peaks, for the rest on a vast confusion of rocky peaks and of deep valleys leading between them towards the foothills and the prairie. The descent was easy, but the march home long, and we had been 17 hours on our feet before we found our way into camp by candlelight. How good hot soup can be under those conditions!

The 31st was set down for a day of rest preparatory to a midnight start for Columbia. But the weather broke badly in the afternoon, and by next morning it was evident that it had made up its mind to stay bad. As I had to be at Jasper, six or seven days away, by the 10th, and wished to do a little climbing round Lake Maligne, the only thing was regretfully to abandon Columbia, set off northwards, and hope that the bad spell would be over in time to leave three or four days at the Maligne end. So in pouring rain we retreated down the valley, camping for the night at our old camping-ground at the foot of Mt. Amery. On September 2 we rode up the N. Saskatchewan in the teeth of an icy blizzard and camped early (no other feed being available within the day's march) at the edge of a broad shingle flat at a spot known as Rock Island Camp. A long day on the 3rd took us up the N. Saskatchewan and then to the N.E. and N. up to Nigel Pass, and so over into the upper Brazeau Valley. This is a beautiful route, but the splendid views we should have had of

Saskatchewan, Athabaska, and other peaks and snowfields were marred by snow and drizzle. The same was the case the next day when we crossed over from the Brazeau into the Jonas Valley and from there in a snowstorm over a ridge 8000 ft. high into the Poboktan Valley—an experience more akin to Antarctic exploration than to summer mountaineering. After that the weather improved, and the Poboktan Valley, with its softer landscape, offered a pleasant change. On the 5th we continued down the Poboktan Valley and then turned N. up the valley of the Poligne, a clear mountain stream coming down from the Maligne Pass. On the way I took a snapshot of a porcupine who had climbed up a small tree and was very reluctant to present his face to the camera. Stirring him up with a branch was a dangerous proceeding, for the porcupine does actually shoot his quills with great force for a distance of two or three yards, the impulse being given by a flick of the base of his stumpy little tail. The great feature of the landscape on the pass, however, were the marmots, much larger than their Swiss cousins and much tamer, looking for all the world, as they sat upright, like narrow little yellow barrels with black lids (their heads) and two black marks (their paws) in front. Of other game, I might mention incidentally, we saw on our tour plenty of goats, one flock of a dozen or more mountain sheep, a few moose, 'elk' and black bears, and some very large tracks of grizzly; happily, as we were unarmed, we did not run into any grizzly himself.

The valley of the Maligne River runs down from Maligne Pass northwards parallel to Maligne Lake, separated from it by a range of peaks of which we knew the northernmost, Mts. Unwin (10,500 ft.) and Charlton, and we believed also the southernmost, Mt. Mary Vaux (Mr. Howard Palmer's Rock Tower),[5] had been climbed in the last few years. Scrambling 200–300 ft. above the pass, Feuz and I got a splendid view of the back of the whole line of peaks, from Mt. Unwin to Rock Tower. Half-way between them was what looked as if it might be a fine rock summit, nearly as high as either of them, not indicated on our map. A long easy ridge seemed to lead quite close under it from our side. So we continued some 3 miles down the valley to what is known as Cut Tree Camp, prepared to spend a day or two on this side of the range.

On the morning of September 6 Feuz and I scrambled up the grassy slopes above our camp for the ridge we had seen

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[5] *A.J.* **36,** 101, footnote; illustrations 102, 103, 107.

from above the pass. We bore rather too far up to our right and, too lazy to descend 200 ft. into a gully and up again, kept on up, to the right of a bold rock peak, and so into a steep amphitheatre filled with a small glacier. Getting out of this on to a saddle between this lower peak and the main line of summits proved quite difficult and tricky climbing in places, the holds all sloping downwards and largely glazed. From the saddle it was easy rock scrambling and new snow up to a small peak (a first ascent such as it was) from which we looked straight down nearly 5000 ft. into the green waters of Lake Maligne, and across at a perfect sea of snowy peaks extending back from the E. shore of the lake and from its S. end. It was a magnificent panorama.

Immediately S. of us the ridge dropped and then lifted again to the broad snow shoulder of Rock Tower with its stern black cliffs dropping sheer towards the lake. Northwards the ridge sank and then rose, bold and very sharp, between a very steep W. face and a stupendous vertical E. face, to a fine pointed peak, very little, if at all, short of Rock Tower in height. Passing the saddle, which we might have reached two hours earlier if we had not gone out of the way, we tackled our peak. The first few hundred feet provided the best rock climbing I got this season; the rest was steep but easy. The summit itself was a sensational wedge or tusk of snow jutting right out on the lake-side. There was no evidence of either Mr. Palmer's or Dr. Strumia's activities, so we put up our cairn and our claim to the first ascent of a truly delightful peak, which I shall provisionally call 'A2' pending an official christening. The N. ridge of our peak dropped equally steeply to a long hump on the ridge between our peak and Mt. Charlton.

Below it, nestled in a shelf completely concealing it from almost every possible point of view, lay a smaller lake whose deep ultramarine contrasted vividly with the jade green of the main lake below. Two glaciers fell into this lake, detaching small icebergs which floated about like bits of white curd. When we got to Lake Maligne everyone was greatly excited over this lake, of which they had never heard, and hailed us as its discoverers. But I have since learnt that Mr. Palmer saw it from Mt. Unwin, and that it has been photographed from the air. From the lake below there is nothing, no overflow of any kind, to suggest the possibility of such a lake, or, indeed, of room for it.

Wonderful as were the near views, the real wonder was the view westward. Below was the lovely valley of the Maligne

River; then yet another, behind which, right through the heart of this grey limestone country, ran a ridge of red quartzite of which we had already seen some on the Brazeau and the Poboktan; then the deep trough of the Athabaska; and then, beyond and above all, the whole line of the Rockies for 200 miles from Mt. Forbes to Mt. Whitehorn beyond Mt. Robson. Saskatchewan, Athabaska, Columbia, The Twins, Alberta, Clemenceau, all stood out very clearly. But Robson was clearly monarch of all, and through my glasses I scanned the great eastern ice wall up which we climbed, and thought I could identify the very spot where we turned back—just twenty years ago to within a day. Of the nearer peaks Mt. Fryatt stood out very finely, and Mt. Edith Cavell, with some of the Tonquin rock peaks, just showing to the left of it. Tearing ourselves away reluctantly, we scrambled rapidly down the rocks, then down long snow slopes and steep descents of soft glissading scree and so into the warmth of the valley with its intoxicating aromatic smell of dwarf balsam and other herbage, to tea and a dip in the clear icy river.

Next day we were to have tried Unwin from the W., but it snowed heavily all day, and on the 8th we retreated down the valley and reached the N. end of Lake Maligne in the afternoon, camping near the comfortable chalet put up by the Canadian National Railway. There I found a brother of 'Curly' Phillips, whom I had met in 1909 near the site of what is now Jasper on his return from his famous, and all but complete, ascent of Robson, and 'Curly' himself arrived next day. The 9th opened wet, but cleared about 9 A.M., and Feuz and I went down the lake in Phillips's motor boat. Lake Maligne is about 18 miles long and perhaps 2 across, narrowing half-way to a hundred yards or so. The northern half, bordered by sloping woods and with pleasant peaks set back, has a quiet charm of its own but no sensational effects.

For these we waited till we came to the Narrows, beyond which lies the inner lake, and felt like the Queen of Sheba: the half had not been told us. For 8 or 9 miles on each side peak after peak of every type rises 5000 ft. and more, straight from the jade-green waters. In places the dense dark green forest of spruce climbs up a thousand feet or more. In between on the 'slides' dwarf willow and other smaller growth in autumn foliage formed broad vertical bands iridescent with every hue from pale blue-green to bronze and purple and rose pink. Above towered the dark rocks broken by snow gullies and hanging glaciers or showing snowy shoulders. Unwin

and Charlton are most impressive from across the lake; our own summit 'A2' soared upwards, a slender, tapering wedge against the sky-line; Rock Tower faced us with its immense continuous cliff. On the E. side a graceful peak with knife-edge ridges, slanting in one unbroken slope almost down to the lake, which I christened Mt. Diamond, led on to a series of fantastic buttressed pinnacles, like seated Egyptian statues, of which The Thumb and Mt. Warren are the chief. At the S. end of the lake the valleys run up to glaciers and towards a maze of peaks of which the chief, Mt. Brazeau, tops the 11,000 ft. mark. Here on a wooded flat the Canadian Alpine Club propose to hold their summer camp this year, and I can give no better advice to anyone who has a chance of going than go.

Feuz and I had hoped to climb The Thumb, but just inside the Narrows the motor boat suddenly struck, and by the time it resumed work it was too late to do more than scramble up 2000 ft. or so and take photographs. On the 10th I had to be in Jasper for the night train to Edmonton. But as the morning opened fair we thought we could still do Mt. Sampson, a fine bold peak of 10,000 ft. rising from the E. shore just this side of the Narrows. Once again the motor boat failed, and finally we paddled ashore and climbed up the nearer and slightly lower Mt. Leah, reaching the summit after an easy scramble at 12.30. A last view at all the glories of the upper world and then we raced down, signalled across the lake to the boat, happily working again, and at 3 o'clock were on our ponies and tittuping down the valley towards Medicine Lake. To the far end of Medicine Lake, an expanse of quicksand after a dry summer, was said to be 15 miles, but it must have been fully 20. Here we found the outfit, which had preceded us, and I bade good-bye to my good comrades. A mile farther on a car was waiting for me, and we bumped in the dark over 10 miles of villainous track and then another 10 miles of excellent road, reaching Jasper at 10 o'clock. A shave and a bath in a kind friend's bungalow, and then I stumbled into the train. Next morning an obliging friend smuggled me out of the station in my tattered and stained climbing kit to breakfast in his home, while my respectable clothes, sent round from Banff, were discovered and taken to the hotel. Thither I was presently smuggled myself, emerging from my room an hour later as a respectable English politician, to join the annual convention of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and address them on the subject of Empire Trade.