



### Invictus.

[William Henley, the writer of "Invictus" and other poems, was a crippled invalid who spent most of his days in a hospital. So unconquerable, however, was his spirit, that he was the inspiration for Robert Louis Stevenson's character, "John Silver," in Treasure Island.]

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate,  
I am the captain of my soul.

### Among the Books

#### Travels in Alaska.

["Travels in Alaska," by John Muir. Pub. by Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York. Price \$2.50 net.]

A short time ago there appeared in these pages a picture of two "grand old men," John Burroughs and John Muir. John Burroughs still lives at his home near the Hudson River. John Muir over a year ago passed the Great Divide, and since his death, has been published a book which he had almost ready for the press, recording what was perhaps, the most stirring, most enjoyable and most productive part of his life—his many journeys and studies in Alaska.

John Burroughs and John Muir were both naturalists, but whereas John Burroughs occupied himself chiefly with the world of small things close at hand—the bees, plants, and above all, the birds.—John Muir's interest was claimed rather, by the great masses of Nature, —mountains, glaciers, and the broad skies—although he was also a botanist of no mean order.

Early in life, indeed, he devoted himself to the mountains. "I am hopelessly and forever a mountaineer," he wrote, long ago, "Civilization and fever, and all the morbidity that has been hooted at me, have not dimmed my glacial eyes, and I care to live only to entice people to look at Nature's loveliness."

"How gloriously he fulfilled the promise of his early manhood!" exclaims a biographer, "Fame, all unbidden, wore a path to his door, but he always remained a modest, unspoiled mountaineer." The greater part of his life indeed, was spent in the high Sierras of Nevada, where he chose to live, but when he made trips abroad it was nearly always to visit other mountains, in Arizona, in Alaska. Emerson urged him in vain to visit Concord and rest from his studies. When at last the East drew him to that spot, the "sage" was no more. "It was seventeen years after our parting on Wawona ridge," he wrote, "that I stood beside his (Emerson's) grave under a pine tree on the hill above Sleepy Hollow. He had gone to higher Sierras, and as I fancied, was again waving his hand in friendly recognition."—And to-day John Muir's body lies above another valley, the sunny Alhambra, beneath a sequoia, one of a grove planted by his own hand.

As the result of his life-work, in addition to many magazine contributions, he has left a number of books: "The Story of My Youth," "My First Summer in the Sierra," "Stickeen: The Story of a Dog," "Our National Parks," and "Travels in Alaska,"—not the least interesting in a series of works at once scientific and literary. To read "Travels in Alaska," indeed, is to enjoy a wonderful trip and thrilling experiences at a little more than second hand, so vivid is Mr. Muir's word-picturing, so simply and honestly told his narrative. And indeed, if one cannot afford the time and money to travel, is it not well to go abroad thus by proxy? "One half of the world does not know how the other half lives," but even reading a good travel book affords interesting sidelights. One cannot read such books without becoming broadened not only in knowledge but in sympathy also.

In passing, midsummer trips to Alaska are likely to become popular in the immediate future. There is comfortable passage on the steamers from Vancouver and Victoria northward, and the scenery all the way is magnificent. Moreover, although many, urged by curiosity, will flock to Europe when the war is over, there are many others who will shrink from the idea of seeing the vast cemeteries and devastated towns of the Continent, and will seek spots for rest and holiday in our own land. To these the Alaskan trip will be one of the most appealing.

In "Travels in Alaska" John Muir describes things as he saw them, with the eye of the scientist as well as of the lover of all nature's beauties. Nothing is missed,—the plant-life, animal-life,

hereabouts. Some, which visiting Indians brought us, were as fine in size and color and flavor as any I ever saw anywhere." And again: "Then come crowberry, and two species of huckleberry, one of them from about six inches to a foot high with delicious berries, the other a most lavishly prolific and contented-looking dwarf, few of the bushes being more than two inches high, counting to the topmost leaf, yet each bearing from ten to twenty or more large berries. Perhaps more than half the bulk of the whole plant is fruit, the largest and finest flavored of all the huckleberries or blueberries I ever tasted, spreading fine feasts for the grouse and ptarmigan and many others of nature's mountain people." Once more: "Some rocks along the shore were completely covered with crimson-leaved huckleberry bushes; one species still in fruit might well be called the winter huckleberry. In a short walk I found vetches eight feet high leaning on raspberry bushes, and tall ferns and *Smilacina unifolia* with leaves six inches wide growing on yellow-green moss, producing a beautiful effect."

That trees are not lacking may be judged from many delightful passages such as the following: "The morning after this delightful day was dark and threatening. A high wind was rushing down the strait dead against us, and just as we were about ready to start, determined to fight our way by creeping close inshore, pelting rain began to fly. We concluded therefore to wait for better weather. The hunters went out for deer, and I to see the forests. The rain brought out the fragrance of the drenched trees, and the wind made wild melody in their tops, while every brown bole was embroidered by a network of rain rills.



Gen. Sir Pertab Singh, Leader of the Indian Forces Fighting for the Allies, with His Son and the Rajah of Rutlam.

Underwood & Underwood.

Indians, auroral displays, and above all, the glaciers, wonderful in themselves, sources of intense interest to the author, the greater part of whose life was spent in the study of them and of the mountains in which they are born. It is a revelation to many who have thought of Alaska as a bleak, ice-bound waste, to be told of fruit in abundance: "Along the base of the mountain-wall we found abundance of salmon-berries, the largest measuring an inch and a half in diameter. Strawberries, too, are found

Perhaps the most delightful part of my ramble was along a stream that flowed through a leafy arch beneath overleaning trees which met at the top. The water was almost black in the deep pools and fine clear amber in the shallows. It was the pure, rich wine of the woods with a pleasant taste, bringing spicy spruce groves and widespread bog and beaver meadows to mind. On this amber stream I discovered an interesting fall. . . . I found most of the trees here fairly loaded with mosses. Some

broadly palmated branches had beds of yellow moss so wide and deep that when wet they must weigh a hundred pounds or even more. Upon these moss-beds ferns and grasses and even good-sized seedling trees grow, making beautiful hanging gardens in which the curious spectacle is presented of old trees holding hundreds of their own children in their arms, nourished by rain and dew and the decaying leaves showered down to them by their parents. The branches upon which these beds of mossy soil rest become flat and irregular like weathered roots or the antlers of deer, and at length die; and when the whole tree has thus been killed it seems to be standing on its head with roots in the air." In another portion of the book Mr. Muir tells of a hemlock "felled by the Indians for bread-bark," and of common hemlocks 150 to 200 feet in height, "slender and handsome."

Flower lovers will delight in his accounts of many mountain gardens, of Nature's own planting, in which, one is surprised to find, grow a great variety of ferns and flowers. He mentions dwarf cornels, pyrola, cypripedium, Solomons seal, larkspurs, geraniums, painted-cups, blue-bells, gentians, saxifrages, violets, columbine, mountain orchids, fritillaria, asters, daisies and many others including a great variety of heathworts. For a bit of description of one of these spots read this:

"After sunset we made haste to seek a camp-ground. I would fain have shared these upper chambers with the two glaciers, but there was no landing-place in sight, and we had to make our way back a few miles in the twilight to the mouth of a side canyon where we had seen timber on the way up. There seemed to be a good landing as we approached the shore, but, coming nearer, we found that the granite fell directly into deep water without leaving any level margin, though the slope a short distance back was not very steep.

"After narrowly scanning the various seams and steps that roughened the granite, we concluded to attempt a landing rather than grope our way farther down the fiord through the ice. And what a time we had climbing on hands and knees up the slippery glacier-polished rocks to a shelf some two hundred feet above the water and dragging provisions and blankets after us! But it proved to be a glorious place, the very best camp-ground of all the trip,—a perfect garden, ripe berries nodding from a fringe of bushes around its edges, charmingly displayed in the light of our big fire. Close alongside there was a lofty mountain capped with ice, and from the blue edge of that ice-cap there were sixteen silvery cascades in a row, falling about four thousand feet, each one of the sixteen large enough to be heard at least two miles.

"How beautiful was the firelight on the nearest larkspurs and geraniums and daisies of our garden! How hearty the wave greeting on the rocks below brought to us from the two glaciers! And how glorious a song the sixteen cascades sang!"

—Truly, as Mr. Muir says, instead of a barren, icy waste, a foodful, kindly wilderness." Alaska surely makes time during her short summers, as, indeed, she well may in a latitude in which, as midsummer approaches, there is scarcely any night at all. Plant-life grows apace where light is so prolonged.

(To be continued.)

During the early part of the war all German music was taboo in France. Now the French critics of music are pleading in behalf of the German composers, claiming that it is childish and of no service to France to insult the art of her enemy.