

The alpenstock is an indispensable adjunct for climbing. Inexperienced men invariably consider a gun or rifle very desirable in climbing, "to shoot a bear, don't you know." Suffice it to say, no bears were shot while mountain climbing. The picture presented to one, on one of the summits, is well described by a recent writer thus :

"What a scene of desolation  
I saw from the mountain peak,  
Craggs, snowfields, glaciation  
Unutterable to speak."

Scarcely a vestige of verdure is in sight, arctic are the surroundings. What grand upheavals of nature come under the topographer's gaze ! Dozens, nay, hundreds of ice-bound and mountain-hemmed lakes come under his view and tell of receding glaciers. He traces from the névé and melting glacier, rills to creeks, creeks to streams, and streams to rivers, until they enter whence they came, the ocean.

Camping along the Ottawa is considered sport and healthy outdoor exercise ; in Alaska with the incessant rains, it is considerably the reverse. Clothes, boots, provisions, everything gets mouldy in camp. The precipitous nature of the shores makes good camping ground very scarce, and an undue regard for the high or spring tides caused some rude awakenings at night, to find oneself unceremoniously a dweller in the Pacific or living in Venice. Nearly all the ascents were made directly from the sea-shore.

The highest mountain climbed was within a few feet of 7,000 feet above the sea. The experienced climber covers about a thousand feet an hour. The descent, when over snow fields, is sometimes made at a dangerous velocity, by squatting down and tobogganing, using the alpenstock for steering. This method is rather risky, for an unseen precipice may some day be the cause of an untimely end to the topographer's career.

Several hot springs were encountered on the work. I took the temperature of a sulphurous one near the coast, and found it to register 164° F., a temperature sufficient to boil eggs. Hot springs and glaciers,—a peculiar combination !

On account of the continued saturated condition of the atmosphere