

over the ground. Through this desolate wilderness we travelled for a day, the monotony of the blackened surface being occasionally broken by the deep blue water of one of the many lakes that are scattered over this country. I do not think that while at this plateau we travelled at any time more than three or four miles without coming to a lake, while constantly crossing clear streams of water. On the second day we left the burnt timber and entered a beautiful park-like country, through which we rode for days, penetrating glade after glade, through group after group of spruce, fir and cotton wood, now crossing low, rolling hills, now following the shores of large and placidly transparent lakes. More than once upon entering a glade we disturbed the grazing caribou, which, after coolly surveying the intruders, would trot off with graceful, swinging stride. The fallow and black tail deer abound in this sportsman's paradise, and, as stated before, traces of bear are seen everywhere. Nor need one be a sportsman to partake of the delicacies of this region. The fool-hen, which abounds in the spruce groves, is (as its name betokens) an easy prey to the pot hunter. Rabbits are plentiful, and we seldom sat down to dinner without that most delicious of all meats—the succulent porcupine, the meat of which is said by experienced trappers to contain the flavor of every known variety. The many lakes abound in white fish, trout, and an occasional land-locked salmon. It is impossible to give an accurate estimate as to the size of the country traversed. I should say it extended over 500 square miles. It is, as I said, well watered, and fuel is everywhere abundant, and the rich wild grass affords the most nourishing of pastures. We abruptly penetrated the eastern side of the plateau, where it descends some hundreds of miles to a lower bench-like country, similar in every respect, except that it appeared more heavily timbered. As we stood here our view was one of the most magnificent it was possible to imagine. At our feet, far below, lay a broad bench, clothed in the deep verdure of the spruce, and dotted with lakes reaching to the clearly defined deep chasm, which bounded the Kettle River. Beyond rose the thousand peaks of Kootenay in all directions, while towering high above all in the back ground the bold outline of the Rocky Mountains closed out the horizon, as from its snow-crowned heights it reflected the bright beams of the mid-day sun.