



Playground Columbia.—By Rev. A. H. Sovereign, M.A.

It lovers runs along the Cheakemous River parallel to the old Pemberton Trail, which can be seen here and there as the train passes quickly by. The dotted lines by the Mamquam and Stony Creek show the two ways of approach to the district at the present time. The most interesting is possibly by Stony Creek up to the Black Tusk meadows, the site of various camps of the B. C. Mountaineering Club.

Last September, a party of three climbers went up by way of the Stony Creek trail to secure a very rare flower and plant growing on Gentian Ridge at the base of Castle Towers

on the face of that barrier—2,500 feet of crushed rock pushed there by the ancient volcanic thrust.

The tawny head of Garibaldi rose high above his fellows, before him was the Table, square and shapely Castle Towers to the left, Tantalus away to the right, behind the ridge the Black Tusk stood dark and forbidding, Helmet Peak piercing the horizon to the north.

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From Panorama the route lay down towards Desolation glacier head, and again up to Corrie Ridge, where snow and bluffs with shifting scree, made travelling slow and strenuous, but moss-pink patches and plots of saxifrage drew gasps of admiration and relieved the strain.

Down these slopes lay venerable woods of pine and hemlock, through which the mountaineers waded knee high! Age has taught these Alpine trees to lie close to earth if they would thrive and Arctic Willows even crept and among the low young trees ptarmigan hid, snow-flakes fluttered like lowly sparrows, and Canada jays scolded at this human intrusion. Camp was made under the lee of rocks honeycombed by whistling marmots, and from this base the coveted seeds were reached in a two hours' climb.

So far the trip was a joy, but now clouds scurried round the ranges, mists rose and fell in threatening shrouds, a gale called through the gorges. Nature would not allow her sanctuary to be rifted without protest.

To avoid the risky Corrie, attempt was made to cross over the Desolation glacier, and the high snow fields must be found while the strongest, coldest, wettest gale ever felt blew misery through the packs and clothing of the travellers. Roped for safety through the blinding sleet they crossed the head of the glacier to Panorama, now no longer panoramic, refusing even a sight of its own face, save for a few yards in advance.

Getting down to 5,000 feet and the sheltering timber was an immense relief, and a beaten trail gave security in direction which could not be had in the fogs above. The swirling clouds gave place to rain, and the drenched party kept steadily on the twelve-mile trail to comfort at Garibaldi Lodge, near Stony Creek.

The hardness of the task made the prizes the more precious. Besides the rarity, which was the object of the trip, other Alpine treasures, scarce, curious and lovely, were carried down, to the joy and wonder of rare rock gardens, plants and flowers that will be admired for their miniature beauty in artificial settings, but the glory of seeing them in their natural homes, girdled with snow and blasted with storms, is known only to those who have the hardihood to scale the intervening hills.

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which can be clearly seen on the map. The story of their journey as printed in the Daily Province of last September is so full of interest that I take the liberty of placing parts of it alongside the map.