

quirements of the railway, yet clothe the mountain slopes and fill in the gap that lies between them. The second habitation of white men in Skaguay was established less than a year before my visit, yet at that time, presumably to meet the demands of a resident population of about five thousand, the destructive hand of the advertiser had already inscribed upon the walls of rock, in characters twenty feet or more in height, the glories of cigars, the value of mental and physical specifics, and of other abominations contrived to fatten the Yankee pocket. In the Dyea Valley the timber line is sharply drawn along the bordering cliffs at an elevation of some 2,500 feet. Above that the mountain sides are stern and rugged; below is a dense forest of gigantic hemlocks, festooned with long streamers of moss, which grows even more luxuriantly than in Florida. The ground beneath the trees and fallen monarchs of the forest is densely covered with a soft, feathery carpet of moss, lichens, and ferns of all possible tints of brown and green. The day I discovered this enchanted valley was bright and sunny in the upper regions, but the valley was filled with vapors. One condition of the Chilkoot Pass, and that a not altogether unimportant one, places it during certain months at a disadvantage, as compared with the White Pass. I refer to the danger from avalanches. The appalling catastrophe of 1898, which caused the loss of sixty-three lives, and followed closely upon an earlier event of like nature, had its seat in the steep, rocky ledges of the east wall between Sheep Camp and the Scales. It is said that the Indians clearly foresaw the impending

event and announced it, but their warnings went unheeded. They themselves did not make the traverse on that fatal day. However useful these trails may have been in the past, how well or how indifferently they met the wants of the pioneers, they are now thrown back into the same obscurity which was theirs when the Indians and a few adventurous trappers and traders alone made use of them, and all through the advent of the railway.

Regarding this same railway, I should, perhaps, not conclude without telling you what an old friend of mine, then a section-boss, said about their experience with bears in the Skaguay. They had noticed that, however early in the mornings the men left the shanty there was never to be seen a particle of the cast-out victuals of the night before. They supposed the bears came regularly for it, and all agreed not to frighten them, but to see how far they could succeed in making friends of them. Soon two bears made a habit of coming about the place at dusk, and staying after daylight. Those were duly encouraged by feeding. After a time they remained day and night, and would appear when summoned by the rattle of their feed dish. Given a bowl of porridge, which they loved above all things, they would sit right down in sight of the whole gang of men and lift it in handfuls to their mouths. Lastly, they would take food from the men's hands. But the fun was spoiled by a man with a gun who happened along one day, and not knowing they were pets, fired at them. They were never seen about the place again.

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