

SCIENTIFIC WORK BEGINS.

The next day was beautiful; the storm had passed away, and it was our lot for the remainder of the journey to experience most delightful weather. We were soon on the way westward to explore a fine exposure of what is known to geologists as rocks of the Laramie series. The deposits of this period commence about the Blackfoot crossing and extend to the mountains. This escarpment is at the track, and forms a portion of the bank of the Bow River. What a delightful morning walk it was as we passed up the track! High above us to the left was the lofty hill, about 800 feet high, while to the right the rapidly flowing Bow rushing eastward filled the air with the noise of its waters. Having reached the fossil haunt we climbed to the steep bank and soon observed that we would not require to move far from that locality to secure many representatives of the primeval life in these deposits. In a short time our hotel companion joined us, and work was thoroughly entered upon. Great fragments of rock were observed, made up of a mass of clam-like shells, and some not unlike a snail. In fact these masses were so compact that it took considerable practice to break out a good specimen. How carefully my friends packed the treasures, that they proposed taking over the sea with them. Even the botanist became so interested in the fossil wealth of this exposure, that for a time he forgot to mark the charming flora around him and made a fine collection of fossils.

There was danger here. At short intervals water burst out from the clay beds which lie between the layers of sandstone, and ran down the steep precipice above, warning us that all the conditions necessary for a landslide were present and that any moment the earth above us or beneath our feet might move river ward. We watched the face of the hill carefully, and looked out a supposed retreat should such a change occur. Had it not been for former slides we could not have climbed this hill so far up as we did. Three distinct slides were perceived, and we felt convinced that after the continuous rain of 1894, another might occur at any moment. At this very time some distance further up men were removing one from the track which had fallen some days before. The whole bank on this, the south side, shows that many slides have occurred in times past. Some seven varieties of fossil shells were secured, and several interesting specimens of leaves and fruit of plants obtained, which flourished when these Laramie deposits were formed. With well loaded bags we returned to the tent, prepared the evening repast, and after a talk in the "ahack," retired well prepared to enjoy all the delights of a good night's rest. Another glorious day was ushered in and a long tramp further up the track undertaken to a locality which the writer thought would supply excellent fossil leaves, for he had visited it the year before during the construction of the road and obtained good results. In this we were somewhat disappointed and had to be contented with obtaining specimens less readily than at first anticipated. However, a good collection of fossils from the Laramie was obtained. The botanist too had done well. In the valley of the Bow near Calgary, he found beautiful wild geraniums in bloom. Near our tent, on the hillside, monkshood was common, and far up the hill on its very summit the wild onion flourished. Many other attractive plants were observed and a large collection secured. One evening while returning from Calgary a magnificent view of the Rockies was seen. 'Twas near sunset. The lofty peaks with snow capped summits, bordered with silver sheen, were distinctly seen, and the golden tints of the western sky formed a background which added grandeur to the glorious scene.

As I walked over the valley in which the town lies, feasting upon the matchless sight of the sun passing down behind the distant mountains, the murmuring waters of the Bow River greeted my ear. At intervals happy youth dashed by me on native ponies, and cantered across the beautiful valley in which the fragrance of prairie flowers was borne on the summer air. I seemed enveloped by all that was suggestive of joy and happiness, and the place appeared more like fairyland than a young city on the borderland of civilization. Such scenes