

we had been so long trying to reach. Our advent created a great commotion among the myriads of birds that frequent the ledges and cliffs, and the intrusion caused them to whirl about in a motley cloud and scream at each other in ceaseless uproar. A few minutes sufficed to survey the situation, before attempting to ascend at a spot that seemed scarcely to afford footing for a goat. Near the foot of the cliffs were seen on the one hand several detached pinnacles of sombre-looking weather-worn granite that had withstood the vigor of many Arctic winters; on the other hand a seemingly inaccessible wall, vividly recalling the eastern face of the Rock of Gibraltar. This sight, strange and weird beyond description, did not fail to awaken odd thoughts and emotions, far removed as we were from all human intercourse, amid solitude and desolation, and for a moment the mind absorbed a dash of the local coloring. Selecting what was believed to be the most favorable spot to ascend the cliff, two of our party in making the attempt would occasionally detach large bowlders, which came bounding down like a bombardment.

The attempt was abandoned after climbing a few hundred feet. In company with several others, I tried what seemed to be a more practicable way—a gully filled with snow—up which we had gone scarcely a hundred feet when it, too, had to be abandoned. In the meantime the skin boat had been brought over the ice, and one of the men pointing out another place where he thought we might ascend, it was the work of but a few minutes to cross a bit of open water which led to the foot of a steep snowbank, somewhat discolored from the gravel brought down by melting snow. Without despairing, and being in that frame of mind prepared to incur danger to a reasonable extent for the sake of