

Mountain Climbing

BY HASIL S. DARLING

"The sport of mountaineering," says Mr. Darling, "although only born within the last fifty years, has so spread and flourished that the ambitious climber is already forced to seek the outskirts of the world to conquer untrodden summits. However, for those who do not aspire, or cannot afford, to embark upon expeditions to the remote ranges, the Coast Mountains of British Columbia offer an almost untouched territory. Most of the high peaks of the range are easily accessible owing to the deeply indented character of the coast line, which is one of the most irregular in the world. Long and devious fiords penetrate far inland along the whole extent of the coast and afford waterways to hundreds of mountains which, although nearly all below 10,000 feet in altitude, yet supply to the climber many peaks which are distinctly Alpine in character. But it is not because of the fact that they, as well as the more lofty mountains of the interior, carry great fields of everlasting snow upon their highest ridges that the mountains of this range will, when more widely known, attract greater attention from the mountaineer, but because of their own distinctive charm. From the summits of the range the westward outlook is to the Pacific, and eastward over a seemingly limitless host of mountains. Below the snow-line great primeval forests clothe the floors and slopes of solitary valleys where no one but the prospector and timber cruiser has ever been, and most often not even they. Thousands of exquisite mountain lakes are hidden there from which wild torrents dash in wonderful cascades to the sea. At the timber line in the summer white and purple heather blooms in lovely meadows which in winter are buried deep beneath a snowfall as heavy as that in the Selkirks."

"In having at their doors such a play-ground, the residents of Vancouver are particularly fortunate, although as yet their good fortune is appreciated by a small minority only. However, the pleasures of mountaineering are every year coming home to the knowledge of a greater number,

and in Vancouver there has been established for three years the British Columbia Mountaineering Club of Vancouver which has done much in making known the mountains to the immediate north of the city. The Alpine Club of Canada also counts many of the city's residents among its most active members. These votaries of the sport are preaching the mountain creed with the conviction and enthusiasm born of many happy days spent on peak, pass and glacier, and it will not be long before many of the unknown realms of enchantment which lie beyond the foothills will be entered and explored by parties of mountaineers."

"Within fifty miles of Vancouver the peak of Mt. Garibaldi rises to a height of 9,600 feet. It is a fine cone-shaped mass rising from a large ice-field which stretches north and east to other lofty and rugged mountains. By way of Howe Sound it is possible to get within fifty miles of Mt. Garibaldi; and then by wagon road up the Squamish valley and a trail to timber line, the camp of the Mountaineering Club will be reached at an altitude of 5,000 feet. It will be pitched in one of the lovely meadows which are situated just below the snow-fields and, with their carpet of heather and mountain flowers, form one of the most charming features of the scenery of the higher altitudes. From this camp every opportunity will be afforded those who take advantage of it to climb and explore to their hearts' content in a field very seldom visited before."

"Howe Sound is the most southerly of the great sea channels which give to British Columbia its remarkable length of coast line. To those who have known the spell of the wilderness and answered the siren song of the open road, a glance at the coast charts of British Columbia will revive and quicken those latent desires and cherished memories. The long, mysterious fiords thrusting their tentacle arms between the mountains are potent to summon up visions of the glory of the open spaces, and the blank on the map behind the chartered coast line kindles the imagination with its unknown possibilities. It means the vastness and mystery of unexplored country, immemorial forests, splendid mountains and shining snow-fields."

"The unknown mountains which rise in this practically untouched wilderness must, many of them, be very close to the 10,000 feet mark, for along Queen's Reach at the



Climbing to the summit of the Eastern Lion.



Descending the Western Lion—
A perilous journey.



"We rested on the back of Mt. Crown."