

our surroundings and far beyond the enclosing hills. So we packed our lunch the evening before in order to be ready for our early start the next morning.

My father knew of a beautiful lake some miles away from home, so early in the morning we mounted our horses, taking a pack-pony to carry lunch, rugs and cushions, and started off.

For some distance the country was familiar to us, but after a time we commenced to ascend a hitherto unknown road, which led up from the valley by a circuitous route over many mounds and through many glens.

At last, after riding through a dark, narrow canyon, we ascended a steep path, and found ourselves high above everything except the mountain we were on. Below us, as far as we could see, stretched great purple mountains, intersected with little blue valleys. In the distance everything was enveloped in a misty purple haze, and the earth and the sky seemed to meet. Nearer us we could make out a great, slow-moving blue river, creeping among the banks of bright emerald green.

To the east there lay a small square of brilliant green, which father said was a great field of grain. The green along the river bank, and this huge field, made such a contrast, and then the blue river and purple haze were all just like a gorgeous picture.

After gazing at it for a long time, we again started riding along the side of the mountain, and, still ascending, reached the summit. Here the view was even more beautiful.

To the north there stretched a range of glorious mountains, buried in snow at their summits, but covered with a misty purple haze at their bases. A little below us was a bright blue lake, lying like a great clear sapphire, surrounded by its banks of moss and stretches of white sand. To the east and south were the same great, misty purple mountains stretching away as far as eye could reach. But to the west, across a narrow, dark-looking canyon, was a great, rugged mountain. It was covered with trees at the top, and seemed to be connected with the great snow-capped range north of us.

Down its sides were most beautiful streams, dashing over the huge cliffs, and falling in showers at the foot, then stealing away out of the sunlight into the great dark glen.

We were held spellbound for a few moments. But, having looked until our eyes ached and our brains reeled with the magnitude of everything, we rode down by a tortuous path to the little lake which lay below us.

Here we made camp for the day and found it delightfully cool after the heat of the sun upon the treesless mountain top.

The lake itself was intensely blue. Around it there stretched a wide white border of fine glistening sand, and beyond that again