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Review: Climbing in Alaska

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distinguishable in morning light. It is very possible that Mount Speke may, as Mr. Wollaston suggests, be the Saddle Peak of some early travellers. What has been disputed and disproved is the existence of the peak inserted by mapmakers under that name from 12 to 20 miles to the north of the central group and equal to it in height. Mount Speke is barely 2 miles from Mount Stanley. The volume is provided with excellent photographs, but once more we must protest against the haphazard way in which publishers have taken to insert illustrations without reference to their place in the text. A sketch-map of the country round Lake Kivu adds something to our knowledge.

## AMERICA.

### LABRADOR.

'A Woman's Way through Unknown Labrador.' By Mrs. Leonidas Hubbard, junr. London: Murray. 1908. Pp. xvi., 338. *Map and Illustrations.* 10s. 6d.

The death of Mr. Leonidas Hubbard on October 18, 1903, in the interior of Labrador, evoked additional sympathy owing to its occurrence when the explorer was within a short distance of safety. His wife determined to complete the work he had undertaken. She started from North-West river post on July 27, 1905, travelled up the Nascaupée river and down the George, and on August 27 reached Ungava bay, having covered 576 miles in this short time, by canoe, with four men. In the present volume we have not only her own narrative, but the diary of her husband, and an introduction, dealing generally with Labrador, by Mr. W. B. Cabot. Mrs. Hubbard's account of the journey is purely narrative, and forms very interesting reading; moreover, with the assistance of excellent photographs, her descriptions give an unusually clear idea of the scenery of the country she traversed. She made certain notes on the geology, flora, and fauna (in the last connection she had the almost unique experience, for a white, of encountering vast numbers of herding caribou). But she also made a running survey, and an examination of the map, in which a reproduction of the outline of the Stieler map of 1905 is overprinted with the course of the two rivers as observed by her, shows the value of her work, especially in the extraordinary divergence between her observations of the course of the Nascaupée and its course as previously conjectured. Mrs. Hubbard's laudable determination in carrying out the journey can only be inferred, but it can be inferred clearly, from her simple narrative. As to Mr. Hubbard's diary, and the account of his companion, George Elson, who with another left him in order to reach the caché of food which would have saved him from starvation, every circumstance combines to give them pathos, from the enthusiasm obvious in every line of the diary at the beginning, to the knowledge of the nearness of relief and the impossibility of reaching it, at the end. In short, this is a book which, while claiming no great scientific value, cannot fail to interest those who like to read of the doings of pioneer travellers.

### CLIMBING IN ALASKA.

'To the Top of the Continent. Discovery, Exploration, and Adventure in Sub-arctic Alaska.' By Dr. Frederick A. Cook. London: Hodder & Stoughton. 1908. *Sketch-maps and Illustrations.* Price 12s. net.

A narrative, written in a style presumably popular in America, of journeys and explorations on both sides of the Alaska range in the neighbourhood of Mount McKinley, the highest mountain in North America, 20,390 feet, and an account of its ascent. The author states that it was made by himself and a single companion in September, 1906, in eight days from a base camp at a height of 1000 feet, mainly

by the northern ridge. Great difficulties are described as having been met with between 12,000 and 16,000 feet, and the rarity of the air was severely felt in the last 4000 feet. The climbers carried their own luggage and provisions in packs of over 40 lbs. They slept in a silk tent or in snow-huts. The lowest temperature recorded was 16° below zero (Centigrade?). The return to camp occupied four days. The book is written in a sensational style, which does injustice to the feat described. It is well illustrated, but has no adequate map or index. The comparatively large extent of bare and not steep rocks in the photograph representing the summit is remarkable. There are several appendices dealing with the geology and development of the region. It is to be hoped that some further cartographic results of the expedition may be forthcoming. Until these are available it is impossible to follow the orographic details which are somewhat confusedly given.

### POLAR REGIONS.

#### IN SEARCH OF A POLAR CONTINENT.

*In Search of a Polar Continent, 1905-1907.* By Alfred H. Harrison. London : Edward Arnold. 1908. *Price 12s. 6d. net.*

Mr. Harrison, quite single handed, undertook an expedition of extraordinary difficulty. His object was to descend the Mackenzie river to its mouth, then to cross the intervening sea to Banks island in a whaler, to travel along the west coasts of Banks and Prince Patrick's islands, and to discover land, if it exists, between those islands and Siberia.

It could hardly be expected that so great an enterprise should succeed at the first attempt. It is true that Alfred Harrison was, in several respects, well fitted for such an undertaking. With a good constitution, and great powers of endurance, he is also gifted with the faculty of conciliating natives, and adapting himself to his environment. Above all, he is a good observer, and an instructed surveyor, qualifications without which a traveller is useless from a geographical point of view.

The difficulties proved to be insuperable, and the present volume is the record of a brilliant attempt, long persevered in, entailing much hardship, but also rich in the acquisition of knowledge and priceless experience. His journey down the Mackenzie river to Herschel island on the polar ocean, his excursions into the mountains, and his intercourse with the Eskimo are described in detail, and the narratives are agreeable reading. Mr. Harrison tells his story well. The chapter devoted to a careful description of the manners, customs, and mode of living of the two tribes of Eskimo encountered by our explorer is very interesting, and forms a valuable contribution to ethnology, especially as all the facts came under the personal observation of the narrator.

It was in the summer of 1906 that Mr. Harrison, having reached the shores of the polar ocean, made his attempt to cross the intervening ice-encumbered sea and reach the southern coast of Banks island. With this object he embarked on board a whaler, with his sledges and dogs and all his belongings. He was to receive two years' provisions from the whaling fleet. After much delay, owing to being beset by ice-floes, and having to force a way through close pack, Nelson head, on Banks island, was at length sighted, a rocky headland rising to a height of 800 feet. Passing along quite close to the shore, Cape Kellett was reached, where the coast terminates in a low sandy beach. At the season when Mr. Harrison saw Banks island the snow was off the ground. "The whole island," he says, "was a mass of verdure, and it was scored with several beautiful valleys which were full of vegetation, and which extended down to the sea-beach."

Mr. Harrison was unable to proceed further owing to the failure of his arrangements for receiving supplies, and by the middle of August he was back at Herschel

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