

Michigan, and Erie. There is nothing in his summer wanderings to report to the Club, except that he desires to mention the extreme beauty and picturesqueness of Mackinac Island, with its curious rock formations and ancient colonial forts.

AN ASCENT OF MT. SHAVANO. BY CHARLES E. FAY.

MT. SHAVANO is a fine peak, 14,240 feet high, situated at the southerly end of the Saguache Range in Central Colorado. Its nearest neighbor is Mt. Antero, a peak of the same general mass, a few miles north and of almost exactly the same altitude; and these two peaks are separated by the Alpine Pass from Mt. Princeton, the southernmost of that portion of the Saguache Mountains to which the name of Collegiate Range has been applied. The mountains of this division are, named from south to north, Princeton (14,190 feet); Yale (14,187 feet); and Harvard (14,375 feet). Yale and Harvard are exactly upon the Continental Divide; Princeton, Antero, and Shavano a little east of it. Of this number Princeton would naturally be chosen if one could make only a single ascent in this region, owing to its easy accessibility from a trunk line of railroad, — that of the Denver and Rio Grande from Denver to Leadville; moreover, it is a very imposing and beautiful mountain.

To Mr. J. R. Edmands and the writer, while making an excursion to Salt Lake City by the line of this same railroad which crosses the Marshall Pass, Shavano seemed more available, as being less remote from their line of travel. Maysville, the town from which the ascent is naturally made, lies only seven miles from Poncha, a station of this section of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. From Poncha, the Monarch Branch, on which Maysville is the leading station, diverges from the main line. Over this branch there is a single train daily each way, Sundays excepted. Finding ourselves at this junction on a Sunday morning (July 22), we were obliged to walk these seven miles, which we accomplished in the latter part of the afternoon. On reaching Maysville, good lodging and excellent fare were found at the boarding-house of Mrs. Venable.

As a long day would evidently be required to ascend Shavano and return to Poncha that evening, we made a very early start, rising at 2.30 A. M. Preparation of coffee and despatching breakfast delayed us until nearly 4 o'clock, when we quietly stole forth into the moonlight and took the road which follows the north fork of the South Arkansas River, — a boisterous little stream coming down from the Continental Divide and skirting the southerly base of Mt. Shavano. It flows between two "mesas," which rise gradually higher on either side, after one leaves the junction of the fork with the main stream, at Maysville.

After following the road (for the most part excellent) about four miles, just before sunrise we struck directly up the slope of the "mesa," rising at an angle of not far from 40°, and here perhaps between three and four hundred feet above the stream. The slope was almost entirely devoid of trees. The top, however, proved to be well wooded, and upon it we crossed one or two wood-roads. We made as directly as we were able through the timber, which soon degenerated into a "chapparal" of aspens, towards the end of a southeasterly ridge that comes down from the lower of the two peaks of Shavano that are visible from Maysville, — the ridge which has on the left the principal ravine of the mountain seen from that place. Reaching this ridge, we found that the aspen growth again gave way to larger timber, while the slope became quite steep. Traces of a path here appeared, though we were unable to learn by whom it was constructed, or for what purpose, as climbing the mountain does not appear to be a favorite recreation of the inhabitants of Maysville or vicinity. Although we heard of a few persons who had made partial ascents, we had found it impossible to secure any definite information as to the best way of attacking the peak.

It was not far from 7 o'clock when we struck the lower end of our ridge, at an approximate elevation of 9,000 feet. My companion not being in good condition for climbing, we made slow progress; so that it was nearly two hours before we reached timber-line. Beyond this point we skirted a deep ravine between our ridge and the one next northerly. In the bottom lay the customary lakelet, and on its head-wall rested the only snow left on this southerly and easterly exposure of the mountain, — a narrow stripe which did not last through the season.

We reached the lower peak, an elevation of nearly 13,500 feet, at about 10 o'clock. The greater part of the way from timber-line had been rather arduous climbing over the huge fragments of rock with which the whole slope is strewn. Before us now lay a gentle down-grade of easy traveling nearly to the base of the main peak, which rises in a sharp cone, almost 1,000 feet above the depression between the two summits. The final spire is likewise strewn with great rocky fragments, which rendered climbing a slow process. The way was enlivened by meeting a covey of ptarmigans, or mountain grouse, so tame that one could almost knock them over with a stick; also the little conies, protesting in squeaky voices against the invasion of their solitude. The principal summit was reached at 11 o'clock. Under more favorable circumstances the ascent could easily have been made in one or two hours' less time.

The mountain, as we had inferred, proved to be well situated as a viewpoint for Central Colorado, though our own enjoyment of its prospect was much diminished by the clouds which had already settled down upon many of the peaks, especially those of the Sangre de Cristo Range in the southeast, and more or less over those of the Collegiate Range. While the former remained hidden, the parting of the cloudy veil occasionally gave us peeps of the latter, particularly of Princeton and Yale. In the

west, upon and beyond the Continental Divide, lay a sea of mountains, more or less striped with snow. The deep red tint of certain of them, a tint heightened by the green of what vegetation grew upon them, lent a peculiar charm of color to that portion of the landscape. To the southward, across the fertile valley of the South Arkansas, lay Sabeta Peak; and behind it Mt. Ouray, over whose southerly ridges the Denver and Rio Grande crosses from the Atlantic to the Pacific slope. Pike's Peak, eighty miles away, was the principal landmark in the far east, while near at hand in that direction lay the broad valley of the main stream of the Arkansas. To the right of the veiled summits of the Sangre de Cristo Range the eye could range for scores of miles down the broad expanse of the great San Luis Park.

Mr. Edmands devoted his time on the summit chiefly to securing compass-bearings of other peaks. Meantime the clouds had been gathering more densely, and showers were falling north and south of us. Shortly a portentous one was seen bearing down upon us from the west, and we hastened to leave the sharp summit of the mountain before it should reach us. We had descended only a few hundred feet, however, before we found ourselves enveloped in a driving storm of hail, while the thunder from unseen lightning crashed menacingly, though not in our immediate vicinity. We sought what shelter we could get in the lee of overhanging rocks, and waited some twenty minutes for the tempest to pass. By this time we were quite chilled through with our coating of hail, and decided that it would be preferable to keep moving. We therefore came out from the delusive shelter of the rocks, prepared to continue our descent.

Here we encountered an experience with electricity which perhaps merits record among similar instances noted, especially in Colorado. We had scarcely left our retreat when I saw my companion suddenly snatch his hat from his head and gaze into it with the puzzled and indignant look of one who fancies that a hornet has taken up his quarters in his head-gear. At the same instant there proceeded from his hair a buzzing and hissing as if from a whole nest of hornets. In a moment we observed similar music proceeding from the minute points of the rocks on every hand. Mr. Edmands at once replaced his hat and returned to the too soon disdained shelter, in which he was imitated by his "partner;" although, probably because insulated by tennis-shoes with rubber soles, he had not served as an avenue to the playful electrical currents. This singing of the rocks continued at intervals for some time after the hail had ceased and we had renewed our descent. So far as we observed, though the electrical discharges were quite numerous, none seemed to take place directly upon Mt. Shavano.

We descended by the ridge we had seen across the deep ravine on our way up. It proved to be somewhat easier than that by which we had ascended, save a very steep final slope, through better timber than any we had seen in Colorado. At its base we came upon a spring which, for volume of water discharged, equals if not surpasses the famous one in

Smugglers' Notch, under Mt. Mansfield, Vermont. Near at hand we found a shelter, evidently constructed by fishermen; and from here out to the edge of the "mesa" we followed, for a good part of the way, a path recently cut by lovers of the sport.

We reached Mrs. Venable's at 5.45, having been gone nearly fourteen hours. After another bountiful meal at her pleasantly remembered board, we started for an evening walk down the railroad to Poncha, where we arrived at about 9 o'clock.

A TRIP TO SIERRA BLANCA. BY F. H. CHAPIN.

HAVING read Mr. S. H. Scudder's account of "A Partial Ascent of Sierra Blanca,"¹ I was desirous of making the climb of the highest point, Blanca Peak. My expedition was not a success; but perhaps it is desirable to put on record accounts of defeats as well as of victories.

On Tuesday, July 19, I arrived from the East at Colorado Springs. It was my intention to go to Estes Park in a few days; so I thought it best to travel immediately to Fort Garland and try for the summit of Blanca. I made some inquiries in Colorado Springs in regard to the Sierra and its accessibility, but could get no information. The first day after my arrival I telegraphed the station-master at Garland, "Can I obtain guide for Sierra Blanca for Saturday?" Answer came back in two hours from my unknown friend, "Can furnish outfit and guides for Saturday. Shall I engage?" signed "Operator." The word "outfit" startled me, as I thought two or three burros ought to be enough to transport my photographic instruments, blankets, and provisions to timber-line; but knowing nothing of the country, except what I had read in the above-named article, I did not answer the telegram, but hurriedly got my "traps" together, and left Colorado Springs at 11 o'clock P. M. Thursday, July 21.

The journey by rail is one hundred and fifty-one miles. The first omen was bad. I could not get a berth on the "sleeper;" so was obliged to take a seat in a day-coach, and catch short naps when I could. The night was remarkably clear; and as the moon was nearly full, the mountains were seen very clearly, and the snows were visible on Pike's Peak for an hour after leaving its base. At Pueblo I succeeded in getting a berth, which was mine till we reached Cuchara at five in the morning; so I obtained a little rest.

From the train I was enabled to enjoy the scenery of Veta Pass, and had beautiful views of the Spanish Peaks. We reached Garland (7,936 feet) on time at 8 o'clock A. M. The telegraph operator immediately handed me over to Mr. Whitescarver, the proprietor of the Fourth Avenue Hotel, which is a rough board house standing by itself on the plain, no

¹ APPALACHIA, vol. i. p. 258.