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A Woman in the Andes

MY ATTEMPT TO ASCEND MOUNT HUASCARAN

BY ANNIE S. PECK

THE Peruvian valley of Huailas and its immediate surroundings surpass in grandeur and magnificence any other portion of the world with which I am acquainted. While claiming no scientific merit for the discovery of unknown lands, nevertheless, in a small way, I feel something of the explorer's pride in having visited a tiny section of the earth's surface unfamiliar not only to Americans, but to the majority of Peruvians—a section, too, that will one day become famous the world over, presenting as it does an extraordinary combination of attractions, including a scenic splendor surpassing that of Chamonix.

This wonderful valley, one hundred miles long and from one to four miles in width, is situated in the Department of Ancachs, ten degrees south of the equator, ninety miles from the Pacific, and from four to twelve thousand feet above the sea. On the west, to a height of 15,000 to 18,000 feet, rises a steep and rocky ridge—the Black Cordillera; on the east the magnificent White Cordillera, to an altitude of from 20,000 to 22,000, possibly 24,000, feet. In this range, just back of the town of Yungay, looms up the pride of the valley, the majestic Huascaran. A saddle-mountain it is called, its two peaks rising several thousand feet above the seat between, the highest of a

serrated wall of magnificent peaks, with massive lower buttresses; and its summit is a rock wall, standing at an angle of 85°, surmounted by a thick layer of snow. This mountain was first brought to my attention by Señor Lucio R. Landerer, a Peruvian engineer, who, describing with enthusiasm the wonderful scenery of the Huailas Valley, declared that Huascaran had an altitude of 25,000 feet, and was therefore probably the highest mountain on this hemisphere. When it had become evident that Mount Sorata in Bolivia had no right to this distinction, it seemed desirable both to investigate the reputed magnificence of this Peruvian valley and to ascertain, if possible, whether the claims of Huascaran were better founded.

Accordingly, on my return from Bolivia to Lima in September, 1904, I began arranging for my first expedition, the story of which has already been told. I reached a height of 19,000 feet on the east side of the mountain, but was compelled for various reasons to abandon the attempt.

I sailed alone from New York for Peru, May 24, 1906, determined to make a second attempt and hoping to secure my old native helpers. My equipment, however, was considerable. Of scientific instruments I carried a mercurial barometer reading down to ten

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inches; a hypsometer, designed to ascertain the temperature of boiling water, and so the height above sea-level—this to supplement the barometer, or to serve, if needful, in its place; a hygrometer to measure the humidity of the air; and a maximum and minimum thermometer. Among other things were two tents—one very small for myself alone, which seemed an excellent thing, but proved not altogether an advantage; my old sleeping-bag, alcohol-stove, food-bags, pemmican, ten pounds of eating - chocolate, several bottles of malted milk (both tablets and powder), a whistle, ice-axes, rope, and climbing - irons; and for the cholos, five pairs of heavy shoes, ten pairs of woollen stockings, five pairs of mittens, five sets of undershirts and drawers, and five blue outer shirts in addition. Thus provided, I trusted that with their own ponchos and blankets they might be comfortable during the cold nights.

A very disagreeable rule compels every one visiting Peru to go first to Callao, as on account of the yellow fever, endemic in Guayaquil, no one may land in Peru within eight days from that port. In the next boat north I sailed for Chimbote, thence rode across the desert of San Jacinto, and arrived, June 27, at Colquipocro. Here I waited ten days for the luggage, which should have come in two, and finally departed without it, arriving the same day at Yungay, at the foot of the famous

Huascaran. However, the time spent was not wholly wasted. To accustom one's self to considerable elevations before attempting greater heights is most important. Also, my several walks—one to a height of 15,000 feet—supplied a little needed training.

While at Colquipocro I received word

that a gentleman, E., from a neighboring town, had telegraphed to Yungay that he desired to accompany me on my climb. "True," said my friends, "he is 'loco,'" which the dictionary interprets as mad or crack-brained, "but he is intelligent, gentlemanly, energetic, and courageous—the best companion you could possibly have." I did not relish the idea of undertaking such an expedition with a man who had once been insane, and by most persons considered so still. He might take some wild notion above and endanger all our lives. Still, the judgment of my friends influenced me to telegraph him to come and



MISS ANNIE PECK
In climbing costume

talk over the matter, and when at the last moment he arrived he seemed so intelligent and enthusiastic that, yielding to my friends' advice, I concluded to take the risk.

No sooner was I installed in my old quarters at Yungay with my friends, the Vinatéas, than I made inquiries about my former companions. But, alas! the little Osorio, who so gallantly cut steps among the crevasses, and the stalwart Adrian, who carefully held the rope



HUASCARAN FROM ABOVE YUNGAY

during such operations, had both gone to the islands to work; another good man was ill; but Señor Jaramillo, who had previously supplied the porters, assured me that he could doubtless find five others who would serve me equally well.

Meanwhile additional alpenstocks, ice-axes, and climbing-irons were ordered and other preparations made: strips of rawhide to fasten the climbing-irons, skins for the sixth man, who had no shoes, dynamite-cloth cut into strips for leggings. I purchased coca for myself as well as for my companions, since this is an invaluable stimulant at great altitudes. Señorita Vinatúa gave me a good supply of chaqui (pease-meal) and toasted maize. I had tea, sugar, and a cereal. Five stalwart Indians were secured to act as porters, one of whom, Pablo, more prepossessing and intelligent than the others, had declared that he would, if necessary, go with me even to death.

One X., at the mine of Señor Cisneros,

some distance above Yungay, expressed a desire to accompany me as substitute for one of the Indians; so he was engaged at double pay (twenty soles, or \$10), with the proviso that he was to carry as much as the others:

On Friday, July 20, we really began our climb up towards the snow, along the projecting ridge, then up a steep stony slope. In the afternoon the monotony was varied by the sight, far above, of some guanaco—a variety of deer. They watched us a few moments from a distance and then scampered away. About five we approached the snow—a little too far south. A deep and difficult gully separated us from the place where I had planned to enter upon the ice, but at this hour it seemed wiser to encamp here. Now began my trials. No one could or would do anything unless told, and hardly then. If one worked, the rest looked on. I sent some for water, others to collect fire-wood. There were no trees or bushes near, but dry dead brush

served the purpose. I had to show them about pitching the tents, how to place the irons and poles, get out the food, arrange my bedding, and see to their boiling water for the chaqui (pea soup) and for tea. After our meal I crept into my tent and put on additional clothing. It seemed not very cold and there was no wind, yet I was not warm and had no sleep. The alarm was set for five. Long before, E. called out that it was four, and with much conversation prevented what might have been a nap. At dawn I called to them to get up. In time they procured water, made coca tea and soup, and at last were ready to start.

We crossed the gully wherever seemed fitting. E. chose a place high up, and from below I saw him slide fifteen or twenty feet down a smooth, sloping rock. My alarm was more for the barometer than for him, but, later, it proved not to have suffered. At the edge of the snow the four pairs of climbing-irons were adjusted, also the cloth puttees. It was eleven when we entered upon the ice, taking a northeasterly direction, as planned from below, where the ice was comparatively smooth. E., at his own de-

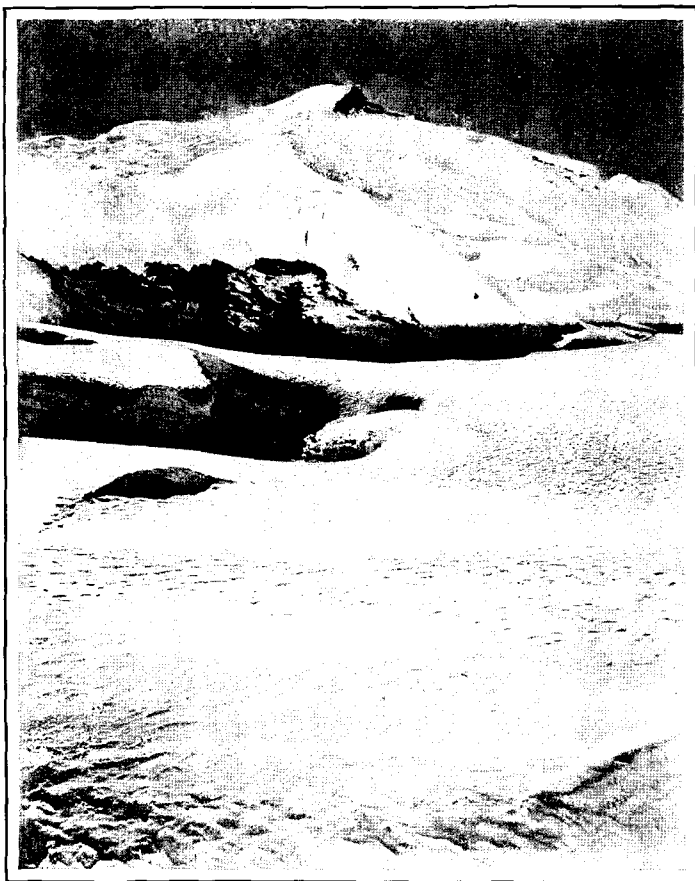
sire, went ahead, X. second, I third, and Pablo fourth; the other three followed on a second rope. Progress would have been good were it not for the frequent halts for the men to rest their packs. We had a luncheon of canned beef, maize, and chocolate. Of course the men were continually chewing coca. I had explained to them the use of rope, ice-axe, and alpenstock, and continually exhorted them to "hold the rope tight." I did this myself so effectually that X. declared he would no longer go second. Pablo declined the honor, so I offered to go ahead. Having no climbing-irons, I was less secure, but went well for a while. In one place the better way seemed up a fairly steep slope where the snow was soft and we sank in about a foot. Before reaching the top of this hillock there was open rebellion. Pablo untied the rope and halted, as well as the entire section in the rear. E. now came nobly to the rescue, and talked to them in Quichua so severely that at length they were induced to proceed. No doubt it was hard work, but that is a necessary part of mountain-climbing. Now they wished to halt for the night. Soon after, in crossing a narrow gully



INDIAN PORTERS

of ice, my foot slipped and I began to slide. I immediately brought down my ice-axe, which held at the same time that the rope became taut. With the pull, E., who was second, had slipped too, though he was on the snow. It was X. who held the rope firm, though it cut his hands badly. Despite my protestations to the contrary, they now tried to haul me up, nearly cutting me in two, with no other perceptible result. I finally persuaded them to desist till I could explain what should be done. I was in no danger.

The gully gave into a nasty-looking hollow fifty feet below, but I was all right where I was. The difficulty was in getting up. There was no support here, but five feet below a little ridge across the ice would give a footing. I induced them to loosen the rope and let me slide down to this. Then I climbed out of the gully upon the snow and walked up to the others. Though I made as light of it as possible, this incident may have alarmed the Indians. Their protestations of fatigue and the impossibility of going farther were renewed, and I succeeded in getting them onward only by the assurance that we would halt at the first suitable camping-place. We halted, indeed, at a rather unsuitable one, where the snow sloped more than was agreeable. At this early hour, a little after four, I thought we might have rice in our soup. I contributed also some pemmican. We had the best alcohol-stove possible,



SOUTH PEAK, LOOKING FROM OUR HIGHEST CAMP

but that water would not boil. On another stove we made tea,—but the soup! After two hours the rice was raw, and a few spoonfuls sufficed.

It was colder here than below. I had thought excellent my plan of having a little tent all to myself, but it did not so prove. At the door it was barely five feet high, sloping to the other end. It was just wide enough for my sleeping-bag. To move about inside was impossible. I had to sit down and arrange my apparel as best I could. In the middle of the day it was very warm, but extremely cold at night. I already had on three suits of woollen underwear, two pairs of stockings, and vicuña fur socks; but the latter were damp, so I removed them for an extra pair of stockings. To sit in cramped quarters, take off high-laced boots, change stockings, put on Eskimo

trousers, get out my toilet articles, cold-cream, witch-hazel, Japanese stoves, when already half dead with fatigue and stiff with the cold—well, it was the hardest kind of labor. Every few minutes I was obliged to rest from exhaustion. I could not do half that I wished; when I tried to sleep it proved in vain. Cold



RAMOS

I was, too, especially my nose. A vicuña fur glove at length served as protection. I had more clothing, but to get out my bag and put it on seemed impossible.

With the dawn I blew my whistle for rising, but in vain. When I was dressed—which means getting out of my bag, putting on my boots, and combing my hair (no washing up here if you value your skin)—I went over to the other tent, where all was still. I exhorted them to rise and be off, but, lo! the In-

dians refused to go farther. Later I learned that it was not the cold alone that they feared, but during the night they had discussed the matter, and said, "What would money profit them if they were changed into stone?" as they believed would happen if they went higher.

It remained for the rest of us to advance as far as might be, if possible to the big rock, returning in time to go down to the snow-line before dark. E., however, was ill; he had eaten the half-cooked rice and had an attack of colic. Nevertheless, he said he could and would go; X. also. After a hasty meal, E. took his flags and the hypsometer, but X. refused to carry the camera or put on the rope. Then I told him he could not go at all, so he presently yielded. Our progress was slow, as the way was steeper and more difficult. Suddenly, in crossing a gully, our leader slipped and slid rapidly down as far as the rope allowed, dropping his ice-axe by the way instead of using it to stop himself; so it depended solely upon me. Luckily I now had on climbing-irons and was holding the rope tight. When the pull came, much to my delight it was not so strong as I expected, and I had no difficulty in retaining my position and stopping his downward career. E. readily regained his feet and his ice-axe, and we continued on our way. Again X. refused to proceed with the rope or to carry the camera. I called him a coward, and all I could in Spanish, to no avail. "He did not propose to be killed, if we were: he would hold the rope in his hand." Yes, and drop it if we both slipped. No, indeed, said I. It was all or none. I took the camera, coiled up the extra rope, and went on with E. alone. Presently I perceived X. following. He overtook us, half apologized for his conduct, said he would take the camera and put on the rope, but what would I give him? I considered the twenty soles promised far more than he deserved, but at length agreed to give thirty if we reached the big rock. It seemed near, but with the necessary windings and our delays, at half past one it might take another hour to arrive. Fearing that the Indians would depart, leaving the tents, etc., on the snow, if we did not return by three, I reluctantly gave the word to halt. I

boiled my thermometer—temperature 83.92 Centigrade—took some photographs, and a light luncheon, and then we retraced our steps. Going down at this altitude is very different from going up. An hour brought us to camp. The Indians were on the watch, and seeing us in the distance, in great haste began packing. This was the first and only time that I have seen people hurry in South America. Instead of the usual hour, fifteen minutes sufficed. Meanwhile X. and E., without burdens or rope, set off for the mine, E. asserting that he must return at once to Yungay for medicine. With all on the same rope, I led the others down, in an hour and a half reaching the rocks. My disgust at this outcome was great, but there seemed no help for it. On the following day we descended to the mine, whence I rode back to Yungay, ready to appreciate a good dinner and bed. E. had arrived at 1 A.M., a sick man, with practically no food for twenty-four hours.

Next day a letter came from E. offer-

ing to accompany me on another mountain expedition, to Cerro de Pasco, or even to the United States if I desired a companion. The superintendent of the mine, B., a gentleman of strength and intelligence, had expressed a wish to make the ascent of Huascaran. On Friday evening both arrived, and after some conversation we decided to make another attempt. I had no desire to repeat so much work for nothing. Sleepless nights and tiresome days had left me much the worse for wear, especially as, having neglected to wear a mask on the snow, my face was burned till I was hardly recognizable. Still, if there was a chance for the mountain, I wished to improve it. E. had done well, but I relied more upon B. The Indians were evidently useless, but E. declared that in Carbuaz he could find cholos, or half-breeds, without their superstitions, equally strong and more courageous. Moreover, these men would make a contract before a justice of the peace that they



CREVASSES SEEN FROM HIGHEST POINT REACHED JULY 22

should receive twenty-five soles each on condition only of arriving at the highest point between the two peaks. Failing to do this, each was to pay a fine of twenty soles.

Accordingly, having made preparations once more, I again set out for the mine, arriving about six. No E. Dinner was delayed, but finally eaten. Still no E. At nine I gave it up and retired, but about ten heard E.'s voice announcing their arrival. For some reason, this time not fleas, I was unable to sleep, and soon after five was up and out, hoping for an early start. After long waiting E. appeared, and I learned that he had brought only three of the men. The others would not come at night. E.'s assurance that they would arrive by eight and then we would set out was futile. I retorted that they could not arrive before twelve, possibly two, and we had lost a day, and my prognostication proved correct.

Friday morning, August 3, we again set out for the snow. It would be a long story to tell how after luncheon E. vanished, thus obliging me to carry a canteen of alcohol which I dared not leave behind; how, later, B. fell ill in consequence of drinking some cold water at luncheon, to which he was unaccustomed; how I went ahead to find a good place to camp and the men refused to follow; how at length they advanced to a most undesirable place near the snow and left me to whistle and wait for them in vain. When at last I approached them, I emphatically expressed my opinion of their conduct. After supper, having supplied B., for his colic, with a Japanese stove, which served as a hot-water bag for more than two hours, I crept into my sleeping-bag, thoroughly tired out from carrying an unwonted burden, and feeling that with men who paid no attention to my commands there was small chance for accomplishing anything. A sleepless night was to be expected.

The alarm at five aroused the others. By seven we were able to set out, and at eight to enter upon the snow. For the first time I began to feel hopeful. But E., having stipulated that he should be leading guide, soon left our former excellent route for a more direct line towards the great rock. In this direction the snow was more uneven, with larger

hillocks and hollows. After advising the old route I allowed him to take his own way, saying that if wrong on this occasion he must in future be guided by me. His way proved much more difficult; continually worse than before. The cholos did well, except one, Manuel, especially stupid and clumsy, who came next after me. True, he had no climbing-irons, but neither had several others. In one place we came up a short steep slope (I believe there was a small crevasse at the bottom), then made a traverse along a snow incline. I had made the ascent and was going on slowly, when I felt a strong pull from the rear. Without looking back I braced myself firmly. Luckily there was a narrow crevasse on my right, in which I placed my ice-axe. The pull increasing, I thrust it down farther. Shouting to the man to come on, I glanced around. It was funny, though uncomfortable. The man was on all fours on the steep slope, not making the slightest effort to recover himself. The leader of the second set, Ramos—a most efficient and intelligent man—was not only exhorting him to go on, but was giving him punches in the rear, which finally impelled him to get up and proceed. In a similar occurrence later the man not only went on all fours, but buried his head on his arms, too much frightened to look up and try to right himself.

At luncheon I gave B., who till now had not ventured to eat, the last of some raw eggs. Against my advice he ate cheese. It was not strange that soon after he declared that he was worse and he must return to the mine. What now? I could not allow him to go alone, though he professed his ability to do so. E. proposed to accompany him to the edge of the snow. I offered them a piece of the rope, but they would have none of it, and at once started off. I called to E. to bring back the climbing-irons B. was wearing, which had been made expressly to fit my shoes, but which I had let him wear, as he thought no others would answer. The men now wished to pitch the tents and advance no farther. This would never do, so I proposed to lead the way, with Ramos second. To this there were loud objections, as Ramos had led the rear so skilfully, but I could not



TOP CAMP, SECOND EXPEDITION, AUGUST 6

have the clumsy Manuel as my only safeguard. At length, all on one rope, we set out towards the big rock. In a few minutes they again wished to pitch the tents. With difficulty I urged them onwards. Now a dark cloud betokened storm, and soon it began to snow. After a few moments it seemed best to pitch the big tent as a shelter for all. We did not expect E. before six, as he had left with B. about two, but at four we heard a voice outside, and there he was. I said, "You could not have taken B. to the rocks?" "No," he replied, but B. declared that he could go on by himself, so he had returned. Naturally he did not bring my climbing-irons, which I regretted. Also I felt some fear for B., alone and ill. However, he arrived safely, though, as I learned later, both he and E. had slipped a considerable distance on the snow, without serious injury. When the snow ceased I proposed to proceed, but the men declared that the tent was wet and heavy, and it would be better to stay here and start early in the morning. After supper, as usual, I put on extra clothing, but hardly enough, and passed another sleepless night.

The alarm was set at five, and I urged the importance of an early start, but it was undeniably cold. The wind invariably sprang up before dawn and continued several hours. I had requested E. to have the kettle only half filled with water for chaqui, it took so long to melt the snow and boil the water. With the same amount of chaqui the soup would be equally nourishing. But he only replied that they were not accustomed to it that way. In my separate tent I was not on hand to regulate such matters. When ready to set out it was *ten o'clock*—a nice time truly for a mountain climb! Continuing our upward way, E. ahead, we soon disagreed about the route. As he had chosen so badly the day before, I insisted on my opinion, whereupon he said I might lead myself, and untied the rope and went off. I was well satisfied with this arrangement, and we proceeded, later overtaking E. at the top of the hill. He now seemed more amenable to reason, and we went on together, but at the next halt open rebellion arose. Declaring that the way was much more difficult than they expected, the men announced that they would go

no farther unless for more pay. Several times before I had been imposed upon in a similar manner, so I determined to try what firmness would do. I reminded them of their contract for twenty-five soles and of the fine they were to pay if the contract should be unfulfilled. But now I learned, contrary to E.'s letter, that only three had signed the contract. I said they could do as they liked, go up or down; it was immaterial to me. But if they returned I should pay them no more. Whereupon all but Ramos started off below, leaving their burdens behind on the snow. I called to them, "If you leave these things, leave also my boots, clothing, climbing-irons, and ice-axes." But here they had the advantage. These they said they would leave at the edge of the snow.

This was indeed a sad plight. E., Ramos, and I could not carry down half of the things. On the whole, it seemed wiser to temporize. I did not so much mind paying their demand of ten soles more each if they did reach the top of the saddle. If they did not, I should not have to pay the additional sum, and next time I would at least make sure that they brought down the things. So I told E. to call them back, that I yielded. (E. had not helped me in this crisis, and I was informed later that he had incited the men to make this demand.) Now we had an explicit un-

derstanding. They were to obey my orders. They were to go on that night till six o'clock. The next morning they were to be off by seven and reach the top of the saddle that day. There would be three more nights on the snow. They should not receive the money unless they reached the desired point. All was agreed to and solemnly promised, and we again set out, E. putting on the rope and heading once more for the great rock. Enormous hollows and hills and crevasses lay between, and soon the way appeared impracticable. I pointed out the difficulties, but E. urged the matter, so I suggested his going ahead to investigate. After some time, becoming alarmed lest he had fallen, we all followed, whistling and shouting in vain, till we paused on the edge of a perpendicular descent of fifty feet. A voice came up from below. "What!" I said. "Down there? Have you, then, fallen?" "No," he replied; he was merely cutting his way down, had about finished, and would go on. This seemed incredible. Undoubtedly, judging from the time that had elapsed, he had had a bad fall here. Now he went up the next snowy hill, very steep, but at its summit he declared as usual that the way beyond was practicable, even easy, and that the great rock was near. I did not like the looks of the descent, but with Ramos holding the rope I climbed down to investigate. It was extremely difficult, impossible for men with packs or for clumsy Manuel without any. To lower the packs with a rope would take considerable time. The next slope was too steep for men with heavy burdens. E.'s statement that it was easy beyond was hardly trustworthy. Accordingly I climbed up again and gave the word to retreat. E., however, declared that he should go on to the rock. Argument was useless.

We retraced our steps to the south as soon as possible, turning to the left towards the saddle. Though I followed an easier way, the men soon began to grumble. They were tired and wished to halt for the night. They were afraid of being overwhelmed by an avalanche, such as we had seen fall over the cliffs of the south peak. They insisted at least on a short rest, and I went on alone to see if the way were practica-



MANUEL, WHO SLIPPED



RAMOS FISHING IN CREVASSE FOR LOST PACK

ble. It was, and I was returning to urge them forward, when, lo! they had pitched the tent at no later than five o'clock. Nothing was left but to whistle, again and again, to inform E. where we were. Just before dark I saw and heard him far to the north, with many impassable hollows between. While supper was in progress I asked one of the men to go out and shout to inform him where we were. Later I went out, called and whistled, without any response. It was eight when again I heard a distant cry. Now I bethought me of my hitherto unused folding-lantern. Having put it in shape, I asked the men with rope and candle to go in search of E., who might have fallen, and if so would perish with the cold. Not a man would stir. I said everything to them that I knew in Spanish—that they were without shame or pity, that they were no men, and worse than women; but all in vain. One man had hung the lantern outside and shouted, but that was all. I could

not go alone, so I stood and waited, wondering if a tragedy was to conclude my efforts on Huascaran.

About nine I heard a shout, and once more espied E. on the next ridge, with a great hollow between. I called to him to wait, that we would come with rope and lantern, and soon he would have the light of the moon. Ramos now rushed out of the tent, grasping rope and lantern, and calling on the others to follow. I had previously been trying to get my climbing-irons, but now I did not wait for them. Ramos and I at once set off down the slope, E. having already started down the slope opposite. We met him in the hollow below and brought him back to camp safe and sound, but, alas! without my barometer, which he had been carrying. This, he said, he had been obliged to leave behind if he were to save his life. He knew where it was and would get it in the morning.

After this adventure I felt more than ever the folly of trying to go on. There

was no knowing what E. would do next. Evidently he could not in any way be depended upon, and if we reached the top of the saddle, it seemed dangerous to attempt the summit with such a companion. Then the men had again been insubordinate. With such people it seemed hopeless.

Another night with only a half-hour's sleep and a headache as well. But early in the morning a man brought some coca tea, and I began to feel hopeful. Presently I went over to see about breakfast. Again the kettle was full and nearly boiling. E. was asleep. Time passed slowly. More alcohol was needed. When we had eaten the *chaqui* and were ready to start, the clock stood at *eleven*. At this rate two days more to the top of the saddle! We might as well go down first as last. A thousand feet more or less hardly mattered if we could not approach the top. Yet if we could! I asked the men if they would go on, and all replied, "Yes." "Very well," I said. "Go up!" But now the alcohol! The second canteen was shaken. Not much left, though we had had more than six bottles: enough for one day only. Twice as much had disappeared as was necessary. At least four days more on the snow if we were to reach the top! In vain, then, a single day and night, with the possibility of a second desertion by the men and of any unforeseen calamity from E. It seemed the part of wisdom to retreat. I had boiled my thermometer the night before—temperature 83.22 C., a height of about 17,500 feet only: 2500 feet in two days, not half-way to the saddle! At the snow-line the boiling temperature was 85.6 C.

E. and his special man went off in quest of the barometer. I led the other party down. We at once took a different and, as it proved, an easier route. Seeing a long slope at the left, I thought I would survey the prospect in this direction. At the top I was astonished to find an immense crevasse, far larger than any seen before, twenty feet wide and one hundred or more deep, extending straight down the mountain. I thought I should like a picture of this fine sight, and having assented to Ramos's request to be in it, turned to get my camera from the man in the rear. While my

back was turned, Ramos, evidently believing that he would look better without his pack, took it off and deposited it on the sloping snow. Hearing an exclamation, I looked around, to see the pack, carefully done up in a poncho, rolling down towards the brink of another crevasse at right angles to the big one. Why Ramos did not run forward and stop it, unless because they never hurry, I cannot see. I had the impulse, but it was already half-way down the slope, and in a moment disappeared over the brink. Ramos now went around to the lower side, while I took my picture without him. Then we all proceeded below and looked over the edge. To my dismay I found that this crevasse, too, seemed a hundred feet deep; at all events we could not see the bottom. Far below appeared a slope of ice, but it was a bend. No pack was visible. At once I said only one thing could be done. If Ramos could be lowered into the crevasse, with four men holding the rope, he might regain the pack. If not, it was wholly lost. Ramos thought, however, that he might fish it up with an ice-axe tied to the rope. There wasn't one chance in a thousand, but I let him try—of course in vain. We halted for luncheon, and then went on to the rocks. The other two were still above, but joined us by five o'clock, without the barometer. E. said he could not find it. The next day I returned alone to Yungay.

While leaving the country with regret that this magnificent mountain is still unclimbed, I congratulate myself on getting back alive, and promise never to go climbing again with one who has been really mad. From my observations taken with the hypsometer and reasonable estimates from these it would seem that if the snow-line is 15,000 feet (it is very likely more), the top of the saddle should be fully 20,000. Estimating the height of the south peak above as three-fifths of the difference, the summit should have an altitude of over 23,000 feet—a little greater than Aconcagua. With three Swiss guides, native porters on the snow could be dispensed with, and in three days from the snow-line this interesting problem could be solved.



Little-Girl-Afraid-of-a-Dog

BY MARY E. WILKINS FREEMAN

"THE chickens are beginning to lay again," said Emmeline's aunt Martha, "and Emmeline can begin carrying eggs over to the poor Ticknors to-morrow." Martha, who was quite young and pretty, cast a glance of congratulation at Emmeline, as if she were proposing a great pleasure.

Emmeline's mother echoed her sister. "Yes, that is so," said she. "Sydney" (Sydney was the man) "said yesterday that the chickens were laying very well. To-morrow Emmeline shall begin."

"Only think how nice it is going to be for those poor Ticknors, with all those children, to have half a dozen new-laid eggs every day," said Martha, again with that congratulatory glance at her little

niece, who sat beside the west window, holding her best doll.

"We shall be able to send more than that some days, I dare say," said Emmeline's mother. "Maybe, when I go to the store, I will buy a pretty new basket for you to carry the eggs in, dear."

"Yes'm," said Emmeline in a low voice. She sat full in the glow of the setting wintry sun, and her whole little blond head and delicate face was gilded by it. It was impossible for her mother and her aunt to see that she had turned very pale. She kept her face turned toward the window, too, and when she said "Yes'm," infused a hypocritical tone of joy into the word, although she was a most honest and conscientious little girl.