



THE KING OF THE CAÑON.—P. 361.

# OUTING.

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## BIG GAME IN COLORADO.

BY ERNEST INGERSOLL.



ONLY fifteen years ago deer might easily be shot within sight of Denver, Colorado Springs, or Cañon City then almost the only towns of consequence; the plains were alive with antelope, all the parks abounded in elk, and the big-horn, bear and mountain lion were found on every range. This primitive condition of things has been greatly modified. Railroads thread many of the passes, the mountains are pitted with mines from base to apex, the charcoal burners have desolated some of the fairest hillsides, and the lumberman has cut away the coverts of the deer, while farms and hay ranches and the corrals and pastures of horses and cattle occupy the lush valleys where wild animals used to feed and bring forth their young.

Nevertheless this is a comparative rather than an absolute statement. The game of Colorado has disappeared, it is true, from its former haunts in the valleys and parks most populous and easily accessible, but in the remoter quarters of the State something of the old-time plenty, if not the pristine fearlessness, may be seen. Never again, probably, must travelers stop and drive the antelope away from their mule

train with stones, as happened more than once to the writer's party in Southern Wyoming in 1877. No longer can the hunter expect to meet elk and blacktail absolutely fearless of man, as were many which we saw that same year, but this feature the sportsman will not regret. He glories in a successful stalk or a skillful chase only when the game is alert and wary. He counts his reward of pleasure in the difficulties overcome rather than in the mere fact of final killing. He would find small satisfaction in walking up to and shooting an animal which was too ignorant to run away.

Colorado is a big State. You might hide away all New England in it. Large portions of it are entirely unsuitable for population outside of the mining industries, so long, at any rate, as irrigable soil remains to be occupied in the better parts, and that will be for a long time to come. The growth of railroads, which has been so rapid and apparently without end, has in fact confined itself either to the really limited regions where precious ores are dug, or else has followed certain river cañons in making through lines east and west. The eastern front of the mountains has been penetrated in almost every valley and bristles with towns, and the southwestern quarter or San Juan country, as far north as the Gunnison and Grand rivers, is well occupied; but a great area in the western central and northwestern quarters is as yet an untamed country, where the hunter may find work for his rifle.

The northwestern quarter of Colorado,



A WEIGHT CARRIER.

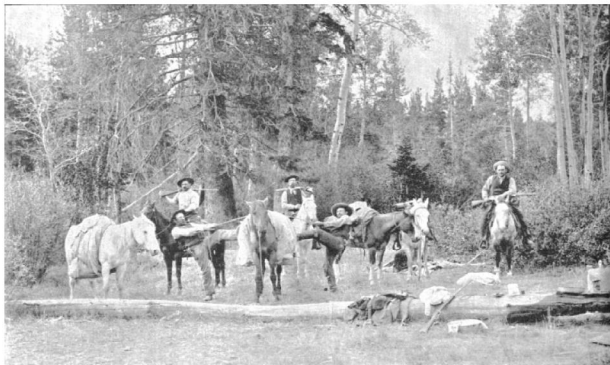
comprised in Garfield and Routt counties, still remains one of the wildest and most primitive regions of the great West. It is wholly west of the Rockies proper, and in a general way is a series of lofty plateaus gradually sloping down from the Park Range to the valley of Green River. But this plateau bears great numbers of short ranges and isolated peaks, many of which rise to snowy altitudes. Westward from these mountains flow two large rivers, the White, and further north the Yampah, as important feeders of the Green River, each having a host of tributaries that gather from rocky gorges and wind their way along pleasant valleys and parks.

Among the head waters of these streams are such mountains as Shingle Peak, Mt. Marvin, the Dome and Pagoda Peak, from which streams flow down not only into the White and Yampah, but southward into the Grand. The valley of the Grand, Egeria Park and the head waters of the Yampah have much open ground and have been pretty well settled on by farmers and cattlemen, whose operations have driven away the game to a great extent, though the settlers have more visits from bears and wolves than they like, and often get a shot at deer of various kinds. In the Elkhead and other mountains lying between there and North Park game is still to be found, including elk, but the peaks are exceedingly high, the foothills are rugged, snow comes early and the whole region is a difficult one to travel and hunt in.

At the western foot of these massive uplifts, however, along the upper White River, around Trapper's Lake, among the southern foothills of Dome and Pagoda peaks, over on Dodd's, Sage and the other creeks which go to form the Yampah, and down Williams River, as good and comfortable hunting is still to be had as anywhere in the West.

Few settlers have gone in there as yet and no ledges of precious ores tempt the invasion of the miner, while not a single railroad or wagon road penetrates the valleys or crosses the hills. There is plenty of timber, but this is scattered about, leaving every little valley open and many of the lower hills bare and grassy, while the higher slopes are clothed with dense forest, every gorge and stream side is lined with spruce and cottonwood, and all the parks are dotted with dense clumps of aspen and small shrubbery. No part of Colorado is prettier or affords more pleasant camping grounds or charming bits of scenery than this, and every one of the swift, sparkling, snow-fed streams is full of fish. In this healthful and beautiful region game abounds—elk, deer, bear, panther and small quarry of every sort—and the sportsman can get at it with the minimum of expense and waste of time and trouble.

The point of entrance to this region, and to a large extent the place for outfitting, is Glenwood Springs, a flourishing town at the junction of the Roaring Fork



PREPARING TO START.

with Grand River, which is the terminus of the Colorado Midland Railway.

This road is among the less known but most entertaining of the transmontanic routes. Its eastern end is at Colorado Springs, whence it enters the mountains by way of Ute Pass. The first part of the route, therefore, is along the northern base of Pike's Peak into South Park, a stretch of beautiful, grove-dotted, open land, where Virginia deer are still not uncommon and excellent trout fishing is to be had in the streams and lakelets. Reaching the valley of the Arkansas at Buena Vista, the railroad crosses to the foot of the Main or Snowy range of the Rockies, and begins to ascend the pass between Mounts Massive and La Plata.

By a strangely circuitous course it winds its way from spur to spur until it has climbed to the level of 10,000 feet, where it passes through the Hegerman tunnel to the Pacific Slope. The view backward from this point toward the east is one of the most spacious and sublime in the whole range of Western travel; and the view westward as the tunnel is left behind and the wonderful descent of the Pacific Slope begins is of many grand mountains and deep valleys, among which the road finds its way down the valley of the Frying Pan and Roaring Fork—both famous trout streams—to Glenwood Springs, by some very clever expedients in engineering.

Glenwood Springs has grown to importance not so much because it is a good business point as because of the presence of some remarkable springs of hot mineral water which supply elaborate bathing houses and spacious pools. Here are handsome modern hotels, well supplied stores and every facility for outfitting a hunting party to good advantage. Glenwood therefore becomes an admirable starting point for an expedition into the northern game country. In fact it is the only starting point.

A wagon road runs northward from there as far as Trapper's Lake, but it is a pretty hard road, and the taking of a wagon is not advisable if a party means to do any earnest hunting, since they will need to go back into the hills where a wagon could not be driven without more trouble than the convenience was worth.

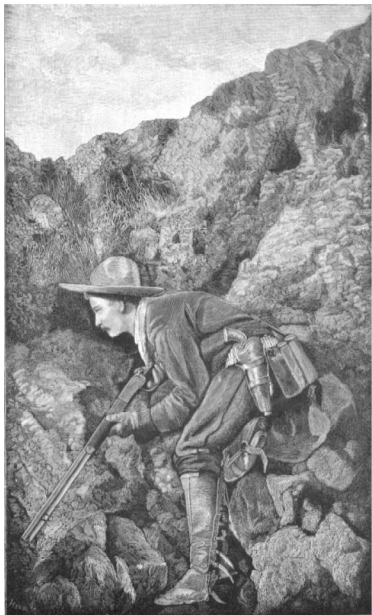
The better plan by far is to buy at Glenwood Springs riding horses and pack animals which can be taken as far into the mountains as anyone wishes, follow-

ing old Indian trails or going where there is no trail at all. The riding animals will naturally be ponies, which may be purchased at from \$35 to \$50 apiece—the latter sum being an outside figure. The pack animals may be mules, ponies or donkeys. Mules will carry most, and are great climbers, but they cost high and need much care. Pack ponies may be had for \$25 to \$35, and are more commonly used than mules. For a hunting expedition, however, burros (donkeys) would probably answer all purposes better than either horses or mules. They cost only \$15 to \$20 a piece, and are easily loaded and cared for. One for each member of the party may seem to an Eastern man a small allowance, but that number ought to be enough to carry all the luggage and camp equipment required by men who want to hunt.

Riding saddles of the ranger pattern, which are altogether best for this kind of work, may be bought in Denver for about \$25 apiece. Pack saddles or paniers will cost \$4 apiece. For burros the panier is probably best. A guide, who will also be cook, care for the animals (as a tenderfoot would not know how to do well), and be general camp helper, may be hired for about \$3 a day, you, of course, furnishing him board while he is with you.

The biggest of the big game of this region is, of course, the grizzly. He is the genuine Old Ephraim, too. The writer has known of some of the largest bears on record killed at the foot of Pagoda Peak. At midday they climb high up where it is cool, but at night they descend into the wooded heads of the gulches and spend the twilight in seeking food. Anything comes handy to their omnivorous palates, and no animal is more readily lured by bait.

Baiting, indeed, is the customary method of hunting them there. A deer or elk is searched for and killed in the locality where bears are hoped for. If it falls in a favorable position so much the better. Let it lie and do not go near it. If not, drag it with as little handling as possible to some place where rocks or other cover make a good stand to shoot from. This should be chosen, of course, with reference to the prevailing draught of the evening wind, which, as a rule, sucks down the gulch. Once placed, go near it as little as possible. The second evening will be time enough to examine whether it has been disturbed. After that keep watch between



SAM HAD HALTED IN A CROUCHING POSITION.—P. 362.



"I LEVELLED ON THE LEADING BUCK."—P. 360.

sunset and the time when it gets too dark to shoot. If the day is rainy the bear may come as early as 4 or 5 o'clock. On clear and especially on moonlight nights he may not appear until long after dusk. The early dawn is another feeding time, when you may obtain him by watching. In broad daylight you will only stumble upon him, however, just as he might stumble upon you in wandering about at midnight. Black bears are numerous there, too, and some of them are almost as big as the grizzly, though hardly as interesting to tackle.

Elk and deer shooting needs no directions. Mule deer are abundant everywhere in the parks by September, when the bucks have renewed their horns and the fawns have grown. They come out to feed on the edges of the glades at sunrise, and slowly collect into little companies that move toward the warmer and more open valleys and plateaus as the autumn advances. The elk have similar habits, and are inclined to form large bands in the winter, those containing several thousand individuals having been seen in time past in this very region.

Now a band of more than a hundred would be noticeable, so rapidly has this noble animal succumbed to reckless hide hunters and market men.

Along certain creeks, where the country is open, antelope live, hiding away in the brushy ravines in summer and coming out with the earliest frost. As they are chased just enough to make them wary, the sportsman will find great sport in endeavoring to stalk these alert and swift-footed creatures, whose flesh is the best addition to the camp larder.

Where such animals as these, not to speak of beaver, badger, skunk, ground squirrel, etc., are numerous, beasts of prey may of course be looked for. The loud-barking coyote sneaks through every gulch and skirts the edges of the woods like the vagabond he is. More thoroughly a mountaineer, the large gray or timber wolf makes the crags echo with his howl, but is nowhere numerous enough to be troublesome. The little yellow wildcat, or bobcat, will be seen often enough, but the panther will rarely show himself, though if he is heard you may be able to tote him down to your bait and get him.

Few mountain lions have been shot in Colorado, however, except those which have been met by accident and dispatched by a quick shot controlled by steady hands and a cool head.

The region north of Grand River, reached from Glenwood Springs, is probably the best hunting ground in Colorado, but another district demands a little attention. West of the main range of the Rockies, in the very centre of the State, is a great group or chaotic spur of lofty peaks, known as the Elk Range, which fills the space between the Grand River on the north and its largest tributary, the Gunnison, on the south.

These mountains are, as a whole, lofty, rugged and snowy in the extreme. Composed largely of eruptive granite, their peaks are splintered ridges and sharp pinnacles of broken rock; they abound in amphitheatre-like cliffs inclosing barren areas above timber line, icy and difficult to reach, and their valleys are narrow gorges, thickly wooded and conducting torrents full of cataracts well fed by the snow banks. Viewed from the outside they present a massive, lonely and alpine

grandeur as impressive as that of almost any group of heights in the State, while he who penetrates their fastnesses finds a picturesque and rugged scenery hardly surpassed even in the tremendous cañons and among the steep and towering peaks of the San Juan.

No mines are worked except on the outskirts of this great group, for even ores exist in their interior ledges the cost of getting them out is too great to justify the attempt. The headquarters of the mining is in and about Aspen, a lively town near the head of the *Frying Pan*, where an outfit and guides can be procured for an expedition. It is manifest, however, that while the Elk Mountains offer an excellent opportunity for wild mountaineering adventures they do not promise so well for the sportsmen. Deer of both species undoubtedly occur among them but not so numerous as on the plateaus westward, of which the principal one is the *Grand Mesa*. Bear haunt their lonelier parts and not infrequently descend to the valleys, and of course lynx and a less number of panther may occasionally be encountered. The name



"THE LAST BAD KITES."



was given originally on account of the abundance of elk met with by the early explorers about their base. These have been largely, though not wholly, exterminated. A band of twenty-five or thirty was seen last season not far from Aspen, and doubtless other small bands find shelter in the remoter valleys, especially those which open toward the north and west. But it must be remembered that in summer the elk go high up to the alpine pastures at timber line, and remain there until driven down by the snow, and that this is a difficult region in which to follow them.

Bighorn are unquestionably numerous in the Elk Range yet, where they find safe retreats on the lofty crests that are so hard for hunters to climb; but the law of Colorado forbids killing the mountain sheep during the next three years.

Taking all things into consideration, if you are in search of big game in Colorado, the best course seems to me to go to the very end of the Midland Railway and then strike northward on to the head of White River.

It was this direction that friends of mine took at the end of a three months' scientific tour in the fall of last year, and what chances there are for big game may be best learned from the report of my friends as I here repeat it:

While upon the broken plains and mesas and among the lower foothills there was work to be done for all but two, the exceptions being "Sam" and myself. But then we were privileged and tolerated by the kindly chief on two conditions—that we did not hinder the working of the staff and that we supplied the entire outfit with game and fish whenever and wherever possible.

When the work in hand was nearly accomplished two-thirds of the party were to move southward and report prior to disbanding for the winter, while the chief, "Sam," myself and needful helpers were to work into the mountains for a three weeks' exploring trip. Some of the "boys" had gone to bring up burros and pack horses, for no wagon could follow our route further. Early one morning a driver came in and reported having seen antelope in a valley a mile north of us, and "Sam" and I hastily got ready and loped away in pursuit. Reaching the valley we dismounted, and, advancing cautiously to a commanding point swept with the glass the long tongue of

grass stretching between steep, rough hills. We learned several welcome things by this scrutiny. In the first place the antelope were there—seven of them—and in the second place we discovered that the valley formed a sort of cul de sac, with no exit likely to tempt an antelope, save the gap immediately below us opening upon a great stretch of comparatively level prairie. In addition we saw that we held a great advantage in position, and that the game would almost certainly when alarmed make a dash for the open.

Hastily retreating to our horses, we mounted and rode quietly to the entrance and in along the north side of the valley for some four hundred yards. Here I halted behind some brush, while Sam quietly advanced several hundred yards farther. Where I was the valley was perhaps half a mile wide, and I could not see the game, but sat keenly watchful for the first sign of the expected stampede.

"Sam" had been gone nearly an hour when suddenly I heard a shot and then another and another. Standing bolt upright in the stirrups, I could command a long stretch of the valley, and presently heard another report and a distant cheer. Round a point, flying like the wind, came the frightened band, heading directly for the gap below me. I counted six only, and then bracing myself firmly I leveled on the leading buck, aiming just below the white crescents on his neck, and fired. At the shot he wavered slightly, halted, and his trained followers pulled up almost in their tracks, bewildered by the echoes from the hills. My buck stood broadside on and I fired again, aiming at the shoulder. This time they located me, and launching ahead like a flash they darted for the gap, my buck lagging behind. I fired two hurried shots as they drew almost abreast of my stand, and then wheeled my horse and spurred for the gap as if the fiend was at my back. The good nag grasped the situation; he saw the bounding quarry and knew the call for speed and he buckled to his task right gamely.

On we flew toward the goal, the antelope seeming to fairly hurl themselves through the air, while my stout-hearted horse laid back his black ears and thrust out his eager nose and stretched away in a thundering gallop, faster and faster, till his girths fairly swept the grass. He was racing in dead earnest and enjoying it hugely, but he ran to defeat, for the

game beat him out handsomely by good fifty yards, and once in the open the footing was too treacherous for reckless riding. With difficulty pulling up my thoroughly excited horse, I slid off him and pumped away vigorously at the rapidly vanishing antelope, but apparently all to no purpose; then remounting, I retraced our course to look for my wounded buck. He was standing motionless not far from where I had last seen him, and a great crimson stain upon his side told that he was sorely wounded. Even as I carefully approached he staggered forward a step or two, swayed from side to side, stumbled around in a semicircle and then lurched down into the grass, stone dead.

In time came "Sam," wearing a grin almost as broad as the valley, and across his saddle a fine young buck, and ere long a very triumphant procession acknowledged the cheers of the delighted camp.

Next day we made a final long stage westward to meet the boys with the horses and burros at a previously arranged point; two days later all was in readiness, and we began our climbing expedition.

Signs of game were about every water course and pool, and on two occasions I had capital luck with the trout, though the rod was merely a branch from the brush and the streams difficult to get at where we happened to reach them.

Gradually working our way upward, we finally reached an ideal camp ground—plenty of forage, shelter and good water close at hand—and we spent a week exploring the surroundings with good result. Deer and grouse could be found almost anywhere, and we saw plenty of bear sign and now and again tracks of "lions," but these latter gentry wisely kept their distance and, as usual, offered no chance for our rifles. But the crowning exploit—a feat that will remain ever green in the memory of "Sam" especially—was the killing of "Ephraim."

One of the boys came in at night and reported that he had found unmistakably fresh bear sign in a little ravine about five miles from camp. He said it was an extremely rough spot, walled in in places with ragged cliffs of naked rock, and that he was positive a grizzly, and a regular old snorter at that, lived in the ravine.

At sunrise we were ready, each man with a snack of lunch in his pocket, and we followed our guide down a great slope through the timber, then over a

steep crest which taxed muscles and lungs to the utmost, then down another long slope, and finally to the stream where he had seen the track. Following it upward for about a mile as best we could, a pool was reached, and its margin showed plainly the footprints of our guide and the track of a huge bear. Suddenly the guide exclaimed excitedly, "Look here, this is fresh!" and we found a great footprint, made so recently that we involuntarily glanced all round for the cause of it. But "Ephraim" had doubtless sought his domicile an hour before.

"Now, he's bin yer fur a drink," said the guide, "and has likely gone loafin' along up the ravine and by this time is in his den, snoozin'. It's among the rocks on that side, I reckon, an' we'll round him up 'fore long. We'd all best sneak along top of the cliff an' see what we kin see."

An hour later we had gained the summit of the cliff at a point above where the guide suspected "Ephraim" dwelt. Below us was a steep descent, marked with countless pinnacles, ledges and steps, and near the bottom fragments of rock were piled in chaotic confusion. We could work our way down readily enough, providing missteps were carefully avoided, for a fall would simply mean instant destruction. For many minutes three pairs of eager eyes searched every visible foot of the ravine and every crevice and cavern among the boulders. Not a sign of life was to be found nor was a tomb quieter than the rock-strewn prospect.

Presently a low hiss from our guide called our attention to him. His face was ablaze with half-suppressed excitement, and silently he came creeping to us and whispered, "I seen him!"

"Where?"

"Creep 'round yer and look down—right below yer. Ain't he an ole whaler?"

"Sam" and I looked long and earnestly and with beating hearts, but saw no bear. Then the guide crept forward and took another look and whispered, "He war thar all right, fur I seen him. He walked 'roun' that rock and looked bigger'n a steer. We'll jest lay low fur a bit; he's as ugly lookin' an ole devil as ever yer seen, an' I reckon hez a den down under thar."

We waited for half an hour, watching intently. It was not more than seventy-five yards to where the guide had seen

him, and a series of rock steps made it quite feasible for a man to descend to his level. Finally "Sam" signified his intention of going down. "Yer want ter be mighty keerful," said the guide; "if he gets his eyes on yer he'll go fur yer sure."

"Sam" said, "All right; you fellows place yourselves to cover me and I'll go down. I'm going to see that bear if it takes a leg." Forthwith he began a noiseless, carefully gauged descent, lowering himself from point to point and from ledge to ledge until he was barely forty yards from the supposed den. We waited and watched with rifles ready and nerves strung to the straining point. "Sam" had halted in a crouching position and was peering keenly down when the crisis suddenly arrived. A big piece of shaly rock, loosened by his movements, started to roll down and finally, followed by a small avalanche of pebbles and grit, lit with a crash upon the shelf-like level where the bear had been.

A moment later an immense rusty-brown head seemed to protrude from out of the solid rock, and "Ephraim" had come forth to see who dared invade his stronghold. He was immediately below "Sam's" point of vantage! and looked to be so close that he might have been almost touched with the rifle, though in reality the distance between them was about thirty yards. Before the grim brute saw his foes; before he even realized that the avalanche of stones was aught else but a natural slip, a .45 calibre bullet struck him fair and true in the back of his mas-

sive head and laid him dead in his very doorway. As "Sam" started to pump in another shell his treacherous foothold gave way a trifle, and he slid downward directly toward the bear for about ten feet or so; the next instant he was climbing like a scared cat upward as fast as hands and knees could carry him, while the expression on his face did our hearts good to see. He speedily rallied, however, and yelled to us to know could we see the bear. Then we all three went down to within twenty feet of our prize, where the guide drew a bead on the small, round ear and fired point blank into it. But "Ephraim" was a thoroughly dead bear, though the guide declared that he took no chances, and I believe rightly enough.

"Ephraim" proved to be a big, old he bear, much the largest our guide had seen. His enormous bulk—he was fat as a stall-fed ox—his great fangs and terrible curved claws were almost terrifying, even in death, and he certainly would have proved himself a dangerous customer had fate ordained he should have had half a fair chance. As it was, "Sam" had secured a magnificent trophy fairly enough, and took it all coolly and as a matter of course.

"Say, 'Sam,' how did you feel perched up there when his head showed; were you scared?"

"Not a bit."

"Then what the deuce made you climb so when you slipped?"

A knowing wink was the sole answer.

## CANOEING ON THE MIRAMICHI.

BY REV. WM. C. GAYNOR.

IF the readers of *OUTING* will take the trouble to examine a map of the Dominion of Canada they will find on its eastern side a province called New Brunswick, adjoining the good State of Maine. If they will pursue their examination a little further they will also find that a river traverses almost the entire breadth of this province and empties into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. This river is called the Miramichi—a name signifying "happy retreat" in the Mic-Mac dialect,

The Miramichi takes its rise in the high

watershed near the Maine boundary, from which it is separated by the valley of another New Brunswick river, the St. John. It has a water course of 220 miles. For the greater part of this distance it is bifurcate, one branch being called the Northwest, the other the Southwest, Miramichi. The first fifty or sixty miles of its course on both branches is a series of rapids and troubled waters, owing to the quick descent and rocky nature of the country through which it passes. Afterward its waters run more smoothly, until at their