

## UPON MOUNT ARARAT.

### The Legend That It Cannot be Climbed is Falsified.

Ararat, we learn, must now be reckoned among the mountains which have exacted a toll of life from explorers. Some of the geologists who attended the congress at St. Petersburg during the summer appear to have extended their trip to the Caucasus (which was among the attractions of the gathering) as far as Ararat, and to have attempted the ascent, but, according to a telegram, one of the party, Professor Stoeber, from Vladikavaz, has been frozen to death. This misfortune will add to the awe with which the mountain is generally regarded in its immediate neighborhood. For centuries it was considered inaccessible, not because it presented any special difficulties, but because it was deemed to be a sacred place. From a very early time it has been firmly believed that portions of the Ark still remained on the summit. This is affirmed by at least one Greek father of early date. Adventurous climbers are said to have been overpowered by an irresistible inclination to slumber, which by delaying their advance, has frustrated their hopes of reaching the summit. This was considered a clear proof of some supernatural guardianship, though a more skeptical age would propound another explanation. But there was yet a legend in reserve to confute the doubters. A monk in the monastery at its foot desired so ardently to gaze on the sacred relics that he returned again and again to the attack, always to fall asleep. But at last, an angelic form stood by him as he slumbered, and told him that men might not tread on such holy ground, but that his faith should be rewarded with a fragment from the timbers of the Ark. When he awoke it lay by his side, and is still preserved, so the story runs, in the monastery.

So strong is the belief that not many years ago an eminent American ecclesiastic, when told by an Englishman that he had just returned from the summit of Ararat, beamed upon him with a benevolent smile of superior knowledge and gravely replied: "That is impossible; no one can ascend Ararat." But of late years—notwithstanding this simple way of settling the question—the summit has been several times reached. The first to make the ascent was Parrot, a professor at Dorpat, in 1829. Doubts have been thrown upon his story, but there is not the slightest reason for questioning its accuracy. As he relates in his well-known book, "A Journey to Ararat," he twice failed, but was successful at his third attempt. He was followed at rather long intervals by other explorers, among whom was the eminent geologist, Abich, in 1845, and in that year the first Englishman, Digby Seymour, arrived on the summit. An ascent was made in 1876 by Professor Bryce. This was certainly not the least memorable, for his companions became exhausted, and were obliged to halt, while he made his way up for rather more than four hours quite alone. Fortunately, of the two routes by which the summit generally has been reached—the north-western and southeastern—he had selected the latter, where the snow is less steep and is not likely to make much step-cutting necessary. The ascent has been repeated several times since then, but the climb is undoubtedly long and toilsome, and the cold may be, as it has been on this occasion, a serious danger.

We do not yet know whether Professor Stoeber became exhausted or whether the party were caught in a storm. Alpine climbers know that the

cold can be a formidable foe, even on a bright day, on the upper part of Mount Blanc, and the sad fate of the travelers who were lost in the mists and died of exhaustion is still among recent memories. But Ararat is considerably higher than Mont Blanc, for its summit only just falls short of 17,000 feet, and the severity of the cold is doubtless increased by the fact that its rocks on the upper part offer hardly any shelter and the whole mountain is remarkably isolated. It crowns the Armenian plateau, rising from the plain of the Aras, about 3,000 feet above the sea level, a huge, almost solitary elongated mass, which culminates in two peaks, Little Ararat, rather more than 12,500 feet high and the vast-domed Great Ararat. Both these—indeed, the whole mass—are of volcanic origin, but no trace of a crater remains. The summit is a dome of snow, but the last rocks which crop out are indubitably volcanic, reddish and grayish scoria, in fact, lava or ash is met with everywhere during the ascent. The materials, so far as they have been examined, do not exhibit any great variety. They belong to a species of rock which is named andesite by geologists, because it abounds in the South American chain. Doubtless the desire of studying this remarkable mass and the hope of enjoying a marvelous panorama, prompted the ascent—undertaken, perhaps, a little too late in the year—which has ended so disastrously.—London Standard.

### A Refractory Royal Patient.

King Humbert's delight in the most fatiguing exercises, and his absolute disregard as to the weather, which he never allows to interfere with any plans that he may have made, give his doctors some anxiety. There is a good story of the late Dr. Saglione, who died quite recently, and in whom the King has lost a most devoted servant and friend. Saglione rarely left his royal master's side, whether the King was chasing chamois in the snows of the Alps, hunting wild boar at Castel Fusano, or during the great and tiring reviews on the plains of Lombardy. A chronic cough that the King had contracted, owing to constant exposure to all kinds of weather, drove Saglione to despair, for his majesty absolutely refused to take any remedies. One evening the King seemed inclined to follow his doctor's advice, however, and Saglione accordingly sent to his room some powders to be taken during the night. Early the next morning he went to inquire after his patient. The King told him that he was "much better; I might almost say quite well." "Your majesty now believes in my powders," Saglione said, triumphantly. "Excellent," replied the King, laughing: "just go and look in my room." There Saglione found his powders in the wastepaper basket, where they had been thrown untouched.—London Morning Post Roman Correspondent.

### Had to Admit It.

"Just thirty-three years ago to-day," said the old soldier, "the top of my head was grazed by a bullet."

"There isn't much grazing now, is there, grandpa?" was the comment of the youngest grandchild, and as the old gentleman rubbed his bare poll, he had to admit the correctness of the assertion.—Tit-Bits.

### A Good Excuse.

"Bridget, how did it happen that when we came in last night after the theater there was a policeman in the kitchen?"

"Sure, mum, Oi don't know; but Oi think the theater didn't last as long as usual."—Figaro.