

fragments of a rock entirely similar to that found at the base of the peak, excepting perhaps a little more compact in its structure. By removing a few of these fragments, they were found to rest upon a bed of ice, which is of great thickness, and may perhaps, be as permanent as the rocks with which it occurs.

"It was about 4 o'clock p. m. when the party arrived on the summit. In our way we had attempted to cross a large field of snow, which occupied a deep ravine, extending down about half a mile from the top, on the southeastern side of the peak. This was, however, found impassable, being covered with a thin ice, not sufficiently strong to bear the weight of a man. We had not been long on the summit when we were rejoined by the man who had separated from us, near the outskirts of the timber. He had turned aside and lain down to rest, and afterwards pursued his journey by a different route.

"From the summit of the peak, the view towards the northwest and southwest is diversified with innumerable mountains, all white with snow; and on some of the more distant it appears to extend down to their bases. Immediately under our feet, on the west, lay the narrow valley of the Arkansa, which we could trace running towards the northwest, probably more than sixty miles.

"On the north side of the peak was an immense mass of snow and ice. The ravine in which it lay terminated in a woodless and apparently fertile valley, lying west of the first great ridge, and extending far towards the north. This valley must undoubtedly contain a considerable branch of the Platte. In a part of it, distant probably thirty miles, the smoke of a large fire was distinctly seen, supposed to indicate the encampment of a party of Indians.

"To the east lay the great plain, rising as it receded, until in the distant horizon it appeared to mingle with the sky. A little want of transparency in the atmosphere, added to the great elevation from which we saw the plain, prevented our distinguishing the small inequalities of the surface. The Arkansa, with several of its tributaries, and some of the branches of the Platte, could be distinctly traced as on a map, by the line of timber along their courses.

"On the south the mountain is continued, having another summit, (supposed to be that ascended by Captain Pike) at the distance of eight or ten miles. This, however, falls much below the high peak in point of elevation being wooded quite on its top. Between the two lies a small lake, apparently a mile long, and half

a mile wide, discharging eastward into the Boiling-spring creek. A few miles further towards the south, the range containing these two peaks terminates abruptly.

"The weather was calm and clear while the detachment remained on the peak; but we were surprised to observe the air in every direction filled with such clouds of grasshoppers, as partially to obscure the day. They had been seen in vast numbers above all the higher parts of the mountain, and many had fallen upon the snow and perished. It is, perhaps, difficult to assign the cause which induces these insects to ascend to these highly elevated regions of the atmosphere. Possibly they may have undertaken migrations to some remote district; but there appears not the least uniformity in the direction of their movements. They extended upwards from the summit of the mountain to the utmost limit of vision; and as the sun shone brightly, they could be seen by the glittering of their wings, at a very considerable distance.

"About all the woodless parts of the mountain, and particularly on the summit, numerous tracks were seen, resembling those of the common deer, but most probably have been those of the animal called the big horn. The skulls and horns of these animals we had repeatedly seen near the licks and saline springs at the foot of the mountain, but they are known to resort principally about the most elevated and inaccessible places.

"The party remained on the summit only about half an hour; in this time the mercury fell to 42 degrees, the thermometer hanging against the side of a rock, which in all the early part of the day had been exposed to the direct rays of the sun. At the encampment of the main body in the plains, a corresponding thermometer stood in the middle of the day at 96 degrees, and did not fall below 80 degrees until a late hour in the evening.

"At about five in the afternoon the party began to descend, and a little before sunset arrived at the commencement of the timber; but before we reached the small stream at the bottom of the first descent, we perceived we had missed our way. It was now become so dark as to render an attempt to proceed extremely hazardous; and as the only alternative, we kindled a fire, and laid ourselves down upon the first spot of level ground we could find. We had neither provisions nor blankets; and our clothing was by no means suitable for passing the night in so bleak and inhospitable a situation. We could not, however, proceed without imminent danger from precipices; and

by the aid of a good fire, and no ordinary degree of fatigue, found ourselves able to sleep during a greater part of the night.

"At daybreak on the following morning, the thermometer stood at 38 degrees. As we had few comforts to leave, we quitted our camp as soon as the light was sufficient to enable us to proceed. We had traveled about three hours when we discovered a dense column of smoke rising from a deep ravine on the left hand. As we concluded this could be no other than the encampment where we had left our blankets and provisions, we descended directly towards it. The fire had spread and burnt extensively among the leaves, dry grass, and small timber, and was now raging over an extent of several acres. This created some apprehension, lest the smoke might attract the notice of any Indians who should be at that time in the neighborhood, and who might be tempted by the weakness of the party to offer some molestation. But we soon discovered a less equivocal cause of regret in the loss of our cache of provisions, blankets, clothing, etc., which had not escaped the conflagration. Most of our baggage was destroyed; but out of the ruins we collected a beggarly breakfast, which we ate, notwithstanding its meanness, with sufficient appetite. We chose a different route for the remaining part of the descent from the one taken in going up, and by that means avoided a part of the difficulty arising from the crumbling granite; but this was nearly compensated by the increased numbers of yuccas and prickly pears.

"We arrived a little after noon at the boiling spring, where we indulged freely in the use of its highly aerated and exhilarating waters. In the bottom of both these springs a great number of beads and other small articles of Indian ornament were found, having unquestionably been left there as sacrifices or presents to the springs, which are regarded with a sort of veneration by the savages. Bijeau assured us he had repeatedly taken beads and other ornaments from these springs, and sold them to the same savages who had thrown them in.

"A large and much frequented road passes the springs, and enters the mountains, running to the north of the high peak. It is traveled principally by the bison, sometimes also by the Indians; who penetrate here to the Columbia.

"The men who had been left at the horse camp about a mile below the springs, had killed several deer, and had a plentiful supply of provisions. Here the detachment dined; then mounting our horses, we proceeded