



BEING STRAY NOTES OF FIVE YEARS OF TRAVEL.

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AMERICA'S TWO GREATEST CANYONS.

II. GRAND CANYON OF ARIZONA.

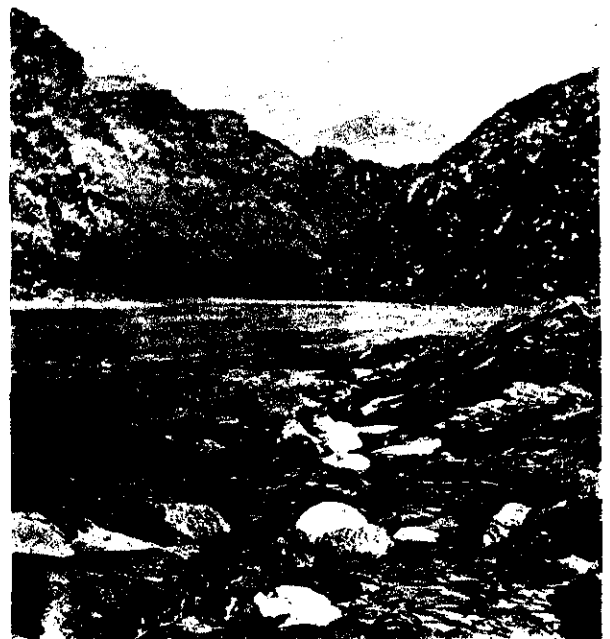
THE trail of the great steam monster across the desert of Arizona, across the red sandy plains where no grass is visible and only a tufty sage plant, a diminutive yucca, and a cactus manage to live, is forlorn and depressing. At the queerest mining hamlet of Williams, that deserted village whose every second building is a beer-shop and whose only claim for distinction lies in the unique sign board that swings over one such den and which proclaims to the world at large that it is a "Life saving station and

Thirst Parlour," we left the main line and branched toward the Canyon. For eleven months there had been no rain in Arizona, and then there came so much rain that the railway lines were washed away, causing much trouble and expense, and often delaying a train for several days. We could only creep along the Canyon line, which had suffered severely, but we had more luck than the passengers of a train two days previously, when the carriages were upset and the unfortunate occupants hauled out through the windows.

The hotel clock was pointing to a quarter to eight when we reached our



LOOKING DOWN THE CANYON FROM BRIGHT ANGEL.



COLORADO RIVER AT THE FOOT OF THE GRAND CANYON.

destination, all covered with snow and just four hours after our expected time of arrival.

El Tovar is quaint to be sure! Following the old log cabin idea, the inside of the great hall and also of the dining-room are lined with huge tree stumps partially stained. Down the centre of the entrance hall are great tree trunks reaching from floor to ceiling and acting as supports for the roof. Round the walls hung Indian paintings; over the entrance door and at the far end of the hall are huge elk and bison heads; on

the floors are brilliantly coloured Indian blankets, and even the electric lights are fastened to swinging logs of wood.

When I awakened next morning I hopped out of bed and opened the shutters of my window, gazing out on a scene such as I had never before beheld. The Grand Canyon with its huge red precipices was not visible though only a few yards away, but every tree was white with snow, and huge icicles a foot long hung from the edge of the verandah. As I leant out of the window the snowflakes fell on my head and shoulders, and the ground was thick and white with it. It took me ages to dress that morning, as I was continually returning to the window to look at the wonderful snow-scene.

After breakfast, as the snow had ceased falling somewhat, we walked outside. The Grand Canyon, shrouded in mist a few yards away, interested me not a whit. I wanted to walk in the snow and shake the trees until great masses of snow fell from their overburdened limbs. There wasn't a tiny scrap of earth to be seen, and not a leaf on the big trees but was thickly coated white; nothing could have been more beautiful. The snow on the ground in the pine forest of Yosemite had enchanted me, but here the trees with their drooping snow-laden branches made the scene a thousand times more wonderful, a thousand times more beautiful to my unaccustomed eyes.

Walking to the Canyon's edge, we found the mist too great for us to see far into its mighty depths, so we spent most of the day in the Indian House,

where the Hopi Indians are employed weaving blankets and making pottery and baskets, all of Indian design, and made by the primitive Indian methods. The snow continuing all day, we saw nothing of the Canyon, but the next day dawned clear and sunny and the snow fast melted away.

We breakfasted early, and the ladies rigged in a similar divided skirt to that I had worn up at Yosemite, we were soon on our mules descending the Canyon trail.

Since that memorable day I have