

which empties into the Youcon. There we saw huge blocks of ice standing up one against the other, or piled upon one another's top and opposing to us a barrier difficult to cross ; but we had to get through, and after an hour's delay, caused by the falling and breaking of one of our four sleighs, we succeeded in passing that importune obstruction. To account for this curious phenomenon you must know that the ice does not close up the Youcon like a lake which quietly and placidly allows its surface to crystallize : The noble river does not brook that attempt against its liberty, and the impetuosity of its current bids defiance to the shackles which the North wind prepares for it. It is along the banks of the Youcon, where the current is slack, and on its tributaries that the first ice is formed and carried down by the current to the sea. Wherever there is a short bend, or a sand-bank, or the mouth of a tributary, ice-cakes meet each other and come clashing into collision, then the water rises, overflows its banks, roots up shrubs and trees, and not seldom cuts a new channel, through which it may flow with more liberty.

But sometimes the barrier of ice has to yield, and the victorious current sweeps it down, boiling and foaming, until another obstacle stops it, and then a scene of wild confusion takes place, ice cakes are heaped upon ice cakes, solid towers 30 feet high, are built in a few hours, the frost solders them altogether into one solid crust, the snow fills up the deepest cavities, and the Youcon is imprisoned for 6 or 7 months.

I visited about a dozen *Barrabarras* and instructed the occupants of each, except the *shamon* who, with his three wives, gave me a very poor reception. I am inclined to think that my visit and my instructions made, with God's grace, a good impression upon the savage