

peered forward in the direction from which the noise came. The bushes before me parted and two old men came forth, having been attracted by the light of my fire. They were prospectors who had spent many years in wandering through the mountains. We greeted each other quite informally. The first thing they asked me was if I had anything "to chew," that is, in Kootenay phraseology, anything to eat. I told them I had—a chicken and an owl. "We have a little flour and a piece of bear meat." "All right." The division of labour came into effect at once. Bob Dour was to make bannocks, Ed. Teggart to supply wood and water, and I was to fry the meat. It took some time to get supper ready, as we had only one frying-pan in which to cook everything. However, when done it was good and we relished it very much. In the course of the evening Teggart gave a vivid description of a trip across the mountains on foot, before the days of the C.P.R., in company with Principal Grant, Chancellor Fleming and others. Each carried a pack. He thought the Principal carried the kettle and frying pan and stood the journey well for a "tenderfoot." After listening to a few blood-curdling stories we retired, each rolling himself in his blanket, feeling as secure as if it were a royal palace. As I was concerned about getting across the river, I rose early in the morning and took a stroll down to where the bridge had been, to see how things looked. It was a hopeless case. No one could possibly venture in a boat, as the current was tremendously strong.

These circumstances appeared discouraging and yet loneliness was impossible amid such surroundings. The scenery of the Rockies and the Selkirks at that time of the year is superb. The Kootenay valley is situated between these two mountain ranges. It is at no place wider than two or three miles. Its natural parks, where trees of immense size grow as straight as arrows and where crystal streams formed by the melting of the mountain snow flow serenely, compare favourably with the Miltonian shades of Vallombrosa. The "stars of earth"—wild crocus, tiger lily, wild rose, blue bell and the blossom of wild oregon-grape and saskatoon—beautifully adorn the carpet that nature has spread. It is impossible to describe in words the admitted grandeur of the giant Rockies and the almost unbroken line formed a few miles west of them by the supremely beautiful Selkirks. Cliff and gorge, glacier and torrent, lofty peak and darkening chasm, all combine to form a sublime poem that seems to lift the weariness of toil out of self and to place it on the shoulders of the rocks or else in the bottom of the deepest canyon.

When I returned from the river my friends had risen and were preparing breakfast. I had been

fortunate enough to shoot a duck on my early walk and we now prepared it for breakfast. About 9 o'clock my companions returned to the mountains. I remained for an hour or two upon the banks of the river waiting in vain for some one to venture across. At 11 o'clock I gathered my traps, saddled my cayuse and started for Fort Steele. I had not gone very far when I overtook the prospectors resting in the shade by the side of a small lake. We were not long there when it was evident that a great cyclone was coming up. The skies began to lower, the clouds to gather, the thunders to roll, and the lightnings to flash. It was a wild day. Even the animals trembled. Our cayuses neighed and rushed together as if to solicit each others protection. The little birds forgot their wildness and flew down from their lofty heights to walk the earth like ordinary mortals. The cyclone came and swept nearly everything before it. Parts of the forest were mown down like grass. It was the most destructive cyclone ever experienced in British Columbia.

I was determined to get to a house that night, so when the cyclone had spent its fury I bade my kind friends adieu and started. The air was exhilarating and everything looked clean and sweet. My little pony loped easily along and about 9 P.M. we arrived at "Black Shorty's." I found Shorty about the house scaring off the animals that were taking his hens. He invited me into his house, if by any courtesy his place of dwelling could be called a house. Shorty, like almost all the men in Kootenay, keeps a bachelor's hall. His proper name is Mr. Henry Atcheson, *i.e.*, if he really remembers his right name. But from the shortness of his stature and the colour of his skin he has been appropriately named "Black Shorty." He left his home in Texas over thirty years ago, when a boy of 14, and has lived ever since on hunting and trapping in the mountains. He has studied the habits of the grizzly bear, mountain lion, and mountain goat and sheep as minutely as Mr. White of Selborne the habits of his famous tortoise. In his own house he is very hospitable and loves to talk of his adventures and his dexterous feats when facing an enraged grizzly. Like all men he has grown more or less like his ideal and in his features and actions one can at once detect a likeness to the bear. This is Shorty on the outside, and interesting as he may appear here, he is even more so if we go beyond the rough exterior to the inner man. He is thoroughly orthodox in his religious views, and though he never went to school or attended church he has a calmer and nobler conception of life than many who become dyspeptics there. We retired late that night, and though there was then an inch of water on the floor we did not expect to find two and a half feet there next morning; yet such was our experience. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."