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wittingly through the Great Flood. Hast
sense enough left to keep the road and
a sharp lookout?"

"Whip up the beasts, man! They must
be kept in motion after this dipping!"

"Stay, sir—we thank you kindly,"
said Mistress Ogilvie. "What will you
take in return for—"

"Aye, kind sir, name thy wish," sup-
plemented the girl. The women stood at
the coach door, and the dame began to
fumble in her reticule.

"Wilt have a sovereign?" and she
tendered a bit of gold.

"Nay, nay," declared the stranger,
shaking his head.

"But you have rendered us a great
service!"

"You have saved our lives! Indeed you
must take something!" urged Elizabeth.

"Twill be little enough—"

The stranger drew off the squirrel-skin
cap and paused a moment. Then he
leaned downward.

"I will have a kiss, then, since you
must give me something," he said.

"Law!" exclaimed madam, bridling.

The girl laughed merrily.

"You first, aunt!" she said, pushing
the lady forward.

The rider imprinted a chaste and re-
sounding salute upon her fresh cheek,
then turned and met the eyes of the girl.

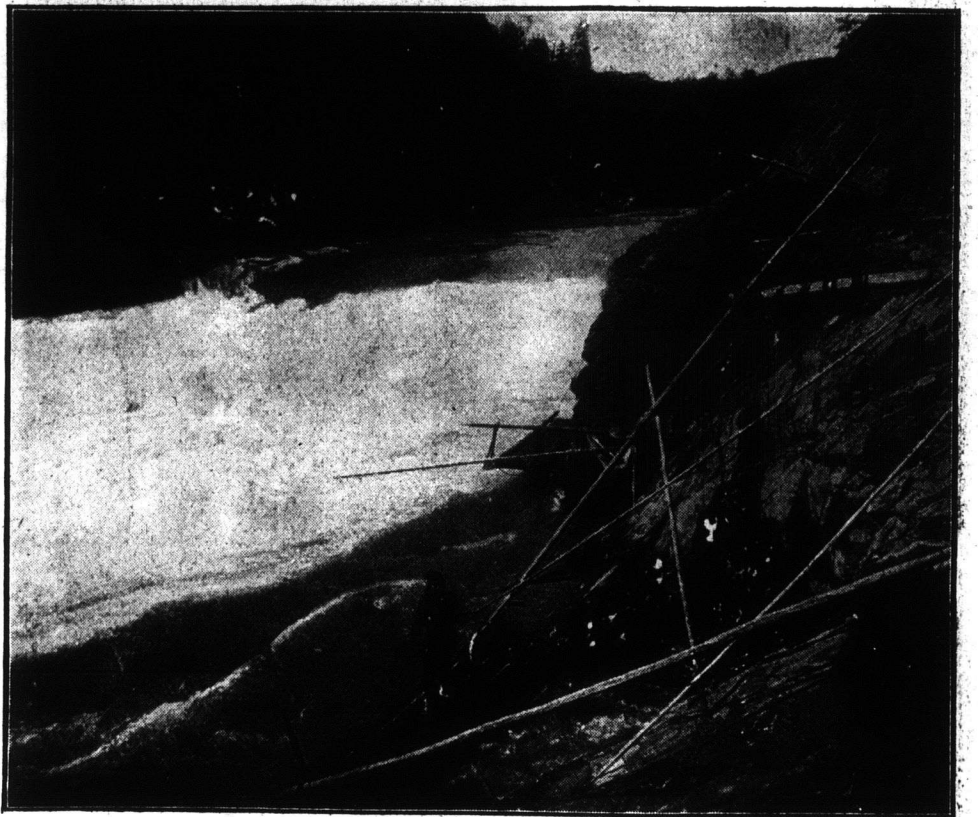
"Would that I were the first and the
last!" he said, softly, as he bent low.

Madam, exceedingly flustered, was

scattered with rosy home-cured hams,
savory roots and bunches of garlic and
onions. Two or three precious holly
sprigs occupied a prominent place along
the hearth-shelf, glowing ruddily against
bright pewter pots. From four ancient
silver candlesticks—brought out from the
depths of a great cedar chest especially
for this occasion—yellow dip-candles
shed a soft light, and their mild radiance
and the reflected glory of a huge fire that
blazed and crackled on the hearth,
lighted the homely abode to its farthest
nook and cranny. Rupert Blake, erst-
while gallant captain in His Majesty's
colonial force, but now short of a leg
since the battle at Lundy's Lane, sat
upon a low bench by the fire making
fresh candles. Although his attention
seemed entirely given to the pouring of
the hot tallow into the moulds, ever and
anon, he raised his head and listened to
some fancied sound without, while his
good wife bustled about in red kerseckie
and grey homespun kirtle, preparing sup-
per. A roast of venison sputtered and
hissed on the spit, and a pot of fragrant
vegetables boiled merrily beside it. The
round table was laid with a coarse woven
but snowy cloth and all seemed in readi-
ness for a family meal.

"Hist, woman!" cried the Captain,
"dost hear wheels?"

"Bless thee man, I have fancied it a
dozen times and as oft been disap-
pointed!"



Babine Indians Fishing on G.T.P. Line B.C.

engaged in rubbing the spot of late con-
tact, with her pocket-handkerchief. As
the girl sprang backward she sent a keen,
searching glance into the stranger's face.

"The hermit!" she breathed, quickly.
"Aye—the hermit. Make haste now
and speed homeward. I ride on to the
Fort, for I do think there is trouble
afoot this night, lady. That bridge be-
tokens—"

"Hasten Elizabeth, and do not stand
chattering there," called Mistress Ogilvie
from the depths of the coach.

Obediently the girl followed her aunt
into the vehicle, casting one last wonder-
ing half-fearful look at the rider on the
sable steed.

Then Treadwell urged his horses on-
ward. The ladies called out farewell,
and as their deliverer bowed low in his
saddle, the great coach and its passen-
gers whirled away into the night.

* * * * *

The interior of the lone log cabin that
nestled amid its grove of pine and bal-
sam, glowed most invitingly. It was the
eve of Christmas, and the homekeeping
heart of Mistress Blake—these many
years, sore-wrung with fond memories at
this season, memories of England and
England's Christmas—had lent willing
industry to her hands. From the dark
rafters hung evergreen boughs, inter-

"I wish they were home," said the Cap-
tain. "Step to the door mother, again."

Mistress Blake opened the door. A gust
of wind mingled with thick, soft snow-
flakes met her—and nothing else. Cap-
tain Blake hobbled across the floor and
peered over her shoulder.

"Betty!" he called, "Betty, child, are
you there? Satan take my failing eyes,
I cannot see a hand's breadth before
me!"

His wife gave a sudden cry and pointed
to the door jamb. There, quivering, as
though freshly shot, in the pine wood of
the door frame, lodged an arrow.

"Pluck it out, mother," said the Cap-
tain. They returned to the fireside and
examined it closely.

"'Tis of the Iroquois," said the Cap-
tain, at last.

"The double-notch arrow! Wichita's
signal!" gasped Mistress Blake.

The pair looked into each other's eyes
for a long moment.

"Aye, woman, aye! There's trouble
brewing of a certainty!" the Captain
said, at length.

In the past summer a squaw of the
Iroquois tribe had been wounded in the
forest by a stray shot of some careless
hunter and the Captain had found
her lying near the bank of a stream to
which she had crawled for a draught of
water. Summoning aid, he had borne