

And away he went up the inlet-side, in the gathering darkness, to the bend—and there a radiance as of bonfires was ahead of him. He grunted to himself all the way, little grunts, like a man aggrieved. This we know from Claridge, who followed him stealthily in the rear. But probably he was grunting only because he was aggrieved at Claridge following him, though Claridge never seemed to think that and looked at me in indignation when I suggested such a reason to him. Yet he admits that suddenly Smith wheeled, came directly back in his tracks, and said :

“ Don't you do it, Jim. Don't you track me up. If anything went wrong we want you left behind to go ahead with them six fellers. You don't seem to understand, Jim, that, by heck, these whisky-fellers—here—have—just—got—to—be—taken ! ”

And, leaving Jim to make out the line of his argument, off he went again, and the shadow of his figure was whelmed anon (after having shown a second or two against the radiance of the further fires) in the black woods that in those days stretched down to the cape.

Not for quite some time did Claridge venture to follow, and then did so on his stomach, till he could look down into the revelling village ; and beside him crawled four of the six paddlers, the other two—after making fast—having curled down where they were, to sleep. And though he could see the “ whooping-up ” village it seemed ages before anything happened.

### III

SMITH surveyed the scene and then threw away his cigar. In the forests of Van Doren's Island