

Owing to the lateness of the hour of starting I did not expect to travel far that day, but, nevertheless, made about twenty miles in two hours, such was the strength of the current. I was now outside of the mountains, among the so-called foothills, which would pass for mountains in any other part of the world where they were not overshadowed by their loftier neighbors. No difficulty from rapids was met with until just before camping for the night, when a spot was reached where the river narrowed to a width of about 100 feet, and rushed at a great rate against a cliff that appeared to bar its further progress, but which only caused it to make a sharp turn to the left, the water lashing itself into foam against its base. Not liking the appearance of things, I landed a short distance above and examined the rapid, but decided it could be run in safety. I made the mistake, however, of keeping too close to the shore on the left, and narrowly escaped coming to grief among some boulders, the boat striking one of these, but rebounding from its smooth surface, and soon the eddy below was reached in safety.

A couple of miles farther on, what looked like a similar rapid appeared in sight, and, as it was getting dusk, I decided to wait for daylight before attempting it, and so camped for the night.

My preparations for the night were soon made. The boat, if not affording very extensive accommodation as a tent, was a very effective shelter in case of rain, and having had supper there was nothing else to do but to retire for the night, which I did, my slumbers not being in the least disturbed by the fact that I was entirely alone.

The following morning I delayed my departure long enough to cook nearly all my provisions, so as to avoid any further delay on that account, and then, having packed up, I paddled on down the river. Shortly before noon I passed the mouth of the Ateko Sippi, a small river which enters the Saskatchewan from the southwest. At the time I mistook this river for the Clearwater, thinking a smaller stream seen farther back was the Ateko Sippi, and was disappointed the following day to find that I had only then reached the Clearwater. About three in the afternoon I passed through the gap in the outlying range of the Rockies, and for the rest of the afternoon had my attention fully occupied in guiding my boat through almost continuous rapids, and when about three hours later I was able to pause and look about me I found that the last vestige of the mountains had almost disappeared from view. The part of the river just passed through was the most dangerous met with. The danger was due not so much to the roughness of the water as the abrupt bends of the river, combined with the swiftness of the current, which made it necessary at times