

THE CHIEF OF THE RANGES

CHAPTER I

THE RAIDERS

THE crooked river wound its lazy way between gently shelving banks. The pebbles along the shore sparkled like mirrors beneath the sun's bright rays. The whole land stood agleam on this fair summer afternoon in the far Canadian Northland. Only a gentle whisper rose from the dark forest as the drifting breeze stirred the crests of battalions of rugged spruce and fir trees. The wind, floating along the river and rippling the surface of the water, caused the small canoe lying near the shore to chafe fretfully upon the beach.

Owindia, seated well astern, played one small brown hand in the stream. The breeze, touching her loose dark hair, tossed it over her cheeks and forehead in rich confusion. Listlessly she leaned against the side of the canoe, looking down dreamily into the clear depths beneath.