

round and swamping it, which, but for the keen look-out they keep and their dexterity in the use of the paddles, would often happen in such swift and treacherous currents as those of North American rivers.

We paddled along quickly until five o'clock, when we stopped for supper, and, landing, made tea. This meal over, we started again and held on steadily all night. If the journey by day was strange and somewhat exciting, how much more so did it become when night set in! Wet, cold, and tired, we rolled ourselves up in our rugs, and in time fell into a broken sleep, lulled by the monotonous rap of the paddles upon the gunwale of the canoe, the rippling sound of the water against its sides, the song of the men now rising loud and shrill, now sinking into a low, drowsy hum. Ever and anon roused by a louder shout from the paddlers in the bow, we started up to find the canoe sweeping by some boat moored to the shore, or the miner's watch-fire, from which an indistinct figure would rise, gaze at us wonderingly as we passed howling by, and sometimes shout to us loudly in reply. We might well startle such of the miners as saw or heard us. Whenever we passed a fire, or a boat drawn up ashore, or moored to the trees by the beach, in which miners might be sleeping, the Indians would commence singing at the top of their voices; and we often saw sleepers start up, in wonder, no doubt, who could be travelling on the river at night at such a season,—and in some fear, perhaps, for several murders had lately been committed, which were attributed, rightly or wrongly, to Indian agency. And, indeed, as we swept by a watch-fire near enough for its glare to light up the dark figures straining at their hard work, and their wild, swarthy faces, with the long, bright ribbons, streaming behind them,—we might well give a shock to some wearied sleeper roused abruptly from dreams of home, or some rich claim which was to make his fortune, by the wild Indian boat-chant.

Most of our journey lay close along the shore, where, of course, the current was less rapid and advantage could be taken of the numerous eddies that set in near the banks. Our chief man was quite well acquainted with the river's navigation, having been for years in the Hudson's Bay Company's employ. When we came to a rapid, or it was necessary to cross the river from one bank to the other,