

They looked, and there, where the quick stream swirled
On the lip of the fall, and the spray was hurled
Up high in the air, to descend like sleet —
A man had crawled, set his spike-shod feet
On the key of the jam, and his axe-head made
A silver halo of light that played
In circling flashes, and rose and fell
With the swing that a woodsman knows so well.
Careless of rapids and life and death
He hewed, and the drivers with bated breath
Spoke but in whispers ; then, staring, dumb,
Waited and watched for the end to come.

It came—when the deep yellow, brown-edged gash
Grew a little wider ; a short, quick crash
Told the deed was done : and he turned and glanced
At the trembling logs, and the stream that danced
On the curving slide ; then he leapt and missed,
And fell where the face of the dam was kissed
By the river's bright lips ; no chance to swim,
For the logs came hurrying down on him,
And the river, now strong from its unsought rest,
Set its shoulders under the jam, and pressed
And heaved, till the logs in the air were tossed
In wild confusion, like matches lost
In a miniature rill ; and the man was sucked
Down into the deeps, as a fly is plucked
From the face of a pool by a rising trout ;
And he was not found till they searched about
Near Flat Rock rapids, two miles below ;
And then he was torn by the sharp rocks so
That they hardly knew the disfigured clay,
For the man who had once been Sandy Grey.

And now when you hear the thundering tone
That up in the night from those falls is thrown,
And spreads far out on the still, calm air
Till it sounds like the sound of an angel's prayer,
You will surely agree with me, and say
That the river is mourning for Sandy Grey.

