

ROMANCE OF EXPLORATION

from them. Once in the canoe, we quickly pushed out and struck obliquely for the opposite bank, so as to be out of range of their arrows, and I faced about, gun in hand, to observe their actions. The river was there too broad either for ball or arrow. We worked hard during the rest of the day, and until late; the men were tired out, and I made them all sleep in my tent while I kept watch. At that season the night is so clear that one can read or write throughout. Our camp lay on the bank of the river, at the base of a steep declivity, which had large trees here and there up its grassy slope. In the branches of one of these trees I passed the greater part of the anxious night, reading Hervey's 'Meditations' and keeping a vigilant lookout. Occasionally I descended and walked to the river-bank, but all was still. Two years afterwards, when friendly relations had been established with the Indians in the district, I learned, to my no small astonishment, that the hostile tribe encountered down the river had dogged us all day, and, when we halted for the night, had encamped behind the crest of the hill, and from this retreat had watched my every movement. With the exactitude of detail characteristic of Indians, they described me sitting in the tree, holding 'something white' (the book) in my hand, and often raising my eyes to make a survey of the neighbourhood; then descending to the river-bank, taking my horn cup from my belt, and, even while I drank, glancing up and down the river and towards the hill. They confessed that, had I knelt down to drink, they would have rushed upon me and drowned me in the swift current, and, after thus despatching me, would have massacred the sleeping inmates of my tent. How often, without knowing it, are we protected from danger by the merciful hand of Providence! Next morning we were early in motion, and were glad to observe that we had outwitted the Indians and outstripped their signal fires."

In the spring of 1848 Campbell once more returned, and