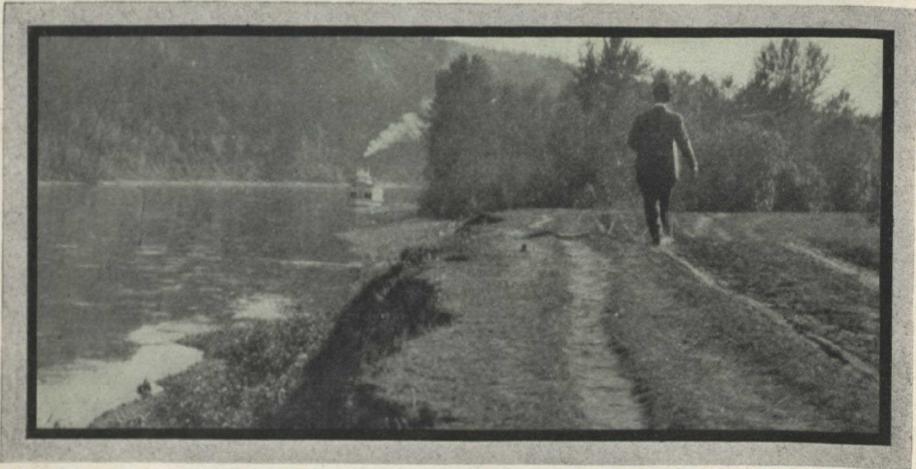


pite the uncomfortable surroundings. Passengers and crew were truly a cosmopolitan aggregation. The French fireman cursed the Indian deck hand for his laziness and called to the Swede

soon everything was comparatively quiet.

After battling for three days against the mighty current, the heavily laden *Nechaco* finally rounded a



THE FRASER RIVER NEAR FORT GEORGE

“working his way” to “pass that wood a little faster” and, lying on the upper deck with my blanket about me, the guttural jargon of the Chinese cook and flunkey reached my ears.

On my left lay a Scotch laddie, scarce out of his teens, anticipating the founding of home and fortune in the new land; but then, as we lay under the starry sky, methought he longed for the silent handclasp and gentle caress of his waiting lassie, “sae far awa in the guid hame land.” His rich brogue as he told me of her that night was music to the ear, and I trust I may see them together some day in his comfortable little cabin, which has since then sheltered me. “Gott in Himmel, dis iss der limid” exclaimed the sturdy German with whom I was touching shoulders on the right; “We doand haff sooch ships like dis on der Rhine.” I smothered a laugh and expressed the wish that we had better beds on the Fraser. Just then the boat ran her nose into the bank, tied up for the night, and

curve in the river about one mile below South Fort George, and we had our first glimpse of the little settlement. The afternoon sun was shining brightly as the steamer hove to opposite the town, and soon a landing was made. Practically all of the few inhabitants met the boat, some to welcome incoming friends; others idly curious; the arrival of strangers with news from outside being quite an event in the lives of some. The mail was at once taken to the house of the factor at the Post and the letters spread out on the table in the dining-room, each man acting as his own post-master.

Not being able to secure sleeping quarters, I unpacked my outfit and pitched the tent, which, with several pairs of heavy blankets, had been shipped in from a trading-post farther down the river; tents and blankets, owing to the great demand, not being obtainable in the upper country, except at fabulous prices. After a hearty meal consisting of pork and