

Dan Dunn's outfit, and I travelled the road to it half a dozen times. Bunyan would have strengthened the *Pilgrim's Progress* had he known of such conditions with which to surround his hero. Between rocks the size of a city mansion and unsteady boulders no larger than a man's head the ground was all but covered. Among this wreckage trees grew in wild abundance, and countless trunks of dead

ones lay rotting between them.

A jungle as dense as any I ever saw was

and was obliged to make that journey after dark. After ten minutes crowded with falls and false steps, the task seemed so hopelessly impossible that I could easily have been induced to turn back and risk a night on the rocks at the edge of the tide.

It was after a thorough knowledge of the natural conditions which the railroad men were overcoming that the gradual steps of their progress became most interesting. The first men to follow the engineers, after the specifications have been drawn up and the contracts signed, are "the right-of-way men." These are partly

trail-makers and partly laborers at the heavier work of actually clearing the wilderness for the road-bed. The trail-cutters are guided by the long line of stakes with which the engineers have marked the course the road is to take. The trail-men are sent out to cut what in general parlance would be called a path, over which supplies are to be thereafter carried to the workmen's camps. The path they cut must therefore be sufficiently wide for the passage along it of a mule and his load. As a mule's load will sometimes consist of the framework of a kitchen range, or the end boards of a bedstead, a five-foot swath through the forest is a trail of serviceable width. The trail-cutters fell the trees to right and left, and drag the fallen trunks out of the path as they go along, travelling and working between a mile and two miles each day, and moving their



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formed of soft-wood saplings and bushes, so that it was next to impossible to move a yard in any direction. It was out of the question for any one to see three yards ahead, and there was often no telling when a foot was put down whether it was going through a rotten trunk or upon a spinning boulder, or whether the black shadows here and there were a foot deep or were the mouths of fissures that reached to China. I fished too long one night,

tents and provisions on pack-horses as they advance. They keep reasonably close to the projected line of the railway, but the path they cut is apt to be a winding one that avoids the larger rocks and the smaller ravines. Great distortions, such as hills or gullies, which the railroad must pass through or over, the trail men pay no heed to; neither do the pack-horses, whose tastes are not consulted, and who can cling to a rock at al-