

The other voyagers and the goods were soon once more on board and the raft resumed her journey.

Emboldened by this success and pressed by the dire need of provisions they determined to float night and day down the stream. All except two or three look-out men lay down to sleep as the unwieldy craft floated on through the night towards the land of their hopes. The next day at dawn they noticed that the speed had perceptibly increased. Almost instantly they found themselves in a long stretch of rapids, extending about fifteen miles. The channel was full of ragged rocks, contact with any of which would unquestionably have knocked the float into its component parts. Now they realized clearly the dangers of night navigation. All hands were at the sweeps again; and they made their way safely through the perilous spot. Then they floated along until about noon, when despite their utmost care the raft struck upon a sunken rock from which their best endeavours could not release it. Fortunately at this point the current was not swift. Three of the party swam ashore with a line and while those on the raft cut away several of the timbers others pulled upon the line and succeeded in getting the raft into deep water once more. They then encamped for the night; and on the next day, September 8th, reached Fort George, at the junction of the Fraser and the Nechako, without further difficulty.

On their arrival Mr. William Charles, the gentleman in command of the post, was absent; but as his return was expected hourly they awaited his home-coming. Meanwhile other rafts arrived bringing the sad story of the drowning of Mr. Robertson, one of the party. He and two others had set out in a canoe from Tête Jaune Cache, preferring to risk the descent by that mode of travel, rather than to venture on the unwieldy and apparently unmanageable rafts. In the Grand Canyon the canoe was swamped. "Two of them," says the diary, "escaped by holding on to the canoe, and were drifted on an island and picked up by a raft, neither of them being able to swim; while Mr. Robertson, being a splendid swimmer, struck out for the shore and was lost (as the others thought) but a short distance from it. They lost everything they had but a little flour."

After remaining at Fort George for two days in the vain expectation of meeting Mr. Charles, whose return was long overdue, they hired an Indian guide and resumed their voyage. Fifteen miles below Fort George they encountered its canyon, which Fraser has so well described. Here, for a distance of half a mile, the river is cut by huge rocks into several channels. The rugged banks and overhanging cliffs bore a striking resemblance to the Grand Canyon, but