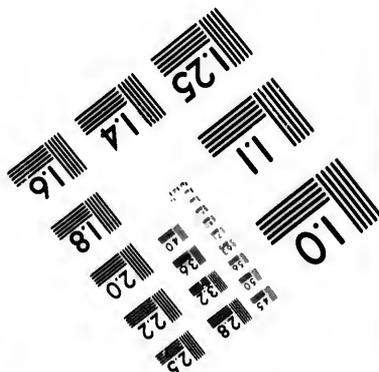
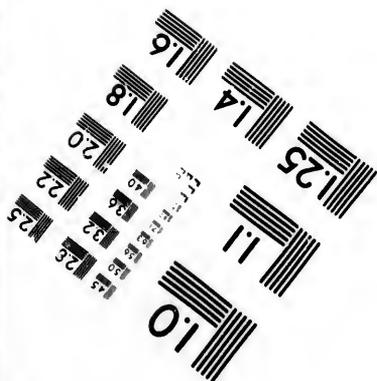
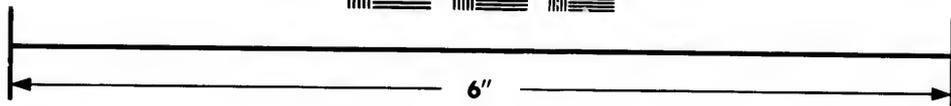
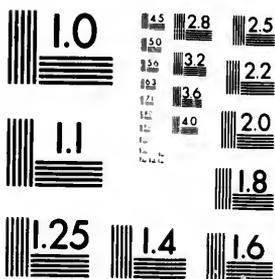


**IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)**



**Photographic
Sciences
Corporation**

23 WEST MAIN STREET
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 872-4503

**CIHM/ICMH
Microfiche
Series.**

**CIHM/ICMH
Collection de
microfiches.**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions

Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

1980

Technical and Bibliographic Notes/Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- Coloured covers/
Ccouverture de couleur
- Covers damaged/
Couverture endommagée
- Covers restored and/or laminated/
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- Cover title missing/
Le titre de couverture manque
- Coloured maps/
Cartes géographiques en couleur
- Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- Coloured plates and/or illustrations/
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- Bound with other material/
Relié avec d'autres documents
- Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion
along interior margin/
La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la
distortion le long de la marge intérieure
- Blank leaves added during restoration may
appear within the text. Whenever possible, these
have been omitted from filming/
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées
lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte,
mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont
pas été filmées.
- Additional comments:/
Commentaires supplémentaires:

- Coloured pages/
Pages de couleur
- Pages damaged/
Pages endommagées
- Pages restored and/or laminated/
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- Pages detached/
Pages détachées
- Showthrough/
Transparence
- Quality of print varies/
Qualité inégale de l'impression
- Includes supplementary material/
Comprend du matériel supplémentaire
- Only edition available/
Seule édition disponible
- Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata
slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to
ensure the best possible image/
Les pages totalement ou partiellement
obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure,
etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à
obtenir la meilleure image possible.

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	12X	14X	16X	18X	20X	22X	24X	26X	28X	30X	32X
				✓							

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

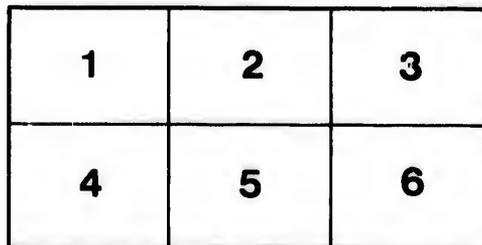
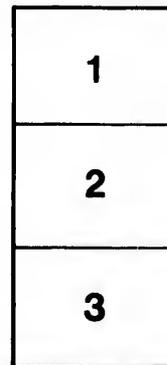
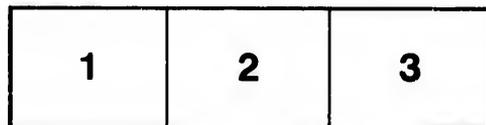
National Library of Canada

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol \rightarrow (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ∇ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

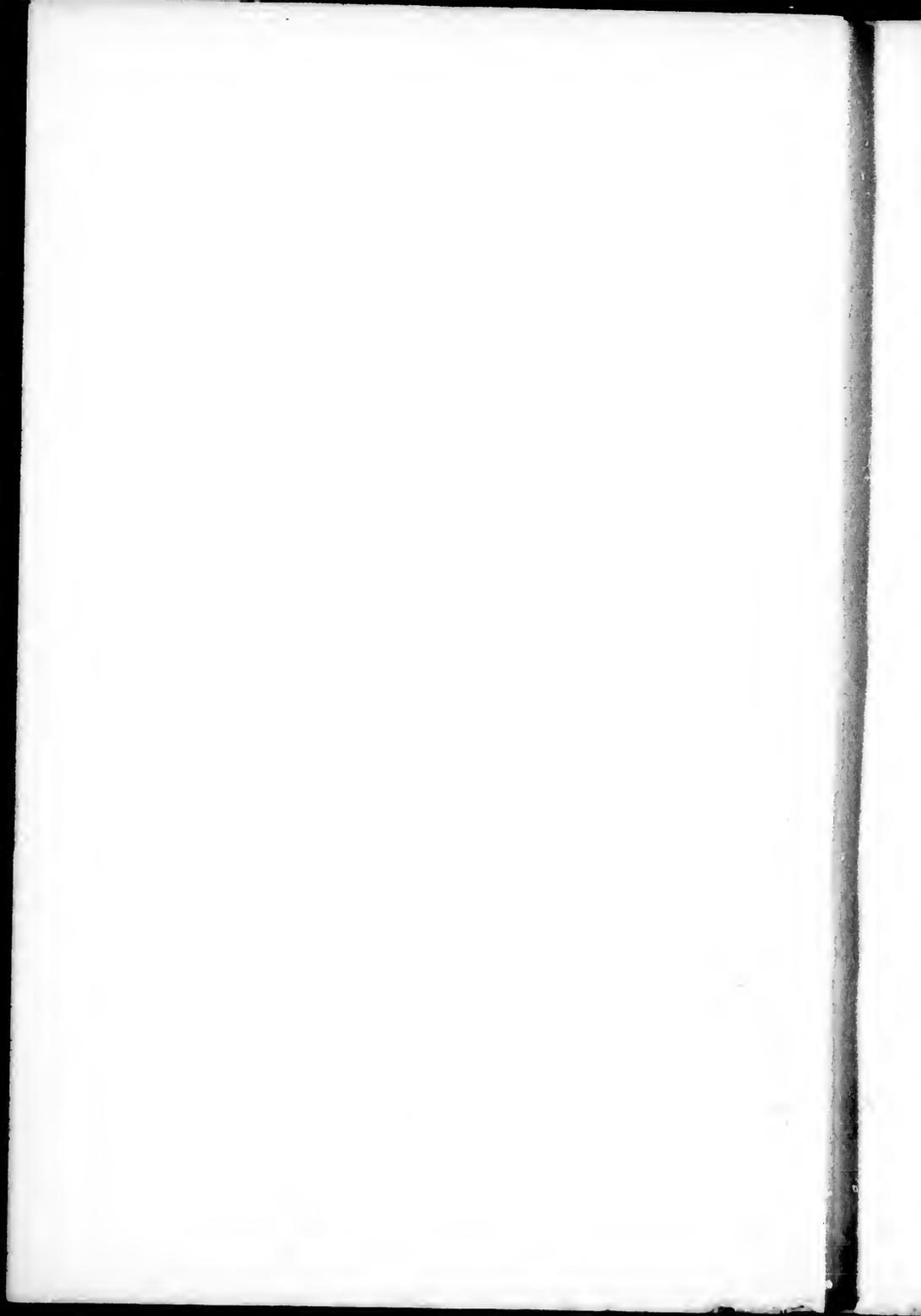
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole \rightarrow signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ∇ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.



Bell's Indian and Colonial Library

THE CHICAMON STONE

*This edition is intended for circulation only in India
and the British Colonies.*

RT

THE
CHICAMON STONE

BY

CLIVE PHILLIPPS-WOLLEY

AUTHOR OF "SNAP," "GOLD, GOLD IN CARIBBOO," "ONE OF
THE BROKEN BRIGADE," ETC.



LONDON
GEORGE BELL & SONS
AND BOMBAY
1900

PRINTED BY
WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BECCLES.

CONTENTS.



PART I.

THE WITCH-FINDERS	...	...	...	...	PAGE
					1

PART II.

THE KULA KULLAHS	97
------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

PART III.

THE BLIND MAN'S HUNT	197
----------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

o
l
g
h
t
f
a
n
t

THE CHICAMON STONE.



PART I.—THE WITCH-FINDELS.

CHAPTER I.

It was evening in Wrangel, and it was raining. If it had been morning the same conditions would have prevailed. Indeed, though I had been in the town three days waiting for a steamer in which to go up the Stickine river, I had never seen the skies do anything but rain. Alaska remains to us to-day as a sample of what the world was about the time of the Flood.

From the sunshine of Victoria or California you come to it by winding channels dividing the mainland from a hundred rugged islands covered with dense growth of pine; whales spout in the waters, and bald-headed eagles soar overhead; in the background is the threadbare scenery of mountain and winter-blasted forest growth. Round Wrangel itself the tides come and go, the black squalls race across the grey sea, and the curtains of mist shift and shut across the sun.

At present the forsaken little town is owned by the States, and when I was there, a very disconsolate regiment of Uncle Sam's soldiers was spending its time in wondering why it had been sent there. Even Uncle Sam's soldiers cannot hold the place much longer—the sea will have it.

To-day the sea knocks at the door of its houses, which, being water-logged, lean heavily away from their foundations, whilst a green moss creeps over everything, and in the square where the soldiers drill, stands a huge wooden saurian, put there, men say, as a totem by the Indians, crawled there, I think, as the forerunner of the beasts of the deep which are to come and possess the place to-morrow.

I had spent my morning fishing off the piers for halibut; I had tried to keep the balls out of the pockets on the one old billiard-table, and could not do it; I had read until neither Kipling nor Hope could interest me any more, and the eternal "lap, lap," of the sea and the ceaseless drone of the rain upon the roof-tree had fairly "got upon my nerves."

Indoors there was nothing to do, but you could keep dry; out-of-doors there was nothing to do but get wet. Being young and foolish, I preferred to get wet rather than do nothing, so I slipped into my long gum-boots, and went squeelching across the road to McFarlane's store.

"You call that rich, do you?" said old McFarlane

as I entered, to a couple of tough-looking prospectors who were leaning over his counter. "Wait until I show you something." And so saying, he stooped down and fished out a small parcel, wrapped up in a bandana handkerchief, containing about a couple of pounds of rock—or so I should have thought at first sight. A better acquaintance with the contents of that parcel later on made me treble my estimate of its weight.

"What do you think of your stuff from the Liard now?" the old man asked.

For a moment the two prospectors looked at Mac's specimen in silence, bending over it, and turning their pocket-glasses on to it hungrily.

"Don't want them things to find the gold in that rock, do you?" asked Mac, contemptuously.

"Wal no, old man," retorted one of the two, "except to see how you put the stuff in. I'll allow you've done it pretty slick."

"Yes, you bet. Him as put that gold in, put it in pretty slick," admitted Mac. "I guess He'd had some experience in the business, but He hasn't put it in as thick as that in most places."

And indeed He who made the rocks has not put gold in them in many places as it was put in that lump of dirty white quartz. On one side of the specimen, which was as big as a brick, there was nearly as much gold showing as there was quartz; the rock was honey-combed, and gold was the honey of it.

"Got it from Coolgardie, I'm thinking," said one of the prospectors, who had once been a Scotchman, a squat, red-headed fellow, with a furtive blue eye.

"No, man, an' I didna," replied Mac, with a touch of his long-forgotten native speech. "I got that rock where you got your swelled heid the night, right here."

"There's more of what swelled my heid, mon; is there more of this?"

"Aiblins there is and aiblins there isna. I canna tell."

"*Won't* tell, you mean," corrected the other prospector. "Well, it's easy guessing. If you knew where that ledge was, you wouldn't be here."

"Waiting to serve you gentlemen," replied Mac, picking up his specimen, and turning to the two with an inquiring wave of his great fat hands. "What can I do for you?" The bacon is Armor's best; the beans are Boston. Nothing like beans and bacon for a prospecting trip. They tell me the boys have struck it pretty rich on Glacier Creek."

"Rich. Five dollars a day, perhaps. Chinaman's wages and mule's work. No, we ain't tenderfeet going prospecting. Give us a couple of plugs of Climax chewing, and tell us how you came by that rock, and maybe we'll give you our order when we do go up the river."

Mac looked at the speaker out of the corner of his

eye, but if he had an answer on the tip of his tongue he swallowed it.

These two might, after all, raise a few dollars somewhere, and if they did give an order in Wrangel, he might as well have the benefit of it."

"There's the Climax," he said. "It's meat and drink to a hungry man, ain't it? and as for the story of the rock, there's nothing in it that any man mayn't know. One of the siwashes who trade with me brought it in two summers ago with his furs, and sold it to me for fifty dollars."

"Where had he been hunting?"

"Somewhere down the Arctic Slope. The Lord knows where."

"And didn't you ask him where he got it?"

"Well, yes, and I offered him five hundred dollars to show me the ledge."

"And what did he say?"

"Said he'd come and see me about it in the morning, if I would have the dollars ready."

"And didn't you have them?"

"Yes, I had them, you bet, and burning a hole in my jeans too, but when he came he wouldn't look at them, though I made them rattle and crisp under his very nose. He'd had a talk with his tillicums in the night, and they would not let him give the secret away. Said it was in their hunting grounds, and they didn't want any white men mining in there."

“Didn’t you offer him more? Man! that ledge would make a Vanderbilt of you, if you got on to it.”

“Yes. I doubled my offer, which was a fool’s trick anyway. If a siwash won’t take five hundred dollars, nothing will fetch him.”

“So that’s all you got?” put in the dark man, who had been listening intently to the conversation between Mac and his partner. “And I suppose you go around thinking as you’re a United States citizen?”

“I do,” replied Mac, stoutly.

“Wal, I don’t. Do you know the States motter—‘Git there’? If it had been the Almighty Hissself that owned that ledge, *I’d* have got there; and you let yourself be bluffed out of it by a measly siwash. Sho!”

“Steady, Luke—steady,” put in the red-headed one. “The gentleman don’t set up for being a miner. He makes his storekeeping. Perhaps, sir, you wouldn’t mind telling us the name of that siwash, and, if we could run across him, Luke and me might manage to persuade him to be a bit more Christian-like. Then you and me could divvy up, fair and square.”

“How do you calculate to persuade him, if dollars won’t do it?” asked Mac, suspiciously.

“Well, there’s no tellin’. One thing will persuade one man, and another will persuade another. Persuadin’ is a prospector’s profession in a manner of speaking. What did you say his name was?”

"Siyah Joe," answered Mac, reluctantly. He could see no reason for withholding the information, but he seemed to give it unwillingly. "Good night, gentlemen."

"Siyah Joe—a Stick Indian?"

"Yes, a Stick. Good night."

"And what does Siyah mean?" asked Luke; but he was too late, the old man had disappeared into the back part of his shop, so, after waiting for a moment with his hand upon the latch, Luke muttered something, and slouched out into the darkness, and I heard him and his partner splashing through the mud towards the Indian quarter of the town. They were hot on the scent of the Chicamon Stone already.

"What does Siyah mean, Mac?" I asked, as the old man came in again.

"Siyah," he said, dwelling on the syllables—"Si-yah means far away, very far away; and it's a deuced good thing, to my way of thinking, that Joe is siyah just now. I guess he would find their way of persuading quite a bit unpleasant. They've left my rock, I see;" and the old man took up the parcel, and, bidding me good night, left the store for his den at the back.

As I went out, I fancied that I saw a couple of figures lurking in the alley way at the side of the store, but I was uncertain, and in any case it was no business of mine, and in Alaska it is as well to let other people's business very strictly alone. So I went across to my

shack, and went to bed, but I could not go to sleep. Even the rain on the roof would not make me forget; even the incessant barking of the Indian dogs, as they fought over refuse on the beach, could not divert my thoughts from the one absorbing topic of Mac's chicamon stone (gold rock). It was but the size of an ordinary builder's brick, and yet he, shrewd dealer as I knew him to be, had given fifty dollars for it. He had sold, so he said, a hundred dollars' worth of specimens off it since then, and the mere intrinsic value of it was still probably several times as much as he gave for it. If a man, I thought—if I, for instance—could only find the ledge from which that specimen came, what would it mean to me! And why should a dirty siwash, to whom two hundred dollars a year would be affluence—why should he keep such a secret to himself? I began to think that there was a good deal to be said for Luke's determination to "get there," get there at any cost, and I wondered what means he was taking to get there.

Just as I was at last dozing off, a couple of revolver shots rang through the stillness of the night, and all the dogs in the town gave tongue together. There was a distant sound of shouting, a door or two opened and shut; some one asked a question, and I heard the answer given distinctly just under my window.

"Some one been selling whisky to the siwashes, I guess. It will be a job for the marshal to-morrow;"

and then all was silent again, except for the rain and the sea. Nature cared nothing for gold reefs, or midnight shootings, and at last her grand impassiveness wrought even upon my fevered imagination, and I slept.

In the morning there was a busy stir in the little town. The fast and commodious steamship *Alaskan* was ready to start up the river, and, like everything else in Alaska, having kept every one waiting for days, she would not wait now a single moment for any one. There was a wild bustle everywhere. Men who had been complaining of having had nothing to do for a week, were now at their wits' end to finish their preparations in time. The stores which had been idle all yesterday were thronged now with impatient customers, and as the boat was casting off from her moorings, two or three people were seen halfway between the pier and the town, packed like mules with all sorts of parcels, staggering through the mud, and crying to the captain to hold hard just one minute more.

In the rush of our departure, I had almost forgotten my adventure of the night before, when the purser of the boat, a quiet, good-natured young fellow, came up to me with a half-apologetic air.

"I am afraid," he said, "that you have got two rather roughish chaps in your room, but the boat is so crowded that I could not help myself. It is my business to let the berths, and ask no questions."

"That's all right," I replied; "they won't eat me, I expect. But who are they?"

"Well, no, they won't eat you, but they might skin you. If you like, I will put anything you want taken care of in the ship's safe until we reach Glenora. They are the two men, I think, who were mixed up in that shooting affair last night. People say that they sold whisky to the Indians. But there was no evidence on which to hold them, and in this rush the police cannot waste much time over a case. Besides, it was only an Indian."

"Killed?"

"No, badly wounded, though. He was too drunk to know who shot him. He was a Stick from Dease Lake, and probably quarrelled with one of the Wrangel siwashes."

"And who are the men?"

"There they are," he said; and he pointed to my two acquaintances of the night before, Sandy Bill and his mate Luke. "I wonder if they know where old Mac's gold rock went to?"

"You don't mean McFarlane's gold specimen?" I asked. "Has anything happened to that?"

For a moment the purser looked at me half suspiciously—

"You've seen it, have you?" he asked. "Well, Mac shows it to most men. Yes; the last thing I heard, before we cast off was, that some one forced his

store last night and got away with the Chicamon Stone."

"Didn't any one remember that he was showing it to those two men last night?" I asked excitedly. "I was in there and saw him do it."

"I wish I had known before," replied the purser—"still it will keep until Glenora. Perhaps now you would like me to take something, and put it in here?"

Outside No. 5 Sandy Bill and Luke were still standing. They gave me good morning, as I went past them into my room; but, in spite of their good wishes, I carried with me a roll of notes and my watch, and deposited them with my friend the purser for safe keeping. Their only luggage, as far as I could see, was a small bundle done up in a handkerchief; and this they kept always with them. They did not even leave it in No. 5 when they went in to dinner.

I dare say that it was a foolish thing to do, but for the life of me I could not help it. We all think that we are born detectives, and I am no better than my fellows; so, as I fixed up my bunk more comfortably, I looked Sandy Bill full in the face, and said—

"Did you hear about that rock old McFarlane was showing us yesterday?"

If I had expected him to show any sign I was disappointed.

"No," he said. "What about the old fool's rock?"

“Some one broke into his store and took it, after we were in there last night.”

“More’n likely he has misplaced it,” was the calm answer.

“Well, it’s lucky for us,” I insisted, “that there was no fuss made about it. As we were the last in the store last night they might have kept us to ask questions, and made us miss our steamer.”

“Lucky for you, you mean!” retorted Bill, angrily; “you seem to forget as we left you alone in the store, and, for all I know, you’ve got it. Thief-catching ain’t my business, but if you’ll take my advice you’ll keep your head shut, young man—and shut tight too.” And with this insolent rebuff he left me and went out, taking his parcel with him.

I should have liked to knock him down, but prudence prevailed. He most likely carried a gun; I did not, and besides, every word he had said was true.

I was a very young man who had—as our boys do—taught myself most of that which I knew, and, being too independent to hang round my home any longer, had put my little savings in my pocket and turned west. As yet I had not fairly commenced my life, and the making of it largely depended upon my own exertions. One of the lessons I had learned was not to make enemies unnecessarily, and I was not fool enough to enter upon the stage brawling with the two roughest

saloon-loafers I could find. If I could lay my hand with certainty upon those who had stolen McFarlane's rock, that would be quite a different business, and might secure me an opening in the police force. But to do that I must wait and be thankful, meanwhile, that in a new country, where I was known to no one, suspicion had not fallen upon me at the outset.

And on deck a new country was indeed opening before me; through grey and savage seas, along the pathway of the seals, past rugged formless mountain-masses, I had at last come to the mouth of the Stickine—to the gateway of that mysterious north where there were still untrodden places for the fur-hunter and the gold-seeker—fortunes to be won and reputations to be made if a man dare play for them with his own life as the stake upon the table. That is what I had come to do; and I looked at the mountains as a man looks who measures his opponent and doubts of his own strength. I knew that at last I had come to Jötunheim.

CHAPTER II.

THERE is something very wonderful in the constantly recurring migrations of men; and I am glad that I have shared, however humbly, in one of them. On the north-west coast of America we have had several in the century. There was the Californian rush in 1849, the Fraser River and Cariboo rushes in 1858 and 1860, and now we have the Klondyke excitement. Elsewhere, in Australia and in South Africa, the same phenomena have occurred on a far larger scale; but the main features have been the same in all cases, and the results have been similar.

For centuries a great space on the earth's surface lies void, and then Nature, who wants a population for her waste places, and that population of the strongest and youngest, holds out her lure and attracts what she requires. Her methods are the same in all cases, whether she shows a new goldfield to a mining people, or reveals the bright colours of an opening flower to the fertilizing bee; but I could not help

wondering, as I entered upon my own pilgrimage, whether the bait she offered to us was not somewhat more vulgar and prosaic than that which she offered eight hundred years ago, when at the great cry of "Deus Vult! Deus Vult!" the Europe of lords, and knights, and men-at-arms, of robbers, incendiaries, and homicides, bent to the blessing of the priests, and, in the full belief that God would pardon the sins of His stout soldiers, belted on the crimson cross and marched to reclaim the Holy Land where His Son was born.

We know now—I wish we did not—how full of evil was the world of that day; we know, alas! that private vice tarnished some of the brightest shields amongst the Crusaders; but if it be only to temper our own self-complacency, it is worth while to remember that eight hundred years ago religion moved men to face greater dangers than those which greed of gold leads men to face to-day.

In 1099 Europe, or part of it at any rate, was not very much easier to travel across than Cassiar is to-day; I doubt if it was as easy. We read in Gibbon, that between the frontiers of Austria and the seat of the Byzantine monarchy the Crusaders were compelled to traverse an interval of six hundred miles, the wild and desolate countries of Hungary and Bulgaria. The soil is fruitful now, it is true; but then it was intersected by many and great rivers, and covered with morasses and forests which no man had tried to reclaim.

And the men who faced these physical dangers had no stern-wheel steamers to force a way for them up-stream; no ocean steamers to cross the channel in; no collapsible boats; no organized transportation companies; no adequate tools even for building boat or bothy, nor any knowledge of those applied sciences which make all travel comparatively easy to-day.

And yet they left all and dared all in such numbers that we read, that after wandering starved and naked amongst the Carpathian mountains during the winter, preyed upon all the time by a hostile population, three hundred thousand members of the first Crusade perished before a single city had been rescued from the infidels.

And here was I playing at the same game half consciously, which Attila and his millions, Gengis and his myriads, and Godfrey of Bouillon and his hundreds of thousands had played at before.

In the world's yesterday the pilgrims had come in and told o' nights of lands flowing with milk and honey; of groves of odorous cinnamon and frankincense, of palaces of marble and jasper.

Yesterday, it seemed to me, I had heard the same story. Prospectors at Seattle were telling men of river-beds where gold (which means palaces, and milk and honey) was to be had for the taking, by the bucketful.

In 1099 the lads of the first Crusade dreamed of

grasping in their hands the golden sceptres of Asia, as well as of the glory of a free Jerusalem; and the very meanest amongst them might aspire to win royalty by the strength of his own right hand and the cunning of his brain.

Then, too, rich men sold their castles, traders closed their stores, 'prentices left their benches—and some wise men stayed behind. Some of those who went succeeded; most of those who were left behind did well.

God forbid that I, of all men, should deprecate the spirit of adventure which has made the race what it is; but there is honour in honest, patient industry, and profit, perhaps, more than in the boldest enterprise. And if I dwell on these thoughts now I must be forgiven, for the crowded piers, and closed business houses, and weeping women I had seen had made me think; and besides, even the leaping silver-mailed salmon pause and play awhile at the mouth of the Stickine River before they rush north. None of them return; many of those on the *Alaskan* would not return either.

And now we had fairly begun our obstacle race. Between us and Wrangel lay a broad sheet of water, calm as a millpond, where the human heads of the seals rose on all sides of us: they were the guerillas hanging on the flanks of the salmon army.

There were no rocks to strike, no swift currents to make our course difficult; but there were troubles ahead

for all that. In the midst of my dreaming there was a sudden shock : the whole slight fabric of plank and canvas, frail for all its imposing appearance, trembled under us.

We had run on a sand-bar, and it took all the skill and energy of the crew to get us off before the tide, which was rapidly falling, left us high and dry on the flats.

In spite of the fair-seeming breadth of the waters there was but a narrow channel, where the tide ran strong close inshore, through which our steamer could creep at ordinary times. She drew but little more than two feet : on this day she was overloaded, and drew more. Freight was worth \$40 per ton in those early days, and the captain had not had the heart to refuse any that he could stow away, though he risked his boat in accepting it.

What with her overload, and some defect in the untried steering-geer (for this was her first trip), the vessel answered badly to her helm, and once more, before we reached the mouth of the river, we saw her veering straight on to a bluff of rock on the shore.

It seemed absurd, with a wide sea behind us, to run ashore ; and it shook our faith in the skipper almost as much as the second shock shook the ship, and if she took in several tons of water in her bows, our courage too received a considerable damper. Worse than that, as we found out afterwards, it destroyed the captain's

confidence in his craft, and "rattled" him badly. He was a little man with some foreign blood in his veins, and none of that stolid calm which makes a sailor.

But nothing short of shipwreck stops a boat on the Stickine. We had started, and we meant to pull through, so, though her bows were heavy with a load which would pay no freight, the steamer turned into the stream and faced the current which runs down that roadway to the north.

Our decks were covered with passengers in spite of the mist which was falling, through which you could see the feet of the coast range protruding like the paws of some monster which crouched up-stream waiting for us.

I was not the only man on board who had never seen a glacier or a grizzly before, and we were keenly looking out for both.

"It is a weird world we are passing through," said a voice at my elbow, and turning, I saw a middle-aged man extremely neat in his dress, and with a certain quiet air of authority upon his clean-cut features, leaning over the taffrail by my side.

"Yes," I said, "it is; but I suppose men become used to it?"

"They become assimilated, I think," he corrected. "Nature makes her own men, and queer fish some of them are."

"Yet surely most of them come here ready made?" I suggested. "Nature can't be held responsible for these," and I glanced towards the crowd of rough fellows in blue overalls by whom we were surrounded.

"Nature made *them* what they are," he replied; "but she has had a turn at most of them in many lands, so that they bear the clear impress of none of those lands. But I was thinking of the natives, and the mark which the north leaves upon them."

"Do you know much of the natives?"

"I ought to. I am in charge up here as chief of police."

"Are you indeed? And are the natives such very queer fish; different to those on the coast?"

For a moment he was silent. As a rule, I expect he was not a communicative man, but the loneliness of the great river struck him perhaps, and made him instinctively long for companionship, and he could talk to me more freely than to most of those on board, some of whom he knew too well already.

"Yes, these Sticks are very different to the British Columbian Coast Indians," he said at last. "Doesn't it strike you that the world looks a bit younger here, more unformed and void than elsewhere? Just as the world is, so are its people. What do you think my present mission is?"

"To run some one in, I suppose?" I said, laughing.

"No, to get some one out, in the first instance, at

any rate. I am going to prevent a witch-killing if possible."

"A witch-killing?"

"Yes, a witch-killing. That is the time of day in this chaotic country. Here, at the end of the nineteenth century, are men who believe in witchcraft, and kill for it."

"Have they ever killed any one for it in your time?"

"They killed a lad only last year; got him away from the tribe, cast lots for his executioner, and then cut away his chest, took out his bad heart, and shoved the rest of him through a hole in the ice. And he was their friend a month before."

"And do you tell me that another such murder is contemplated?"

"Not only is it contemplated, but I am terribly afraid that it will have been committed by now. Siyah Joe knows his danger, and knows the ways of these woods as well as the moose knows them; but then, so do the two who are on his track, and God knows whether the gloom of these grim places and the fear of his fate won't make him crazy enough to give himself up. They do such things sometimes."

I started at the mention of Siyah Joe's name, and so did another man in the crowd, and I saw Luke and his partner edge their way nearer to us, so that they could better hear our conversation. I so mistrusted

these men even then that I would have turned the conversation if I could have done, but I was too late. The chief's next words put that out of my power.

"It's hard luck too on poor Joe—especially hard luck," he said. "Joe is a very white kind of Indian, and deserves better treatment from his fellows. They say, you know, that he and two of the Tahl Tans have the secret of a fabulously rich ledge somewhere up by McDame's Creek, but though lots of white men have offered Joe money to show them the ledge, he won't do it for fear the miners should spoil the tribal hunting grounds."

"An' you say, chief, as they're goin' to kill this poor boy?" chipped in Sandy Bill, craning his head past me.

"Yes I did, if they can catch him."

"An' can't no one stop them?"

"*We* shall if we can," was the curt reply.

"Would it be asking too much to ask whereabouts you think he is?" persisted Bill. "You see, me and my mate here are goin' in prospectin', and we might be able to lend a hand. It's every man's clear Christian duty to do that if he can."

"It's a great thing to do one's duty," said the chief drily, looking his man up and down with no great favour. "There is no reward, mind."

"'Virtue's its own reward,' I've heerd tell," put in Luke, with a sneer; "but I think I heerd you say as the siwash was near McDame's creek?"

"I don't think I did," retorted the chief; "if he's anywhere above ground, he should be this side of Dease Lake."

"Wal, if so be as you want any specials, you'll know where to look for them."

"I shall; but I would rather know where to look for McFarlane's Chicamon Stone."

Now, whether he drew a bow at a venture, or whether he was thinking only of the ledge which every one spoke of as the *summum bonum* of miners' luck, I don't know, but the effect was instantaneous. Bill seemed to become suddenly conscious of a certain parcel he was carrying, and Luke stood open mouthed glaring at the speaker.

I don't know how it would have ended, but every one rushed forward crying that the canyon was in sight.

The canyon is the real gateway from the coast to Cassiar proper, from the wet land to the dry belt, a gateway through the coast range, against which all the rain-clouds, driven up, strike and explode.

In itself it is a narrow gorge not fifty yards wide, with sheer rock sides, between which at high water the confined volume of the great river rushes at a terrific pace, so that a strong-engined steamer can barely make headway against it.

It is the test of a river-boat. If she can go up the canyon at high water, she is all right; if not, her engines are not good enough for the Stickine.

For some time past we had been making our preparations, and now we steered into the mouth of the canyon, using every pound of steam which the law allows—and perhaps more.

As the boat felt the force of the current she shivered like a live thing, and then, gathering herself together, forced her way up foot by foot until she was about halfway between the entrance to it and the exit. Then the furnaces became clinkered and the steam fell off. We could not get the boat to do her best, and slowly we had to back down-stream until we were again clear of the strong water.

Twice we tried to make that passage, with the same result; and then we got out our wire cable.

It would injure the boat's reputation; but if she could not steam up she must be lined up. So, when men had scrambled over the high cliffs and fastened the cable to a rocky point, we set the steam-winch going, and again, with steam and line, we fought our way to the crux of the position.

Here we hung again; and I watched a point on shore whilst the paddles churned the water into white foam and the hot ashes streamed from the funnel, and the great white creature we were driving snorted and panted as if she would explode. And we did not gain an inch; we stood still.

Then the line, which had lain below the level of the water, began to show, foot by foot, until at last

every inch of it was visible, white and strained and trembling; and then something gave—a part of the line came back to us, and, before any of us had time to think, we were broadside on to the current, being swept down-stream.

If the captain had kept his head, even then things might have gone well with us, but he did not. He was rattled already when the accident happened, and now the bells rang for the engine-room as if they were crazy; and the next moment, with an appalling crash, we went stem on on to a buttress in the middle of the canyon. I don't know myself quite what happened. I saw the jackstaff snap with the force of the shock, and, falling, fell the mate upon the lower deck; I heard men calling that she would blow up. I saw the captain outside the pilot-house, and as we struck, I saw two men jump, and cling in some juniper scrub, which was the only live thing growing upon the canyon's walls; but for myself I had time to do nothing, before, as luck would have it, turning round and round like a top, we came out still floating at the canyon's foot.

After that we tied up to the bank for repairs, and spent the whole afternoon and night in cutting cord-wood, which was considered better for generating steam than coal; and next morning, with a spliced line and all the steam we could put on, we just managed to crawl through with all our freight, and all hands on

board except two. Those two were Luke and Sandy Bill, and, though we kept a sharp look-out for them on the way up, we never caught sight of them again that voyage.

“Did you know anything of those two who spoke to us about Siyah Joe?” asked Luscombe, the chief of police, just before we reached Glenora.

I told him what I knew, keeping nothing back.

“Ah,” he said, “I thought they looked like some of my wards. I wish I had known. But I will see that a reception committee waits upon them when they visit Glenora.”

“You don’t think, then, that they were drowned?” I asked.

“No; nor scared, except by that stupid speech of mine about the Chicamon Stone. They saw their chance and took it, and took old McFarlane’s specimen with them too. On second thoughts, I am not so sure that I shall ever get a chance of receiving them at Glenora according to their merits. They are pretty daring rogues; and I hope, for Siyah Joe’s sake, that they may not find him before I do. If I am not mistaken they are after the Chicamon Stone, and mean to ‘get there’ at any cost.”

His words struck me. He was putting Luke’s determination into Luke’s own words.

CHAPTER III.

A WEEK later I "struck a job," *i.e.* I obtained employment.

A mining and transportation company was engaged in packing supplies into the Dease Lake country, and was in trouble with its men. Some of them were drunk, most of them were incapable; and so, being at my wits' end for work, I went down to the principal office and asked to see "the Boss."

When I reached the station every one was in the corrals: enclosures made of great pine-poles, one above another, strong enough to hold a herd of wild cattle, and big enough to hold three or four hundred head, at a pinch.

The "boys" were breaking young mules, and, as luck would have it, one of these wrenched the snubbing-post clean out of the ground as I came up, and bucked over the corral fence like a deer. Without stopping to think, I clutched at the loose end of rope which the

beast trailed behind him, and the next moment I was jerked off my feet and dragged over half an acre of rough clearing, the sharp stumps in which found every tender spot in my body.

But I had played Rugby Union in my time, and, once having collared, old habit made me hold on like a limpet, though my arms seemed to be coming out of their sockets.

“Stay with him, stranger! Shake him, Applejack!” I heard the men yelling, and, before I knew what they meant, I saw a pair of long ears laid back, a gleam of white teeth which looked as large as gravestones, and Applejack came right at me open-mouthed.

I am quite willing, as a general rule, to take credit for any clever thing I ever did, but common honesty compels me to admit that I am utterly unable to say why, instead of trying to get away from that mule (as I undoubtedly wanted to), I shortened my hold on the rope, and rolled in towards him instead of rolling away.

However it was, I did so; and this possibly saved my life, for the beast, blinded by fear or rage, missed me with his teeth, stumbled over me with his fore feet, and the sudden jerk of the shortened rope, when his head was down, made him turn a complete somersault over my prostrate body.

Before he could recover himself three or four pair of strong hands were on the rope, the end man making

a snubbing-post of his own body ; but even then Applejack kept his captors waltzing round him for a good five minutes before they managed to take the rope round a tree, and so put a period to his performances.

I was slowly pulling myself together, and absent-mindedly dusting my trousers with my cowboy hat, when a huge fellow by my side asked if I were much hurt.

“Not much,” I said, feeling my limbs to see if it was true ; “but a little dazed, I think.”

“Lucky it was only a little,” he laughed ; “if you had not kept your wits deuced well, you would have lost the number of your mess. That was a very neat throw of yours.”

I did not contradict him. Indeed, I was not sure whether he meant that he admired the neatness with which the mule threw me, or that with which I threw the mule. As the mule might be his, possibly his admiration was for his own property ; but there was no time for explanations, for just then a black cook came into the yard and beat noisily upon the back of a frying-pan, at which all the “boys” began to pick up their coats and leave the corral.

“That means grub,” said my new friend ; “if you have not had lunch yet, will you come and have some with us ? The food is not ‘high toned,’ but it is filling.”

“Thank you,” I said, “but I was looking for Captain Lanyon.”

"That's me," replied the big fellow, with a fine disregard for grammar. "What do you want?"

Now, this style of address has its merits, brevity, and so on, but it is embarrassing sometimes, and besides, my abrupt questioner did not look a bit like the man I thought I was looking for.

I had been told that a young English gentleman, with any amount of money, was "running" the mule trains for the fun of the thing. This man was young, but he was the roughest-looking fellow in the whole crowd; two huge bare arms protruded from his shirt-sleeves, the blue flannel breast of which was open enough to show a hairy chest, of which a navy might have been proud, a fair beard was all over his bronzed face, and the rest of him was just blue overalls, and moccasins a shade more ragged than those of any other man.

"Not my idea of a dude, anyway," was my mental comment; "and not half a bad fellow," I added an hour later, as I went down to his corrals to lend a hand at the breaking, as his hired man.

I told him honestly, as he sat eating a huge meal with his packers, that I had been brought up as a civil engineer, but having failed to find employment in my own line, I should be glad to do anything to earn a few dollars to keep me until something better turned up.

"I am afraid that I shall not be much good," I concluded; "but I can try."

"Some of the others are not any good, and they

don't try," he growled; "but, if you like, I'll take you on at fifty dollars a month. The regular wages are seventy-five. If you only help to catch the mules in the morning, you ought to earn your money."

And so I was hired, and next morning began to learn what a very large number of things there were connected with mules, ropes, and packages of which I had not the faintest idea.

But the packing was over at last, and in spite of every artifice known to the half-broken produce of little Spanish mares and cayuse jacks, the whole train was loaded and ready to start.

"Now, Mo, let them rip," sang out the boss, "and look out for squalls. You'll have a merry time, but I believe it is the only way to break those devils, and there is nothing much to damage."

And then we had a picnic for two or three days. After that, most of the mules sobered down; but at first it was just as well that the loads were only made up of well-packed sugar and flour.

At first the leaders would not move. Then one of the youngest dashed back, and executed a *pas seule* in front of the cook-house, bucking and kicking like a Chinese cracker until the rigging gave way, and her whole pack was scattered in all directions. In the middle of this performance, the whole band took it into its head to move, and charged in open order up the steep hill which overlooks the corrals.

"Pick up the pieces, boss! So long!" yelled Mo, the carcadore; and the next moment all of us, the boss included, were riding at best pace after the train. Somebody else might pick up the pieces. He meant to see the fun.

I have no time to tell you all about the first trip, though it might be worth telling; suffice it to say that at the end of the first day we had lost one-third of our mules, and though we knew that their loads were still in the country, we knew very little more about them, but by the fourth day out, thanks to untiring efforts on the part of Mo, we had twenty-four reasonably quiet pack-animals instead of the thirty fireworks we started with.

Later on, we recovered all the mules, and most of their packs. What was lost went to the breaking account, and was considered well spent.

At first, of course, I was as bad as the mules. I could not do anything right, from lighting a fire, or pitching a tent, to throwing the diamond hitch.

Between you and me, I cannot do that right yet. But, after a time, I learned to know a dry stick from a green tree, and to detect a shirker when he tried to slip off the trail, as the train went by, and, above all, I was of some real service to my mates in retrieving the lost and strayed. Bringing in the mules in the morning became my special duty, after the first week out.

The journey from Telegraph Creek to Dease Lake

took ten days, if all went well ; fifteen, if things went normally ill. Every day we were up in the dark, and every day we camped before midday, so as to give the beasts the benefit of the cool hours of the morning for their work. As a rule, at first, whilst there was good feed in every swamp, most of the animals stayed where they were turned out, and, after a month's packing, would come in as soon as we appeared in the morning, and walk sedately up to the semicircle of the aparejos, which had been placed in readiness for them. It was a pretty sight to see them standing like soldiers at attention, waiting for their masters to pack them.

But there were always a few who, out of pure meanness, would sneak out of the richest feeding-grounds, and refuse to present themselves at the morning roll-call. Applejack was one of the worst of these, and many a morning I had to run myself to a standstill upon the track of this wandering beast. The whole country between Telegraph Creek and Dease Lake is, with very few exceptions, a succession of willow thickets, running in great swells like a dull green sea up and down for seventy miles, with here and there a patch of black pines where the best camps are, and here and there an open swamp where the best feed is. In these swamps, at early morning, every step you take stirs up a covey of mosquitoes, and it was lucky for me that my business kept me moving pretty briskly or I should have been eaten alive. But I was quick-sighted,

and a good tracker, so that I generally found my beasts, and football and baseball had made me a good "stayer," so that, as a rule, I caught the shirkers before old Mo, our carcadore, had quite lost all patience, and thus won for myself a fair reputation with the men and the boss, who, though he never said much, paid me my seventy-five dollars the second month without being asked to do so. I never saw a man take less trouble to make himself popular with his employés, and yet I never knew one of whom the men thought more. He never praised a man, but he always paid him; he never rated a man, but if he was not satisfied with him, he just "fired" him without a word, and if there was a particularly hard thing to do, the boss generally had the first try at it himself. Any evening, wherever we were camped on that trail, we were likely to see him come "loping" in on foot, with a single blanket tied on his shoulders, and a tomato-tin (his cooking outfit) in his hand, to see how we were getting on. He would cover his thirty-five or forty miles in a day, and, as likely as not, if all was well, turn round at daylight next morning, and "lope" back.

I should have been working for him still, if it had not been that one morning in the first week of October, my old enemy, that slab-sided, fiddle-headed Applejack, could not be found even in the half-hour which I usually allowed for him.

Lately the feed, even in our favourite swamps, had

been getting very short, and the nights unpleasantly cold. Indeed, we had had one considerable fall of snow already, and orders had been issued that this was to be our last trip for the season. Want of feed and cold combined made the animals restive, and they would wander unheard-of distances to find a bite of grass out of which the frost had not taken all the goodness. Even if you turned them into feed which was over their hocks, they would still move round to keep warm, and my billet as "finder" was no sinecure.

On this particular morning I had spent so long looking for Applejack, that I knew Mo must either have given up all idea of moving for the day, or must have gone on without me, leaving me to follow as best I could.

I did not like the idea of camping by myself, even though I knew that the boys would leave some food for me; but I liked less the idea of losing old Applejack, who was one of our best mules, right at the end of the season.

I had managed to beat him so far, and I meant to bring him in at the finish. It had become a personal matter between Applejack and myself, so I took up the contrary boss's faint tracks again for another hour.

Now, if my reader happens to be a hunter he will know what the fascination is of following tracks. It is hard enough to keep on a trail, but it is much harder to leave fresh tracks till you lose them. However far

they may have led you, you still want to go on just another half-hour. You *know* that the beast will be just beyond the next ridge, or browsing in the next swamp, though he was not on any of the twenty ridges, nor in any of the ten swamps through which you have already passed. Having spent already so much time in hunting him, it would be folly to abandon the hunt now, when another quarter of an hour would infallibly reward you for all the trouble you have taken.

This was the way I argued, and this was why, when a brown beast crashed out on the other side of the swamp, I could not for the moment make out Applejack as clearly as I ought to have done, *for it was growing distinctly dark.*

Until then, I had been so engrossed in the pursuit, that I had hardly noticed how the time was going. I knew that it was past dinner-time. My inner consciousness had been telling me that at intervals all day. I had wanted food badly for a long time, but then I wanted that confounded mule worse.

And of course it was Applejack!

On second thoughts I was not absolutely certain even of that, though to doubt it seemed rather ridiculous.

As I looked the beast moved out into a comparatively open space, with a long, slouching stride, feeling his way, as it seemed to me, with his nose, until he came right out upon the skyline, his great clumsy head outlined clearly against the sky into which the

cold green tint of a northern evening had already come.

Then I knew that it was not Applejack, and that, for the first time, I was looking at one of those huge giants of an earlier creation, to whom these wastes of deep silence are home.

For a space of many minutes, so it seemed to me, the moose stood immovable, gazing at me whilst the darkness seemed to increase perceptibly, and the silence fell and deepened, until I felt a long way from camp and humankind.

Then one great ear moved, the grotesque head turned slowly round, and without a sound the whole apparition disappeared. If he had gone off with a crash of breaking underbrush, I could have endured it: that would have been natural.

His sudden appearance had not shaken my nerves in the least; but when he went without a sound, he left me shaking, and when at last I turned and looked for landmarks, the heart fairly went out of me.

I said that I was a good tracker, and, as mule-drivers go, so I was, but I was no hunter. I had been looking for a mule and not thinking of moose, and had, I suppose, somewhere changed Applejack's tracks for those of the great bull I had just "jumped"—not a very difficult thing for a better man to have done, who was only tracking by the bent grass and broken twigs, without troubling to look for the print of the beast's feet.

I don't wish my worst enemy to endure what I endured after I discovered my mistake.

Look where I would I could see nothing that I recognized. Everywhere there was rolling swamp; everywhere willows, and nowhere was there any vantage-ground from which I could see into the beyond.

For a time I let the silence and the fear of the place master me. Then one of those grey birds, which northern men call whisky-jacks, lit on a bough close to my head. He was a mere ball of grey feathers—the very ghost of a bird,—and so light and dainty in his movements that he hardly swayed the tiny sprig on which he lit. But in the silence I heard him, and the sound and the presence of another live thing roused me. Without stopping to think of the direction in which camp ought to lie, I turned and crashed back along the way I had come. At any cost I felt that I must get back to camp before the black dark caught me.

As I came I had moved easily through the brush. Now in my hurry every bush seemed to rise in my path and oppose me; every crooked stick caught me; the very withies swung back and cut me viciously across the eyeball.

In the night I saw these woods as they really were, full of a personal hostility to man. I set my teeth and charged through these personal enemies, but the tough boughs laughed at my puny strength; a dozen times I stumbled, and fell to my knees more than once.

I began to pant and sweat until I was wet through. My knees gave under me, and at the last a short stick caught in the end of my moccasin, and, rising as I pressed forward, threw me heavily upon my face.

For a moment I lay there almost crying, with rage rather than fear. When I rose the rage left me, and fear took its place. I knew then that I was lost; not just "turned round" in the woods, but lost without any idea of direction at all.

Then an utterly unreasoning terror took possession of me. Things were looking at me, voices were whispering; I was not sure that the trees were not moving, closing in thicker and thicker all round me. *Something* was coming.

If you have never been lost, laugh at me. If you are a man who has been alone with Nature—I mean really alone—you won't laugh. She is a terrible person to meet face to face, when there is no other fellow anywhere near to call to, and the night is coming on.

And with the night came the cold.

As long as I was moving, blindly forcing my way through interminable labyrinths of willow, Heaven knows I was hot enough. When I stopped, utterly exhausted, the swamp-water pumped into my moccasins and froze there, and the little wind which came creeping through the willows had in it all the sting of the glaciers where it was born.

Luckily for me I smoke; and at last, as I plunged

heavily through the swamps, my pipe fell out of my pocket. That gave me an idea. I picked up my old friend, filled and lit it; and then, having found a fairly dry log, sat down to smoke and think. The tobacco calmed me, and, I fancy, saved my life. If I had not sat down then I think I should have blundered on, circling through the woods, until fatigue and fear made me light-headed, and I might have died mad a few hundred yards, perhaps, from a Government trail. Such things have happened before.

But the tobacco calmed me, and in a few minutes I could almost have laughed at myself.

Here was I, a man who sought adventure, probably not half a dozen miles from the camp of my own pack-train, ready to chuck up the sponge because I had lost my way, and I had not even tried shouting yet.

So I rose and shouted till I was hoarse, and listened for an answer until I could hear bells in my ears.

But no answer came, and I knew enough to know that the bells were only fancy, though I confess that I walked for a good hour trying to reach them. I walked indeed until the moon, a tiny crescent—very new to its work and very incompetent, I thought—came up and showed me nothing but millions of silvery leaves trembling in the frost.

I tried to light a fire, and could not do it. Most of my matches were damp, and there was not a thing in the swamp dry enough to burn.

Then a hunting owl laughed somewhere in the shadows, and, though I am not superstitious as a rule, I cursed the bird in my angry fear.

I think I was just revolving some wild scheme of making myself a bed of brush, and piling the same over me to keep me warm, when a thin column of mist caught my eye. At first I looked at it without interest, then an idea struck me. Was it mist? was it not too dense, too blue for mist? above all, was there not a shadow of a glow in it, which never came from moonlight?

Certainly there was. It was a camp-fire, beyond doubt, and I was saved; and in a moment the kingdom of shadows vanished, and there were only ordinary trees and bushes round me again, through which I could push my way like the lord of creation instead of blundering like a hunted slave.

But the fire was a long way off, and it was past midnight before I reached it.

What I saw when I stood almost within the glow of it will do for another chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

HERE and there in the Cassiar country occur islands of black pine amongst the endless waves of willow and swamp.

These make the favourite camping-grounds for hunters and packers, and other lonely folk whose lot it is to wander homeless over the Arctic Slope. By day these pines are but dark spots in the rolling green. So dark are they, that they seem the natural harbour where the gloom lurks, and whence the shadows steal out at nightfall; but they have this advantage, they stand on firm ground, and amongst them are sure to be two or three dry sticks which will burn; and hence it is that at night, if there is a spot of comfort anywhere, it will be in the pines where the dry wood cracks and sputters and the red embers glow.

It was on such a spot that I looked as I peered from the edge of the swamp, my knees shaking with exhaustion and fatigue, and my body rapidly passing from the heat of incessant physical exertion to the chills of damp and starvation.

Under ordinary circumstances I should have blundered through the brush and rushed to the fire, making sure of warmth and welcome, but a very short sojourn in the woods changes a man's nature.

No one ever saw wild game come galloping up to their feed; no one ever saw a bear, even, swagger boldly up to a carcase. No! The woods breed caution.

The deer pushes noiselessly through the brush, stops, listens, looks carefully all round, standing still as a carven image for an unconscionable time at the edge of the little meadow, and then dropping his head, steals in daintily and noiselessly to eat his fill.

The grizzly, though he is the master of the woods, plods in a long circuit round his kill, his ears pricked, his nose testing every draft of air; and then, if neither nose nor ear warns him of danger from any quarter, he too walks quietly in and feeds in silence.

To some extent men, too, learn the lesson of the woods, and I had myself imbibed enough of their caution to step lighter, half consciously, as I drew near that fire, lift the boughs gently asunder, and peer through them before passing into the open.

Light as my moccasined step had been, and though I could hear no rustle of the moved boughs, I had not altogether escaped observation.

Of the two figures by the dying embers, one sat up at once and peered into the darkness where I stood.

Listening like a stag at gaze, this upright bundle of blankets remained rigid, intent, motionless, until I almost gasped and let go of the upheld boughs, so greatly did the strain tell upon me.

At last the listener seemed satisfied, and, letting the blankets slide from his shoulders, a heavily-built Indian rose to his knees, and reaching forward drew the logs together on the fire.

Then for a moment he sat upon his heels thawing himself, and a few minutes later rose, and fetching an armful of logs from a pile close by, heaped them on the fire and started a blaze.

The fresh logs crackled and snapped like pistol-shots, but theirs were the first sounds which broke the stillness. The Indian himself had moved like a shadow, without a sound.

When the logs had been piled upon the fire the Indian's mate sat up too, watching him; and as he turned said something to him, but in that low, constrained voice which is natural to woodsmen, so that I could not catch the meaning of his speech.

Perhaps you wonder why, even then, I did not go forward into the genial glow I so longed to feel.

If you had seen the two who crouched beside it, you would not have wondered. An Indian in store clothes near a settlement looks a very ordinary, harmless person, but these two looked otherwise.

They were at home and natural; and their red-brown

faces, their glittering eyes, and harsh black hair, looked beast-like and terrible in the glow, and their stealthy, silent movements were more suggestive of beasts of prey than of men. For a time they talked together in low growls over the fire, and then one of them took something from his blankets, and, stepping over the embers, sat down facing his comrade.

For a full minute he sat there, weaving his hands backwards and forwards, under and over, with surpassing rapidity, the other watching him, as a lynx watches a rabbit, until suddenly the watcher shot out a long bare arm and touched one of the weaver's hands with his finger.

The weaving stopped, the hand was opened and it was empty. Again the weaving began, and again the other player leaned forward and arrested one of the rapid hands. This time there was something in it which was passed across the fire. Then the winner took up the play, and his mate watched him.

The two were playing a game, not unlike the merry play which white boys call "Jenkins up;" but there was no cheery noise, no mirth in their game. They were in deadly earnest.

Perhaps they played for five minutes—it seemed more to me,—and at the end of that time the first Indian, a huge fellow, as many of the Sticks are, sprang to his feet with a short snarl, and, throwing some little billets of wood across the fire, said—

"You are yourself more witch than witch-finder."

The other laughed. "Lone Goose has won," he said. "Go you and do the killing, and take care. You have lost little this time. It is better to be killer than killed, and those who spied out Siyah Joe may spy you next time."

"If Lone Goose comes to Tahl Tan from the hill-top to spy out Tatooch he had better fly high!" retorted the other, angrily.

"Do your business now. Threats are for boys. The day comes, and the white men will soon be here now," was the cold answer; and the other sullenly began to make himself ready, the victor in the game helping him.

From a little cache of pinebark the Lone Goose drew out two or three small sacks of deerskin. From one of these he took a bladder of grease. With it he anointed Tatooch from the crown of his head to his broad shoulders. From another bag he took two or three handful of white down, with which Tatooch was thickly sprinkled, until his stiff black hair was hidden in a quaking mass of white like snowflakes. Then he took from under his skin shirt a long, evil-looking knife, and, before handing it to Tatoosh, whetted its broad, recurved blade upon his bare palm, and, laying a feather across the edge of it, gave a dexterous upper cut, and the feather in two pieces settled slowly down upon the damp ground.

"It is sharp," he said, "and Joe will not feel much."

Last, he took a wooden mask from the cache: a hideous thing, with the jaws of a wolf, and great cavernous eyeholes in it, and long streamers of human hair flying from it.

Tatoosh put this on and the other fixed it for him, and then knife in hand he rose.

With mask and plumes he must have stood nearly seven feet high, and in the faint light of coming dawn, with the black pines behind him, their blackness emphasized by thin wreaths of new-fallen snow, Tatooch looked the incarnation of all evil—a very devil of the woods.

"See that you bring the heart and liver, that we may know you have slain him!" hissed Lone Goose; "and remember that the spirits watch."

"And that dead men cannot find the Chicamon Stone," said a voice from behind the mask; and then turning, the wearer of the mask strode into the brush, passing swift and silent within a few feet of where I cowered amongst the willows.

Had Tatooch been free from his headgear, or had his cunning brain been less full of other thoughts, he would have seen me as clearly perhaps as I saw him. I almost think he would have heard my heart thumping against my ribs, or the gasping for breath in my dry throat. As it was he saw nothing, but passed on,

the little morning breeze making the ghastly trimmings of his mask flutter as he went.

Now what possessed me I cannot tell. I had no mind to meddle with these wood-fiends. I only wanted to get away and be at home amongst white folk, and listen to their merry chatter round the camp-fire, instead of having my ears ache with the silence of northern forests; but I turned as Tatooch passed and followed him. Like everything else, it seemed to me that I was coming under the spell of the wilderness and becoming one with it.

Now the bushes no longer withstood me; my moccasins forgot to squelch in the wet places; the very boughs passed over me without that noisy, rasping scrape to which I had grown accustomed.

Perhaps all this was only fancy. More likely was it that it was because, as I found out before long, we were passing—Tatooch and his tracker—over a comparatively well-worn trail.

Above us was rising ground—a ridge bare of timber, which might be the beginning of the foot-hills—and towards this we were making, my leader passing in front with such swift, silent strides that it would have been more than I could have done at ordinary times to keep him in sight.

But now I think that I was outside myself.

Want of sleep and want of food, and weariness and fear, had worked upon me until now I needed neither

food nor rest. Fever was coming on me, and for the time lent me unnatural strength.

Presently we came to the mouth of a narrow canyon, deep, and tortuous, and dark. Here the rock had cropped out from the hillside, and made towers and parapets which guarded the entrance to the gorge, whilst further up one crag hung over it like the keep of some old castle.

Inside the gorge Tatooch stopped, and so suddenly that I, following him, only just stopped in time. I even think that he must have heard me then, and perhaps fancied that the Lone Goose followed him. At any rate he stood and listened, and when I saw him take out the great knife and finger it delicately, I gave up all for lost.

But he was thinking of other things. First he re-adjusted his mask, and fingered the plumes on his head like a girl who tries whether her fringe is still in curl; then he lifted his hand to his mouth and called—hollow, far-reaching, deep-sounding—the call of the hunting owl.

Twice he repeated the boding cry, and then close to, as it seemed to me, came the hollow answer. It was the Lone Goose answering him from the camp. Who else heard the call, or what it meant to him, I did not know then. I know now, and I can fancy the terror of it to him.

As soon as the answer came Tatooch moved on, but

now no longer with the swift stride which it had tired me so to follow. Stately and slow he strode, carrying himself at his full height, his plumes nodding as he went; and the next minute the trees parted, and the grey cold light fell upon an acre of brown moss, crisp and hoar with frost, in the midst of which was a solitary pine, dead of age or lightning stroke, grey-white and skeleton-like in the grey of the morning.

Tied to this and facing us, naked, or almost so, was an Indian lad of twenty, his flesh almost as grey with cold and terror as the tree he was tied to.

Have you ever seen a rabbit when the caretaker has thrown him in to the snakes, and they rise slowly and begin to rear up and sway their heads? Do you know the stony horror that seems to seize him, so that he cannot flee from the death that comes to him so leisurely?

As the rabbit looks, so looked the boy. Slowly the grim figure strode across the moss, which made no sound beneath its feet, and with eyes starting from their sockets the witch saw the witch-killer come. This was no Indian to him; it was the Wood Devil coming for his life. Perhaps, if he had been able to, he would have cried out; perhaps, if they could have done so, those straining arms would have burst their thongs, and he would have fled shrieking into the thicket. More likely he would have waited dumb and fascinated for the stroke. As it was, he had no choice. The

strength had been sapped from his muscles by three days of cruel starvation and suspense; the tight bindings on his thumbs and ankles, and the frost at night, had checked the current of his blood, and his mouth was gagged. Only his eyes spoke, and the wild appeal in them reached even the deaf ears of selfishness and fear. As the great mask towered over the shrinking victim, and the blue steel went up to strike, I think the old Berserk madness of which the Sagas tell took hold of me. The scream of my own voice, and the rage in it, startled me, and made the dumb woods wake and move; and the next moment I struck as I never struck before in my life. It was but a foolish blow with bare knuckles, but, thank God! I am six feet two in my socks, and I know how to hit; and though my knuckles split and bled, the hideous mask smashed, and its wearer fell like a log at my feet. He was up again, however, quick as a panther and as savage; but I had lost fear now. I only wanted battle—hot, fast, furious fighting—and, caring nothing for myself, I closed, and struck again and again and again, as if there was to be no end to my force or fury. The third time he fell I saw his knife, the great blue-bladed thing, sticking in the moss within reach of my hand, and quick as thought I clutched it and threw myself upon him.

Now I had him by the throat, and the blade was up to strike, when his eyes for the first time caught mine.

I have not told you, so far, that I have one unfortunate personal peculiarity—unfortunate, as a rule, though perhaps not so on this occasion : as a boy brain fever had left me white-headed. In spite of my red-brown cheeks my hair is white as snow.

Perhaps this saved his life or mine. At least I think so, for when his eyes caught mine a look of terror took all the malice out of his face, and with one wild struggle he slipped from me. The grease with which he had anointed himself spoiled my hold ; fear gave him strength which rage could not supply. Without one look behind him Tatooch darted into the brush.

He had no eyes for me, no woodsman's feet now with which to pick his way. I could hear him crashing and blundering through the brush for minutes after I lost sight of him, like a beast which has not only seen the hunter but heard the bullet whistle between his horns.

The superstitious fear which had brought him here to kill his tribesman, had driven him away more scared possibly than his victim. He had played the devil, and dressed himself up for the part. In the cold grey of the morning he had met a real devil—white-faced, snowy-haired, and savage,—and he had not time or courage to realize that, though his enemy was as tall as he, it was but a boy who felled him : a boy who would have had no chance against his seasoned strength

had he but had courage to maintain the fight a little longer.

Had he come back he would have seen his error, for now I was spent. The madness had gone out of me; the fever had left me; and I was almost too weak to rise. Indeed, I must have lain for minutes where he slid from my grasp, the knife in my hand and my face buried in the cold moss.

When I pulled myself together and rose to my knees, I rested there a moment as the sun came up from behind the ridge. I did not believe in devils, but I too believed in something which was not as we are, and I had a word of thanks to say to the Unseen who is so little remembered except in the crises of our lives.

When my thanks were said I rose, and turned to the cause of the quarrel.

If I had expected to see joy and gratitude upon the Indian witch's face, I was doomed to disappointment. If terror had sat upon those haggard features before, terror intensified sat there now; and as I drew near with the knife to cut the thongs which held him, he seemed to shrink as if he would vanish bodily from my sight.

When the thongs on his ankles and the deerskin strings which bound his thumbs had been cut, Siyah Joe fell heavily forward on his face, and, for a moment, lay there like one dead; and when I went to him, instead of trying to rise, he kept his face to the ground

and clung about my feet, crying to me in that Indian tongue, which has a wail in it at all times, and was now the whimpering of a frightened child.

Of course it dawned upon me at once that to him, as to Tatooch, I was not a white man but a white devil; stronger perhaps—perhaps worse than the one I had driven away, and in any case equally to be feared.

It was ridiculous, but it was also embarrassing; and this was no time for fooling, for, though I had scared away Tatooch, I did not expect that the hard-withered old witch-finder would give up his prey without a fight for it. He knew too much of witchcraft and its little tricks to believe in anything, and, if I was not mistaken, what I had heard about the chicamon stone (gold rock) meant that a very real and prosaic devil was at the bottom of his devilry.

So I did my best with Siyah Joe: gave him the knife to give him confidence, and, with all the little Indian at my disposal, put him in possession of my version of the story, and implored him to lead the way out of this cursed jungle to some pack-trail or settlement where we might find food and protection.

If the shadow of death had not been very near him, and if he had not passed much of his life amongst white men at the coast, I should probably have failed even then; but the feel of the knife in his hands reassured him, and I dare say a closer scrutiny of my ragged, starved condition half convinced him of the truth

of my story. It did not weaken his respect or fear of me, but it induced him to obey me; and I was astounded at the speed with which, in spite of what he had endured, he managed to lead me up the canyon to the foot of the castle-like rock, which I had noticed in the earlier morning.

CHAPTER V.

THIS castle rock, which was perhaps half a mile from the meadow in which he had been tied, was Joe's bane and his blessing.

For centuries it had been a devil's stone to the Tahl Tan tribes, a place where all manner of weird and uncanny things collected at nightfall. Here the flying cariboo used to alight and sing as the moon rose, and here, they said, the little hairy men who have no speech, and stink so that the dogs, winding them, howl, crowded together when nights were dark.

Joe, as a boy, had had no reverence for local superstitions. He had been too much with white men for that, and, finding in the snows of one November the track of a great grey bear, he had followed it up the canyon, and not thinking, had tracked it to its den in a natural tunnel in this rock, and killed it there.

The bear was in its prime, and the skin had been worth many dollars to Joe, and, moreover, in the night and morning which he had been obliged to spend near

the castle rock, he had found out for himself that, not only did no flying cariboo sing to him, nor any hairy men disturb him, but that superstition had made of this place a sanctuary for certain fur-bearing beasts, and a perfect mine of wealth for any hunter who was unbelieving enough to help himself.

But Joe's haunting this place of devils had become known to the tribe—more especially had it become known to the witch-finder Lone Goose; and this, and Joe's knowledge of a certain other rock, of which McFarlane had specimens—of which Lone Goose knew, and which Luke and Bill would have given their souls to find—had worked Siyah Joe's ruin.

The witch-finder had been absent from the tribe for a week in the far mountains, conversing with the spirits, he said; and, when he came back to Tahl Tan, he had pointed out Joe as the witch to whose evil influence the last chief's death was due.

Lone Goose had had the medical treatment of this worthy, who was dying of old age, whisky, and rheumatism, and failing to cure him by the beating of drums and chanting of songs, was compelled, either to forfeit his reputation as a medicine-man, or find some valid reason for this failure of the healing art. So he had been away into the mountains, and the spirits had revealed the witch to him in Siyah Joe.

It was useless for Joe to protest. In the first place, Joe had no powerful relations in the tribe, and, indeed,

he was a waif and a lone man amongst them ; and in the second place his ill-conditioned wanderings round castle rock were known, and it was argued that the man whom the devils won't hurt must be something of a devil himself.

When he openly derided Lone Goose's claim to supernatural powers he fared no better, though men listened at first.

"Did you not see me four suns ago, about the time of the half sun?" asked the medicine-man. "Did you not see me here in the village?"

"No, you were not here," they answered.

"Did you not see one solitary goose fly over the houses towards the Stickine?"

Unfortunately some one had seen such a lone bird, and said so.

"That was me," said the medicine-man; and his case was proved to those simple minds, and no one would listen to Siyah Joe's explanation, that if the old man had been hiding in the high peak which overlooks the village, he would have seen the goose fly as they had seen it, and could have said anything he liked about its supernatural contents.

Joe's fate was sealed, and from that day to this he had lived a hunted life, and even his white friends had not been able to save him. In the woods, whose ways they knew, the red men were still the stronger.

And so it came that the eeriness of his surroundings,

and the constant terror of his life, had preyed upon the untaught mind, until Joe himself had fallen back upon the superstitions of his forefathers, and had almost come to believe that he was a witch, and that wood devils and singing cariboo really had an existence.

One thing only he would not believe, and that was lucky for him and for me: he would not believe that the castle rock was haunted. He had slept there safe many a night, and brought from it a grand store of fur, and seen nothing there more evil than a grizzly mother with her cubs, and for her he had but little fear if he could only creep near enough with his Winchester.

So he led me thither out of the canyon, and together we clambered up the vast pile of boulders at its foot, feeling no larger than mice as we stepped from one huge stone to another, until at last we reached his hiding-place.

What I had taken for the first of the foothills were in reality but the precipitous rocks which overhang one of the forks of the Stickine, and this castle rock, which dominated the gorge running at right angles to the river, stood almost in the elbow made by the junction of the fork with the main stream.

At its foot was the gorge and the stone pile which ran down ever to the raving torrent several hundred feet below the level even of the gorge, and above, when you had climbed the stone pile, one great shaft of

solid rock went up towards heaven, bare even of the scanty verdure of the north. At the foot of this monolith was Joe's cave, into which we crawled, on our hands and knees, climbing upwards almost like sweeps going up a chimney, so steep was the ascent, until at last we reached a level floor, perhaps twenty feet square.

"Old-time bear den," said Joe at last; "now nika house."

It was obvious that both parts of his statement were true. There was in the place an unmistakable animal smell even now, and along the ridge of rock at one side there was a worn path, as of something which had walked ceaselessly backwards and forwards for centuries. In some of the smaller dens, which led off from this main den, there was still enough hair (smoky black, with a bright silver tip to it) to help a man guess who had slept through the winter in those narrow quarters; and, if any one had needed a further clue, there it lay on the floor in the form of two huge half-cured hides, to which the heads and claws still adhered.

Motioning me to take one of these, my friend the witch dug out a bundle of matches from a cranny in the walls of his house, and lit a candle which had been left sticking against the rock.

"S'pose we make fire, no good," he said, "Tatooch see smoke. Eat plenty muck a muck, white man keep warm."

I was all but frozen. But he was right, and after all I was gradually deriving a little comfort from the deep fur in which I had wrapped myself; so I nodded my head, and held out my hand for the dried salmon which he had taken from a cache in the cavern.

If you have never eaten salmon smoked and dried by the Tahl Tan indians you have missed one of the good things of life. It is dry as a biscuit, as light almost as a feather, and as tasty as anything I know. I ate an enormous meal of it, washed it down with a handful of snow from outside and then rolled myself in the bearskin and slept. When I was last conscious Siyah Joe was still eating: an Indian can starve as long as a wolf, but when he has a chance he can eat as much as one.

When I woke with a start Joe was bending over me, shaking me, and it was broad daylight of the day after his escape.

"They are coming," he whispered.

"Coming?" I said only half awake. "Who are coming?"

"Tatooch and the medicine-man. Look!" and he led me to a crevice higher up in our tunnel through which I could see over the forest around. But there was no one in sight. The woods stretched away and away as if they went on for ever; wreaths of snow lay on them; no wind moved them; they looked as if they were dead.

"Do you see!" he whispered at my elbow.

"No," I said; "there is no one there. Tatoonch won't come."

"Tatoonch is coming," he persisted. "Don't you hear the squirrels? Don't you see the whisky-jacks?"

And then I noticed that all through the woods, along the way we had come, the squirrels were "churring," and chattering angrily as they do when something has disturbed them, and ever and anon one of the little grey birds flew forwards to the confines of the wood.

Quicker at noticing the signs of his own world than I was, Joe had noted this stir in the forest life, and had gathered its meaning at a glance.

Nor was he wrong. Even as I looked, I saw a man move into sight among the outlying trees, and then another. Later on I thought I saw two more, but they kept in the brush, and I was not very sure of them. The first two came boldly into the open, their eyes bent upon our tracks. No need to ask if they were white men or Indians. An Indian would not want to read the sign at his feet; he would have been looking ahead. Yes; they were white men, and white men I knew: Sandy Bill and his mate Luke, and both armed to the teeth.

How they happened to be with the two Indians, as I afterwards found they were, I did not know then, and I can only guess now, that they were the white men

whose coming Lone Goose had feared in the killer's camp. Probably they had come upon that camp before Tatooch reached it in his flight from me, and hearing his story had put two and two together and persuaded the Indians to think better of their fears, and join forces in pursuit of the man who had the secret of the gold rock. There is a natural tendency of like to like in this world, and the four thieves with a common object may have determined to hunt in company.

When the two had come near enough to our hiding-place to be sure that the track led into the cave, which they could see in front of them, they halted and held a council of war. Bill wanted one thing, Luke evidently recommended another plan.

But Bill had his way, I think, for he was always the craftier villain of the two.

Ostentatiously laying aside his rifle, and a great knife which he carried, he motioned Luke back; and when Luke had retired to the nearest covert, Bill took out a rag from his pocket, and tying it on a stick cried to the rock—

“Say, Mr. Whitehead, are you there?”

It was no good pretending that I was not, so I answered him.

“Yes. What do you want?”

“Just five minutes' talk with you where no one else can hear. You and me can fix this thing up in five minutes, white man's fashion, if we only get a show.”

“What are you doing with those murdering Indians?” I asked.

“Don’t hollerso loud,” he said, coming nearer. “Leave your gun an’ come and talk white man’s fashion, an’ I’ll explain that in a brace of shakes.”

Joe, who heard the conversation, was against my going, but I could see no reason for refusing. Man to man, I felt myself more than a match for Bill; and besides, how did I know that he was really acting in league with 'Tatooch?

“All right, wait there,” I said; and the next moment I was sliding down to the mouth of the tunnel, whilst Bill, who forgot that Joe might be watching, was loosening something in the top of his long gumboot.

When I came out Bill came to meet me, and together we stood about halfway down the moraine which led to the cave’s mouth.

“Say now,” said Bill, “that was a pretty smart trick you played on 'Tatooch. I suppose you’ve got the boy up there.”

“That’s my business.”

“All right, partner; but the tracks say so. However that’s no matter. We are both on the same lay out, I reckon.”

“And what is your lay out?”

“Why, to save the poor young fellow from these murdering heathen, of course.”

"And to get on to his secret of the Chicamon Stone," I suggested.

"Well, an' if we did, we three could divvy up fair and square; there's enough for three, ain't there?"

"How do I know?"

"Oh, I guess you know all you want to by now. I should if I'd been in your shoes."

"If you wanted to save Joe, why did you bring Tatooch with you?"

"Without him we couldn't have found you."

"And without you Tatooch dare not have come. Get Tatooch out of this, and keep him away, and if Joe gives me the secret, I'll pledge you my word to share anything I get with you."

"What! You haven't got the secret yet?"

"No."

Bill looked at me suspiciously. I was very young, but he didn't think I was young enough for that.

"Well," he said at last, "if that's so, you want help. Them Indians are cussedly mean brutes to handle: a man wants experience in handling them. Now you just take us in to this Joe, or bring him out to us, and we'll get his secret. Yes; an' make him show us the rock afore we let him go, and then we can divvy up."

"And suppose I do this and Joe won't tell?"

"Joe'll tell if we talk to him," said Bill, savagely; and by habit his hand went to his pistol, which he had shoved into the head of his boot.

Instinctively I sprang back; I had believed him to be unarmed.

"So that is the way you keep your treaties," I said sneeringly, putting the best face I could on it.

He saw that he was discovered, but he made one more effort to gain his ends in his natural way.

"Well, never mind my ways," he said. "We don't mean you no harm—unless you're a bigger fool than you look. Give up the boy, an' you can go where you've a mind to."

"And suppose I don't give him up?"

"You will," said Bill, quietly, looking me straight in the eyes at last; and there was more threat in those two words than in a volley of abuse.

"I'll be hanged if I will!"

"Not now;" and quick as thought the ugly muzzle of his six-shooter was in my face.

"Look here," he went on quietly; "turn round and walk back past me quietly to Luke there and the Indians, and leave the boy to us. If you do that your hide will be safe; if you don't—well, there are three other guns, besides mine, looking at you now."

I could see that he was right—in part at any rate,—for over his shoulder I caught a glimpse of Luke, who had risen when his partner covered me, and now had his Winchester to his shoulder.

It was an awkward predicament, and my life did not seem worth a moment's purchase. I don't know what

I should have done—grappled with Bill, probably, and been shot through the body before I could have fixed my hold on him,—but at that moment there was the ring of a rifle-shot, and Bill's pistol fell from his grasp.

As it fell I turned and bolted for the cave, and stepping clumsily in my blind haste, missed my footing, and came down with a tremendous crash on my knee-cap.

The pain of it nearly made me sick. If I had not fallen I might not have suffered so much, but I should not have been able to tell any more of this story, for as I fell three bullets splashed on the rocks about me. One went wide of its mark; but one, flying low, branded me for life across my thigh—only skin-deep, luckily—and the other must have passed where the small of my back should have been: I have always attributed that well-meant attention to Luke. However, they had missed, and their next volley only splashed on the outside of the mouth of the cave whilst I was nursing my knee in safe shelter.

“So that is white man's fashion,” I muttered. “Well, Mr. Bill, it's war now anyway. Why the devil doesn't Joe go on shooting?”

But when I had crawled up to him I found Joe watching with an empty rifle.

“Look!” he said, “fool white men, and Indian no more cartridges.”

It certainly was annoying, from his point of view, for

there were the two rascals, cunning enough in all knavery, but so ignorant or careless in bush-fighting that they were standing still in plain view—a long way off, it is true—bandaging Bill's wrist.

“One more cartridge and I kill one sure—perhaps two,” muttered Joe; and he took up his empty rifle and drew a bead on the white men.

But it was no good. His gun was empty, and the chambers of theirs were full probably.

“Well, Joe, if the gun is empty we have got to quit,” I said.

“Yes,” he said; “we run away now, hyak.”

“But how?”

“You comtax how bear walk?” he asked.

I thought he was crazy; but in a moment I began to understand, for he had lifted one of the skins and was arranging it over his body. In less time than I take to write it, he had so draped this skin that, as he plodded round on all-fours in the half-lit cabin, he looked even at that distance almost dangerous.

“You try,” he said; and hurriedly he wrapped me in the robe, and put me through my paces.

He was not satisfied; but there was no time to lose.

“Step slow,” he said, “and keep your head down. When we get out keep behind stones, so as pretty nearly all hid. It's not far, and maybe they'll watch me most. Now come quick.”

And he started climbing up and up the funnel-like

passage until I thought that we must be coming out at the top of the peak. But we were not.

When I peeped out I saw what the trouble was. The second opening at the top of the cave was less than one-third of the way up the peak, and opened unluckily on the same side as the entrance, *i.e.* facing our besiegers; but it opened on to a narrow ledge which ran for fifty feet or so along the face of the cliff, and then seemed to vanish over its edge towards the river.

For a minute Joe was busy dressing me for my part.

"It's a long way off," he said; "and if Tatooch isn't watching we may fool *them*. Lone Goose is half blind, and *they* won't know. If they tell Tatooch he'll think the shots scared two bears lying up somewhere back of the cave. I'll go first. Now come."

And he plodded slowly into full view of Bill and Luke, who were still at the edge of the bush. Tatooch and Lone Goose were not in sight.

CHAPTER VI.

It almost looked as if Siyah Joe wanted our enemies to see him. Perhaps he did—or, at any rate, as he felt certain that he must be seen in a place which did not afford cover for a squirrel, he wanted to be seen unmistakably as a bear, rather than, by giving Sandy Bill a glimpse of something going round the corner, leave on that fellow's mind an impression that what he saw might have been a man.

Therefore, I suppose, it was that, to my horror, he only went a few paces from the upper mouth of the cave, before he sat coolly up upon his haunches and looked down over his shoulder at the white men, whilst I crouched, an indefinite mass of fur, by his side.

There are no animal mimics in the world like Indians. Down on the coast of Vancouver Island, at the Feast of the Klooh-quah-nah, the two sects known as Wolves and Crows have a dress-rehearsal which lasts for days, members of either clan adopting for the time being the outward semblance of the beasts

whose names they bear : the Wolves with their hair tied out from their heads to represent ears and snout ; and the Crows furnished with large wooden bills, and blankets so arranged that they look like wings. Seen in the dusk hopping about in the shallows by the beach, shaking their wings and dabbing with their bills for shell-fish, a traveller might well mistake them for a flock of gigantic ravens.

As a mimic my Stick Indian was not a whit behind the Ahts upon the coast. Although he knew that his enemies were armed and looking at him, he sat there as cool as a cucumber, with his muzzle over his shoulder—a very bear—nor did the sudden shout of Sandy Bill disturb him in the least.

For a while he looked intently down below, and then, rising slowly upon all-fours, he lurched complacently along, until a shot was fired and the bullet struck somewhere below us. Then he turned sharply and sat at gaze again for a moment, before he rose and scrambled hurriedly over the ridge and out of sight.

It was admirably done, and I verily believe that if the bullet had struck him, he would have turned and bitten at the place before seeking safety in flight.

For those few seconds Joe lived his part—he really was a bear,—and I can only hope that his admirable acting drew the attention of the audience from my poor attempt to second him, until, thank Heaven ! we were over the ridge.

Not over our troubles, though! Rather did it seem to me that we had come into worse.

We had, it is true, a rock now between us and our enemies, but we had also a precipice between us and the river, and that river was simply a raving, roaring torrent.

Confined here in narrow limits, with two or three great rocky teeth standing up in the middle of it, the Fork had churned its yellow waters into a creamy foam which boiled and swirled like a witch's cauldron, and from us to it there was a sheer rock-face of two or three hundred feet.

But a difficulty is never as bad as it looks, if you don't look too long; and after he had cached his two bear-ropes, Joe went about the descent as if it were an everyday experience. First he took his moccasins off, and made me do the same. These he slung on his back; and then the descent began. My head reeled and swam so that I was near falling from sheer dizziness, at first; but this feeling went off after a while. I had no time to think, no power left to do more than grip with my hands and cling with my bare toes.

Luckily the rock of the wall was what the geologists call shale, I think—that is to say, it was like a coarse slate which lay in flakes or layers, and this, instead of lying horizontally, had by some convulsion of nature been turned up on edge; and the snow and the frost

and the sun had broken into the wall, so that parts of the outside layer had crumbed off, leaving us narrow, upturned edges along which to crawl. Nowhere was there room to walk face forwards; but by plastering our backs against the wall and moving sideways, we managed to shuffle along in some sort of safety, until the break and the edge began to go downwards with very considerable abruptness.

Then, if my hair had not been white already, it would have grown white in a few seconds, and I should have been almost glad, I think, to have slipped, so that there would have been only one swift rush through the air and the torture ended.

I suppose we had climbed in this fashion nearly half-way down to the river's level, when I heard an exclamation below me from Joe. I could not look down to him safely for fear of seeing the river, which seemed to draw me to it; but he was within reach of my hand, and I could hear him plainly in spite of the roar of the water.

"Trail very bad here!" he said, "stone broken away all smooth!"

Trail indeed! One would have thought we were on a high-road to hear him talk; and how could anything be bad if this was not? or how could anything be worse?

But it was. And here seemed to me the end of our journey unless we could climb up again—and that

looked impossible. I certainly could not lead, and he certainly could not get past me. But Joe was not beaten yet. The layer on the edge of which we had been walking seemed to have broken off altogether just below Joe's feet, and from where he stood to the next ledge there was not a foothold for a fly for a distance of perhaps eighteen feet.

That is not very far, you will say, and a man might put his hands on his own ledge, and, lowering himself down, drop to the next in safety.

Might he? In the first place the ledge on which we were standing was not a foot wide, and the wall against which our backs were, seemed—as it was—to be leaning over and pushing us face forwards into the river.

If I had bent outwards a single foot I must have lost my balance and departed into space; much less, then, could I, by any gymnastic trick known to me, reach the ledge on which my feet were with my hands. Again, supposing I had succeeded to this extent, the ledge on which I had to drop seemed no wider than the ledge on which I stood, and do you suppose that I could have dropped upon that with my back to the wall and stuck there?

“Not much,” as my American friends used to say, and I was not going to try.

But Joe had a way out of the difficulty, and even whilst I was regretting that I had not left him to Bill's

tender mercies and saved my own life, he was busy shaping a means for our deliverance.

From my position I could feel, rather than see, that he had wriggled about on his narrow perch until he had the moccasins in one of his hands and his knife in the other, and, trusting entirely to his balance, was tying the deerskin thongs of them together, until he had a string nearly long enough to reach the next ledge.

He tried it; and I could see the end of it dangling down the face of the rock, looking about as big as a reasonably stout cobweb.

But it would not reach quite far enough, so the knife came into play, and the moccasins themselves were cut into shreds and spliced together, until he had a rope (I am ashamed to call it a rope), about fifteen feet long, made of *two* thicknesses of bootlace—for that is about what a moccasin-string really is, only that our bootlaces are made to break, and a moccasin-string is as tough as—well, nothing that I know is as tough as deerskin.

When the rope was ready he sought about for a stay to which to attach it. There was not a tree, of course, nor even a crawling juniper bush on that sheer face of smooth rock, neither was there a knob or corner round which to hitch our ladder; but the knife found a way out of that difficulty too, and at last we were ready with one end of a bootlace hitched round the

haft of a knife—the blade of which was driven deep down into a crevice in the shale—and the other end of the bootlace loose over certain death.

From the way in which Joe had driven the knife into the crevice, there seemed very little danger that that would pull out. It was a big knife, the one with which Tatooch had intended to execute Siyah Joe, and compared with what we had already risked, I did not feel very nervous about that. But the ladder of bootlace! That was the trouble.

It is all very well to talk about toughness, but size counts for something.

If I had seen a good stout cable as thick as my arm hanging over that gulf, and an infallible authority had told me that the laces were stronger than the cable, I should still have chosen to risk my life on the cable. But I had no choice: it was bootlaces or nothing—and, after all, Joe had to go first. I even forgot my fear of the river and looked at him. I believe that fellow could have gone down on a cobweb.

It was done in a moment, and he hardly seemed to put any strain on his frail support. Until the very last he clung to the ledge, and then, a touch halfway, and he was standing upright on the ledge waiting for me.

I wished that he had taken longer, and, for a moment, I came to the conclusion that I could not make the attempt, even to save my life.

I am afraid that I put a strain on the deerskin thongs, even before I was over the ledge. I know that I forgot to clutch the ledge, as my feet left it, and I swung (not widely, of course, but still I swung) on that frail support before my feet touched the rock again, and even then I came down with my face to the rock instead of *away* from it. Luckily it was a far wider ledge than it looked—far wider than the one we had left—and it was possible even for me to turn round without upsetting; but I could not get out of Joe's way to let him reach the rope, and I could not jerk out the knife myself, so that we had to leave it sticking there for Tatooch to recover if he cared to.

Compared with what we had done, what we still had to do was easy, and in another five minutes at most we were clambering along a shelf just above the torrent: a shelf so wet and slippery that, at ordinary times, I would not have tried to cross it for a thousand dollars, though Joe treated it as if it were a sidewalk.

After an hour's clambering along ledges and amongst boulders we came out upon the river.

Now the Stickine is navigable for good swift watermen up to Glenora at all times; up to Telegraph Creek, with assistance from wire cables, at sometimes; but above Telegraph Creek it is not navigable at any time, even for a siwash in his canoe. And no wonder!

The big river has cut its way so far through the rocks, and it knows, I suppose, that below Glenora it

will find plenty of room, where it can break itself into a dozen arms if it pleases, or sleep in twenty sloughs and backwaters; but here, almost in sight of its broad and comparatively easy bed, it is encountered by narrow canyons and obstinate rocks, which will not be worn away, and which crowd the impatient waters upon one another, so that they become mad--a coil of yellow snakes, twisting this way and that, turning for an outlet here, a right-of-way there, until at last they are heaped up in a furious tangle of conflicting streams which would tear anything to pieces that fell amongst them.

And this is what we had to cross without a boat.

"Once across there, all safe; the white men won't follow," said Joe, cheerily.

I thought not. If I was any judge of unnavigable waters, there would be no one for the white men to follow on that other side.

But Joe was at work already, and whilst I rested amongst the boulders where the flying spray moistened my hot feet and hands, he was dragging two great drift-logs together and making a raft of them.

To do this cost him his overalls. We had no rope; we had used up our moccasins; now Joe's overalls had to go. Overalls are honest goods, and, cut into strips and twisted, his made reasonably good ropes, but not for lashing a raft together.

However, they had to suffice, and before the sun was

well above our heads I was helping him launch his craft. We shoved it out behind a great boulder, which broke the force of the stream, and here it lay at peace whilst he made his final preparations, which consisted merely in whittling a broken board he had found into some semblance of a paddle.

When that was done he signed to me to get on the boulder and step on to the raft and sit tight. As I took my place the nose of the raft came level with the outside edge of the boulder.

"Hold fast now!" he cried; "if you fall off you dead sure!"

My nails went into those logs. I would have held on with my teeth if there had been anything to hold on to.

"Now!" he cried; and with one strong stroke he shot right out into the boil of waters.

For a moment the thing spun round, then he got control of it again for a moment; I saw him stand up, and once or twice he leaned over, and drove his paddle in, making the crazy craft jump, as we just grazed a rock round which the white water boiled. Meanwhile the banks and trees raced by. We were standing still, it seemed, whilst all nature was galloping up-stream faster than an express train could go.

Suddenly there was a fearful shock; I was thrown clear of the raft; some one caught me by my shirt, and, for a moment, I felt my legs sailing away down-stream without my body, and the next I was lying scared and

panting, half in half out of the water ; but out of the current anyway. Joe was lying beside me, as spent as I was, and our raft *in two pieces* was just going out of sight round the next bend.

The place from which we had started looked nearly a mile up-stream—it must have been half that, at least—and it seemed to me as if I had only just jumped on board. Tatooch might come in the dress of the prince of all Indian devils, and Sandy Bill, and Luke, and every rascal in Cassiar, but I would not move. I had done as much as human nature could stand in one day, and I told the Indian so. But he only laughed, turning over on his back and looking up at the sun. I believe he was almost enjoying himself.

“Good sun,” he said ; “get warm now and dry. By-and-by Tatooch come ; then we laugh plenty.”

So here we loafed and rested for an hour, and tried to find some scrap of food to satisfy our hunger ; but there was nothing to find. The season of wild fruit was over, and a few wilted and bitter berries of the high-bush cranberry, whose leaves were like a flame of fire, were all we could lay our hands on.

If I had been rested and full of meat, I should have enjoyed that autumn afternoon ; I never saw anything to compare with it in my life. I had been so long in the pine-woods that I had grown used to their monotonous gloom and the dead grey-green of the willow bushes.

But here, near the river, were kindlier things which had drunk in the sun in the summer season, and were giving it back in flame now that the summer was over. Every bush had a tint of its own, and every tint beautiful. The leaves of the cottonwood were a clear gold; the fire weeds were purple as wine; the cranberry leaves were jewels through which the light shone; and the further hills were carpeted with a royal carpet, in which every richest tint of autumn was blended as only nature knows how to blend.

"Pretty soon winter come now," said Joe, at last; and he pointed to where the young ice was forming at the mouth of a little creek which ran into the main river. "No one stay at Telegraph or Glenora now, I think. All the white men go down-stream before the ice catch them."

Here was a new trouble which I had not thought of. I had hoped at Glenora, at any rate, to find the boss and obtain a passage out with the mules on his river-steamer, and I said so.

"Steamers gone long while," said Joe.

When he said this all the sunlight seemed to have gone out of the sky. Indeed, a cloud did come drifting up just then, and I noticed that the new, raw-looking snows—not sparkling white, but thin and grey and miserable—had already crept a long way down from the peaks; and a little breeze getting up in the willows set them sobbing. I shivered involuntarily. I had heard

the threat of winter, and the idea of it appalled me. If I did not go, and go at once, I should be caught in this desolate country and held fast here a prisoner for four or five months. And then, what would happen with Tatooch and the witch-finder, Sandy Bill and his friend Luke, like wolves upon our trail? You who sit at home by your sea coal-fires, with the crimson curtains drawn snugly round you, and half a dozen people to wait upon you, know nothing of the world outside. The wolf knows, as he stands in the blizzard looking down at the cozy red lights of Christmas in the little prairie settlement, and some of the "boys" know, who have pluck enough to face it; I had not. I wanted to get home.

"Come, Joe," I said, "let us go—and go quick. We must get out before the river freezes."

"Perhaps," he said; "who knows?" but he rose, and, taking an old game-trail on the top of the high bank, set off at a swinging pace down-stream.

We walked far into the night and then camped for a while, crouching over a fire whilst the stars came out in wild brilliancy, and all the peaks looked crystal clear against the bright dark sky. Now and again waves of lemon-coloured light in arcs would spring up and spread all over the heavens, whilst at other times they would rise in irregular columns and flicker up and down.

"Dead siwashes dancing," he said when he noticed me watching the phenomenon.

Dead siwashes! It seemed to me before morning that I had found my way into a dead, or at least a dying, world. I would not have stopped in it by my own free-will for a mountain of Chicamon Stone.

Joe, who was always watching me in his quiet way, seemed to read my thoughts.

"Whitehead no miner?" he asked, "not want Chicamon Stone?"

"No, Joe," I said, "I am no miner; but I wish I knew where your Chicamon Stone was."

"Indians swear they kill me s'pose I tell white man," he answered.

"They have tried to kill you now, Joe, and you didn't tell," I suggested.

"Yes," he said after a pause. "S'pose I tell, they kill me; s'pose I not tell, they kill me too. Next spring, s'pose we get out safe, I tell Whitehead. I take you, show you Chicamon Stone; and then Joe go away siyah, oh si-yah;" and he hung on the first syllable so long that his "siyah" meant a very long way indeed, almost beyond the confines of this world.

CHAPTER VII.

NEXT morning at dawn we saw Glenora. We had passed Telegraph Creek in the night. It was still too early for any one to be stirring, and the little town looked very dead indeed. The fires were all out; the tents all closed; and there was not a dog even moving about. Only in the corral by the river at the back of Master and Man's warehouses there were half a dozen worn-out horses, standing freezing in the raw morning air. They were to be pitied. The masters had gone, but the poor slaves were left; no one would buy them, and hay was \$100 per ton. The time for dogs was coming—dogs who could drag sleighs over the snow—and horses were of no further value. So these were only waiting to be shot, and would be lucky if some merciful man took the trouble to shoot them before they starved.

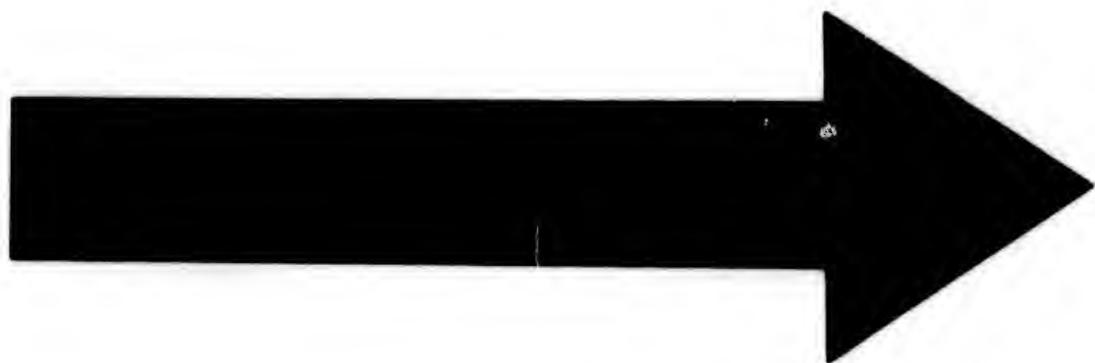
This was one of the most cruel features of the Klondyke rush in 1898.

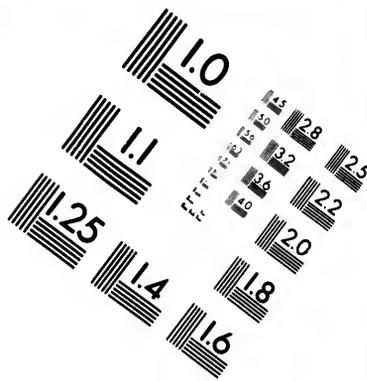
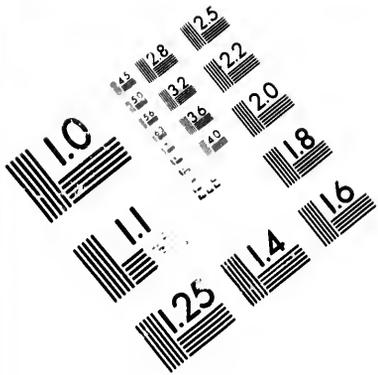
Horses were taken in by the hundred, and mules,

and little or no provision was made for their keep, whilst the country itself did not supply any food on which to winter stock. After slaving as pack-animals all the summer, they were not found worth feeding through the winter, or worth transportation to a kindlier country, where they could forage for themselves until spring. The hills were full of them; some lame, all lean, resting, and trying to pick up a mouthful here and there. It was not worth their while. When the snow came, death for them was inevitable, and those were luckiest which died soonest. I don't like thinking of what I have seen, even now, and I cannot help wondering if there will not some time be a day of reckoning in which the misery of the beasts will cost more than all the gold won by their masters.

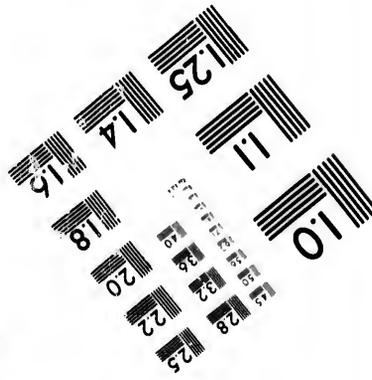
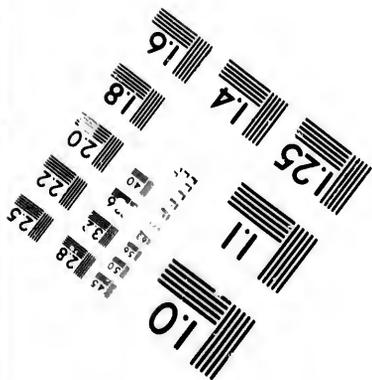
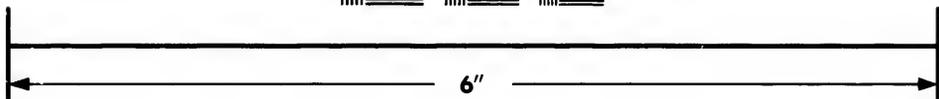
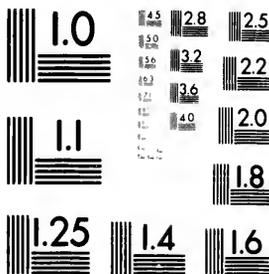
There was only one thing encouraging in our first view of Glenora. There was no steamer at the little wharf; no canoes on the beach, but there was one large flat-bottomed boat, made of inch planks, roughly put together, drawn up by the side of the main street. It looked as if some one was going down-stream. But we were still on the wrong side of the river.

However, a mile below Glenora, is new Glenora, and there is the new fort or trading store of the Hudson Bay Co., the largest and best building to-day in Cassiar, with the flag flying, and the bell which the Company always insists on, and a helping hand for white man or Indian at all times.



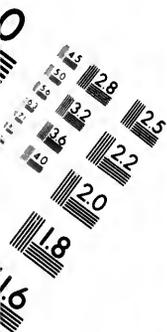


**IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)**



**Photographic
Sciences
Corporation**

23 WEST MAIN STREET
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 872-4503



Here we found a small boat tied up under the fort, and, in answer to our repeated yells, a man came down to the beach, and at last launched the boat and brought me over. Joe would not come. He was safe where he was, and had no intention of risking himself where Tatooch might be.

My mission was, if possible, to secure a canoe or boat to take us out to Wrangel, but it was a vain mission. The last steamer had gone long ago; the Alaskan Company had left two days before in scows forty-five feet long by fifteen wide with twenty mules in each, and the men of Glenora were open to bet that none of them would reach the mouth of the river; and the very last boat of the season was to leave Upper Glenora in an hour's time. I might, they said, possibly secure a passage, but the boat was too full for safety already. I went up town, as they call it, to see what could be done, and found that I might possibly bribe the owner of the boat to endanger the lives of all his passengers by taking just one more white man; but the idea of taking a siwash was scouted as absurd, and, without Joe, I had made up my mind I would not leave the country.

So I stood and watched the crazy-looking craft push off, and listened to the cheers of those who were left behind. The boat was so loaded that it looked as if the water must come in over the gunwales, and the four rowers were so cramped that they could hardly

handle the rough-hewn oars which they had made; but winter was at this end of the trip, and a white man's Christmas at the other, so they stuck in the oars one after another, and went wobbling down-stream, tacking from side to side, in spite of all their Indian steersman could do for them.

"That's the last boat left in Cassiar, and there's no time to make another, I think, before she freezes solid," said a man beside me, jerking his thumb at the river.

"There's the Hudson Bay boat," I answered.

"Yes, a fellow might steal that, but he'd have to steal it. The Company wouldn't sell it for a thousand dollars."

I did not possess half as much as that in the whole world, but I thought I would, at any rate, make the first bid for this boat, and turned to walk back to the lower town.

As I started, I could have sworn that I saw Sandy Bill's face at the window of the Nugget Hotel, watching me. If it was his, he took it away very quickly, but the fancy made me put my best leg foremost, until I stood by the Company's counter. As ill luck would have it, no one seemed left in the place. The police were away after cache robbers, on the Teslin trail; the Government agent had gone in to Dease to make winter arrangements, and the manager of the H.B. Co. had taken advantage of a last trip in to Teslin to inspect his store there before the winter

opened. I could neither buy the boat nor make any arrangement for the safe custody of Siyah Joe, if I could induce him to stay. I was at my wits' end as to what to do, and was seriously revolving in my mind the morality of theft under certain circumstances. Would it not be justifiable to steal the Hudson Bay boat to save Siyah Joe's life? I was rapidly coming to the conclusion that such a course would not only be justifiable, but meritorious, when the clerk put a better idea into my head.

"There are some fellows," he said, "down at Glacier Creek, six miles below here. They took down some grub a week ago, and are going to winter there on some placer ground they've staked off. They had a boat, such as it was, and might let you have it. But I wouldn't take it, if I were you; I didn't think it was safe even for that distance. Below them there isn't a boat or a man on the river till you get to Wrangel."

With this news I went over again to Joe, and by midday we reached Glacier Creek, and found a good-natured crowd of fellows ready to give any one half of nothing, which was about all they possessed. A capital chap who divided his time between painting and prospecting, treating both as a highly coloured joke, made us a present of the boat. He was glad to get rid of it, he said; it might tempt some one to desert, and he could spare none of his Christmas party. If we would only send him some canvases up from Wrangel,

we should more than pay our debt. Alas! I fear he never got those canvases. The river was frozen before we reached Victoria, and there is no parcels-post on the Stickine in winter.

Like fools we were tempted to stay one night with the artist and his partners; I salving my conscience with the argument that the boat wanted caulking (as it did), but really hankering after one more square meal and a chat with my fellows.

Next morning we saw our mistake. Already there were small cakes of ice drifting down-stream. Joe would hardly give me time to snatch a mouthful of food.

"Come now, or stop all winter," he kept saying; and before the sun came up I had hold of the sculls, Joe sitting in the stern with his paddle, and Glacier Creek and its gold-seekers vanished from my sight. Now and again we heard an ugly scraping sound as the boat ground against a small cake of ice, but there was nothing to seriously impede our progress; so that I was much more afraid of an upset than I was of being caught in the ice, though that would probably have meant death much more certainly than the other.

One hundred and thirty miles by river is a long way, and it looks longer in reality than it does on paper; but we had a racing current with us, and we made such good progress that I insisted upon stopping

for lunch and a cup of tea at noon. Joe wanted me to eat what I needed in the boat, but I was chilled to the bone, and would not forego my hot tea: neither would I listen to him when he wanted to run all night, risking the danger of snags in the darkness.

Perhaps there I was right, but when the dawn came I doubted it. We had camped in a wood-pile on the edge of the shore—a wood-pile which furnished us with a roaring fire, and into the body of which we crept for shelter from the bitter wind which was blowing. The wind was busy all that night. In the morning we saw what it had been doing. All round us the ice-cakes were floating, and round our boat the little fleets of them had packed, so that for a time we could not move her. I used all my strength, and gave it up at last; but Joe, who knew the thing must be done, worked like a fiend until at last we moved. Then, for a time, catching the contagion from him, I too poled and pushed until the great beads of perspiration fell with a splash upon my hands, and at last we were free.

“All right now,” said Joe, as we sat down to our work, and the ice came floating after us. “S’pose the Big Bend open we see Wrangel to-night. Ice not catch us now.”

No; the ice would not catch us, but something else might. Even as he spoke I saw the nose of a white boat come into the upper end of the reach. It

was half a mile off, but the men in it saw us and shouted. They were Sandy Bill, Luke, Tatooch, and the medicine-man, and they had stolen the Hudson Bay boat.

How I wished then that I had had no scruples ; that I had taken that boat myself ; or, at least, that I had not been such a fool as to risk my life and Joe's for the sake of a cup of hot tea !

For now I knew well that my life, as well as the Indian's, was at stake. Once caught they would kill us both ; and for months, at any rate, the Stickine would tell no tales. But it was no good wishing. We were not caught yet ; we had half a mile start, and the river was helping us as much as it was helping them, and neither Bill nor Luke were oarsmen. Really it was only those two cursed Indians against Joe and myself, and they had the heavier boat whilst we were rowing for our lives.

For two or three hours we more than held our own. Then my wrists began to feel dead ; the sculls hung heavily in my hands, and I blundered as I rowed. They began to gain on us, and I saw Bill working with a spare paddle to help his Indian friends. He was no waterman, but I think he helped them a little ; his whole heart was in his work, and he was, to do him justice, a strong rascal.

They had reduced the distance to half when I saw Luke take up a Winchester and aim at us. Sitting

as I was I could see it all ; but the bullets (for he fired twice) skipped harmlessly past us, and for the moment he desisted.

Just then a draft of air sprang up, and it was downstream. Joe watched it for a moment, and then he dropped his paddle and crawled into the middle of the boat. Instinctively I stopped too.

“Row, row!” he screamed—“row for two men, or they’ll catch us!”

I could not row for one man, but I did my best ; and meanwhile he, in a wonderfully short time, fixed up some sort of a sail with a blanket and two poling-sticks. Then he snatched up his paddle again. But that short pause had brought the other boat perilously near, and this time Luke managed to knock one of my sculls out of my hand with his bullet. But Joe caught the scull as it floated by him, and the wind increasing we drew away from them again.

That was Luke’s chance. If he could only have made a decent shot whilst we were still within range they would have caught us ; but he was too anxious, and lost his opportunity. For now we were leaving them far behind us ; and I had time even to take a momentary easy, and trail my aching wrists in the cold water of the river. We had long since passed through the canyon—a very prosaic piece of water, now that it was low, compared to that up which we had fought our way inch by inch in the early summer—

and we were away down by the Barley Cache, when I noticed for the first time a weird feature in the landscape which will haunt me, I think, all my life.

Up-stream, behind us, the clouds were gathering, and in the front of them rose a mountain peak, three-headed, I suppose; but so shaped that it looked like a bird with trailing wings, which flew ever after us, and was never out of sight.

I suppose my nerves were strained to the breaking-point, but that strange shape scared me more than the boat behind. I had to keep my head down, or turn my eyes away, and even then I fancied I could catch glimpses of its flapping wings as it pursued us.

At the end of one long reach I did undoubtedly catch sight of a more real danger. The white boat was in sight again, and was overhauling us fast. Taking a lesson from Joe, the men in it had also rigged up a sail, a bigger and better one than ours, broad and low down at the bow of their boat, and it was full and drawing to the uttermost. But even so we had still some little chance, for now and again the wind would drop, and then their great sail drooped and hindered them more than our small one hindered us.

But the end seemed evident. Each reach the distance grew less, and the chase could not last much longer. Every risk that men could take we took. Here and there the now shrunken stream ran in fierce channels which seemed to suck our boat on to some

rocky bluff, to touch which would be to capsize or break up; but we never lowered the sail.

For a few breathless seconds the boat would tear through the water, head on for the bluff; then, at a touch from Joe's paddle, she would sheer just enough, and only just enough, to graze by it and into smooth water again.

I was so exhausted that I wished she would strike and have done with it, when, as we came round a worse and sharper corner than usual, I saw Joe's keen face light up.

"Steamer," he said.

For a minute I could see nothing; but at last, a good mile off, I made out a puff of smoke.

"Coming this way?" I asked.

"No; getting steam up. Tied to the bank," he answered.

Could we possibly hold out for another mile? I did not believe it. The white boat was in range again, and its sail was drawing well. With an open course it must overhaul us before we had covered half the distance. But we were not to have an open course. We had come now to the Big Bend, and there was the ice gathered in a solid bar right across it. Every little drifting morsel seemed to have been caught in the slack water of that sharp bend.

The river was gorged, and we were trapped in sight of safety.

The others saw it and put on a spurt. They too had seen the steamer, and, until they saw the ice, had probably been thinking of abandoning the chase. But now they had us. Had they?

Joe did not seem to think so. His eyes were intent on the barrier, and he altered our course a little, and now, as we came up very near the ice, he struck his sail. I looked back over my shoulder. Two-thirds across the stream there was a narrow opening in the blockade, not visible at first, for even in it there was floating ice which would soon be solid. But the entrance was big enough for our boat, and gliding into it, we used our oars and paddles as poles, and pushing this way and that, wound slowly through the channel.

Whilst we were still in it the other boat came in with a crash. They had not struck their sail in time, and had too much way on.

That almost ended the chase; but the white boat righted itself, and, utterly forgetting everything but the Chicamon Stone, the four rascals in her poled madly after us. They even forgot to fire again, though then we were not fifty yards away from them.

Their excitement saved our lives. It ought to have cost them theirs, for when we last saw them they had stuck fast in the very centre of the floe.

Their boat being wider than ours was more difficult to push through, and, sticking for a time, fresh ice floated in and gathered round it. The longer they

stayed the faster their boat stuck. At last it seemed fairly held, and, as they realized the fact, we shot into open water, and were round the corner in sight of the dear old *Alaskan*.

Even Siyah Joe cheered then; and the echo of his cheer came in sullen curses from the floe where our pursuers lay trapped.

Even if they could have freed themselves in time I do not suppose that they would have dared to follow us further, for the whole of the next bend was a sheet of open water in full view of the stern-wheeler, from which even then a flag was flying, one of two, beneath which the hunted do not have to ask for sanctuary or the wronged for justice.

The black wings of the Spirit of Winter might shadow the Stickine, but in the light and warmth of this wondering nest of white men, Joe and I were safe from the men and devils of the north.

PART II.—THE KULA KULLAHS.

CHAPTER I.

It was good to be on board the *Alaskan* again; good to see the bright, cozy interior lighted with the white light of the acetyline gas, and, above all, good to hear the merry chatter of the white men I knew.

Outside us was the gloom of the silent pine-woods, behind us the camps in the snow, and the long wind-swept reaches of the fast-freezing river. To have escaped from that to this, almost made amends for the misery I had been through.

The Boss was on board in command, more bearded, more bronzed, and if anything more silent than ever. The men said that he was slowly recovering from a spree.

Don't misunderstand me. The Boss never drank. That was not his idea of a spree; but in the course of business he had just had an opportunity of pitting himself against Nature, and had done successfully what none of the old-timers of Cassiar had hitherto attempted.

Owing to an unprecedented fall in the waters of the Stickine, he and his mules had been trapped at Glenora, and, when it was clearly seen that no more steamers could possibly crawl up the river that season, his company had allowed him to evolve some means for conveying the animals out of the country, thereby saving the cost of feed, which in those days was more than the mules were worth.

Seeing that the river was dangerous for steamers, and only safe for good boatmen in small boats, he had conceived the idea of constructing several huge trays, nearly fifty feet long, fifteen feet wide, and phenomenally shallow, in each of which he had tied some twenty mules, and, steering the leading tray himself, had, as he put it, let them rip down-stream.

There were four sweeps in each tray besides the steersman's, and, when it was necessary to get way on in the swift places, the men who pulled on them had no time to think of such minor dangers as a mule's heels; in the slack water the threat of a hind leg drawn up for kicking kept the sleepest awake.

For five solid days—from dawn, that is, to dark—in sleet and snow, the Boss had stood erect at the huge steering-oar of the leading scow, listening for the roar of swift water ahead, or using all his seasoned strength to hold his frail craft off the rocks when the swift water caught her.

The scows were only flimsy things of inch plank

rudely nailed together, and a touch upon one of the rocks where the white water broke, or upon one of the many snags which rose above it, would have dissolved them into a hundred pieces, and left men and mules to drown.

But all the time the Boss never spoke except to give a short order, nor did his smile or his pipe leave his mouth. Only his face grew redder and redder as the bitter wind struck it, and his brown beard stiffened with ice until, at last, he brought his whole fleet through in safety.

Then he said "it was pretty lucky;" but the men understood how much that meant, and knew now that he was suffering from the reaction, after the pleasures of peril, and from the ennui of being really comfortable.

"I thought you were dead, Whitehead," was his greeting as he met me.

"Not quite, thank you; but I've been near enough death once or twice to make this kind of thing very pleasant."

"Have you?" he asked, brightening, as if I had spoken of a pleasant experience. "What have you been doing? and where have you been to? We have been scouring the country for you and old Applejack for nearly a month."

"Did you find Applejack?"

Without reply he led me to the lower deck, and pointed with the stem of his pipe to the old villain

who had taken me into all my troubles. If mules ever smile, that beast smiled then, laying back his ears and drawing up one hind leg suggestively.

"Knows you, it seems," said the Boss. "He came back to camp after Mo's train left it, and was nearly bursting with swamp-grass when we found him. Where did he leave you?"

"Looking for him," I answered; and then I told the Boss the story of my hunt and of what I found, and all the adventures which had befallen me, concluding with a proposal that he and I should spend part of next season in looking for Joe's Chicamon Stone.

"I believe that there is such a ledge, and there can be none richer; and if you will come I'll go halves with you at any share Joe will let me have in it."

"That's a fair offer, Whitehead, and I don't mind taking a small interest in the ledge if we find it; but if I go, I shall go for the fun of the thing, and to see the country. I am not very keen about dollars, and don't believe much in gold ledges. But what are you going to do until spring?"

"I suppose I must go down to Victoria, if you will give me a passage as a deck-hand, though I don't know how I am going to pull through the winter doing nothing."

"I'll do better than that for you, if you are not sick of mules; I know I am. How would it suit you to look after the stock?"

Of course this suited me exactly. Victoria is a charming place for a man with lots of money, but no place for a loafer without any; and, to tell the truth, I am a poor hand at loafing any way. So next day I left Wrangel with him for his island down south.

Before leaving we both went over to McFarlane's store to buy a few necessary odds and ends for the journey. The old man recognized me, of course, as soon as I put my white head inside his door.

"Hullo, sonny!" he cried, "here you are again. Where's my Chicamon Stone?"

"I wish I knew. You don't think I took it, Mac, do you?"

"No, my lad, I don't; but I guess you were here not long before it was taken. I know the rascal as took it, I think, and I wish I could get my claws near his ugly face again."

"Whitehead has got the siwash with him who found it, though," said the Boss; and it was the only time I heard him say a word too much.

The old man's face changed in a moment. All the kindness went out of it, and all the Scotch suspicion and distrust that was in him, replaced it.

"And what might you be doing with Joe?" he asked.

"We are going to take him along to tend mules," replied the Boss. "It's not much of a job, but it is better than staying up there to be killed as a witch.

Good day, Mac!" and he handed me half the parcels and stepped out of the store.

The answer was a reasonable one, and may have disarmed the old trader's suspicions, but I was not sure. When you have cherished a secret as long as he had done his, you do not relish the idea that the key to it is in another man's keeping. Besides, I had an instinctive aversion to publishing either Joe's movements or mine at Wrangel. Bill and Luke might visit Wrangel, and I had seen all I wanted to see of Bill and Luke.

If we had not left Wrangel within ten minutes of that conversation, Mac might have made some attempt to shake Siyah Joe's resolution to go south with us, but he had no chance.

In an hour Etoline Island lay between us and the gateway to the north, and a long trail of black smoke was all that was left of us in the seas round Wrangel.

Now the journey from the mouth of the Stickine to Victoria is as perfectly safe for an ocean-going steamer as any in the world. The course lies through what is, for the most part, a sea-canal, with the mainland upon one side and a chain of rough, pine-clad islands on the other, which breaks the swell from the Pacific.

The way looks eerie enough, I admit, in the fogs which often haunt these seas, and the islands loom up like vast marine-monsters in the fog, or, when that lifts, show indescribably desolate, set in grey seas, with

long streamers of white mist curling up from the sodden moss amongst the pines.

But the road looks worse than it is, except for stern-wheelers. For them it is not too safe. Here and there there are gaps in the chain of islands—gaps which take several hours to cross, and through these the Pacific comes with a thundering rush, which would soon shake a fragile river-boat into her component parts. This is why the agents will not insure, and that was why we had to tie up every night, or whenever a “blow” seemed imminent.

When we started from Wrangel we had made up our minds that the trip down would take us from a fortnight to three weeks; and we were content, knowing that we might spend November worse than in a cruise from one wild-fowling station to another. For that was just what it came to, and, had we been wise men, we might have had a splendid trip, running only between flighting-times, and shooting on new grounds every evening.

But man as soon as he comes West must hurry. A real Westerner would look on Paradise as a pleasant place to *pass through*, but he would not for all that loiter willingly by the way.

Being Westerners we began to talk of “making good time” to Victoria on the second day out, though no one wanted particularly to arrive there; and on the third day success, and immunity from bad weather, had made us reckless.

From our shelter behind Prince of Wales' Island, Dixon's Entrance had no terrors for us. There were dark clouds, it is true, hanging low down amongst the pines, but there was no wind worth mentioning, and when are there not dark clouds in Alaska? It was true that it was the biggest gap in our breakwater, but the day was young, and there was no good shooting-place handy, so we hardened our hearts and went at it.

Before we had steamed a quarter of the distance we saw our mistake. Without any apparent freshening in the wind the grey sea became silver-tipped, and then all at once a black line appeared to seaward, and came racing towards us with incredible velocity. As the squall struck us the *Alaskan* shook in every timber, and a crash of falling pottery told us that the galley was in trouble, whilst their trampling and screaming on the main deck reminded us that there were conditions under which even mules cannot keep their feet.

Luckily for us a sea could not get up in a minute even in those waters; but the whistling of the wind in the rigging was a threat which put the fear of death in us, and such roll as there was already, was enough to strain such a ship as ours to destruction. We saw plainly that if we stayed long where we were the *Alaskan* would come to pieces under our feet, and the Boss saw it as plainly as any one.

"Is there any place of shelter we can run to?" he asked.

No one knew of any haven nearer than Stephen's Island, and that seemed far off for us with a beam sea, until Joe roused himself from his dreams and came to our rescue.

"Good little bay stop on Kula Kullah," he said, pointing seaward in the teeth of the wind to where a small island loomed through the mist.

"That thing! Why, it is not big enough to shelter a duck!"

"Plenty big enough to shelter this ship. Kula Kullah two miles long."

Perhaps it was. Indeed, I learned later on, that it was all that and more, but it did not look more than a mere rock in the ocean then.

"Put her head for Kula Kullah, then," ordered the Boss, after a moment's hesitation. "It's nearer than any other place, and I guess she'll stand a head sea better than this infernal roll. I suppose she will hold together for that distance?"

And she just managed to, though how much further she could have gone bucking the big waves which were now beginning to roll in from the Pacific, we did not care to think.

I know we all heaved a sigh of relief when we steamed under the lee of the island, and eventually ran into the long, narrow inlet in which Joe promised us safe anchorage.

Short as our trial had been we were leaking like a

sieve, and most of our mules were in an indescribable tangle on the deck: two of them hanged outright, and two more had their legs broken.

"Pretty expensive for an hour's run," muttered the Boss, as he stood contemplating the confusion on the main deck. "Is there any feed on this place, Joe?"

"Plenty good grass all winter. No snow stop here."

"And how are we to get the beasts on shore?"

"Dump them over the side and make them swim," I suggested.

"And how about getting them on board again, Whitehead?"

That puzzled me. Mules will do most things with a bell-mare to lead them, but you can't expect even a bell-mare to scramble on board after swimming alongside.

For a time the Boss smoked in silence. The ship was hardly seaworthy. With luck, and without any troublesome cargo, he might by careful handling take her down to Victoria in safety; but he had no mind to risk a total loss of train and steamer together.

"It is my own infernal folly," he muttered at last. "Could we winter all the stock here, Joe, until spring?"

"Nawitka" (certainly).

"Would you stay with them, Whitehead? I don't like asking you to."

"I don't mind a bit; but I can't manage sixty of them single-handed. Will you stay with me, Joe?"

"Joe will stay where Whitehead stays," answered the Indian.

"And I will get two or three of the boys to stay, and you must manage to rig up some sort of a wharf by next spring. Who wants to put in a winter on Kula Kullah?"

For a moment no one in the group which had gathered round us made any answer. Blue-grey rocks, with the sea sobbing round them, and pines grey with age, and beard moss, made no very cheerful picture in the mist, and as the boys looked at the kelp-strewn, desolate beaches, they no doubt yearned for the delights of Victoria which now seemed very near.

"Indians stop round behind that rock," said Joe.

"What! are there people on the island?"

"Nawitka; don't you see the canim?" and he pointed to where a great rock rose apparently out of the beach.

From behind it glided a canoe, which, after reaching the open, lay about a couple of hundred yards away, its occupants watching us. I suppose it is only my fancy, but a canoe always looks to me more like a sea-beast, than a mere machine made by man. It is so silent, its prow rises like a sea-snake's head, the body of it lies almost flush with the wave, and the manner of

its propulsion is not so obvious as the oars of a white man's boat.

This sea-snake was more than ordinarily timid, but we got an answer from it at last, and it came gliding alongside, the eyes in it watching us distrustfully, and the fins of it ready for flight at a moment's notice. But it was sufficiently human to accept a present of tobacco, and after that all the rest was easy.

There was plenty of grass on the island, and only the wild deer to eat it, so that we were welcome to land with our mules and take all we could get. Only there would be no one to help us. That was obvious from the first; and I was thankful for small mercies, when one of the boys, Windy Ike, volunteered to stay with us.

The seductive game of poker had reduced his available finances to a condition more suited to the seclusion of an island than to the luxury of life at the capital.

I should have been glad to have had any other in his place, but it was not in my power to choose; so I set to work as cheerily as I could to swim the animals ashore, and to collect all the provisions which the ship could possibly spare, with blankets, ammunition, and a few old novels, to keep us from physical and mental starvation during the long months to come. We were lucky in having on board not only a fair supply of flour and canned goods, but also a considerable quantity of

rough lumber, with which we had intended to build stables for the mules when we had taken them "below." Now the mules would have to share their lumber with us. Part of it would make a shed for them, and part of it a shack for us.

Guided by the natives, we took the steamer round the big rock before mentioned, finding deep water all the way, until we opened a second inlet—a miniature of the first—not a hundred yards long, at the end of which a dozen canoes were hauled up on the beach. Beyond them stood a huge shed with a terrific totem-pole in front of it, all bears, and frogs, and devils, roughly carved and painted in red and blue toned down by many years of rain.

This was the Kula Kullah rancherie, or common hall of the tribe, and was perhaps from eighty to a hundred feet in length, the sides of it supported by great posts twenty feet apart, and the roof-tree one huge cedar-pole which looked as if it could only have been put into its present position by the aid of powerful machinery.

Outside this common hall were half a dozen little lean-to's made of strips of cedar-bark and rough sticks, less comfortable than dog-kennels, and in these the natives were camping.

Kula Kullah was a winter encampment, and the main body of the tribe had not arrived yet, as we might have guessed from the fact that the sides of the rancherie were not yet boarded in, neither was the roof on. The

natives who received us were but forerunners sent on ahead to make things comfortable for the more important members of the tribe who were to come.

That it was an old camp, in which many generations had fished and hunted, was proved by the beach, which was white with the ruin of clam-shells, and by the great piles of shells of more recent date, as well as by a number of deers' horns and bones, and the head-bones of a whale, now green with age and weather.

There was no order in the place, nor any comfort, and the only sign of art, beyond the totem-pole, was in the pillars of the house, which were roughly hewn and painted to represent gigantic human figures.

What with the bones on the beach, and the strong sea-smell of the kelp, the driving rain, the steaming pine-woods, and the roar of a waterfall which came tumbling from a second story of the island, it seemed to me as if I had come upon a lair of sea-wolves rather than a home of men ; and the totem-pole representing a gradual ascent from a vast toad—which was the base of it, through several intermediate stages of animal creation, until it reached the human—suggested a true story of life, raw and newborn, from the great deep, which ceaselessly heaved and throbbed about the island.

I had to shake myself to bring my mind back to the commonplace facts of life, and realize that it was my business to look after the miserable quadrupeds who

still stood sullenly "draining" in the sedge by the water's edge.

They did not seem a bit more captivated by their surroundings than I was; but at last one old stager began to wander slowly up the beach, and, after that, the whole band straggled disconsolately upwards to the second bench, on which, finding a certain amount of green food, they settled down in a business-like way to make up for time wasted upon dry and flavourless swamp hay.

Here we left them to take care of themselves, and, for the next three days, we had our hands full, landing our stores and our lumber, patching up the *Alaskan* and building a makeshift hut for ourselves on the first plateau above the beach, on which, between the gleam of the pines and the grey of the sea, lived the Kula Kullahs, and a vast population of water-fowl whose cries and scutterings ceased not neither by day nor by night.

At the end of three days, the weather clearing, the *Alaskan* left us to crawl up to our shack and hibernate by ourselves, for the mules got on well enough at present without us, and there was nothing in the appearance of the natives to tempt us to associate with them.

Taller than most coast Indians and somewhat lighter in colour, they were fine enough men but for their legs, which looked as if they had been warped and bent by

constantly squatting in their canoes, and Windy Ike's name for them, "the Clams," was well earned by the pertinacity with which they clung to their shells, and the obstinacy with which they kept their mouths shut.

Before the last wisp of smoke had cleared from the offing we had realized that, for three months, we should hear no voices but the sea's voice and our own, and a fit of the blues fell upon us like a sea-fog.

For a whole week it was an effort to crawl out of our blankets in the morning, and take the first dive into the wet world which waited for us outside, and, even after that, there was a marked tendency to crawl back and cower, smoking and thinking, over the fire; but at the end of that time, in the words of Windy Ike, we too began to put on scales, and grow web-footed, and went about trying to earn our living by hunting and building winter quarters for our stock.

CHAPTER II.

ABOUT a fortnight after the steamer had left us for the south, there was a great stir in the Indian rancherie, and we heard the sound of men's voices singing in the mist beyond the point.

Even, rhythmical, and deep, these voices drew nearer and nearer, until at length the singers came in sight, labouring at the paddles of a string of some twenty canoes, yoked two and two by platforms of cedar plank, upon which were piled great stores of household stuff: rush baskets, skin sacks, blankets, and kitchen gear. When these came into the inlet the forerunners went knee-deep into the water, and, taking the canoes by the bows, ran them up upon the beach; and straightway there ensued such a chattering as if a colony of daws had alighted, but the voices came for the most part from the bundles of blankets which now resolved themselves into squaws and tenasmen (children).

The warriors were brief in their greetings.

"Kula Kullahs coming to winter camp," said Joe over my shoulder.

"Where have they come from?"

"Oh, siyah; away over there," pointing eastward across the great plain of the sea. "Away where the salt tchuk (ocean) runs long ways up into the mountains."

"What! from Hasting's Arm?"

"Klunas; maybe white man call him Hastum Arm. Siwash call him other name. Plenty white sheep stop there. See!" and he pointed to the bales of coarse, white goat-skins which were being piled up upon the beach.

"Do you mean to say, Joe, that they have come all that distance with their canoes like that?"

"Nawitka; very good summer camp. Winter camp not too far. Suppose too much wind, canims stop; suppose good wind, travel all night. Suppose Ki-i pleased, Kula Kullahs hunt good all summer; in winter come here, sleep a little, dance plenty, perhaps fight a little."

"And if Ki-i is not pleased?"

"Then skukum tchuk black all over; Tokseilh, the sou'-west wind, scream in their ears; Tse-a-kish, the sea-snake, look up out of the wave; kanims kilipi (turn over) and no more siwashes come long time to Kula Kullah."

The bucks dropped their paddles as the shoremen touched the bows of the canoes. They had paddled incessantly, uncomplainingly as machines for three whole

days, whilst the women lay at the bottom of the canoes in their blankets. Now the bucks had done the last stroke of work they meant to do for many a day. It was the turn of the klotchman and the tenasman, who, piled with odds and ends of baggage, were already staggering up the beach to the rancherie.

It was easy to see, from their gestures, that the new arrivals were being informed of the advent of strangers in their hunting-grounds.

Groups of men squatted here and there on the beach, smoking and talking, and from time to time I saw them turn their heads and stare fixedly towards the smoke of our fires upon the upper flat. It occurred to me that, being now in force, they might possibly take our presence less kindly than the first handful of them had done. Although we had entered upon their ground by their consent, it could hardly be said that we had as yet established friendly relations with them.

It seemed wise to try to do this without any delay ; so, taking my Winchester under my arm, I clambered down to the beach, and walked towards the principal group of newcomers.

Before reaching them I stopped and laid down my rifle, taking care that they should see me do this. Then I advanced boldly towards them with my best smile of welcome, and what I imagined was a cheery "Klahowyah."

But nobody rose or returned my greeting.

One or two of the savages laughed rudely ; the others sat still and stared at me from under bent brows.

Luckily I had read somewhere of the ways of the Ahts, and, conceiving that these men were not unlike them in their customs, I retained my composure, and, squatting down within fifty paces of them, waited for them to make the next move.

Possibly this was the correct thing to do, for, after waiting in dead silence for some time, the Kulla Kullahs continued their conversation as if entirely unconscious of my presence.

This state of things continued until I felt a perfect worm, and wanted badly to brain some one in order to recover my self-respect ; but, just before my patience failed me, one of the leaders arose, and, leading the way, seemed to invite me to follow him to the rancherie.

Here, in an incredibly short time, the interior had been rendered in some degree habitable. As fast as nails and hammers could do it, the platforms which had joined the canoes were being applied as outside walls, or internal partitions of the great lodge. Men were busy up above fastening on the roof, the squaws had festooned every beam with bags and baskets, dried meat, dried fish, and bunches of fern roots ; and in the middle of the floor a cooking-fire was burning, round which hung pots and the savour of food.

The place, with its garnishing of provisions, and its many partitions, looked like a cross between a larder and a school dormitory.

Beside the fire, in the middle of the floor, the chief spread a blanket and invited me by signs to sit upon it; and then, at his order, the women set before me a dish of steaming salmon and potatoes.

The portion was enormous; but I had not dined, and did my best, no one speaking a word whilst we ate. What I left was removed, and, as I found afterwards, was taken up to our shack and left there for me to finish at my leisure.

The great business of dinner being over, pipes were lighted, and then at last conversation commenced. It took the form of a catechism, in which my ignorance of the Kula Kullahs' language gave me some advantage, affording me an excuse for ignoring questions which I did not choose to answer, whilst answering those which it suited me to.

Most of all, they were anxious to know my position amongst my men. Was I a chief or a slave? and were the mules my mules? I had no scruples in representing myself as the very biggest kind of chief, and the interest I claimed in the mules was certainly greater than the company would have allowed.

But my answers were politic, and, when at last I rose and left my hosts, I felt that my position with them was considerably improved. But my Winchester had

vanished, and to my inquiries about it the chief gave no satisfactory reply.

Possibly, I understood him to say, one of the tenas-men had hidden it in play; possibly an evil spirit had taken it: they did such things in Kula Kullah. But he would look into the matter, and when found the rifle should be returned.

Under the circumstances I dared not press the matter. Moods are variable in the north, and I could see storm-signals already in the ugly faces around me. I could ill spare the weapon—one of three only in our possession—but I had sense enough to realize that I had lost it, and should never see it again.

I never did, in my own hands; but I have seen the muzzle of it since, nearer than I cared to.

From this commencement of friendly (?) relations, we advanced very slowly. It is true that there were generally two or three Indians hanging about our encampment and fingering all our possessions, but they were not welcome guests. On the contrary, they gave us more trouble than the mules, as, after my experience with the rifle, we considered it absolutely necessary that some one should be always on guard whenever Indians were about; and this additional worry made our tempers grow shorter and shorter, until one day Windy Ike, who was quicker at entering upon a quarrel than braver men are wont to be, took a particularly troublesome buck by the

shoulders and kicked him unceremoniously out of the shack.

Now, amongst themselves, these people rarely quarrel, and never resort to fisticuffs; and this fellow had no firearms, nor any knife about him that we could see.

The odds were against him, and the first law of Indian warfare is, that the odds should be heavily in your favour; so, though he picked himself up, looking as bitter as a November morning, he strode sullenly back to his camp without a word.

But from that time out we had no more visits from the Kula Kullahs, and Windy Ike, who was too much of a fool to fear anything he could not see, spoke sneeringly of the courage of Joe and myself, who had endured the insolence of these Indians so long.

"Hang them!" he said, "they are just dogs, and should be treated as such."

Dangerous dogs I thought, and any day I expected to hear them growl.

But whatever my fears were we had to live, and in order to do that Joe and I had to hunt, for, in spite of his swagger, Windy Ike never brought back with him as much as he took out. If he left in the morning with a dozen cartridges for his gun, he came back at night with his gun and a fable of some dead beast which had disappeared before his very eyes, but with no meat and no cartridges.

So Joe used to take the rifle and bring in a deer

now and again from the higher ground, whilst I used to sit with the shot-gun at the head of the sloughs and shoot duck, and sometimes a seal whose curiosity had led him too near to the rocks behind which I was hidden.

I confess that, in those lonely watches, the superstitions of the Indians used to take a strange hold on my fancy. It seemed to me as if the sea was everything and we nothing. Through the waning light I could see the pines on the nearer points—shapes indistinct and vague—and hear the weird, half-human laugh of the loon ; and then suddenly a round head with man's eyes in it would rise without a sound, within fifty feet, and stare unwinkingly into my face.

At the first movement of my hand towards my gun it would sink without leaving a ripple behind it, and, a few minutes later, I would find it staring at me from some other quarter.

Generally I let the seals alone, for they were difficult to secure, even if I killed them ; but once or twice when the number of heads staring at me from the misty waters were too great a strain upon my nerves, I fired ; and those I killed were greedily eaten by the Kula Kullahs. As for ourselves, we could never stomach seal-meat.

All day long, if I had wished it, I could have had excellent sport with the brent which used to whirl past my hiding-place, or gabble and croak as they

floated in strong fleets just out of shot of me ; but I could not afford to waste ammunition, and I had no fancy for playing retriever in the icy water which surrounded Kula Kullah ; so that, as a rule, I waited until the evening flight commenced.

Behind me lay mud-flats and shallow pools in which the fowl fed, and, as soon as night began to approach, the whole life of the ocean seemed to set towards these in noisy streams.

First against the setting sun I would see the brent get up and wheel in orderly ranks, something like homing rooks, until their minds were made up ; and then suddenly they would pack and rush in solid phalanx straight at me, rise as they reached the rocks behind which I lay, and then drive down with great clamour into the swamp behind.

As a rule I managed to bring two or three of them thumping down upon the ooze before their flight was over.

After them came singly, or in small parties, high up, with wings that beat with the strong whirr of machinery, long-necked grebes, and mergansers, and such-like fish-eating fowl, whose caution was wasted, since no man wanted their flesh for food ; and after them again in the dusk, when a man had to shoot rather by ear than by eye, there came a vast scuttering and splashing along the face of the inlet as myriads of cultus, duck, and scaup hurried past me. For an hour

before this I had seen great flocks of them working slowly in towards the shore, but they never came near enough, whilst swimming, to give me a pot-shot, nor did they ever rise and dash past me until it was too dark to see to shoot.

Last of all I would hear the full fat "quack, quack" of the mallard; but, though I knew that somewhere in the dusk above me a right good dinner was going by, I could rarely catch more than a glimpse of these birds, except when once or twice a rising moon betrayed them to me. When that happened there was a heavy flop on the ooze, and I took home something really worth cooking.

It was one night, after a long spell of this kind of work, that I was going home half frozen, and heavily laden with my spoil, by the light of a young moon, which I feared would hardly last long enough to see me safely home over the sloughs and logs which always made my return a risky business.

Especially there was one place which always gave me trouble, a broad and deep inlet, across which had been thrown a single log, just broad enough to walk on, which was at full tide a foot under water, and at the ebb a few feet above it, but so slippery and treacherous that I had already had more than one experience of the temperature of the stream below.

Before attempting the crossing I made sure that my ducks were securely tied about my waist, and

passed my gun-strap over my shoulders, and then with a half prayer began to feel my way across.

About midway over, whilst my feet were slipping on the greasy weed which clung to the pole, and the shadows were playing all manner of tricks with me, an owl called sharply and suddenly, right under my feet.

Naturally my eyes left the pole, my foot slipped in the desperate effort to recover my balance, gun and ducks all shifted their position simultaneously, and the next moment I was struggling in the water in the dark.

Owing to the fact that the water was running out very swiftly I was some distance from the pole, and near the further bank, when I came to the surface, with my eyes full of water and my wits considerably scattered by the sudden plunge.

Between me and the bank was what looked at first like a log lying in the shadow, and instinctively I put out my hand to clutch it; but before I did so the outlines of it became clearer, and a fear, worse than the fear of drowning, took possession of me.

It was a war-canoe, and, sitting in it in dead silence, all their eyes intent upon my face, were a dozen Kula Kullahs, their faces painted black, their white teeth only showing distinctly in the gloom.

Before any one had time to move I floated past the first canoe, only to find a dozen more moored in the

shadow of the bank in a long, silent line, all full of men armed to the teeth.

One of these, as I came alongside, reached for a kind of harpooning spear, and, half rising, made as if he would plunge it into me; but one whom I recognized as the chief gave some short order, and my would-be murderer sat sullenly down again, whilst a suppressed laugh, more like a growl than any sign of merriment, ran up the silent ranks. In another minute I was clear of the fleet, and, seeing a stranded snag handy, I seized it and drew myself out upon the mud, shaking with cold and fear.

I do not think that, under ordinary circumstances, I could have taken my own clothes off, so numbed was I after my long swim; but, with the knowledge of what lay behind me, I managed to scramble up the bank and flounder in the direction of our camp.

If any of those who read my adventures have ever been belated on a strange mud-flat when the moon has gone down, they will have some idea of the miseries of that tramp. As long as my gum-boots only squelched in the soft ooze it was all right; but now and again one of them would leave me to go down, and down, until I had to follow it into some unseen cut or gulch, where two or three feet of water still ran, or, to vary my misery, I would suddenly receive a stinging blow across the face, and find that I had walked into the up-turned roots of a great snag left stranded on the mud.

Meanwhile, all round me were strange voices of feeding fowl—voices which they never seemed to use by daylight,—whistlings and croakings and strange half-human cries, and the sudden whirr of unseen wings rising under my very feet. Worse than all, a terrible dread haunted me, so that I kept turning to see whose step that was which I heard stealthily following mine, expecting every moment to see a hideous, blackened face, and an upraised harpoon, before I felt the sharp steel plunge into my side.

But the longest night of pain has mercifully an ending, and I suppose that it was still early, when, with my face bleeding, and most of my ducks lost, I reached the edge of the mud-flats where the pines grew upon comparatively dry land. From this point to my camp it was easy for me to find my way, and in half an hour Joe was putting food before me and listening to my tale.

To my surprise he expressed no astonishment at what I had seen. If he wondered at anything, it was that I had been allowed to return to tell the story.

“I see Kula Kullahs long time getting ready. You see them scraping canoes, and making fresh paddles. By-and-by they have a big feast; now they go to fetch heads. In the dark the Tshimsians at Oorah not see them come. Then they get heads and slaves. You see in two days from now.”

“Are they at war, then, with the men of Oorah?”

“Not now. Long time ago the Tshimsians stole a whale that the Kula Kullahs harpooned. It floated dead into the bay at Oorah, and the Tshimsians found and eat it, but they gave no present to the Kula Kullahs.”

“Why should they? The Kula Kullahs did not bag the whale.”

“No. Kula Kullahs not get that whale, but the Oorahs knew. They saw the floats of the Kula Kullahs fast to the harpoons in that whale, and they knew very well who killed him. Oh, the Oorahs had a very bad heart; and the Kula Kullahs have not forgotten.”

“When was this? Last year?”

“Oh no; not last year—not this many years. Some very old men, I think, remember when it was; but that is no matter. It happened long ago; but the Oorahs stole that whale, and the Kula Kullahs want heads—and remember. Besides, the Oorahs are a very small tribe now. Not many men stop at all at Oorah. Maybe after to-morrow no more Oorahs ever at all. Kula Kullahs kill 'em all if they catch them asleep.”

“Tenasmen stop,” I suggested.

“No; kill tenasmen too, and klotchmen. Kill 'em all. Perhaps make one or two young klotches slaves. Kill 'em all.”

So, then, this was the devil's work on hand, and the Kula Kullahs' idea of a happy Christmas.

Lost in lone seas, themselves the mere flotsam and

jetsam of ocean, holding to their lives by a very uncertain tenure, these fiends were starting in the night to wipe out a whole neighbouring tribe in its sleep—a tribe, moreover, so closely akin to themselves that no one but a Tshimsian could tell a Kula Kullah from one of his own clan; and all this, not for an insult real or fancied to themselves, but on the thin pretext of a cause of quarrel which the oldest men *might* remember.

I was beginning to understand what the word was which Nature kept trying to articulate in these dreary northern seas; the word which is muttered in the surges to the tossing kelp, round the slaughtering-grounds at Pribyloff; the word that hangs about the rivers where the flashing salmon are slain in their myriads; the word that the wind whispers in its ceaseless roaming—surely it is “Death.”

CHAPTER III.

THAT night was one of the quietest I ever saw in Alaskan waters. For once there was not a breath of wind, and even the swell, which generally roared on the exposed parts of the island, now only beat with a soft, rhythmical insistence which lulled rather than disturbed. But there was not a vestige of light in the sky, and a fog, like a black pall, clung over the waters. Everything seemed hushed and waiting, and even the rare cries of some waking sea-fowl, which may be heard at times, even on the darkest nights, were hushed on this one.

In the rancherie there was not a light showing. There were few but women and children left there; and they were, I presume, rolled in their blankets. What becomes of the old men I do not know, and it is hardly good to think; but there were no old men among the Kula Kullahs. Half a dozen slaves, and a few sick men, were all that remained on the island. The rest, with their blackened faces, were somewhere out in the fog.

“It would be easy to take heads now. There are no fighting-men left.”

I turned with a start. It was Siyah Joe who had spoken.

“Good God, Joe! you don't want to murder too, do you?”

“My cousins stop in Oorah; they will kill them.”

“You can't tell that. You are not even sure that they are going to Oorah; and, if they do, they may not surprise the Tshimsians.”

“They catch them to-night sure. The skies all blind, and the sea she says ‘Sleep, sleep,’ and the men will sleep all the red spirit leaps on the rancherie, and then it will be stab, stab, stab!” and, as he spoke, he imitated the murderous motion with such savage accuracy, that I felt the killing madness was upon him too.

For a little longer we sat together looking out into the night, and listening for sounds which we could not possibly have heard, and then Joe rose.

“If Whitehead say no kill, Joe no kill them; but it is a foolish saying. By-and-by they kill us;” and with these words he stalked into the hut, and, in ten minutes, was sleeping as soundly upon the floor as I should have done in my own cot at home.

I was going to say that the next morning broke dull and threatening; it would be more accurate to say that it never broke at all. A grey light filtered

through the fog: a light by which we could just see how miserable the world looked, and that was all. All day a threat lay upon the face of the waters, and the light of the sun was veiled; but towards noon an incident occurred which was somewhat unusual in Kula Kullah.

A visitor arrived who called in at the rancherie. Now, though Kula Kullah is by the way to the main northern ports, it lies some three or four miles out of the direct course to Wrangel. As a result of this, though we often saw the smoke of great steamers going north, several miles away, we seldom saw even a small sail within hailing distance of the island.

But towards noon, as I said, a sail came creeping up to the mouth of our inlet, and, to our surprise, the sail was lowered and the boat rowed round the rock to the rancherie. I had wild hopes at first that the men in her might bring some message for us: orders, perhaps, to make ready for a steamer which would take us and our mules down south, but it was not to be. The visitors were for the Kula Kullahs, and not for us.

Although with my eyes alone I could have seen little from my post on the second storey, I was able to watch the landing well with my field-glasses. As soon as the boat, or canoe rather, came within a hundred yards of the beach, she was turned stern first to it, and the men in her ceased paddling.

“Humph! Strangers’” grunted Joe, at my elbow.

“ Now they wait till some one come and talk ; ” and in proof of the accuracy of his guess, the canoe and its occupants lay there, gently rocking stern first to the beach for at least ten minutes, neither hailing the shore nor making any sign, until the inhabitants of the rancherie came out and sat solemnly down to look at them.

For a few minutes the two parties regarded one another in silence, and it occurred to me that the custom had its advantages, for, in case of an unfriendly reception, the visitors had a hundred yards' start and the bow of their boat in the right direction.

Having stared one another out of countenance, one of the shore-party arose to his legs and shouted something across the water to the visitors. What he said we could not distinguish, neither could we catch the answer ; but it seemed as if he was catechizing the newcomers, and they answering him.

Apparently their answers were satisfactory, for, after a time, the boat was pulled in to the shore, and the Kula Kullahs bore a hand in running her up the beach. The three who stepped out of her were apparently two tall Indians and one old man, also an Indian, much bent and swathed in blankets.

With my glasses I could see the men's faces plainly ; but, though I could recognize the Kula Kullahs, I could not recognize their visitors. They were strangers to me, as I might have expected.

"Who are they, Joe?" I asked.

"Nika halo comtax, halo nanich (I don't know, I can't see). Won't the long-sight show you?"

Even my "long-sight" would not tell me, and I handed it to him, but he could make nothing of it. Of course they become used to glasses after a time; but at first Indians cannot see as far with a field-glass as with their own strong eyes.

"No good; all same fog," Joe said peevishly, handing me back the glasses. "You sure those all three siwashes?"

"Sure, Joe; two are dilate (thorough) siwashes, and the old man is a siwash too; but I can't see much of him for his blankets. Why, what do you think they are?"

"Perhaps Whitehead see good; perhaps not. Three Indians, perhaps; perhaps two. One white man. You see Tatooch?"

"Tatooch?"

"Nawitka; Tatooch. That man in front Tatooch."

I brought my glasses to bear again upon the group now about to enter the rancherie. Joe was dreaming. I did not think that the danger he had passed through had so affected his wonderful self-possession; but, after all, an Indian's face is only a clever mask, and he may feel and remember more than his features betray.

The man in front was certainly not Tatooch. True, now that he had suggested it, I could almost fancy that I saw something in the man's bearing which

reminded me of the witch-killer; but this fellow was as unlike Tatooch in face as a man could be. Indeed, he would have been a marked man anywhere amongst Indians, for he was all but red-headed, and, though they do occur occasionally amongst the Hydahs, red-headed Indians are nearly as rare as white crows.

What bothered me more than Joe's fancies about Tatooch, was a queer jerky turning of the head on the part of the old man in blankets. He reminded me of a bird with its head sunk on its shoulders, but watching all the while with its beady eyes for a chance to peck; and reminded me too of something, or some one else, but who or what I could not then remember.

However, these fancies were of course ridiculous, so I put my glass in its case.

"I'm going to see who they are, Joe. If it is Tatooch, he will know me anyway: my hair has not changed its colour."

"No, Whitehead always Whitehead. Tatooch perhaps sometimes black head, sometimes red. Take your gun along with you. Joe won't be far off;" and with that he slipped into the brush, whilst I took the trail down to the beach.

But I was almost too late to achieve my purpose. The guests were going when I reached the rancherie, and, though I satisfied myself with my own eyes that they were neither Tatooch nor any one else that I

had ever met, I had no chance of speaking to them.

More surly rascals even for Indians I never met. The red-headed man stared me sullenly in the face when I greeted him, and, though he was every bit as ugly as paint could make him, he was not anything like the witch-killer. The other two did not even turn to see who spoke to them, but stepped silently into their canoe and paddled off towards the north.

Neither did the Kula Kullahs seem much more pleased with their visitors than I was. A medicine-man and two siwashes of the Tshimsians from the south they called them, and they said that they had come to bring a present of whale-blubber to the Kula Kullah chief, and make inquiries about a canoe-full of their tribesmen, lost, it was supposed, in this neighbourhood the week before in a squall; but, contrary to all Indian etiquette, they had barely tasted of the feast set before them.

They had come to see the chief, they said, and they would deal with no one else; so they had left a bad impression behind them with the men of the rancherie, who, being most of them slaves, or men of low degree, were peculiarly sensitive, and resented other people's airs.

The only other information I could obtain about them, was that they were going north to the Nasse River.

With this news I went back to Joe, whom I found

at a point of vantage overlooking Dixon's Entrance and the straits and inlets which lay around us.

"They say they go north?" he said. "What for Tatooch go north now?"

"But I tell you it was not Tatooch."

Joe did not answer, but kept his eyes fixed on the sail which crept along the coast of Kula Kullah to the north.

For a very long time we watched it, for its progress was very slow, and I could not help wondering why, if the men in the canoe wanted to make the mouth of the Nasse, they did not take a more direct course, and obtain the full benefit of any little wind there was, instead of hugging our island-shore. There seemed no danger of a squall, and Indians are not timid navigators.

At last the canoe disappeared round the corner of Kula Kullah, and we watched to see it reappear, a white fleck on the open sea which must be traversed to reach the Nasse.

But it did not reappear.

"Camped, Joe, on the spit."

"Halo. You see by-and-by."

And by-and-by I saw, for, apparently believing themselves unwatched, the men in the canoe discarded caution, and, having turned the point, tacked out boldly into the open at the back of the island, returning towards Hecate Straits.

At that distance I could not, even by the aid of my glasses, identify the canoe going south as the same which we had watched going north; but if not, craft in these waters were sufficiently scarce to make the coincidence remarkable.

"See; I tell you Tatooch not go north. Kloonas (perhaps) plenty trouble by-and-by."

Joe's persistence was beginning to tell upon me; and the rest of that day was spent by me in a struggle, which was only partially successful, to convince myself that my own eyes had not deceived me.

If that was Tatooch who was the man in the blankets? And then I remembered who it was with the beak-like nose and the restless, shifty glances. But Sandy Bill was nearly as tall as myself, and the man in blankets was old and shrunk, and a boy's size.

No; it could not be Tatooch. Joe was growing crazy with fear and the loneliness of our life in Kula Kullah; and, lest I should become as bad, I plunged resolutely into one of Hope's novels, wishing that I was a prisoner of Zenda instead of a prisoner in Alaska.

On the evening of the third day after my immersion in the slough the Kula Kullahs returned.

For three days we had had the sullen threatening weather I have described.

On the evening of this day there was a low moaning

amongst the trees, and a heave and sigh at the base of the cliffs, whilst the widgeon and sea-fowl generally, not waiting for the flighting-time, came whirling in in a hurry, by twos and threes or in small flocks. They came as if something was behind them, and they did not make for the feeding-grounds, but, after one or two circling flights, pitched under the lee of those points where there was shelter from the worst of storms. The gulls too came inland shrieking, and there was an unusual clamour amongst the myriads of crows who dwelt in the island.

At sea, in the south-west, the ragged clouds were hurrying together, torn and trailing, and, through them from the low sun, great pale rays shot down to the gun-barrel grey of the sullen sea, making a watery archway of dim light, behind which was the coming storm.

Suddenly in the midst of this we, who were watching, saw the black bows of a canoe, and then another, and presently, to the moan of the rising tempest, was added the slow, long-drawn rhythm of the Death-song.

Now the men who had been left in the rancherie, and the women, crowded down on the beach, and added their cries to the cries of the colony of crows overhead. But the men in the canoes made no sign that they saw them.

One after another, like the joints of a hideous sea-serpent, the black canoes glided out of the gloom

through the archway of stormy light, until we could see the rowers' shoulders gleam as the twelve men in each boat drove her nearer and nearer with strong, even strokes, their wild song keeping time to their paddles.

The storm broke even as they reached shore, and the grinding of their keels on the beach, and the song of the rowers, was drowned in a scream of wind, which swung the tallest pines as if they had been saplings, and snapped the older ones with cracks like pistol-shots.

But through the veil of rain which followed the first wild gust of the tempest, we saw a miserable procession of captives driven like sheep to the shambles, and a cargo of human heads slung out by the long hair upon the beach.

As these hideous trophies rolled one after another to the feet of the women, the savage song of the victors rose ever louder and louder, until, what with that and the scream of the tempest, and the sighing of the trees, and the crash and roar of the ocean, there was such a tumult of wild sound as if Hell had broken loose.

"They have had a great killing," said Joe. "Now their hearts are bad, and there will be a great feast and more killing."

"My God! is it not enough?"

"Not yet. See—they begin."

As he spoke a heavy-shouldered savage walked forward shouting, pushing before him a child of, it may be, nine or ten years old. Suddenly he stopped in the very midst of the onlookers, there was a swift movement of his arm, a gleam of blue light, and I saw the child's head roll from its shoulders, and the poor body stand and sway, as it seemed to me, for many seconds before it lurched and sank upon the sand.

As the blood spouted from the severed neck my own blood leapt into my brain; there was a red mist before my eyes so that I could hardly see the sights of my rifle, but Joe struck up the rifle before I could fire.

"Not yet, Whitehead," he whispered—and I could feel that even he was shaking like an aspen—"not yet; we have no chance now. By-and-by; when they sleep. The men of Oorah were my tillicums (friends)."

I dropped the rifle, and the cold beads of sweat broke out upon my body. What devil's paradise had I fallen into? In my rage I would have killed, but here was murder before my eyes which I could not prevent, and murder—the murder of sleeping men—whispered into my ear as justice.

Perhaps there was something which a good and brave man should have done at that time. Perhaps I should have sacrificed my life and my companions' in a mad effort to save those miserable prisoners, or

have gone down to plead to the deaf ears of the sea-brutes who had them at their mercy.

But I am not a good, and perhaps not a brave man. At any rate I did none of these things; but sat down crouching in my shed, hiding my eyes, and covering my ears, and praying that the bitterness of these days might pass from me.

Even now I cannot look back upon that wild night without a shudder. The storm in itself was enough to terrify most men. I remember that it tore the roof from our shed, and no man tried to replace it, though the rain poured in upon us, preventing sleep, and putting out our fires. I remember, too, the indistinct figures of the mules, and their trampling and cries in the dark. Like human beings they had come down to us for the sake of such comfort as they could find in the neighbourhood of their masters.

And through it all there was one glowing red spot, like the eye of a demon on the beach, where the great fires burned, and the Kula Kullahs feasted.

Thank God that the voice of the tempest drowned all cries from that quarter! We could see the light and imagine what was being done in the glow of it, but we were spared certain knowledge until with morning came silence.

CHAPTER IV.

I THINK that it must have been near noon when Windy Ike woke me--not from any care for my comfort, but because Siyah Joe had been away all the morning, and Ike was lonesome and frightened.

He wanted some one to talk to, and I do not wonder at that. The roof was off our cabin, and pools of water stood upon its floor: in some of which I had been lying until I was sodden through and through, and cold to the marrow. I don't know why men do not die of cold and rheumatism in these places; but for some reason they do not. The earth is a sponge under your feet which makes a puddle of every footprint, and the very trees almost spurt water from their trunks if you lean against them; but men do not take cold, nor do they become rheumatic until past middle-life, when really it would perhaps be better if all men died. It is no good living when the joy of life has gone.

Soda-water with the fizz off is a very poor beverage.

Perhaps it was the weather which made me think of

these things, for Nature that morning was very flat indeed. After her great carnival of storm, the world looked ashamed of herself.

There was ruin everywhere. The sulky sea sobbed and growled to itself, and mumbled over the wreckage with which it still toyed. The beach was strewn with monstrous tresses of kelp—some of them fifty feet long, suggestive of the gigantic growths of the greatest of earth's oceans—and with spars, and even some lumber, which had been drifting about at sea so long, that the marks of man's labour had almost worn off it. Trees, to whose fantastic proportions I had grown accustomed, had lost their limbs, whose fractured ends showed white and ghastly in the gloom of the dripping greenery; and one huge fellow, the home of the Kula Kullah rookery, had blown over from its roots, and lay there, the cause of much tribulation amongst its late tenants.

Of course that fool Ike had not made a fire. Under any, except the most favourable circumstances, I doubt very much if he could have made one, and on that morning fire-lighting was not easy.

The hearth was not only cold, it was a puddle; and it was long before I could lay my hand on any kindling wood. Ike had breakfasted on cold tea and canned meats, with a pull at a bottle kept for Christmas, or sickness—as I afterwards discovered—and would probably have kept to this diet as long as it

lasted rather than cook for himself; but I was glad to have something to do, and set myself to repair the ruins and make things comfortable.

When I had in some measure done this, Siyah Joe came in, and stood draining slowly into the hot embers. It was easy to see that he had not slept all night. His rifle was still in his hands; his face was drawn and grey with want of rest and cold, and the water ran off from his coarse hair as it is shed from a straw thatch.

But he turned to, after a few moments, and set about helping me in that quiet, practical way which makes even a handy white man ashamed of his helplessness. Then we sat down and ate in silence, and, when we had finished, rose and left Ike still busy with what we had cooked. He hated cooking himself, but no one appreciated decent food more than he did when some one else had the preparing of it.

As I looked at the beach, an involuntary exclamation escaped me.

"Five tens and three," said Joe, following my gaze, "and most of them Tshimsian klootchmen from Oorah. Kula Kullahs kill more women than men."

What we were looking at was a line of upright stakes a few yards above high-water level. On the top of each of them was a human head, its long hair swaying slowly this way and that in a little breeze, and the dead eyes of all of them looking back across the grey waters towards Oorah.

As Joe had said, there were fifty-three of them, and, three nights ago, they were live men and women, free to go where they would—men and women, for the most part, who had never seen Kula Kullah, and who had done the Kula Kullahs no wrong.

I turned away shuddering; but Joe laughed—a hard laugh between his teeth.

“Those,” he said, “hyas kloosh (very good); no more cold freeze them, no more hunger pinch them; those others down below very bad. They fear all the time.”

“The Kula Kullahs?”

“Yes; the Kula Kullahs fear too. Last night the Kula Kullah tree blow down. That very bad sign for the Kula Kullahs. The crows are the fathers of the siwash; the crows’ house fall, by-and-by the Kula Kullahs’ house fall too. They heap quash (fear), but the others quash more.”

“Who do you mean?”

“The men they catch and bring along from Oorah.”

I had forgotten the captives.

“How many did they bring, Joe?”

“Thirteen. Last night they kill one: you see that.”

I had seen and was not likely to forget.

“There she is,” he said, pointing to one of the stakes from which exceptionally long black hair was waving; “she was my cousin.”

His face looked unnaturally pinched and wan, even

for a man who had spent the night as he had spent it ; but he spoke very quietly.

Amongst the Indians the women will go off by themselves to a place apart, and wail and cry for their dead for days at a time, no one coming near to comfort them, nor any taking heed of them ; but the men do not weep nor utter any sound.

“ Did you see the others, Joe ? ”

“ Yes ; I saw them. When the Kula Kullahs had feasted, and were talking big of the brave things they had done and the heads they had taken, I crawled round to the rancherie. The dogs were full and asleep, and no man heard me ; and through the boards I saw. There are twelve of them.”

“ Will they kill them too ? ”

“ Perhaps one or two for the god, but not all.”

“ Is there no way in which we could save them ? ”

“ Can we pay for them ? We have not enough blankets to buy one.”

“ Won't they take money ? ”

“ What for ? Siwash not want any chicamon. Can he eat it ? Will it keep him warm ? ”

“ Is there nothing we can do ? ”

“ Does Whitehead care very much if the siwashes die ? ”

“ Enough to risk my life for them, Joe,” I said quietly.

“ Nawitka. Then Whitehead and Joe will try, but

not to-night. To-night the Kula Kullahs will watch. They will not feast again to-day. They are heap scared, and they have many things to make. Besides, they will not kill again soon."

Even as he spoke I noticed men out upon the beach, dragging in the biggest logs of driftwood, and others busy amongst the trees with their axes.

That evening the neighbourhood of the rancherie was like a builder's yard, piles of logs and great stakes lying in every direction; and I think that that night, to judge by the way the fires were kept up, none of the Kula Kullahs slept much. Vengeance follows murder; and these men knew, by instinct as well as by experience, that the slow feet had begun already to travel their way.

All that day, and the next, and the day after that, the Kula Kullahs worked like beavers; and by the end of that time the rancherie was protected by a very fair rough stockade.

"Now they feast again, and play games," said Joe. "Soon they forget all about the 'Tshimsians coming; and the 'Tshimsians know that and wait. But by-and by time to let the other people go."

"Will they let them go?" I asked, misunderstanding him.

"No. Joe and Whitehead do that pretty soon. They know we come to help them, so they keep a good heart and wait."

I had fancied that Siyah Joe had forgotten, but I wronged him; he was not one to forget. And now I thought of it I remembered how little I had seen of him for the last few days. I had thought he was hunting; and, indeed, he had been for a part of the time, for I had seen him skinning a great grey wolf which he had brought in, with extraordinary care, as if he was preparing a museum specimen rather than a hide. It was drying at that moment behind our shed.

Two or three days passed, after this, without anything occurring to break the monotony of our vigil. I had nothing to do except to watch the slow swaying of the heads upon the beach, and stare out to sea for some sign of a coming steamer.

Our boat was to go up to Wrangel some time before the season opened; but even so it was too early to expect her yet. But I could not help looking for her.

And then the games began. It was what the Indians further south call the Feast of Klooh-quahn-nah, a feast apparently of initiation to bloodshed, at which various fierce plays are indulged in; the children, terrified by all manner of hideous sights and sounds, and taught, if not to kill, at least to handle the bodies of victims without any show of terror or repugnance. Ordinarily some old slave is killed as the sacrifice, or used to be, for now white man's law and white man's example have banished such barbarities from the neighbourhood of Vancouver Island; and, indeed, the

strong arm of the Indian Office reaches far further than that.

But in the old times, and perhaps still, in a few remote corners which have escaped white man's notice, if slaves were plenty, plenty of slaves were killed. The more they killed the greater the feast, and knowing this, I trembled for the unlucky Tshimsians.

The first great play was the wolves' attack—for so I must call it, since I do not know the Indian name.

About noon one day we saw a great commotion taking place inside the stockade. Men and women rushed hither and thither, and the men were painted and armed. All looked towards the edges of the pine-timber where the front ranks of the trees encroached upon the beach, and, following the direction of their glances, I made out with my old field-glasses first one, then two, and at last perhaps a dozen grey objects crawling from the covert down to the beach.

I turned to call Joe's attention to this; but though he had been in the shed a moment before—or rather at the back of it—softening his wolf's hide, he was gone now, and, though I looked for him high and low, I could not find him.

His wolf's hide had gone too, and, guessing that he had taken it away to a better place to work upon it, I returned to my look-out with Ike, who wanted to shoot. As the wolves were well out of the longest rifle-range, and as I thought the Kula Kullahs in no need

of our assistance, I told him to put up his rifle, though he would have done neither good nor harm with it had I let him have his way.

Like most men in the north, I had hitherto seen but little of wolves. As a rule you do not see them by daylight, unless it be now and again a single one watching you from some hill-top or promontory as your canoe glides down-stream. Before you can get within range the watcher's tail drops, and with a few long, loping strides he disappears in the brush. At night you may hear them often enough driving the deer in the winter season; and so great is the terror they inspire, that I have known a hind come and stand in the light of my camp-fire, beside which I and another man were sitting, whilst the long howls of her pursuers echoed in the hill above us. Fear of them had made her fearless of us.

But now I saw them hunting in broad daylight, or rather, just at the setting of the sun. At first they crept out, and lay in the shadows of the furthest pines, watching, it seemed, until the whole of the band was in place; and I was able to pick them out when I knew where to look for them, until I could see at least fifty of the still, grey shapes lying in a semicircle round the Indian stockade.

After a time they began to move. It was almost impossible to catch them actually moving, but their positions changed little by little, until at last the line,

which had lain in the shadow of the pines, had crept some considerable distance down the shore. Then there was a cry from the stockade, and, with one simultaneous impulse, all the silent grey figures sprang to life, and rushed forward with hideous howls, dashing at the stockade, springing up it, and tearing at it with teeth and claws, and in a few instances clambering over or forcing a way through it.

Meanwhile those in the stockade were not idle. The braves had had time, it seemed, to paint themselves and make them ready for battle. Shot after shot rang out from the enclosure, and little red spurts of flame sprang out from between the palisades ; but the shooting seemed bad, for, though at such close quarters, only one or two of the wolves fell, and these I noticed crawled away lamely after a time.

But clubs and spears were used with terrific effect ; and having seen, once or twice, individual wolves rear against the palisades, and climb in such fashion as no four-footed wolves could climb, I wondered how so much realism could be put into Indian acting without some serious casualties occurring. Perhaps many a shrewd blow was given to wipe off old scores, but I never heard of any serious accidents occurring at these plays.

In half an hour the show was over ; the attack had been repulsed, and one by one the wolves had slunk back and vanished in the pines. As the shadows fell

I could only see one of them still in the open, and I question if he could have been seen except from such a commanding point of view as that which I occupied.

When I first noticed him early in the fight he was crawling away from the stockade badly hurt; and I imagined, from the painful way in which he dragged his hind-quarters along the sand, that his hurt was a real one, but no one took any notice of him.

Slowly he dragged himself along amongst the wreckage near high-water mark, and then, my attention being taken up with other things, I lost sight of him. When I saw him next he was still creeping about at the landing-place, where, in a long line, the Kula Kullah canoes were moored in the deep water and shelter afforded by the mouth of a small inlet.

Unlike most Indians the Kula Kullahs were methodical in the matter of mooring their canoes. As a rule these, though they are the Indians' most valuable possessions, are beached here and there and everywhere—handiness to the owner's dwelling-place being the only condition considered. But at Kula Kullah there was one point where all the fleet lay, and it was here that the wounded wolf was crawling about.

In the rancherie, after the acting, all was animation. A great feast was being prepared, and, the beach being deserted, this one wolf had the world to himself. I could not help wondering why, if he was really hurt, he did not crawl back to his comrades and obtain

assistance, or why, if he was not hurt, he did not cease from his acting and walk back to his supper.

What was he doing there?

And then an idea occurred to me. Surely some of the canoes had moved slightly from their moorings. Surely, too, there were not quite as many of them as there generally were! The big canoe, which was the end of the line and in full sight of the rancherie, had not altered its position; but the rest were afloat, and some I could swear were missing.

And now I saw the lame wolf crawl towards the rancherie for a few yards and lie watching. For a while he watched, and then, crawling quickly into one of the floating canoes, he crouched in it, and was lost to sight.

After a time he slipped over the side and crawled into another, and so on, from one to another, until he had visited them all in turn; and the first one which he had entered was already almost flush with the water of the inlet.

In another minute it had disappeared, and then, as one by one the canoes vanished, the dusk fell, and I could see no more. The wolf, whoever he was, was scuttling the Kula Kullah fleet. As far as I could see only one canoe, and that the one in full view of the rancherie, still remained above water.

Quite what it all meant I did not clearly understand then, but it did not seem good for the Kula Kullahs.

As they were no friends of mine it did not concern me, and so I put up my glasses and went back to the shed for supper, wondering if it would not be wise for me to call Ike and Joe, and, crawling down in the dark, take possession of the only boat left, and sail away from this dangerous neighbourhood whilst the owners were feasting.

We might possibly reach a place no better for us than this one, but we could not well find a worse.

Unfortunately there were the mules to be thought of; they did not belong to me, and I had taken the boss's money, and pledged him my word to look after them. Even at the risk of my life I must try to redeem that promise, and, even if this consideration had not had sufficient weight with me, there was another. I had promised Joe to assist him in the liberation of the Tshimsian captives, and they knew of my promise, and were relying upon it as all that stood between them and death.

Yes; escape looked very easy and very tempting that night. There was only one serious obstacle in the way, a *white man's word*; but that was a great thing. It is the one thing, faith in which has tamed the red men of British North America without much assistance from firearms; and it was not for me to weaken any man's faith in that, which is the pride of the race. But I wished Joe would come, and began to fear that some evil had befallen him.

CHAPTER V.

As the thought went through my brain a grey wolf came in sight upon the trail which leads from the rancherie to our shed, and, the next moment, Joe threw the skin on the floor at my feet.

"No more good now," he said. "But I think that wolf-skin cost the Kula Kullahs plenty money."

So he was the lame wolf I had seen amongst the canoes. In truth no wolf had ever cost the Indians more.

"The word that Whitehead spoke about the Tshimsians—was it a true word?"

"A white man's word, Joe," I answered, thinking how strangely his question jumped with my own late thoughts.

"Then it is time to keep it. The Kula Kullahs are tired with play and very full of food. They will sleep sound to-night; and the Tshimsians expect us."

"How can they know, Joe?"

"The lame wolf that made the canoes sink, climbed

the stockade first; the braves could not keep all the wolves out."

It was a great risk he had taken, but I could see now how feasible it had all been during the masquerade, and I could have laughed at the shrewd use he had made of their fooling. He must have forced his way into the rancherie itself, and communicated with the captives under the very eyes of their captors.

"When you tell me, Joe, I shall be ready."

"We will wait until the night comes. It will be all black soon."

He did not take the trouble to tell me his plans. He wanted my help, and that was enough; and so we sat there waiting, whilst the rancherie grew gradually quiet, until the only sound which broke the stillness was the heavy snoring of Ike, to whom of course we confided nothing.

Then Joe rose and stripped himself to his skin. I fancy that he would have liked it better if I had done so too; but, having moccasins on already, I contented myself with throwing my hat and coat into the cabin; and then, one after the other, we crept down the winding pathway to the beach.

It was, as he had said it would be, a black night. I could not see him in front of me when he was once beyond my reach, and only indistinctly when he was within arm's length of me. And yet he went along that winding trail without touching a twig. As for

me, I dare hardly put my feet down, and, had I been alone, I should have come to a standstill in the thick brush beside the trail, before I had gone a hundred yards.

The cracking of a twig was anguish to me at first, but he reassured me.

"No matter," he said. "Suppose Kula Kullahs hear, they think mule come down the trail to eat seaweed; only come quick."

I suppose that in reality we did go quickly, but the time did not pass quickly to me. I went through an eternity of anxiety before we lay inside the stockade, against the wooden walls of the rancherie, waiting, whilst Joe peered through a crevice between the boards.

There were many such crevices, and, imitating his example, I too looked inside. At first I could see nothing but a smoky darkness. Then my eyes grew more accustomed to the place, and one of the dying embers on the hearth flickered faintly. By it I could see at first only one of the colossal figures which supported the roof-tree, its deep-set, gigantic eyes and wide mouth fixed in a rigid stare, as it seemed to me, upon the spot at which danger threatened.

Little by little I made out more. I could see some of the sleepers. At the feet of one was a cur, such as these men keep for tracking the bears, and whilst I looked it barked. But it barked only in its dreams.

It, too, was too full fed to be on guard. But the bark startled me, and in moving I made a plank rattle.

Instantly a rat scuttled along the log by which Joe lay, and I never knew, until afterwards, that his nimble fingers *made* the rat to cover my mistake.

One or two of the sleepers moved heavily in their blankets, and one klootchman reached out her hand for something to throw, but her hand dropped again, and, turning over, she lay still.

Then Joe began to work slowly at a board in front of him. One by one, with teeth and fingers, he drew out the nails, which had already been loosened, and then gradually began to remove the board itself. Had I had the work to do anxiety would have made me hurry. I could not--no white man could--have endured the protracted strain upon his nerves which this man endured; and I could scarcely lie still, watching him, as inch by inch he lowered the plank to the grass.

I don't believe he made as much noise as a fly would have done crawling over it. Then he rose to his knees, and I crept to his side and looked in over his shoulder. The opening gave upon a space between two of the partitions, along which a man might go to the main hall by the big hearth. In this space only one man slept. He lay right under the board which Joe had removed, and those who would go out or in, must pass over his body. How was this to be done?

The solution of the riddle was in Joe's hand, and I

gripped his wrist only just in time. With a face of fury he turned on me, and his strong teeth met like a tiger's in my arm. There we lay for a moment, not daring even to pant, my hand on his throat and his eyes glaring into mine.

"Not whilst he sleeps, Joe?" I pleaded.

"Wake them all and die, then!" he hissed.

It was a terrible position. If we spared this man, we must sacrifice twelve others. To save them we must take the life of a man in his sleep.

I was young then and could not do it, or see it done; but twelve lives were of more value than one, so I let go my grip, and turning away hid my eyes. He understood my action if he could not realize my feelings; but I wish I had closed my ears as well as my eyes, so that at night I might not hear again that low, dull thud.

It might have been a rat dropping from the rafters, or a log settling in the embers, but I knew better what it was.

At any rate there was no cry, and the sleeper—a deep sleeper now through all eternity—never stirred, except perhaps that the legs straightened and the jaw dropped; and when I dared to look again, I saw, one after another, eleven men crawl through the opening and lie on the grass by Joe's side. There was still one to come.

"Where is Skookum Jim?" I heard Joe whisper.

"Tied and guarded," one answered. "He was chosen for the sacrifice to-night at the feast."

For a few moments they conferred together, and Joe peered into the interior. Then he withdrew and pointed to where some paddles lay. The others took them up.

"Are you not going to save him, Joe?"

"No; he must die. Come with us."

From where I was I could now see the bound man, and I could see the two guards sleeping at his feet. They had bound him round the knees of one of the great idols which served as pillars for the house. I knew by my own instinct, though I could not see whether his eyes were opened, that this poor wretch must be awake; that he must have seen his countrymen from Oorah crawl like snakes along the floor of the rancherie and glide safely through the open panel, and pictured to myself the horror of his despair, left alone to die whilst they escaped safe and sound to Oorah.

And then I saw the shape inside: the limp, lifeless thing in the blankets. I had consented to its death as the price of the other's freedom. The bargain I had made with my conscience was, "one for twelve." There were to be but eleven. The white man's word had been passed to twelve; why should it be broken to one of the twelve?

"Wait for me one minute at the boat, Joe," I whispered; "I am going in for Skookum Jim."

“ You cannot ! it is madness ! ”

“ White man’s word, Joe ; ” and, hardly stopping to think, I glided through the entrance.

How I went I don’t know ; my feet found their own way. I remember the look in the eyes of the tied man ; I shall never forget that. And I remember the snick with which the leather bands gave to my knife—too loud a snick,—but it gave me a sort of pleasure then to hear them give, and I slashed the other two fiercely, so that the man nearly fell as his supports gave way. He was numbed and paralyzed by the tightness with which he had been bound, and his stumble was our undoing.

I know it is only fancy, but I could swear that as the noise of his stumble echoed through the sleeping rancherie, I saw the idol to which he had been tied grin all across its broad, flat face.

With a yell the cur was across the floor and at us, and at the same moment one of the guards sprang to his feet. He never saw me. As he reached his feet my right hand reached his jaw, and he fell in a deeper slumber than the one he had left, and with a rush the captive and myself reached the opening.

A knife (thrown, I think) quivered in the boards above my head as I went through ; a harpoon, driven home at half arm’s length, plunged into Skookum Jim’s bowels, and killed him too soon for the sacrifice.

He would never see Oorah again ; but he had had a

run for his life, and had been spared many hours of miserable waiting. That was at least something. And I had kept my word!

But I had no time to think then. I was fleet of foot at that time as a buck; but the last man was clambering into the canoe when I reached it. That man was Joe. A moment he waited and caught my hand.

“Brave man, Whitehead; now hide in the brush and crawl back to camp. They will see us, and won’t hunt you.”

He gave me no choice or chance of replying, but with one strong shove sent the canoe from shore. I had only just time—barely enough time—to drop behind a log, and squirm thence into the brush, before the whole pack from the rancherie was down upon us. But they were still bemused with sleep, and excited beyond the power of thinking collectedly of anything; besides which, all eyes were now upon the canoe, which was paddled boldly out into the open, and slowly too at that.

For a moment the dazed savages stared at their escaping captives, and then, with a rush, they went for their other canoes.

But there were no others.

Yesterday there were nigh upon twenty; now, there was nothing but a little one-man canoe, and no man dared to take that against twelve *desperate* men. So some ran this way and some that, as if they thought that

the canoes were mislaid, and some even struck out a few strokes into the water, whilst the canoe of the Tshimsians lay there mocking them.

“Why don’t you come to us? Has not Kula Kullah many war-canoes?” cried the men of Oorah. “See, we have but one, and there is not a rifle amongst us.”

That was a foolish speech. In an incredibly short space of time a rifle was brought from the rancherie; it must have been on its way thence already; and a bullet chipped a great strip of wood from the bow of Joe’s boat.

Then the Tshimsians bent to their paddles, whilst the man with the rifle pumped lead after them as fast as he could fire; but he did less execution than he would have done had he taken aim once, and I think that, when the blackness which hung over the waters swallowed up the canoe, the men of Oorah had neither scathe nor scar from that encounter.

And that was the last I saw of the Tshimsians, though, long after they were out of sight, I could hear the rhythmical beat of their paddles in the darkness. Like a fish escaped from a net they vanished into their native element, and their captors stood there as long as they could hear the paddles, firing futile random shots in the direction in which the canoe had gone. But the shots made only harmless sparks of light in the great ocean of darkness which lay around Kula Kullah.

Until nearly morning the mob of Kula Kullahs

remained round the scene of the rescue, chattering like daws, and splashing about in the water in which their canoes were sunk. Even the women came down and joined them, after a time ; and each new arrival roused a fresh storm of questions and answers and wild invective.

All this time I dared not move. As they became calmer the savages became more alert, and the snapping of a single twig would have brought the whole pack upon my heels. For the present, no doubt, they believed that every one connected with the rescue had escaped in the canoe ; if the idea ever occurred to them that one man was left, it would be certain death for that one man.

Through those long hours I never moved ; but my brain was never quiet, cursing my own folly and Joe for not taking me into the canoe. Then I should have been safe ; now I could almost feel one of those murderous harpoons crashing into my vitals.

Little by little the blackness in the sky lost its intensity, a faint, cold breeze began to move the top limbs of the pines, and I heard a bird crying over the sea.

The dawn was coming, and, luckily for me, the Indians were going. One by one they walked back slowly to the rancherie ; and at last, stiff with cold and weak with excitement, I rose and began to crawl homewards. There was no way that I knew, but my feet told me

that I had accidentally blundered upon a deer-trail, which led upwards, and, knowing that the favourite deer-pass from the peak was no great distance from our cabin, I followed this. It was bound to lead into the main trail.

As I was creeping wearily up it in the half-light, I heard a rattling in the bush far below me. Every sound, however faint, meant pursuit in my ears that morning, and my heart went into my mouth. What if, after all, some one of the savages had seen me, and was even now stalking me as he would stalk a deer at dawn? For a few minutes I lay and listened, and then I heard it again: a rustling in the bushes, now here, now there, as if some one was quartering the ground for game. Probably, I thought, that is it. A coyote or a wolf hunting for a rabbit, and I hurried along the narrow trail again, determined to stop no more until I reached my home. How I longed then to see even Ike's homely face!

But the rustling continued and came closer, and then, sharp and clear in the stillness, I heard the yap of a dog hunting, and next minute saw the same villainous cur which had betrayed me in the rancherie, running on my tracks. He had come down with his masters, and, having one sense more than they had, had detected my presence, and would in another minute betray it to them.

But he had not seen me yet, and I had a chance.

I was still some distance above him, and the brush was thick on either side of the trail. Into this I jumped, and, snatching up a stout broken limb of a pine tree, ran downhill parallel with and close to the trail.

I was borrowing a hint from the moose of Cassiar.

Fifty yards down the trail I crouched and waited, whilst the little beast worked uphill, running entirely by nose, but running keenly now. He knew I was not far off. Luckily for me he did not know how close I was, and, true to his training, stuck close to the scent. Yap! yap! he came, every moment growing noisier and more jubilant, until he was abreast of me, and then I brought my pine bough down across his back with all the strength left in me. From that moment he was a dead dog, and, shying his body into the brush as far as I could sling it, I ran the rest of the way home, never stopping until I had my blankets in my hand.

After my night's adventure even that shack looked comfortable. The red blankets looked absolutely luxurious, and I hurried to get my wet moccasins off, and roll myself up in the soft, warm things. But I woke Windy Ike in doing so, and Ike was very conservative of his right to sleep at least half of the twenty-four hours.

"Been out again?" he grumbled. "Looking after mules, I suppose you'll say?"

"No; but it's about time for you to get up and do that."

"Well, what in thunder *have* you been doing? You and Joe are just the two most pernicketty night-hawks I ever did strike. There ain't no peace for a man night nor day in this confounded hole!"

"Nor any work for you, either, it seems to me."

"Work!—it's work all day and most of the night, what with doing chores and cooking."

"Much cooking you do! I'll tell you what it is: you just get up now and watch, if you don't want your throat cut; I am going to sleep. I've done my spell of watching, and mean to turn in."

"What is there to watch for? The steamer ain't likely to come, is she? and, if she does, I guess she'll wait for morning."

"I'm not thinking of steamers!" I answered angrily. "But you are under my orders, and, if you don't get up and watch, I'll put a bullet through you. Do you understand that?"

"Your orders?"

"Yes! my orders!" and I snatched up my Winchester. I was utterly worn-out and irritable.

The man saw that I was in earnest, and rose sullenly to obey.

"And what's your orders, sir, if the steamer comes?" he asked sneeringly.

"My orders are to keep awake and keep your

mouth shut, and, if you see any siwashes coming, wake me before they come too near. Or go to sleep and have your throat cut, I don't care ;" and, so saying, I turned over on my side and slept. And from the fact that a fire had been lighted when I woke, I fancy that my mention of throat-cutting had had some effect upon Ike.

But the sun was high when I woke ; and hunger, not duty, may have prompted Ike to light that fire.

To my surprise, when I sat up in my blankets I saw that Joe was rolled up in his on the floor by my side. He must have come when I slept ; but how the deuce had he come back ? When I last saw him he was steering the war-canoe of the Tshimsians into the night towards Oorah.

CHAPTER VI.

As I sat and watched Joe he began to move restlessly in his sleep, muttering words of which I could not catch the sense—if indeed there was any sense in them. Then suddenly he rose up on his elbow and stared fixedly towards the hearth, his features convulsed with what looked like fear. But his eyes were fast shut; he was still asleep.

“Joe!” I shouted, “wake up!” and I tossed a billet of wood at him, which, striking him in the ribs, brought him back from the land of dreams, but not, I thought, to his senses, for, after one wild, doubting stare at the hearth, he began to tear up the blankets in which he had been lying, and to pour them and all his other possessions, with both arms, upon the live coals, muttering all the while as he did so, “More, more!”

I was so taken aback by his madness, that for a minute I did not interfere. But when he plucked out a knife, and began slashing at his forearm with it

until the blood spouted to his finger-tips, I gathered my wits together, and, springing upon him, pinned his arms to his sides.

This was more easily accomplished than I might have expected. Indeed, instead of having to struggle against the paroxysms of madness, I found Joe so tractable that I took my hands off him almost at once.

When I did so, the strange fellow walked across the floor to that spot which had drawn his waking eyes, and, shaking the blood from his finger-tips, so besprinkled it.

“What foolery are you at, Joe?” I asked.

“Whitehead did not see the koutsmah. It was there.”

“You were dreaming; there was no koutsmah (spirit) in this shack. I have been awake for half an hour.”

“Whitehead think he see; think Joe sleep. Whitehead’s koutsmah sleep; Siyah Joe’s koutsmah wake. Joe see the head there very plain, and he know the the face; only now Joe forgets;” and he pressed his hand to his forehead.

“Yes, Joe forgets,” he went on, talking half to himself. “The head he stop there. Whose face was it? Why was there only a head? Why was the ground all white? What was it between Joe and the head? The head saw it, and could not come to it; Joe could not see. Why could not Joe see any of these things?”

"Because you were asleep, and had your eyes shut," I said, with the impatience one naturally feels for such childish follies. "And now what are you going to do for more blankets?"

Joe looked at me, more hurt than angered.

"Whitehead not believe in koutsmahs. No? By-and-by Whitehead see."

"And about the blankets?"

"Joe not want any more blankets now. Perhaps Whitehead not want any more after to-day."

"What the deuce *do* you mean?"

"No matter, come now and watch. The Kula Kullahs come to ask questions."

How he knew it I cannot guess, but, as we reached the door of the shed, two or three Kula Kullahs came up the trail. Joe stood leaning on his rifle as they drew near; and I think that they noticed the rifle, and it may have altered their intentions.

After an exchange of greetings they asked us a few unimportant questions, whilst one of their number wandered aimlessly around the hut. He touched nothing, but his eyes were very busy.

I told one of them that I had watched the wolves with my glasses the day before, and asked him what all the shooting had been about at night. But I could only learn that the god Ki-i was very angry with his children, and that the home of the Kula Kullah crows had fallen, which I knew.

They did not say a word about the death of one of their number, nor of the escape of the captives.

They asked where Ike was, and I told them truthfully enough that I did not know—looking after his mules, I supposed. And they asked me when the big smoke-ship would come again, and I replied, not quite so truthfully, that I expected her to come in sight any minute—that indeed she was already overdue.

Then they went away and left us, some going up the hill and some back to the rancherie.

Three hours later I heard something fall in the hut, at the back of which I was busy preparing our dinner. As I went to see whether it was my kettle which had upset, Joe came out with a knife in his hand. He had picked it up on the floor of the hut, and I recognized it as that with which he had stabbed the sleeping Kula Kullah the night before. In his hurry he had left it in the wound.

“Kula Kullahs know now. They knew when they came here. But this is not siwash blood;” and he held up the blade to show me that it was red and wet.

I could hardly frame the question that I wanted to ask, but my eyes asked for me.

“Ike!” was all he said.

So we were only two now; and the poor, grumbling packer had paid with his life for the life we had taken.

“They are quits now; and they will bury their man; and then it will be our turn.”

Their man was, of course, he who had slept across the doorway. And, during the long watch of that afternoon, we heard the women keening, and, early in the grey of the next morning, they put him to rest, wedged upright in a crevice in the rocks, on the coast of Kula Kullah, with his face to the sea. So are buried most of his kinsmen; and some day, if the graves give up their dead, the islands between the north end of Vancouver Island and Wrangel will be grey with them.

At night, even now, the Kula Kullahs say that they come out in the dark, and peer over the waste of waters, looking for the war-canoes to come and bring them fresh company.

And now we had to let the mules shift for themselves. Day and night we watched in turn, our cartridges laid out in handy places, and our hut barricaded as well as we knew how to barricade it.

We would have tried to escape, but there was no place to escape to on the island; and Joe had taught them such a lesson of caution in regard to their canoes, that it would have been hopeless to attempt to get away in one of them.

We dared not leave the hut. Ike's fate was always before us, and, knowing that he must have foreseen this, I could not help wondering at the loyalty which had made Joe leave the Tshimsians in the stolen war-canoe to swim ashore and share my peril. My attempt to rescue Skookum Jim had restored me to the place

in his esteem which my soft-heartedness had jeopardized.

For one day after the burial of the Kula Kullah everything was quiet. It was the longest day I ever spent, and the night of it was longer than the day. I felt the oppression which Nature seems to feel before a thunderstorm, and, like Nature, my whole system seemed charged with suppressed excitement, and my senses were so keen that I was painfully conscious of the fall of every twig in the brush which surrounded us.

And that reminds me that, during every moment of his spare time, Joe was busy with axe and knife clearing away every bush or tree on the little plateau in front of the hut. At first I thought he was merely cutting fuel, but the stuff he cut was green and useless for that. The men who were watching us did not notice what worthless wood Joe was cutting as soon as I did.

As yet they dared not come near enough to see that; but before the evening of that day they saw; and a bullet, which knocked his axe out of his hand, warned Joe that he had carried that game as far as it was safe to. He did not wait to give the marksman another chance. But he had done us some good already: there was very little cover left above the edge of the plateau in which an enemy could hide.

On the morning of the third day a new sound came to our ears. Have you ever heard bees swarming? that was the sound in miniature. All the morning it

went on, rising and falling; and with my glasses we could see the Kula Kullahs gathered on the beach. It was the incessant murmur of their angry voices which had reminded me of the swarming bees. After a time one man—whom I knew for the chief by his huge shoulders—rose, and flinging back his blanket, spoke to his tribesmen in a voice like the roaring of a storm from the south-west.

I should think that he spoke for half an hour. After he had spoken two or three others rose, and, now and again, there was a hum of approval or dissent; but, whenever the speaker's arm was raised towards where we watched, there was no mistaking the menace in the voice of the mob.

"To-night they come," said Joe, pumping the cartridges out of his rifle, and carefully refilling it. It held seventeen of the little brass messengers in its chambers, and we had each a case of twenty more such messengers to fall back upon.

If they did not rush our position, that night's hunt seemed likely to be a costly one for the Kula Kullahs.

The first attack was made in the dark of early night, before the moon rose. Even Joe did not hear them coming, and, thinking that they would wait for some light to shoot by, he and I were snatching a hasty meal of canned meat by the light of a little wood fire in the middle of the hut.

Suddenly there was a rattle of shots, the meat-can

flew out of my hands, and two or three splinters of wood or bullets sent the red ashes all over the floor. We had no time to gather them together. If the shack burned down we could not help it.

In a moment we were at our posts, one guarding the front, and one the rear of the one-roomed building, and each entrenched behind a solid barricade of heavy timber made ready for the purpose.

"Don't fire till you see them," whispered Joe, and, in obedience to his advice, we received another volley without returning a single shot.

"Soon they think we dead. Then they come closer."

As he spoke I saw a stump, or what I had taken for one, move a little towards me. Thinking that my eyes were playing me tricks, I waited until I saw it distinctly roll slowly over towards the hut. Then I fired, and the stump sprang to its feet, only to come down again, with a bullet through the middle of it; whilst what I had taken for a faggot, left purposely near the hut, took three bullets to keep it quiet.

Meanwhile Joe had been busy. I heard him fire so quickly that I was afraid he was throwing away ammunition; but two out of his five bullets told, and that was good work in such an infamously bad light.

"Better watch," he said. "But I think that stop them a little while."

And then the edge of the clouds was touched with

a silvery light, and the moon rose. We should die in the light, and that was better than being shot down in the dark. For the next half-hour there was dead silence. As the moon rose higher and higher the calm of the night was in strange contrast to the way in which we were spending it.

"All over soon now," said Joe. "They make a ring in the trees and rush us. Good-bye, Whitehead; I go and look once." And he crawled to the roof, and stood sufficiently exposed to give a fair chance to a marksman.

But they did not choose to show their positions by firing, or had not enough confidence in their shooting. Seeing that no one fired I joined Joe, keeping as much out of sight as possible.

Below us lay the beach, flooded with silvery light, contrasting strongly with the dense darkness which lay under the shadow of the pines.

In the full whiteness of the moonlight stood the long row of stakes, and the wind was playing strange tricks with their burden, waving the hair of the dead, and turning their faces, so it seemed to me, towards Oorah. How soon would our dead eyes be looking the same way?

The answer came in one short order from the brush; and then, with an unearthly yell, the Kula Kullahs rushed from the shadows on all sides of us. I had no time to see what happened; I had enough to do in

working the pump of my Winchester. But though I fired until my barrel burned my fingers, and though Joe's rifle seemed to send out one uninterrupted stream of flame and sound, we could not check the rush.

There were so many of our foes that the death of one of them made no difference, and already they were tearing down the frail walls of our shack with their bare hands, whilst one had died across our hearth, brained by Joe, in the very act of driving his spear through my back.

We were like a fox now in the middle of the pack; one sharp worry and it would have been all over. But, even as we set our teeth to take our death in silence, as men should, there arose such a storm of shrieks, such a roar of war-cries from the beach below, that even those hounds running for blood heard it, and were checked in mid-career.

For one breathing-space they stood in dumb amaze; and then, above the war-cries and the shrieks, rose the voice of fire, and a great spout of flame shot up from where the Indian rancherie stood. The Tshimsians had come for vengeance.

Joe saw it, and, divining what had happened, in a moment sprang recklessly upon the roof and dropped three of the Kula Kullahs in their tracks before, without another glance at us, they turned and plunged downhill through the pines. I did not fire; my heart was weary of slaying, and it made no matter.

Whether I slew, or they slew down below, the men of Kula Kullah were doomed.

The white light of the moon looked pallid now. In place of its peaceful silver, a red, lurid glow was over everything. From the great roof-tree of the rancherie forked tongues of flame leaped and streamed; the stockade was a river of fire through which, from time to time, some hunted thing, its hair streaming in the wind, dashed, only to die on the spears of the howling demons outside, who hacked and stabbed at everything that moved until it lay still.

A handful of our late assailants behaved like men. With the flames of their home in their eyes, they charged down the beach from the pines, and their great chief led them on.

I saw a woman with her baby in her arms turn and double as she met the line of Tshimsian spears. She had brought her young one through the flames only to die by steel. A laugh went up as she dodged one brave after another; it was merry work, and they made no haste to catch her. But at that moment the Kula Kullah charge came home, and, as I saw her creep into the brush unhurt, I thanked God for two lives spared.

Hitherto it had been a one-sided massacre, now it almost seemed as if the tide of the battle had turned. Using some sort of a spear, the great-shouldered chief rushed in to close quarters. His gun-bearers, of whom he had two, might use the rifles. In his deadly strait

he clung to the weapon he loved and knew. He was the harpooner of his tribe now, and he speared the Tshimsians as he would have speared seals on the beach.

For ten minutes the braves of Oorah learned what fighting meant. "Wah! Wah!" you heard his hoarse cry, half sob, half snort, as he drove his weapon home, and never a man in all that mob either fended his blow or needed a second.

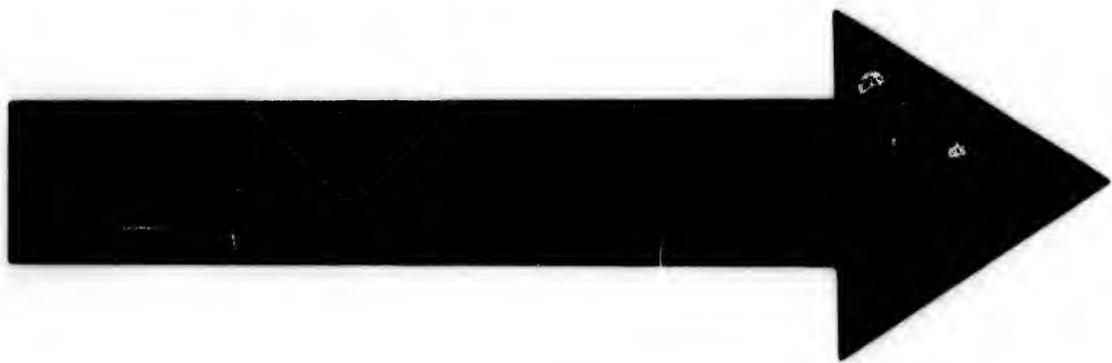
If there had been ten men like him that night amongst his tribe, no Tshimsians would have gone back to Oorah.

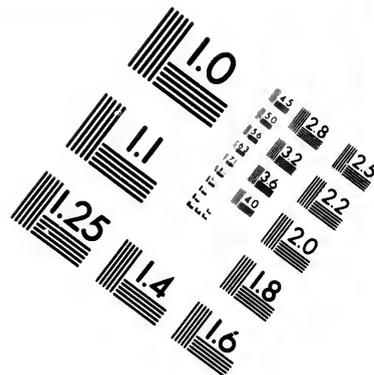
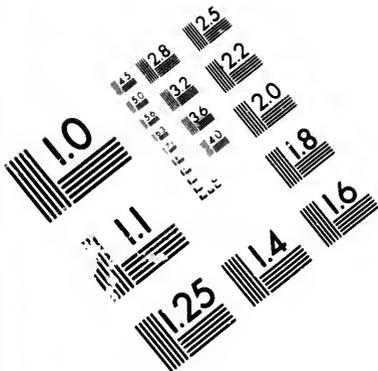
But there was not one like him. In spite of his gallant leading some fled and some fell; and, step by step, he was driven down his own beach to his own killing-yard, until he stood at bay in front of that dead line of his own marshalling.

Even there, and alone, he held the Tshimsians at bay; and though I knew him for a savage and a murderer, who would have added my own head to his trophies that night but for the Tshimsians' attack, I could not withhold a tribute of admiration for the man fighting so gallantly in the glow of his own burning homestead.

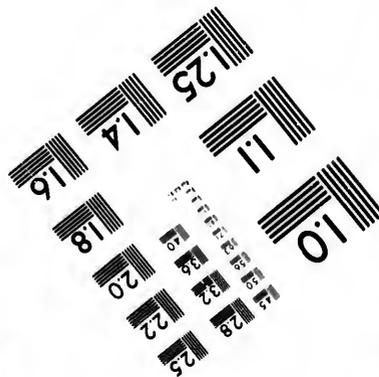
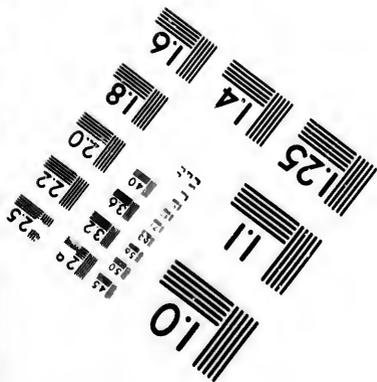
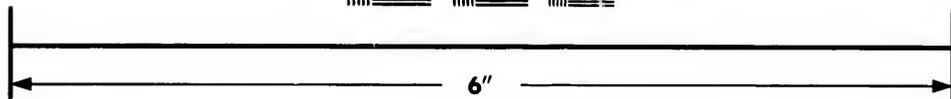
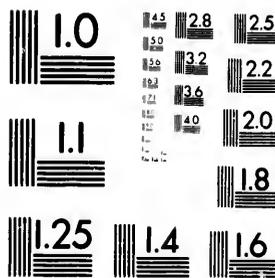
If he was a monster, he was at any rate one worthy of the savage seas that bore him. If he had their cruelty, he had also some of their magnificent might.

How long he would have held his own amongst the shrinking Tshimsians I cannot tell, for as they ringed





**IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)**



**Photographic
Sciences
Corporation**

23 WEST MAIN STREET
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 872-4503

0
1.5
1.6
1.8
2.0
2.2
2.5
2.8
3.2
3.6
4.0
4.5
5.0

5
10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
50
55
60
65
70
75
80
85
90
95
100

him round I heard a cry, so fierce, so shrill that it rang above the crackling of the burning beams and the measured sob of ocean, and I saw a lithe, naked figure cross the beach in splendid bounds like a cheetah loosed upon a deer.

With a rush that nothing could stay, Joe—for it was he—went through the shrinking Tshimsians and in at his man, diving under the lifted spear, and, winding his long arms round the spearman's mighty thigh, so that the spear-thrust struck empty air and the great chief himself was lifted off his legs shoulder high and rolled crashing in the sand.

But the sand was soft, and his brawny neck was like the neck of a bull; so that, beyond a stunning shock, he came to no great hurt, and moreover he clung to Joe with his left arm, so that he dragged him with him in his fall, and lay locked with him under the very eyes of the dead of Oorah.

But the dead of Oorah were looking out to sea to where their home lay, over the dark waters, so that they saw neither their foe nor their champion, as the two writhed and twisted on the sand, until for a moment these were at deadlock, Joe still above, but spent, and merely clinging to his foe. And that foe, as I could see, only getting breath for a moment, and drawing up his limbs for one mighty effort, after which the slighter man would lie helpless as a child beneath the giant's spear.

And then the wind changed, and, swinging as a vane swings, the ghastly heads of Oorah turned slowly round, and their dead eyes looked down in the Kula Kullah's face.

My friends say that of course the great brute burst a blood-vessel in his struggles, or died, as such men will, in a fit. So be it; but let me believe as the men of Oorah believe—and that is not their belief.

However it was, I *know* that, whilst in the very act of throwing Joe beneath him, the dead eyes fell upon the Kula Kullah chief, and he dropped back, and lay without a struggle and without a wound, dead, by the side of a man who was too spent to rise to his feet.

CHAPTER VII.

WHEN I crept down to the beach, the warriors of the Tshimsian tribe were busy preparing for their return to Oorah. They had revenged the death of their tribesmen, they had gathered a plentiful harvest of the hideous trophies which make the pride of such a clan as theirs, and had lent a hand in the extinction of a race which could not, in any event, endure long before the advance of white man's civilization; but they were afraid of the solitude they had created, and were anxious to be gone.

The walls of the rancherie had fallen in; the great roof-tree, or what was left of it, lay still smouldering amongst the embers, but the glare of the fire had subsided, and the shadows, having crept back into the brush, the long line of war-canoes, in which they had stolen upon Kula Kullah, now gleamed ghostly in the moonlight.

One party of the Tshimsians was out along the shore; but whether they were burying their newly slain, or

whether they were finding sepulture for the heads which had watched their coming, I do not know. That they did not bury the dead of Kula Kullah I know, for the headless trunks lay in all directions, thickest round the fallen home of the crows.

The warriors were sullen now, and savage: not jubilant, as men who had won a great victory; and when I showed my face amongst them, they crowded round me, fingering their spears as if their thirst for blood was not even yet slaked; but Joe came to my rescue.

“Nika tillicum (my friend),” he said. “It was he who tried to save Skookum Jim.” And at once the spears were dropped, and a blanket spread for me to sit upon, until the preparations for sailing had been completed.

I had made up my mind, of course, to go with the Tshimsians. Ike was dead—that we knew, and, now that the worst of the winter was passed, the mules could look after themselves until I could send word to the Boss and take them away in the steamer.

But, whatever might be the cost of my desertion, in mules, I felt that I could not be expected to stay longer on the island. Many of the Kula Kullahs had been slain, but not all. Some had never faced the fight. They had not stomach for such fighting as there was that night upon the beach, but they would be brave enough to take the head of one white man if he were fool enough to remain behind at their mercy. I

had to choose between going with the Tshimsians, or staying to be slain by the Kula Kullahs; so that it was easy to make up my mind.

But not as easy as it might appear, for, whilst I sat watching the preparations for departure, my eyes fell upon a small party which held itself aloof from the rest of the savages, and which appeared to have had no share in the battle.

It was composed of the three who had come as visitors to Kula Kullah, and turned south instead of going north to the Nasse. They were already watching me before my eyes fell upon them, and, as our eyes met, an unaccountable dread took possession of me. I guessed that these were the men who had led the Tshimsians to Kula Kullah, and that indirectly Joe and I owed our lives to them. But they had not come for that. Why then had they come, and who were they? Not men of Oorah, and therefore not interested in the inter-tribal war; not seeking spoil, for there was none to take—and that they must have known. I remembered Joe's words, and, as if answering my thoughts, he came to me at that moment and whispered, following my eyes with his.

“Yes, that is Tatooch; and with him are Lone Goose and the white man. They came for us.”

But if they had, they made no sign as yet, and, when the rest embarked, they slipped into their own canoe and followed in our wake.

It was a strange and eerie journey in the dark, with no sound to break the stillness of the night except the even, mechanical dip of the paddles, and the occasional scuttering of some waterfowl frightened by the passing canoes. When the dawn came it was even worse, for the fiendish faces all round me looked more hideous, with their smearings of paint and drying blood in the white light of dawn, than even in the lurid glow of the burning rancherie ; and there were worse-looking faces than those of the rowers, rolling loose in the bottom of the canoe.

But at last weariness, and the even beat of the paddles, and the freshness of the morning soothed me, so that the whole of my surroundings vanished like a nightmare, and for a time I slept. When I woke the sun was up, and there was even a suggestion of spring in the air, which gladdened me and turned my thoughts to happier times ahead.

"Thank Heaven, Joe!" I said to him, "it is all over now, and we shall see white men again soon."

"Perhaps, Whitehead; who knows. The ice could not save us; will the fire?"

"Why should you doubt it? The Tshimsians are our friends."

"We helped them; but so did those." And he pointed over his shoulder to the canoe behind.

And then I noticed what I had not seen in the darkness of the night before, that the man whom Joe took for

Tatooch was no longer red-headed, but was Tatooch indeed. He and Lone Goose had abandoned their disguises, and looked their own accursed selves, but the sorcerer in his blankets had made no change. He was the same shrivelled and heavily blanketed old savage he had always seemed; but after the revelation of the other two, I began to watch him more closely, and was at last almost convinced that Joe was right in this case too, and that he was Bill mumming. But why?

This puzzled me. So did the extraordinary depression which had taken possession of Joe. It was in vain that I tried to rally him. He had received no hurt, and, as the hero of last night's fight, he ought to have felt sure of good treatment at the hands of the victors.

But he did not.

"It was a grand fight, Joe; and your struggle with the chief the grandest part of it. They will make a chief of you when we come to Oorah."

"Tshimsians do not make chiefs of Tahl Tans, and, as for the fight, Ki-i gives one good fight to most men, but I must pay for the death of the Kula Kullah. He was a great chief."

"And he who slew him, greater."

"So will not men think; and the gods will punish."

That was his vein of thought, and I could not rouse him from it. After his exertions of the last few days a great reaction had set in, and I felt that I must wait

until rest had restored him to his natural strength, before I could hope to see in him his old energy.

The sun was halfway up the heavens before we drew near to a certain island on the road to Oorah, on the shores of which stood one or two deserted booths such as Indians build in the summer season ; and here we landed. It was still far to Oorah, and the men had not broken their fast since their landing at Kula Kullah, and even Indians cannot do without food altogether.

So here we beached our canoes, and the Indians set about preparing some sort of a meal, and some of the weariest of them stretched themselves on the beach or washed their wounds in the mouth of the little stream at which they filled their cans. After that, they lounged round the fires they had kindled, until Tatooch and his companions rose and stood before the Tshimsian chief.

Tatooch was the spokesman of the party, and he spoke in the Tshimsian tongue, which I did not understand, but I gathered much from his dramatic action—in which all Indians excel,—and the rest I learned later from Siyah Joe, who listened to him now with a face as set as any mask.

“Is it true, chief, that the Tshimsians have won a great victory?”

“Tatooch has seen that it is true.”

“And there are many heads to take to Oorah?”

The chief raised his hand and pointed to the canoes.

“Is it true, chief, that Tatooch and the wise man of the Tlinkits”—pointing to the silent figure in the blankets—“gave this victory to the Tshimsians?”

“It is true that Tatooch and his friends spied out the land, and led us thither whilst the Kula Kullahs slept.”

“Does the chief forget that the tree of Kula Kullah fell, as the wise man foretold that it would fall?”

Now, whether by some dark saying, which might be interpreted to mean either the fall of the tree or the clan, the impostor had made a lucky hit, or whether one of the three had made an opportunity to cut through the roots of that tree whilst they were upon the island, leaving the south-west wind to finish their work, I do not know. The former is the more probable. But at this saying I noticed that the Tshimsians, who had now crowded round the speakers, looked at one another, and looked, too, questioningly at their chief. Public opinion was in favour of the miraculous, and even a chief in the Straits of Hecate is not independent of public opinion, so this chief had to bow to the priests, and content himself with a portion only of his victory.

“The saying of Tatooch is a true saying. The tree did fall.”

“And the Tlinkit foretold its fall; and when the tree falls, the clan falls. Is it not so?”

"It was so."

"Does the chief of Oorah give no presents to his friends?"

"There shall be blankets and rifles at Oorah."

"But the chief promised. Will he not keep his promise? The wise man of the Tlinkits asks for no blankets. He has no need of rifles, and it is but one slave that he asks—a slave of the Tahl Tans;" and the scoundrel's finger pointed at Joe.

But Joe sprang to his feet, and his words came like rushing water. Talk of oratory! You should hear a native speak when he is in earnest. His voice rings with a passion to which our most fervid eloquence is cold, with a strength like the strength of the elements, whilst, if his tongue was dumb, his gestures alone would make his meaning plain.

"Did the chief believe words or deeds? Was he not himself a warrior; or was he an old woman whose tongue was stronger than his arm? Had the thing in blankets struck one stroke for Oorah? Had he set the captives of Oorah free, or had they been freed by the white man there, and himself? If the sorcerer had felled the tree of Kula Kullah, and not the south-west wind, who had felled the chief who speared men as the harpooner spears seals?"

Up to this point Joe was making splendid headway.

The chief of the Tshimsians was a man, who loved a stalwart blow better than a crafty speech; but he did

not care to be reminded, in the presence of his followers red from the battle, that he had stood back whilst a naked man of another tribe went in and slew the great Kula Kullah.

"The Tahl Tan forgets," he said, "that, but for the dead eyes of Oorah, he would be now where the Kula Kullah lies."

Tatooch saw his opportunity, and burst into a harsh laugh.

"The Tahl Tan jeers at the men of Oorah," he said. "Would he have them believe that those arms slew the Kula Kullah, whom the chief himself could not reach? He is a slave and a witch; and but for that, would have died before the Tshimsian dead turned to his aid."

In truth, Joe was but a young man still, and his lithe, spare figure, worn by hunger and fatigue, did not compare favourably with those of the brawny oarsmen round him.

"See," Tatooch went on, growing bolder, "we ask but two: the slave for the wise man and the white man for us. And you have taken five times ten heads."

"We promised but one, and will give no more."

"Then let it be the slave."

"You say he is a witch," said the chief, who was now sore put to it, between respect for his promise and, I think, an honest liking for the man who had done

so much for his tribe. "Can your wise man of the Tlinkits show the Tshimsians that this is so?"

For a moment Tatooch stood silent; but there came a murmur from the thing in blankets, and the quick-eared savage heard it, and put on a bold front again.

"The Tlinkit can do this thing," he replied.

And then he had a hurried conference with his ally, after which, returning to the circle round the chief, he announced that in one hour from then, the wise man of the Tlinkits would prove to the assembled Tshimsians that the slave, Joe, was indeed a witch—and that, not by words but by deeds. In the mean time the Tlinkit asked leave to retire to his tent, apart from the people, that he might confer with the spirits he served.

This speech pleasing the chief, whose eminently practical mind was more prepared to trust his eyes than his ears, the three were allowed to retire and pitch their tent apart, and I watched him for some time fetching bundles of different kinds from the canoe to the tent, inside which a continual droning and medley of strange sounds was kept up, the two Indians sitting like statues outside on guard.

What devilish mummery was in hand I could not tell, but my faith was strong in the scepticism of the Tshimsian chief, and I had very little fear for Joe in the approaching trial. But my faith did not affect him.

"The man who is accursed cannot be saved," he

replied to all my arguments. "You have seen, White-head, that the ice could not save us, nor the red fire that leaped on the Kula Kullah roof-tree. The spirits are stronger than men, and Joe has slept in the house of the spirits."

His mind, long sceptical with regard to the legends of his people, was breaking down, and he magnified his sojourns at the Castle Rock into an unpardonable sin which the haunting spirits must avenge.

Towards the close of the afternoon a sudden snow-squall blew up from the sea and blinded the face of Nature, patching the mossy rocks with miserable gray patches of snow which melted as it fell.

"The light goes," said Joe, "and the end comes"—and as he spoke the tent opened, and a hideous figure bounded across the beach and stood in the circle of the Tshimsians.

It was the Tlinkit, and in a moment I knew again the mask of the witch-killer, and the nodding white plumes, but the rest of the man was swathed in robes, so that not a particle of him could be seen save his long, bare arms.

Joe knew the mask, and perhaps it was the memory of another day which made him shrink before it. His action was noted, and it went against him.

I cannot stay now to describe, even if I could remember, all the mummary of the first part of that witch-trial. It was not well done, and I could see

that it wearied the chief, although the others looked on as children might at a pantomime.

"Tatooch promised us a sign of deeds," said the chief at last. "Until now we have had but words. The Tlinkit mutters words which we do not understand, and the Tahl Tan answers words which sound true."

"Then the chief shall have his sign. Let him bid the Tahl Tan stand here."

Now I so mistrusted the scoundrels that I feared lest, failing to obtain possession of Joe's body alive, they would drive a knife into him in the very midst of us, and so seal the secret of the Chicamon Stone upon his lips for ever. Therefore, when he stood up between the Tshimsians and the Tlinkit, I went and took my place beside him.

As I did so Tatooch, the spokesman, turned and looked at the masked mummer for a sign. As he made none I was allowed to remain where I was.

There was a little fire still smouldering near the stream, by which we were all camped, and upon the banks of this stream the trial was held. By the side of this fire stood one of the small "billies" which miners and prospectors use in the north. At a word from the medicine-man Tatooch emptied the cold tea from this billy, washed it out, and then, turning to the chief, said—

"The medicine-man of the Tlinkits asks the chief if

the water of this creek is good water, and harmless to true men ? ”

“The water is good water. The Tshimsians have drunk it since the gods gave them the island.”

“Then will the chief drink it now, before his people, that they may see that it is good water ? ” asked Tatooch. And stooping he let the pure stream gurgle into the top of the billy, and then held it, brimming over and dripping, to the Tshimsian.

For one moment only the chief demurred. It is possible that, in that moment of hesitation, the same suspicion crossed his brain and mine ; but from his it was soon dispelled.

Short as his hesitation was, a murmur rose from his people, as Tatooch faced him with the brimming vessel. Why should he fear ? He had seen the vessel filled before his eyes, and who would dare to harm him amongst his own warriors ?

He held out his hand, and Tatooch, pouring out a cupful of the water, handed it to him, and he drank, Tatooch passing the billy back to the medicine-man.

For a moment all eyes were on the chief. Then he said simply—

“It is good water. The Tshimsians know it.”

Then Tatooch turned to the medicine-man, who crouched still in the wide folds of his blanket behind the Indian, and held to him the cup to be refilled.

“Then if the chief says the water is good water, let

the Tahl Tan drink of it. If the water harms him not, then he is no witch, and his friends the Tshimsians shall take him back to Oorah."

The chief smiled a little grimly. He did not intend to ask the leave of these three strangers to take his man back with him. But I did not smile. I feared. For a few seconds our eyes had left the medicine-man. What had he done to the water in those few seconds?

"Don't drink, Joe, he has poisoned it!" I cried; and I put back the cup which Tatooch held to my friend.

The water in the cup swilled backwards and forwards, and all but spilled over the brim of it. If only it had quite done so! But the Indian's hand was steady, and luck was against us.

"The white man knows, and the Tahl Tan fears the trial of the gods!" sneered Tatooch. "Is the chief to be obeyed?"

The chief hesitated. He was quick-witted, and may have had a suspicion of foul play as I had; but if anything had been done, it had been so well done that it had escaped our eyes, and a murmur rose once more from his own people.

Tatooch heard it.

"The chief will not keep his word," he said insolently. "But Ki-i is stronger than the chief. See!" and with one dexterous jerk he flung the contents of the cup full into Joe's face.

With a scream of agony the Tahl Tan sprang backwards, his hands to his eyes, and I can almost think now that I indeed saw his skin smoke where the water struck him. For a moment he rolled upon the ground, tearing blindly at his face, and then rushed to the sea, as a hurt child flies to its mother's bosom. He was floundering in the waves when I caught him in my arms, and it was almost more than I could do to save him from drowning himself.

"The spirits eat my eyes! my eyes!" he screamed, struggling desperately.

And then I heard the cold, sneering voice of Tatooch ask—

"Does water burn true men or witches?"

The murmur which answered him told me the verdict of the Tshimsians. They had had their sign of deeds, and had heard the Tahl Tan's own lips condemn him.

"The spirits eat my eyes!" he had cried; and that was enough. They were but untaught men of blood, and knew nothing of the ways of the deceitful men, neither could they tell a true man from a witch, nor vitriol from honest water.

PART III.—THE BLIND MAN'S HUNT.

CHAPTER I.

It is one of the many mercies of Nature that, whereas Hope offers us the right end of the telescope, Memory reverses the glass; whence it comes that the things of the future look so large, and those of the past so infinitely small.

There is no room for details at the small end of the telescope; and I am glad that it is so, for I at any rate want no clear recollection of the days which I spent nursing Siyah Joe, after the Tshimsians had left us like wounded beasts upon the island, to die or recover from our hurts as the gods might choose.

Even those who had wrought our ill left us without further molestation, taking ship with the Tshimsians.

For if Joe was a witch, a blind witch who could not find his way to a ledge he had once seen, was not one worthy of further consideration from a practical witch-finder like Sandy Bill, who had been so long away from

Scotland, that he had probably forgotten the very name of second sight, and even if he remembered the childish superstitions of his youth, was far too level-headed a man to pay any attention to them.

Vitriol would destroy any kind of sight worth taking into the consideration of a practical prospector, and, in Joe's case, it certainly had done so; for when the first paroxysms of pain had passed, it became abundantly evident that, as he put it, "the gods had eaten out his eyes."

If I wanted to I could not take you back through those long days when Joe suffered, and I, closing my ears, waited for the pain to pass away from him. There was scarcely anything that I could do for the blinded man; but that little I did, and found perhaps more comfort in my ministrations than he did.

At the first he was a raving madman whom I had to restrain from self-destruction by sheer physical force; then the days of agonized writhings, and wild screams passed, and he lay moaning, face down upon the sand, neither eating nor speaking, and for hours together showing no signs of life whatever.

Later on I found him sitting, where at high water the sea almost wet his feet—a rock upon a rock—as rigid, as dumb, and as storm-scarred as the stones amongst which he sate; and here he remained for the rest of our stay upon the island. And whether he slept, or what he ate, I know not, for, whenever I saw him, he had the same

rigid, expressionless face turned towards the sea, and except once, he never showed that he was conscious of my presence, nor spoke word to me, from the time he took his place there until we left the island.

On the one occasion upon which he spoke, it was evening—an evening so beautifully still that you could almost hear what the sea and the little breeze were saying to one another; aye, and come very near to understanding the language in which they spoke.

“The sea say that the *Alaskan* come to-morrow, Whitehead. Do you hear it?”

“No, Joe. But she must come soon. Are you sure that the sea says to-morrow?”

“The Tahl Tan is sure. He see now the waves run from the foot of the *Alaskan*; he hear the thump, thump, of the smoke-ship coming; he see her black breath in the pines. By-and-by Whitehead see too.”

“Does Joe see anything else?”

“Ah—ah,” he answered, as if speaking to himself, “the blind witch of Tahl Tan see many things; more things, many more things than eyes see. But all dark Joe—all dark. No sun, no wind, no water that runs, no things that talk; only snow, and night coming, and the head that waits.”

I thought that he was mad; but anything was better than the dumb-madness I had endured for days, so I humoured him.

“What head, Joe?” I asked.

“The head of the dream in Kula Kullah. The head that waits by the Chicamon Stone. Whitehead will see it, and Joe will be near it then. But the smoke-ship comes to-morrow;” and with these mad words he turned his face again to sea, and his wandering mind went out into space, so that my voice seemed as little able to pass through his ears as the light to pass through his eyes.

Such a sojourn as mine upon that island is enough to turn the brain of the sanest man, and it is not wonderful that I dreamed that night that I was again on board the *Alaskan*; but it was strange that when I woke, my dream had been so vivid that I could still hear, when I woke, the stroke of a steamer’s paddle coming near to the island.

It was stranger still that when I sat up upon my bed of hard-packed sand and looked out seaward, I fancied that I could see the big white ship almost abreast of our island, and hear a voice saying—

“The *Alaskan* has come, Whitehead. Make a signal to call her to us.”

I rubbed my eyes and shook myself, to make sure that I was awake, and saw at last that the dream had been suggested by the reality. It was the stroke of a paddle-wheel which had reached my sleeping brain, and there was the *Alaskan* coming rapidly towards us.

It did not take me long, you may be sure, to rig up some sort of distress-signal; and in another quarter of

an hour a dingy had put off from the steamer and taken us both on board, Joe showing no sign of joy, or surprise, or any other emotion. He behaved all along like a man who knew the future, and was waiting for each new event. But I admit that the manner of the Boss surprised me a great deal. I knew him for a quiet, self-contained man, so easy-going that I had often wondered if anything could make him hurry, or anything stir that stolid face to passion.

I had no idea of the volcano which slept under his habitual quiet. Joe was an Indian, and the Boss did not go out of his way to show any special liking for Indians; and of this particular Indian he knew scarcely anything; but when his kind eyes rested on that seared face and its sightless orbs, when he listened to my story in the presence of the uncomplaining victim of it, I heard a great curse muttered in his brown beard, and his hand clenched upon the rail until his knuckles turned stone-white.

To Joe he said little or nothing. He seemed to me to be ashamed, as if this thing which Bill had done was that for which he, as a white man, was in some measure responsible; but he followed Siyah Joe with his eyes as he felt his way about the decks, and woe befell any man of his crew who left anything undone which could contribute to the blind man's comfort.

To me the Boss talked incessantly; and all his conversation ran one way, the way of Bill's going and the

way in which we might most quickly follow him ; and when it became obvious, even to him, that I had no more to tell, he would have a soda-water bottle slung up somewhere in the rigging, and devote himself assiduously to revolver shooting. He was always, even after many days' practice, as slow as a first-class funeral, but he became fairly sure. Unless the *Alaskan* was rolling badly the odds were against the bottle, until soda-water bottles ran out.

But, like a typical Englishman, it was business first with the Boss. Pleasure could come later (and I should have been blind, if I had not seen what that pleasure would be) ; but at first we had to go and fetch the mules from Kula Kullah, and look for anything which might remain of Ike.

The mules we found, and brought what was left of them on board, for the remnant of the Kula Kullahs had destroyed some ; but unless a pickled hand nailed to the totem-post belonged to Ike, we found no traces of him.

We had the deuce of a time with the mules. It was hard enough to catch them ; but when it came to getting them on board, I began to think that, in the elegant phraseology of the West, we had "bitten off more than we could chew."

Man's patience will, however, beat even a mule's obstinacy ; and by dint of hauling at their heads, and pushing on a bar laid across their hocks, we bundled

them one by one head over heels into a kind of loose box, which we swung on board with a derrick.

Before the poor beasts had made up their minds whether they were fish, flesh, or fowl, they were on their way to Wrangel, where, as I had expected, we found winter still reigning upon the river, in strange contrast to the spring weather of Victoria which had tempted the Boss to bring up the *Alaskan* a good six weeks before there was a chance of carrying any freight up to Glenora.

There was nothing for it but to tie up the steamer and wait for open water, make the best provision for the mules, and find some employment if possible for ourselves.

"Better come and see Mac first," suggested the boss; "he will be able to tell us something, if any one can." From the first it was evident that the boss had some plan of action ready-made, and was taking measures to carry it out.

We found Mac, as usual, amongst his dry goods and curios.

"How do, Mac? What is the news?" asked the boss, as he entered.

"Wal, that's a good 'un," replied the old man, "for a chap as has just come from Victoria. You people make the news down there. Can't you tell us of no new crik since Sherry Crik? *We* ain't even found out yet where Sherry Crik is."

"No. We aren't on the Pioneer's staff, and volunteer lying is prohibited."

"Same as aliens, who bring five dollars into the country, for every one as they find in it. Well, it's a'most a pity. We're getting tired of the same old fool kind of lies, and the same fool kind of law-makin'."

"You don't like the Alien Bill then, Mac?"

"Like it? Who would like it as wants to make money? I don't like no laws, nor no law-makers. The country would go ahead a whole heap faster if there weren't any papers or politicians. It's just laws as got Fred and Sing into trouble."

"What has happened to Fred?"

"Run in for selling whiskey, which it's been his business all the years I've knowed him, an' tried before a judge as is one of his best customers. Fred had to pay fifty greenbacks, and the judge had to keep sober—pretty nigh sober—for twenty-four hours to try him;" and the old man snorted with indignation.

"Pretty tough luck. And what is the matter with Sing?"

"Oh, Sing! Why there's been the devil to pay along of Sing. Whiskey too in his'n. He got run in to the Skookum House for the winter, same as usual, for selling forty rod to the siwashes; and then, what with the mining rush, and one thing and another, they kinder ran short on provisions and turned the old man out."

"Well, I don't see what he has got to kick about."

"Not got nothing to kick about! Why, where's he going to get his grub? It's the first time, for fifteen year, as Uncle Sam has played it as low down as that on poor old Sing. And he's a good citizen is Sing!"

We began to see that our point of view was not the common one in Alaska, so we changed our ground.

"Have you heard anything of those two prospecting fellows, Sandy Bill and his partner Luke?"

"Those two sharks? Yes. They came sneaking out maybe two weeks after you left Wrangel. Got stuck in the ice, they said. I didn't see 'em when they came out."

"Are they here now?"

"No. Bill cleared before I could get a hold of him, havin' had some kind of a fallin'-out with Luke; no shooting, but a whole heap of cuss-words; after which he pulled out in a sail-boat down the coast with them two Indians, and, just like my luck! blowed if Luke, who had figured on putting in the winter here, didn't all of a sudden make up his mind and skip for 'Frisco on the steamer."

"And is that the last you heard of them?"

"No, sir; Luke's back up the river. Seems that whilst he was in 'Frisco he located a lot of suckers, and now he's a-trailin' of 'em up the river to find my Chicamon Stone. I seed his advertisement in a Californy paper; and it says as the deep digging of the

Randt ain't in it with Captain Luke Haddows' Chicamon mother lode, and he's only chargin' of 'em two thousand dollars apiece to show it to them."

"Does he know where it is?"

"Sho, you make me sick! Know where it is! How would he? No, sir; Luke's brought the rock as he means to mine along with him: yaller-legged experts, an' Californy dudes, an' English suckers—an' pretty good rock, too. Why, allowin' as they'll go two hundred pounds apiece, his rock'll go twenty thousand dollars a ton; and that ain't bad for the Stickine, *if it don't turn refractory on him.*"

"Is there any chance of that?"

"Klunas," replied the old fellow, reverting to the siwash, which he spoke as often as he spoke English, "I don't know. He'd ought to have advertized for suckers, and he'd have made his game stick all right; but he picked these up in saloons, and such-like. They're proper suckers at mining, but there ain't much as you can teach 'em about poker and billiards, and such; and that kind is mighty apt to turn refractory when it sees its dollars goin'."

"And these fellows have gone up the river already?"

"Two weeks back come Sunday."

So far the game seemed clear enough. Bill had gone down the river to find us—with what result we knew—meaning to return in the spring to hunt up the ledge at his leisure, without any danger of finding rivals

in the field, whilst Luke, despairing of the ledge itself, had gone down to San Francisco to discount it.

For two thousand dollars a head he would tell his fairy story, and lead those who believed in it, and paid the money, to some place where he could leave them, with their dollars in his pocket.

The game is played every year, and it is a lucrative and fairly safe one, if "the rock," as Mac put it, does not "turn refractory." However Luke's game interested comparatively little.

Without the two Indians he could not find the Chicamon Stone, and even that had become a secondary consideration with us. We wanted the ledge and Sandy Bill—but Bill first for choice.

Whilst we were still undecided as to what should be done the s.s. *Amur* came into port, and the skipper being a cheery soul, and a great friend of ours, we went on board to take our evening toddy with him.

"Aren't you going up the river, captain, before she opens?" he asked the Boss.

"No, I don't think it is much good doing that," he replied, "no one else seems to be going."

"Aren't they? Well, you should know, but I half fancied that there was a strike in there; I know we put one party off at the Skeena. They were going in from Hazelton."

"Do you know who they were? Americans?"

"No, I don't think it. One was a Scotchman, I

fancy, and the other two were siwashes. I could not find out much about them; they kept their mouths pretty tightly shut; and I shouldn't have known as much as I've told you if one of the siwashes had not talked to one of my deck hands."

"Was the white man a stout-built fellow with sandy hair and light-blue, shifty eyes?" I asked, a sudden idea coming into my head.

"That's the Scotchman to a dot, and one of the Indians was called Tootoo."

"Tatooch," I said, looking at the Boss.

"May be Tatooch. I didn't take much notice. A strapping great siwash, and as ugly as a bear. Do you know them?"

"A little—not as well as we want to," growled my friend, and then added, "Good night, skipper! We had better be going or your gang-plank won't be wide enough for us."

"Nonsense! One little glass of Scotch won't upset your balance. It's no load at all for a craft your size."

"Load enough, if the craft isn't built for carrying such freight. Good night!" and, so saying, the Boss and I clambered over the side and went to consult Joe, who we found wandering about the narrow and rickety sidewalks of the siwash end of the town, alone as usual, for he held no communication with his fellows, and seemed to need no guide.

Indeed, in the strange, brooding apathy into which he had fallen since the loss of his sight, the only interest he showed was in testing the powers that remained to him, and in training himself to do without his eyes. And it was marvellous to see how far he succeeded.

His memory was not like ours, overburdened with the details of a score of useless sciences—useless, that is, for meeting our daily needs.

He could not tell you how far the sun was from the earth; his whole power of articulate utterance was limited to the knowledge of perhaps a thousand words; but, to balance this, he remembered every road he had ever trodden, so that his feet seemed to *see* their way as plainly as our eyes saw it. The touch of the wind on his cheek gave him the points of the compass and knowledge of the weather which was to come, and every voice of wood and water had a message for him full of meaning. I could almost have brought myself to believe that he might find the way to his ledge without his eyes; and it was with this thought in my head that I said to him when we met—

“Well, Joe, do you think you could find your way to the Chicamon Stone?”

“Klunas. Better if Whitehead come too. The Chicamon Stone will pay him well, but Sandy Bill goes fast.”

“Which way does Bill go?”

"Siyah Joe cannot see the way ; but all trails go to the water, and the hunter who waits by the water kills the buck."

"Is the water the Chicamon Stone?"

"Nawitka."

"And you think Bill is going to the Chicamon Stone?"

"Bill, and Lone Goose, and Tatooch. Luke go too. Only Bill get there. He say one time he get there, and he get there sure. When will Whitehead start?"

"To-morrow," said the Boss by my side ; and though I dared not have pressed it, I was glad to hear him say so.

"There is no reason why I should stay by the boat," he went on, as if to himself. "Bob is due now any day to take charge, and I don't mean to hang round camp this season anyhow. But are you sure, Joe, you can find the ledge?"

"How does white man find his way on the Skookum Chuk (ocean)?"

"By using the charts."

"All the same pictures? Hyas kloosh. Picture stop here ;" and he tapped his forehead. "Joe tell white man what picture say, and white man find the Chicamon Stone. But we must go quick, Bill is long ways in front ;" and the mask began to fall from the Indian's face, which twitched with repressed excitement.

"Do you want the gold now, Joe? I thought you

didn't care for it. You could have had it long ago."

"No, no; Indian want no gold. Indian want to see the place of his dream. And then no more dreams. Sleep, sleep;" and as he spoke a veil seemed to fall again upon his face, the light went out of it, and only the empty husk of a man stood beside us.

Two days later the Boss, Joe, and I crossed to the Stickine, with dogs and enough food to last us as far as Glenora, even if the wind continued to blow downstream, as it had been blowing, for another month. I wanted to take some more men with us, but neither he nor the Indian would hear of it.

"You and I, Whitehead, can manage Bill and his friends," said the Boss; and Joe seemed to think that neither of us would be needed.

We had to meet Bill; after that Fate would take charge of the rest.

Before I started for that winter journey up the great river, I thought that I knew what the world looked like at its wildest. I had seen it in its moods of storm, and I had peered into some of its most desolate waste-chambers, but I had hitherto only seen a live world. I had no notion what the moon must look like, dead with cold, lonely and lost in space. As I set foot on the winter roadway to Cassiar, I caught a glimpse of Nature in her tomb, and the awe of it struck me dumb.

At home, back east in Canada, I had in my time seen

plenty of snow ; and had found it a dust of diamonds in the morning sunshine ; a silver setting for bare trees ; a deep, soft carpet for the sleigh to glide over to the tune of merry bells, or, at the worst, when night fell, just drear enough to heighten the sense of comfort round the ruddy hearth.

There, snow suggested life and frolic (there was always enough of both to make the snow but a pleasant foil to them) ; but here was no life except our own, and that seemed an outrage and an impertinence in the face of the great white death in the midst of which we stood.

At the mouth of the Stickine, statisticians tell us that the snowfall is sometimes twelve feet deep, and the thermometer registers fifty degrees below zero.

I don't know what this conveys to most minds. Probably as little as a statement of the myriads who people Asia. There are some things of which a comprehension cannot be conveyed by mere print. They must be seen and felt to be understood, and of these is the real winter of the north.

Men talk of "dying of cold" who have never been within ten degrees of frost-bite. How much can they know of that cold hand which thrusts right in to heart and brain and holds them still ? or of such a winter scene as that we saw ? Round us there were no delicate trceries of frost, no plumes of snow. Those are for English winters, or Christmas cards.

The rocks we had passed on our way to the river's mouth were hung with icicles as thick as trees, or so sheeted with ice that they looked like glaciers rather than frozen rocks.

The earth itself was not so much covered with snow as that there was no earth, and no indication of it, except here and there the top of a black pine from which the wind had torn its shroud, so that it stood out in sharp contrast to the smothering whiteness in which its fellows stood waist-deep, and under the load of which now and again a great tree snapped with the sound of a cannon-shot.

But for these occasional reports this dead world was dumb in its misery; every pulse had ceased to throb, the very heart of it was stilled.

We talk of the silence of the night and of the tomb!

In the tomb there must be the sound of those who pass overhead; the pulses of the earth, and the stir of growing things in the ground; and as for the night, it is full of voices, though they may not be familiar to the children of the day.

But on the frozen river there was no sound nor any movement, not even cloud-shadows to chase one another over the snow, or a wind to drive them and moan amongst the trees.

The only trace of life was in a tiny, thread-like track, which went away and away to the north, until, to the eyes which followed it, the dazzling whiteness of the

distance turned to a weird electrical blue, not proper to any world in which life exists.

Over this track Joe was busy. Both of us had stood dazed on landing, our whole minds absorbed in sight; but Joe could not see, and his fingers and feet told him more than our eyes told us.

"Plenty men go up here," he said, fingering the hard-beaten trail. "Some wear snow-shoes; some tchee tchakos (newcomers) wear boots. By-and-by their feet freeze; we see *them* soon."

"Better camp now and start to-morrow morning," I suggested, feeling loath to leave the neighbourhood of men.

"What for? Travelling good now, and we have far to go."

Of course he was right. So we started, led by a blind man, into a dead world.

CHAPTER II.

It was nearly two o'clock in the afternoon when that hunt began, and the shadows were already falling heavily; but the snow was so hard and firm under our feet, that if the Boss and I had been as expert upon snow-shoes as the average man of the country, we should have covered many miles before nightfall.

But we were not experts—indeed, we were but novices—and, in spite of our length of limb and good training, we found it impossible to keep pace with the Indian, although, when we had once started, we appreciated to the full that invigorating quality of the northern air which makes many men love it more than all the soft breezes of the south.

As for the Indian, he ran like a man in a nightmare. The dogs of course led him and kept the trail; but it seemed to me that, had there been no dogs, he would have run just as surely. For a month it had seemed as if every faculty in him lay dormant; but, now that his feet were on the snow, and his lungs inhaled

the icy atmosphere of his home, he woke to feverish life.

He ran like a hound with the scent breast-high. His sightless orbs strained painfully at the distance; his coarse black hair, cropped short in Wrangel, bristled like a dog's hackles; and he ran mute. He was running for blood.

In the burning desire to reach his enemy he seemed to know nothing of physical conditions. Cold did not bite him; hunger could not reach him; he knew nothing of weariness, and, I verily believe, that knowing not the day from the night, and absorbed as he was in his one idea, that man would have run from the mouth of the river to the head of navigation, without camping; but we were white men, and not built upon Siyah Joe's lines.

For a couple of hours or more, on that first day, I endured torture. Of course I saw nothing of the world I was passing through. I had no time to waste in looking about me, nor had I the power to look if I had had the time. The keen air whistled in my eyes, and the lashes of them became clubbed with icicles; my thick, hot breath was caught and frozen solid in my beard; and a blanket, swathed round my head and shoulders and belted at my waist, shut all sound from my ears, and restricted my view to the few yards of trail immediately about my feet.

Swish! swish! went the shoes in front of me, and

swish! swish! mine answered them; and with the unfaltering regularity of clock-work the legs, which I could only see from the knees downwards, swung left right, left right, hour after hour just three yards ahead of me.

As far as I was concerned nothing in the whole world mattered that afternoon, except those automatically worked legs. My whole duty was to make mine move in time to them, my one hope was to see them stop. My own feet were in agony from the unaccustomed bandages of the snow-shoes; there was no breath left in my body; I was too far gone to even feel sorry for myself.

I had been so driven from pillar to post, in the last twelve months, that I ceased to worry myself by thinking, or rebelling against my lot. I was just a fly on the wheel, and knew it; and knew that I could not make the wheel go the other way. But I was none the less heartily thankful when the Boss cried, "Halt!"

It was the first word that had been spoken since we started, and I think it was the most pleasant sounding word I ever heard.

"Time to camp now, Joe," he said, and, without looking to see what sort of a spot we had come to, I sank in the snow where I was and gasped for breath.

As I did so the Boss collapsed beside me.

"Good Heavens, Whitehead! if that is the pace the fellow means to go, I can't last a day."

"He hasn't stopped yet, either," I gasped; but as the words left my lips the Indian became conscious that no one was following him, and turned back sullenly enough to join us.

For a moment he stood sulkily brooding, and then, I suppose, he realized that if he wanted us to go through with him, he would have to nurse our strength a little, for he called the dogs to him, and began unharnessing them while we rested. But we did not rest for long; it was a great deal too cold for that. As soon as we ceased to sweat, our bodies began to freeze, and we went at the axe-work as if it were a luxury.

Even at that the blind man was as handy as either of us. We found and felled the dry sticks for him, and he cut them into lengths, although you would have expected to see him take his own foot off at every stroke of the axe. In fixing the camp the blind man was master of the proceedings.

If I had not to sleep in it, I should like to see what kind of a camp a *bonâ fide* tenderfoot would make for himself in a Stickine snow-bank.

Given the gloom of coming night, an indefinite number of feet of snow everywhere, the thermometer anywhere below zero, every tree robed in snow and sheeted in ice—what, gentle reader, would you be inclined to do about it with an axe, some matches, and a blanket to help you?

What we did, under Joe's directions, was to build a

huge fire first against a bank, so that none of the heat of it should be wasted in the wintry world beyond ; then we carpeted our camp with thickly-piled pine-brush and set up our tents—not as tents, for those are cold things which keep in the frost and keep out the fire, but as flies : great reflectors which catch the light and the heat, and throw them back upon you lying between the flies and the blazing logs.

But even when we had done all that experience has taught men to do to make the best of such conditions, that first night of winter on the Stickine was a bitter experience for me. The Indian, rolled in his blankets and lying on the very edge of the fire, slept soundly enough ; but I dared not crawl as near the burning logs as he had done, nor had I the knack of turning my blankets into such a weatherproof chrysalis as he had made of his.

At first I made a stern resolve to lie still. If I only could do that, I thought that in time I must sleep, and, to induce sleep, I recited to myself the longest recitation I had ever learned in my schoolboy days ; but though I did this, until the words had lost their meaning, sleep would not come. I grew utterly restless, and scratched myself furiously to get warm ; I rose and made the fire up ; I tried a new plan with my blankets ; I piled the snow over them ; I lay and counted the stars ; I tried to persuade myself that I really was asleep, and the cold and misery only part

of an evil dream. But it was all to no purpose. My efforts at stoking helped the others, nothing I could do was of any use to myself.

That night I made the moon my timepiece, and, I fancy, from the distance she had swung across the heavens, that it must have been somewhere midway between dusk and dawn when the silence was broken by a faint, grinding sound. At first this was far away up-stream; but the night was deadly still, and the sound grew clearer every moment. Whatever it was that made the sound, it was coming our way.

At first I could only hear it at intervals; but, after a time, it became continuous: an even scratch, scratch; and, after a while, this sound was repeated, and repeated again at a greater distance, as if echoes followed it from up-stream.

I sat up and looked round, and saw that the blind man was also sitting up, listening. He too had heard the sound, but the Boss slept on unconcernedly. He was away in dreams far enough, I expect, from the Stickine River.

Very soon the noises came closer to us and to each other. Those who made them could only have been just out of sight, round the next bend in the river, when the sound that led, and the echoes that followed it, came as it were together, and were blended in a rush and a scramble. Then there was a short, sharp cry, so sudden and so unexpected and so quickly

hushed that my ears had not time to decide whether it was the cry of a man or of a beast, and then the stars throbbed again through an unbroken silence.

"What was it, Joe?" I asked; but he sat silent, still listening.

"Was it men?" I persisted.

"Halo comtax."

"Was it wolves?"

"Perhaps wolves kill a deer," he answered. But it did not seem to me as if he spoke like one who believed in his own words; and when I last saw him he was still listening, every nerve strained to hear, and at another time I might have wondered at so much interest in such an everyday tragedy of the forest.

But my turn had come.

If Joe was sleepless now, my turn had come to slumber, and, before he lay down again, the blessed unconsciousness of sleep had stolen over me, and I cared no more for cold, or wolves, or weariness.

But in the winter the story of the forest and stream is written on a white sheet, plain for all folks to read; and beyond the turn in the river I read next morning, in large print, the record of last night's doing. The raspings I had heard had been the raspings of snowshoes, and there had been many of them—four pairs at the least.

Here, you could see, one pair had been racing by themselves, and had made a false turn; there, were

the tracks of three other pairs, packed close together, and following the first.

For the most part they had all kept to the beaten track, but here and there they had missed it, either because the shadows had hidden the track, or for some other reason; and here it was that the story was written most plainly.

It was three following one: a hunt, so it seemed; but not of wolves, or deer; until at last the snow-writing came to a full stop in a wild and illegible trampling, as if a band of cariboo had been "milling" there.

We turned, and looked to the Indian for an explanation, and, though he was blind, he seemed to understand, and answered with apparent reluctance.

"Halo wolves. Men."

"What men? Luke and his party?"

"How can Indian know? Halo nannich (he does not see)."

"It must have been some of Luke's party," said the Boss.

"Perhaps Luke; perhaps wood-cutters. White men cutting cord-wood for steamers by-and-by."

"What would wood-cutters be doing here at night?"

"All the same, Luke. What would Luke do here at night? I think wood-cutters cultus coolie (go for a walk) perhaps."

Now that any one should go for a stroll ("cultus coolie") at the dead of night, in the depth of winter,

was so obviously ridiculous that we knew Joe was not telling us his real opinion, unless he had lost his wits as well as his eyesight; but having no better explanation to offer, we held our peace.

"See," he added, touching another line of tracks, which for a space left the beaten trail, "they have gone back up the river."

"Where to?"

"How can Indian tell? To camp, I suppose. If Whitehead want to know, better cladawa hyak. Talk no good;" and so saying he swung forward again, guiding himself as surely by his stick and his feet as we could with our frost-closed eyes.

The Boss, who said nothing, gave me a look, and stopped to fasten his snow-shoes. I stopped beside him.

"Joe doesn't want to see those fellows," he said.

"It seems not. But why?"

"Had you any fire when you heard them last night?"

"A huge one. I was too cold to let it die down."

"Do you think that they could have helped seeing it?"

"No. They must have seen it.

"Then why did they turn back?"

"Because they saw it, perhaps."

"You think that they did not want to see us, any more than Joe wants to see them?"

"Exactly. But I don't understand Joe."

"I think I do. His blood is up, and he does not want to change foxes. He is hunting Bill, and doesn't mean to stop until he runs him to ground at the Chicamon Stone. But it makes no matter. I have an idea that this hunt is going to be managed for us, somehow."

It was an odd speech to come from the Boss, but the same idea had seized upon me. In the vastness of our surroundings I had long since begun to yield up my own individual will, and to submit to being driven whither Fate listed.

I was just a machine, which moved forward mechanically, seeing little but the track under my feet, and hearing only the hard-drawn breath of my companions, or the occasional crash of some great tree which split at last under a load too great for it to bear.

It was nearly night-time again, and I was beginning to regard each snowbank we passed as a possible camping-ground, when the master of the hunt called another check.

The Indian was still running in the lead when the trail divided: one branch of it going slightly to the left, the other as slightly to the right. Joe stopped, undecided which of the two branches he should take. That to the left was the most worn and the widest, that to the right, perhaps, more in accordance with his idea of the right direction. The difference in direction

was so small that even his memory was not enough to decide the matter without the aid of his sight. He turned to us for guidance for the first time.

"Which way?" he said; "nika halo nannich."

Now at this point it was not easy even for us, who saw, to decide with any certainty. Two roads opened before us, and each looked like the main course of the river; but we knew that one of them must be a slough, or part of an old course of the river, from which it had been diverted by the silting up of its bed, possibly followed by a heavy growth of timber thereon, whilst the other was the bed down which the Stickine still ran.

Through the whole course of the river there are hundreds of such sloughs, and it is easy enough for a man who can see to run his head into a *cul de sac*.

I was just going to give the Indian such help as I could, when the Boss gripped my arm.

"Let him decide," he whispered; and though I wondered, I obeyed him.

"Nika tum tum this one," he said doubtingly, touching the right-hand trail with his stick.

We did not answer him.

"Can't Whitehead see?" he asked peevishly.

"I can see, Joe, but I cannot tell. The wood is thick in front on both trails. Perhaps it is a bend; perhaps it is blocked—I can't tell; both go nearly the same way."

"Only one goes the right way," he answered; and

kneeling down, began to feel first one trail and then the other with his hands, cursing savagely to himself, I suppose at the loss of sight, which made him dependent upon two such fools as we must have seemed to him.

The left-hand trail was the widest and the most worn, and the dogs seemed inclined to take it. If I was any judge it was the wrong trail for that very reason, and if Joe had been master of his mind he would have probably agreed with me. For it was natural that the dogs should want to follow the freshest trail of man, and if this trail led to a camp which had been made for many days, it was not unnatural that it should be more worn than the trail of the monthly post.

But as I have suggested before, Joe was, I think, only guiding whither he himself was led, and after a few minutes of hesitation took the broad trail.

On this we ran for ten minutes, and the winding of it, after the first bend was passed, made him hesitate again. Then I saw ahead of us, in a thick bunch of pines, a cloud of blue smoke, and I think that Joe's nostrils smelled the fire as soon as I saw it.

"No good," he said, stopping; "wrong road."

But it was too late to turn back then.

"It's time to camp, Joe, anyway," said the Boss; "and as there is a fire in front, we may as well go to it and see who is there."

"Better not," urged the Indian; "we don't know who is there."

"All the more reason that we should go and find out;" and with no more ado he went to the front, and I followed him, leaving the Indian and the dog-sleighs standing where they were.

Sooner or later he would follow us, we supposed, but indeed we did not then stop to think. I obeyed the Boss, and, I suppose, he obeyed some impulse of his own: a desire to camp and save himself the trouble of cutting his own firewood, as likely as not.

But we had both of us been too long in the woods to make an unnecessarily unceremonious entry where we were not expected.

A sudden noise sends a frontiersman's hand to his gun, and no one wants a stranger too close to him in the woods until he knows a little about him. Remembering these things, and being cautious men, we kept in the shadow of the pines by the edge of the slough instead of running along the broad trail in full view of the camp; and so trod that the snow gave no warning of our approach.

Night, which comes suddenly in the north, had fallen on the pines almost as we looked. The bushes, whose limbs we had seen a few minutes before on the edge of the ice, were now drowned in a gulf of inky darkness. Indeed, the whole forest was whelmed in it, except the tops of the tallest pines, and these were

gradually being lit by the pale silver of the rising moon.

Slowly and carefully we crept along under the shadows until we could hear the voices of men talking round the camp-fires; nor had we any notion that we ourselves were being followed by one more silent-footed than ourselves.

Though we waited and looked back for him more than once, we saw nothing of the blind Indian; and when at last we came well within earshot, and in full sight of the stranger's camp, we crouched down to make our reconnaissance, in the full belief that he was still behind with the dogs.

It would be time enough to call him when we knew what manner of men these were.

CHAPTER III.

"THERE'S Atkinson dead, all of us fooled, two frost-bitten, let alone Spot Harris there, who's bound to lose his feet, even if we ever get him out of this cursed country—which don't seem certain."

"Nor any ways likely, if you ask me."

The words came to us in the darkness as clearly as if we had been standing in the ring of firelight where they were spoken.

"Wal, it ain't the sort of certainty as old Spot there used to bet on—leastwise, not for him," the first voice went on, coolly; "but what we're at now is, what are we going to do about it? Is this sharp going to swing, or isn't he? If a gent kills another gent, not on the square, he swings. That's law. If he kills ten, it seems to me that he has a ten times better right to swing. Now this here Luke caught us for suckers in 'Frisco. He's pouched the swag. One on us has gone under already, and last night he tried to skin out, leavin' the rest of us to do ditto. Ain't that murder?"

At this point I crept a little more forward, and pushed back the brush so that I could see, as well as hear, what was going on. All about us was a sea of blackest gloom, from which rose the tops of the taller bushes, touched here and there by the light of the two great fires, which made a lurid spot in the heart of the night.

Round these fires sat a score, more or less, of the most desperate-looking characters I ever set eyes on: ragged, bearded, and worn with hardship, which had told heavily upon constitutions already sapped by vicious living, and long unused to physical privations.

An ordinary "hard fist" looks a sufficiently "tough citizen," but his rags sit upon him naturally. Born to his manner of life, he knows how to make the best of it; but these men were not of the hard fist's guild. Two months ago nine out of ten of them had been sleek, fat citizens, bull-throated, soft-handed, and showily clad. Now their faces had fallen in, their plump bodies had shrunk away, their beards had grown over their faces in wisps and patches, whilst their town clothes had melted away in the brush. Greed had made them bold at first, and now misery and disappointed avarice had made them mad.

Most of them were sitting in a semi-circle round the larger of the two fires; by the other fire sat the rest of them, a blanket spread between them and the snow, on which a dirty pack of cards had been dealt. Near

this group lay a roll of blankets and bedding, which writhed now and again, punctuating the speeches with groans and curses, whilst in the middle of the firelight stood the principal speaker, a square-built fellow with a dark, Jewish face, under a peaked cap such as American yachtsmen wear.

For the moment the card-players had abandoned their game, and all sat smoking or chewing, with their faces turned to the Jew. From the look of things you might have guessed that an auction of miner's effects was taking place.

"I guess Soapy has about sized up the situation," said one.

"Pretty well. But what about the Chicamon mother lode?" asked another.

"There ain't no mother lode," retorted the Jew—"any fool can guess that—except in the pockets of our pants. That's the lode as he meant to mine."

"You ain't proved that, Soapy," said a weak-faced man, who had not spoken before; "we saw his rock."

"As come from Californy, same as you did!" sneered the Jew. "Are *you* standing in with Luke on this deal?"

The speaker's eyes glittered dangerously, and they cowed the timid objector. It required more courage than he possessed to appear for the defence in this court of the woods.

"If the cursed fool hadn't have tried to skin out

last night, I'd have been agin stringing him up yet," drawled a grey-bearded man, spitting meditatively into the embers. "There might have been an Indian, and he might have gone back on him. There's no telling."

"Your head's level, Peterson," said the spokesman, in a more conciliatory tone than he had used to the others; "but when he tried to skin out he showed his hand. There ain't no Indian, and there ain't no Chicamon mother lode. It's a fake from start to finish."

"Seems like it," the other assented.

"Then what's the use in foolin' any longer? If he gets another show, he may make it down to Wrangel, with our wad of greenbacks in his pockets."

"To drink the 'ealth of the stiff 'uns on the Stickine," laughed one of the card-players.

"Well, mates, you've got the fire, and can go on gassin' if you've a mind to till midnight. I've stood here as long as I want to. All I want to know is, is it to be swing or shoot?"

"Shoot?"

"Yep! I said shoot!" snapped the Jew, turning on Luke's half-hearted advocate. "You can let this sharp go, if you've a mind to; but if you don't hang, I shoot. No man gets away with Soapy's dollars if he knows it; and this here shoots more'n once;" and he drew a revolver and tapped it significantly with his forefinger.

The counsel for the prosecution was in earnest, and a laugh which greeted his last argument showed that

he understood his jury. The crowd round him had endured so much misery, in the last month, that no member of it had any pity left for his fellows, much less for the common enemy. For the last few minutes, one of the men who had been gambling, had been fidgeting impatiently with the cards. Now he spoke.

"Say, Soapy, ain't that sermon of yours pretty nigh preached? Me and my friends don't want to hurry Mr. Luke none, but we're mighty anxious to go on with our game."

"How'd it be to ask Luke hisself? He's a pretty good sport, and wouldn't want to spoil fun," suggested another.

"It would make the vote unanimous, perhaps," sneered one. "And when a gent's a candidate for such an elevated position, it would be just as well if the vote were all one way."

"Quit foolin'!" snapped the spokesman. "Is any one agin hangin' him?" and he handled his revolver ominously.

There was silence for a moment, and then the old man said, "Take a vote. It would be more regular."

"That's so. Now, gents, them as is in favour of doin' justice on the prisoner, signify the same, in the usual way, by holdin' up their hands."

All hands went up at once, with the exception of those of the man who had asked for proof of the non-existence of the lode. Even the bundle of blankets,

which swathed the misery of Spot Harris, rolled over and showed a couple of mitts in favour of the hanging.

"There's one gent back of the fire there, as I don't seem to see very well. His head's clear enough," drawled the Jew, indicating the head with the barrel of his pistol. "But I'm in doubt whether I can see his hands or not. Are you with the meetin', sir, or for the prisoner?"

The red light flickered on the pistol-barrel; that remained steady enough; and the other man seeing it, put up his hand. He had no wish to share Luke's fate. The spokesman put his pistol back into his hip pocket.

"I congratulate this meetin' as bein' regular, and unanimous. Boys, fetch up the prisoner."

At his word two of the party rose, and, leaving the fireside, stepped into the gloom where the light from it was quenched.

They had not apparently far to go. For a few minutes we heard them without seeing them; and then three figures stood up indistinctly on the edge of the shadows under a great pine—one blasted limb of which leaned out over the meeting, white in the moonlight, which now bathed the tops of the highest of the trees.

I looked up at it involuntarily, and the unconsciousness of Nature smote me with a chill. The sky was as hard and inscrutable as the face of the sphinx, and the stars seemed to have a malicious twinkle in them.

From the limb itself hung something like a streamer of beard moss, but in the breathless calm of the night it looked strangely rigid for beard moss.

Later on I knew that it was not beard moss; but, strange as it may seem to my readers, I had in my mind at that moment no fear of immediate violence. Neither, I think, had the Boss. The whole scene was so unreal, the actors so unconcerned and commonplace, that I could not bring myself to believe that a question of life or death was actually being discussed before our eyes.

"Will I take the gag off him?" asked one of the three in the shadows.

"What's your will, gents?"

"It's according to rules to hear what he has to say."

"Then take it off, but hitch the line on. I don't want another trip down the Stickine to-night, and I guess there's only one here as does."

There was a pause whilst two of those in the shadows fumbled with the man between them. Whatever they were doing, he offered no resistance. When they were ready the Jew spoke again.

"Luke Haddon, you've heerd what these gents have to say agin you?"

"Not a word," replied a voice I recognized. I had heard it first in old Mac's store at Wrangel.

"How's that?"

"I've heard you gassin', Scapy. You haven't given

any one else a chance. Seems to me you're running this show alone."

The Jew flinched. He wanted the others to share in the deed, even if he prompted it.

"Do you say as you aren't guilty?"

"Of what?"

"Of leadin' twenty innocent men into this cursed place to die of cold or starve."

The speaker in the shadows laughed.

"Innocent men is good," he said, "and starvin' ain't bad, with all them canned goods around. But it *is* cold. Couldn't you hurry up a bit? or let me stand by the fire till you're ready?"

An evil look came into the Jew's face, and his thin lips parted so that the firelight gleamed on his white teeth; but as he lifted his hand as a signal to the other two, the old man Peterson sprang up.

"Hold hard!" he said. "Luke's right. You're running this show a bit too much, Soapy; and I want to ask the prisoner a question."

The other half-opened his lips to reply; but for some reason or other the old man had the authority, and Soapy yielded to it.

"You'il allow, Luke," he said, "as your game's about played out?"

The other made no answer.

"An' I guess it may as well come to a show down. Is there such a thing as the Chicamon mother

lode? It won't hurt you none to make a clean breast of it."

"There is."

"Do you know where it is?"

"I told you first and last as I didn't, ever since we got to Wrangel."

"That isn't what you told us at 'Frisco."

"No; but I told you plenty time enough. The Indian knows where it is."

The man spoke as coolly as if he was discussing an ordinary business transaction. There was not a tremor in his voice, and, though I did not realize how near his danger was, I could not help admiring his iron nerve. Rascals you can find in plenty in the West (and elsewhere), but cowards there, are peculiarly uncommon.

"Where is the Indian?"

"I wish I knew; like enough at Glenora with Sandy Bill. Look here, Peterson, there's twenty of you, and I'm alone and roped, and you know the game I've played on you. I know I haven't a show, and I don't care a whole heap. I always calculated to pay in my chips when I lost; but, so help me God! the Chicamon Stone is no fake, and if we can find the Indian we can find the ledge. If you do for me you get back what's left of your dollars, but you can't find the Indian and you can't find the ledge."

It was his last bid for life, and he made it boldly,

and, but for one man's vindictiveness, he might still have prevailed.

For one moment, a wave of hesitation ran through the meeting; then a cold, sneering laugh jarred on the silence.

"Goin' to let him fool you agin, gents? Well, you are suckers! Why don't you tell 'em you've got your Indian staked somewhere's handy, Luke? They'd swaller it."

Luke made no answer.

"Give him a week to find the Indian," suggested the weak-faced man, who had at first refused to put up his hands.

It was his last effort for the prisoner, and, as the Jew turned on him, he slunk away from the fire. It was the last we saw of him.

"And let him peach on us at Glenora! Luscombe's there; and there's one or two of us knows Luscombe as well as we want to."

"That's a bit too thin, Luke," said Peterson, meditatively. "Can't you make it anywhere nearer than Glenora? Roped and watched, we might manage to give you another week; but you can't expect us to head a deputation with you to the gold commissioner. Can't you find him nearer than that?"

Another man might have grasped at this or any other straw, and lied for the sake of another day or two of misery, because it was life; but Luke was not of that

kidney. He had no taste for another week of cold and bondage; he had played his last card and faced his losses.

"How the devil do I know!" he said fiercely. "The siwash may be within a hundred yards of you, but if he is where he ought to be, he's at Glenora. And what's the use in foolin'? If I showed him to you, you wouldn't keep your word. That black-faced dog has got it in for me."

He little knew how prophetic his words were. In any case they sentenced him.

"Is there anything else any gent would like to say?" sneered Soapy; "there's no hurry."

No one spoke, so he turned to Luke. "Hev you any more to say?"

"Well, no; I guess the world owes every man a livin', and I tried to make mine out of you. You are fools, the whole lot of you; but it's luck, not play, as wins. My bluff hasn't worked. You take the pot; but I wish you'd hurry up. It's damned cold standin' around here."

I have been blamed so often since for what we did not do, that I am afraid that, although I have set down, as nearly as my memory will serve me, the very words of these desperate men, I have not conveyed to my reader's minds the absolutely calm matter-of-fact way in which Luke and his judges spoke.

If they had been arguing the merits of an execution

reported in the *Colonist*, they would have done it more heatedly than they did here in the black shadow of the pines.

The end came with a suddenness as startling as the trial had been commonplace.

“Is it a go, mates?” asked the Jew; and the men round the fire bowed their heads, and most of them took their pipes out of their mouths.

The roll of blankets raised itself, and looked up; the red light of the fire fell on its white, wasted features.

“Let him go!” cried the spokesman, kicking a log in the fire as he spoke; and the log, happening to be rich in resin where it fell on the red embers, blazed out in a great stream of light, which drove back the shadows, until I saw Luke’s features clearly for a moment.

He stood calm and nonchalant as if he were taking a drink at the bar. But just as the rope tightened, I saw a new look come into his face, his eyes strained at something beyond the second fire—something which the blazing log had but just revealed; he tried convulsively to raise one of his pinioned hands, and I heard distinctly, “The Indian!”

The rest was cut short by the strangling cord, and, in another second, he was jerked out of the lurid glow of the firelight, through the black shadows into the hard, brilliant light of the arctic moon; and after one

short struggle, hung, his head sunken forward on his chest, from the blasted limb of the great pine.

And the firelight danced and reddened over the sightless face of Siyah Joe, standing on the edge of the camp. Luke had shown them the Indian, and they had not kept their word.

I had no time to wonder what brought him there, no time to think of him, or anything else.

As Luke shot up to his high position, there was a shout and a crash in the brush by my side, and the Boss went by me like a flash, into the middle of them. Bare-headed and furious, with a knife in his hand, he charged through the camp, straight for the gallows; and though the fear of God had no weight with them, the fear of this one man scattered the murderers, for one moment, as wind scatters dry leaves, so that he almost won to the foot of the tree.

But only for a moment. In my haste, clumsy as I was upon my snow-shoes, I tripped, and came down headlong almost into one of the fires. When I struggled to my feet I saw two of the men close with the Boss. One was the Jew. He fell like a pole-axed ox, and I wish that the Boss had struck with the knife instead of with his clenched left hand; but he was true to his training, and he had other work for the knife to do.

Not even pausing to shake off his second assailant, he carried him with him to the foot of the pine, and

with one swift stroke cut the rope so that the body of Luke came down with a rush from amongst the stars, and fell with a dull thud upon the snow, where it rolled over and lay as it fell.

Too late! Man's mercy was slower than man's justice. All that was worth saving—if it was worth saving—in that lump of clay, had gone; and at the moment it seemed as if we were likely to follow it, for with a rush the whole pack of rascals was upon us.

Then it was that the Boss's readiness of resource showed through his habitual phlegm.

Rushing at one of the leaders, he seized him by the throat and yelled to me—

“In the name of the law, seize them, boys! seize them! Ho, Luscombe!—Luscombe, quick!”

It was the name most dreaded on the Stickine River. The name of that courtly, quiet, precise chief of police I had met on my first journey up the river; and it worked like a charm.

Every head turned to see who was coming; and a crashing in the brush, and a shot which sang high overhead, completed the panic. It was only our dogs in the brush, only blind Joe who fired high at a venture; but it did the trick. No one stopped to see Luscombe and his stout constables come upon the scene.

The man whom the Boss had gripped, wrenched himself free (I doubt if he could have done so, had

the Boss wanted to hold him); and in a minute there was only the roll of blankets left on the trampled snow, and that was trying to crawl painfully away into the brush.

"Shoot, Whitehead, shoot!" hissed the Boss, firing himself recklessly in all directions, "and follow." And I did as I was bid; and I heard Joe's rifle ringing down by the river.

His must have been dangerous shooting, if there was any one in range of him, for his bullets were in the hands of Fate—and Fate, like Joe, is blind.

But when we reached the river, the greater part of those who had lately sat in judgment on one man were far enough away, strung out like startled wild-fowl: most of them going south down the river trail, though one small bunch of fugitives, who had (so we thought) lost their heads, could be seen struggling upstream towards Glenora. When we had fired a round or two after them, just to keep them moving (as the Boss said), the night swallowed them up; silence settled on the river and in the pines; and we went back to camp alone, but for the dead man and the footless thing in the blankets.

In camp we found Siyah Joe sitting by the body of Luke. He was cutting a notch on the butt of his Winchester.

CHAPTER IV.

AT first the Boss and I sat very silent round Luke's camp-fire. Events had happened so rapidly that we badly needed time to think, and there was more than enough to think about. As for myself, I don't mind confessing that I kept my head over my shoulder, and my ears very wide open indeed. Every bush that creaked in the wind suggested the stealthy approach of a foe; every shadow made by a swinging bough sent my hand to my Winchester.

It was bad enough to know that we had nearly a score of enemies at large somewhere in the forest—enemies who would stick at nothing if they knew that we were unsupported; with no friends nearer than Wrangel; but it was even worse to think of that indistinct figure prone upon the snow, round which the shadows were gathering ever thicker and thicker; or of that other which still moved in the blankets by the fire.

Common humanity required that we should do something for Spot Harris, but there was very little

which men like ourselves could do. A very short examination of his condition convinced us that no one but a surgeon could be of much help to him. Both his feet were severely frost-bitten, and the knife would have to be applied with very little loss of time if it was to prevent mortification spreading beyond his knees. A cripple he must be all his life, even if his life could be saved.

"That means a journey back to Wrangel the first thing to-morrow morning," said the Boss, when our examination was over. "If we are lucky enough not to run into any of Luke's party, we may manage to get him back the day after to-morrow."

"What for?" asked the Indian, who had been listening intently. "He die pretty soon."

The poor wretch must have heard him, or so I gathered, from the movement of the blankets.

"Rubbish! If we can get him down to Wrangel a surgeon will soon fix him up all right."

"Halo! Medicine-man halo give him new legs. He halo walk any more; halo hunt any more; halo travel. What for live any more? Boss leave him here—pretty soon die."

We tried to explain to Joe the duty we owed to our fellow-man, the necessity of saving even a crippled life; but it was in vain; the Indian could not see it. This man was an enemy, therefore we ought to kill him. If he had been a friend, crippled as he was, it

might have been our duty to pile our robes over him and smother him, that he might die easily ; as it was, if we had not sufficiently strong hearts to kill him, we could at least leave Nature to save us the trouble. It was no business of ours any way, and certainly we could not be mad enough to give up our hunt to enable a useless cripple to live a little longer.

"Suppose Whitehead go back," he concluded, "Siyah Joe go on alone."

"Siyah Joe can do what the devil he pleases!" retorted the Boss, savagely ; "but if the man's alive to-morrow morning we take him back to Wrangel."

For a moment the Indian's lips moved, but he said nothing that I could hear ; and we left him crouching over the fire, brooding, I suppose, on white man's folly.

That night, tired as I was, I slept but ill. I kept hearing a voice which called to me in my sleep, and when I woke with a start, the first thing my eyes always lighted upon was the bone-white limb of the dead pine which pointed down the river. It seemed to me that it was warning me to desist from my mad hunt, and turn back from this accursed land.

I don't remember very clearly ; but it seems to me that, whenever I awoke, I saw the Indian still sitting by the fire. He never seemed to sleep now ; but I had become so used to his vagaries that, if I thought of this at all, it was only to be thankful that some one

was keeping vigil whilst we slept. Once, in a half-waking state, I thought that I heard scuffling in the snow; but if I did it ceased before I was well awake. Probably I thought it was a lynx or a carcajou foraging amongst our scraps, and that is not enough to tempt a man out of his blankets on a winter night in the arctic.

When I woke I supposed that it was about an hour to dawn, and the others still slept. Even Siyah Joe had curled up at last, and seemed to be sleeping heavily. As we had work to do, and a man's life to save, I roused the Boss and called to Joe.

"We'll boil the billy first, and then wake him," I said, pointing to Spot Harris.

"All right. Whilst you do that I'll go and make a cache of our grub. That will make room for him on the sleigh."

As he spoke, Joe groped his way to the bundle of blankets by the fire, and stirred it roughly with his foot.

"Let him alone, Joe! Didn't you hear the Boss say you were to let the poor devil sleep?" I cried.

"He sleep all right; Joe no can wake him."

Something in the Indian's manner, more than in his words, made me go over to his side and put my hand upon the blankets. I don't know what told me, but I knew that Spot Harris was dead before I touched him. Dead he was, and stiff already, and the snow just round

him, I noticed, was disturbed almost as if the poor wretch had writhed in agony before his troubles were over. Indeed it looked as if he had hastened his own end by his struggles, for there was a distinct impress in the snow, as if he had turned face downwards and smothered in it.

But that can hardly have happened, for had he suffered so acutely he would surely have cried out, in which case I must have heard him; but he had made no sound. If he had, Joe at any rate would have heard him, and would have——

Ah! what would Joe have done? The question suggested a terrible train of thoughts to my mind; so that when I next looked at that inscrutable and blind mask by my side it was with a shudder of fear and abhorrence.

But my suspicions had nothing substantial to justify them. Whatever had happened had happened in the night whilst we slept, and nothing that had been done could be proved now or mended.

With heavy hearts and in dead silence we set about our morning's work. If we could not save the frost-bitten man, we could do our best to bury him and Luke; but even of this we made a desperately poor job. The frozen earth would neither support man's life nor take him into her bosom when dead; and the best that we could do for the two bodies was to break the ice at the river's edge and shove them under it.

There they would be safe at least from the wolves, and the river would take them down to the sea for burial. I don't know why we should have thought them better placed there than in the snow by the river's edge; but we wanted to do something for them, and this was all that could be done.

After burying our dead, the wind being fair, we decided to proceed up-stream. That, I suppose, is the way in which the case would ordinarily be stated; but if I so stated it, it would be at variance with the fact. As we stood by the edge of the ice, neither of us could have said whether we were going backwards or forwards. We had lost all heart in our quest; there were enemies both before and behind us, and, though we followed the Indian up-stream, our natural instinct was, I think, rather to flee from than to follow him.

Neither the Boss nor I had much to say to him, but that did not affect him—indeed, I don't suppose he noticed it. He was living in a world of his own, and talking to his own heart, so that he neither knew nor cared what happened outside him so that it did not interfere between him and his goal.

I don't pretend to explain all that happened in the last part of our journey. I know—for I have asked him since—that the Boss, like myself, had determined to abandon the journey at Glenora; but we camped some distance short of the little town, and, when in the early morning we passed it, the Indian leading us

steadily on, neither the Boss nor I offered any resistance. We did not want to go, but we went; and I don't think that we realized what we were doing, until we were tramping some distance north, along the winter trail, to Dease Lake.

"I suppose we may as well see it through, now that we have come so far," said my friend that night, by the camp fire.

"I don't feel as if we could help ourselves," I admitted; "and that fellow would go on alone and die by himself if we turn back."

"I don't know whether that is any worse than he deserves."

"That's just it: you don't know, and I don't know, and it's no good speculating. All I care to remember is, that he was a good friend to me before those fiends blinded him, and I'm not going to leave him in the lurch now."

"That's wholesome doctrine, Whitehead, and we'll make it the last word said on the subject. Mad or sane, we will follow Siyah Joe till we reach the Chicamon Stone, or the Great Divide: I don't know that it matters much which, the hunt is out of our hands, and has been since we started."

"So are all hunts, Boss," I said. And in that spirit we let the Indian lead us on day by day, until we had passed through a hundred miles of snow-smothered willow-swamps, and come down to the little clearing

at the head of the lake, where last summer the hard-fists bound for Pelly Banks, had made them a boat-builder's yard.

Now, though this story may seem to travel fast, it must not be understood that we travelled quite as fast as the story. There were many days of stubborn collar-work, enlivened by no incident at all. From dawn to dark we broke the trail, or plodded after the dogs, straining our muscles and thinking our own thoughts, longing, as many a pioneer does, for the fight to be over, and the day to come when we could turn back home.

How many of them ever do go home? At first it seems so easy. A year or two of saving, and privation, and hard work, and then they think they will go back just as young as ever, and crowned with success, to receive the plaudits of those they left behind. But all the time the good recedes. Only one more year—only one year more, whispers Hope; but the years come, and the years go, and the grey steals into the hair, whilst news comes, even to those outlandish parts, that first one, and then another, of those for whose applause the wanderer has been working, will not be there to welcome him at his home-coming, until at last, even if in the long run he wins, his is but a barren victory, with no smiles, no cheers to make it sweet. The devil gold, or the empty baubles of ambition, have led him on a fool's chase, only to prove to him as he

clutches them what will-o'-the-wisps they are. The real thing, the life which he has spent, has passed by him unnoticed. Well for him if he has left nothing worse than a blind trail behind him.

By the time we reached Dease Lake we were hard, tired men, and the signs of spring were beginning to appear. More than once a chinook wind had blown, and beneath its warm breath the snow had disappeared in places, as if it had been cut off with a knife. Overhead from time to time there was a whistle of wings, going north, and nearly every day we came across some tiny splash of open water, in which the earliest of the ducks were making merry. But the lake itself was still a solid sheet of ice except where, here and there in the coves, a little ribbon of open water bordered the shore. The main sheet of ice was still several feet in thickness, though it was honey-combed through and through like a log which the teredos have eaten.

But it was not only the lake which had changed; the camp at the head of it, too, was a very different place to that which I remembered. In the early summer from a hundred to four hundred men were living there or thereabouts; at least twenty boats were in course of construction—great boats to contain from two to five tons of winter supply, and built out of lumber, whip-sawed upon the spot.

It was a merry enough spot then, with stacks of

provisions round each tent, duck and fish in the lake, and generally at least one carcase of cariboo or moose in camp, a ruddy stove in the one log building on cold nights, and a game of whist (not bumble puppy) for those who cared to play.

Then a pack-train arrived twice a week; and after each arrival we used to go down to the shore, and see at least one of the wooden scows just built start upon its journey—a journey down the arctic slope, from which the travellers might return in one year, two years, or never.

Now the place was empty, the whip-saw silent, and the Jew pedler, who used to catch fish for us, and the bird-stuffer from Scotland, and the pretty young man from California, who used to bore us about the girl he left behind him, and the Herefordshire farmer (good fellow), and the two ragged scholars who wanted to know whether they could earn their living as working-men, were all gone. I saw the last of the Herefordshire farmer at the first sharp bend in Dease River. He had just successfully accomplished the salvage of five tons of grub. Both he and it were on the bank draining. The Jew pedler, and some other fellows, were bringing back the boat. The ragged scholars were beating the Hudson Bay Indians in open competition, as oarsmen, at two dollars and a half a day, and the rest of the merry crowd had passed on to Pelly Banks, I suppose, or beyond.

Every trace of the old camp was buried under the snows of winter, except the old log-house, which we found closed and deserted; but human beings had evidently been at the lake-head not long before our arrival, for on the edge of the lake were two dead camp-fires, and a hole in the ice from which the campers had been drawing their water.

An investigation of these camp-fires showed that they were barely cold, while the ice-hole had not frozen over again.

"They can't have been gone long," said the Boss. "I suppose they are some of those fellows we scared on the Stickine."

"Maybe," I said; "but there are a good many of them. What do you think, Joe?"

"How can Joe know? Joe not see. Whitehead see which way trail come."

The rebuke was deserved, and, acting upon the hint contained in it, I followed the trail back for some distance, and, finding that the two parties came in from different directions, I told the Indian what I saw.

"Nawitka," he said. "Luke's men come along trail from the Stickine; Bill and his tillicums come from away over there by the Skeena."

"And both go away this morning early?"

"Nawitka."

"Well; and if he's right, as I suppose he is," said the Boss—"what next?"

As he spoke a low wind was rising, and the Indian was busy prodding the ice with a long pole. Strong as it appeared, the ice was mushy and gave easily, like wet brown sugar, beneath the pole.

"S'pose strong wind come to-night," said the Indian, turning towards us, "ice all go, and no boat stop here. Better start to-night—perhaps we pass them in the dark."

As he spoke I noticed a little rift in the ice near the shore. It was gradually widening. Though it did not look as if the great lake could possibly clear itself of ice as quickly as Joe suggested, it did look as if the break-up was coming; and if that came, and left us without a boat, it would give to any one in front of us a dangerously long start to the reef for which we had endured so much.

"I don't believe in the Chicamon Stone," grumbled the Boss, "and I wish I had never heard of it; but, having started, we can't very well let those fellows beat us on the post. Lead on, MacDuff!"

CHAPTER V.

FOR some time we sat cowering over the dying fire, and peering out into the darkness in which the frozen lake lay, listening to the rising wind and the strangely ominous sounds of the great ice-field. For months this had formed a solid highway, but now, just when so much depended upon it, it was dissolving before our eyes, whilst the deep snows which lay slowly melting in the heavy timber along the lake's edges, made it all but impossible for men to scramble that way to the head of Dease River.

The lake itself is twenty-four miles long; and about sixteen miles from the hither end of it is Laketon, the natural centre of the Cassiar mining district, where the recorder lives and a few miners pass the winter. Once, in the seventies, this was a place of some importance, and a street of tumbled-down shacks remains as a memento of the seven or eight million dollars skimmed by the hard-fists from the rich gravels of Dease and Thibert Creek. But, as we sat blinking at the fire, we had no thought of the handful of men

who might possibly be found halfway down the lake. All our thoughts were bent upon eight desperate gold-seekers, who, somewhere out in that frowning darkness, were blundering on blindly towards that reef for which we had risked so much. Would the devil, who cares for such as they, take them safely through the dark, and leave us helpless at this end of the lake? That was the question in our minds, and every time we heard the ice move, our spirits fell another point.

At last the moon rose, and a faint and pallid light showed us fresh and larger spaces of open water. It looked madness to attempt a crossing, but it was not a case for waiting.

"Come now!" said Joe, rising and feeling his way through a foot of water to the ice. "S'pose wind not too strong we make it by morning."

As we followed him it seemed as if the wind had heard him, for it swept against us with fresh energy, and the ice heaved and throbbed as if the water below it, knew of the freedom from its icy bonds which was so near at hand.

Mile after mile we travelled swiftly, as men travel who know that their road is sinking beneath their feet; and ever as we went the wind rose higher and higher, until the great trees creaked and groaned with the strain of it, and, where the moonlight struck them, we could see them tossing and swaying like a crowd which waved to us to go back.

Here and there we came upon water which we had to skirt, and once or twice the leader crushed through ; but, by falling upon his belly, and spreading his weight over a larger surface, he escaped total immersion, and we hauled him back to safety, whilst ever and anon we felt that that upon which we trod was loose and floating.

But, with immunity from accident, confidence increased in us ; so that at last we passed Laketon, and kept on down the lake, though one star of light which we saw upon the shore drew me strongly towards it. Had I been alone I should have yielded to the temptation, and escaped from the din and darkness through which we were struggling ; for now the wind had risen to a perfect hurricane, so that we were buffeted this way and that, and could not hear one another's voices for the roar of the wind and the grinding of the ice.

I saw the Boss stop and point to the light, and I suppose that he spoke, but I could hear no sound. For a moment we stood in doubt, and then both looked at the bent figure in front, in which there was no sign of pause or rest or deviation from the path ahead. Already the outlines of the figure were gone, and in a few more seconds it would be out of sight. Throwing up his hand as if in despair the Boss turned again, and both of us plodded on behind the silent siwash.

At last the dawn began to come—a faint grey light which did more to frighten than to hearten us, for by

it we saw the chaos through which we went, or some portion of it. Along the shore now ran a black ribbon of open water, and the ice, which the night before had been solid as dry land, was now cut by long black rivers, and those long floes which still remained, broke every moment into smaller and still smaller sections, until some of the smallest of them were mere islets floating free upon the bosom of the lake. But ahead of us the ice, though it heaved uneasily under us as we hurried on, seemed still continuous. Either our floe, or that upon our right, seemed still the main body of the ice, and these two ran parallel to one another, extending towards the head of Dease River, and separated only from one another by a dark, heaving gulf, too wide already to leap, and growing every moment wider.

But the greater part of the journey had been accomplished in safety, and I was beginning to strain my eyes for a glimpse of the end of the lake, where I knew that the shores must come curving in towards the outlet of the Dease, when, to add to our discomfort, a fine snow began to drift into our faces, rendering everything dark again.

It was at this time, when the noise of the grinding ice and the roar of the wind was deafening us, and the shifting veil of the snowstorm partially blinding us, that, as I turned my eyes to see how the chasm grew upon my right, I became aware that we were not alone.

At first I thought my eyes were playing tricks with me, or that my nerves were giving way, for though perfectly reasonable—when you had time to reason—it seemed at first unnatural that we should be racing neck and neck with those other eight men beyond the chasm, without our ears giving us warning of their presence. But it was natural enough. In that pandemonium of sound you could not have heard a park of artillery going by, and if we had not heard them they certainly had not heard us. Strung out like a skein of wild-fowl, dim as a procession of ghosts, swift and silent, they sped on, unconscious of the competitors in the race so close alongside of them. I suppose that we ran like this for half an hour, and I don't think that they saw us, or that either of my companions once caught sight of them, so intent were all upon the road before them, and so often did the whirling snow swallow the dim figures in its veil.

The end came suddenly. I, who was toiling along painfully just in sight of my leaders, saw the Boss break into a run, and, dashing up to Joe, clutch him by the shoulder. In a minute I was up alongside them. In front of the Indian, and only just in front, was open water—fifty feet of it at least. Our bridge had come to an end, and ahead of us I could see (or was it only fancy?) the faint outlines of the curving shore.

Beyond the open water there was ice again, but

whether continuous or not, no man could tell in that dim light. The snow drifted more thickly near the surface of the lake, so that, though you might now and again make out the outlines of a tree-top at some distance on the bank, you could see but a very little way along the floe.

For a few moments Joe and the Boss stood screaming into each other's ears, but though I stood close by them, I could not catch a word of their conversation. It seemed madness to go on. It was equally madness to try to go back. Our road had in parts sunk as we passed over it. Even those two hesitated for a while, and attracted, I presume, by the open water on their left, the string of figures on the other floe turned our way and saw us, for the first time. The situation needed no explanation. They evidently grasped it in a moment, as, bunching together, they stood a moment looking at us. The goal was just ahead, but our bridge had broken down, and theirs stretched on still, sound, into the mist. I suppose the Boss told Siyah Joe who stood alongside us, for I saw him turn his blind face towards them, and shake his iron-shod staff furiously in their faces; and then, it seemed to me, though I could not hear, nor even see distinctly, that those others laughed, and, before they went on into the mist, one whom I knew came out from amongst them and raised his hat mockingly to us before he disappeared.

The cards were certainly against us, and, no doubt, as Bill saw his hand, he chuckled at our position, and went on towards the ledge, leaving us to drown at our leisure. But it is bad policy to mock a beaten foe. Many men have found that, in the ring and elsewhere, there is generally one last blow left in the beaten man, and that blow may reverse the issue of the fight.

So it was now, for Joe, who seemed to realize what had happened as clearly as if he had had eyes and ears which could overcome the darkness and din of the storm, held out his pole to the Boss, and, clinging to one end of it whilst my friend held on to the other, slid over the edge into the open water.

I expected to see him swim for it, and tried to harden my heart to follow him, but it was unnecessary. He was never waist-deep, or more than waist-deep, from one edge of the water to the other. What looked like a rent in the ice was but a depression, over which the lake had risen, and, though I shall not easily forget the horror of that sloping, pulsing submarine floor, and though once I lost my feet and slid right under the cold black water, they hauled me somehow safely to the firm ice again.

Firm! Well, I called it so in contrast to that thin, waving floor which I had crossed; but the ice of the lake was now moving like the coloured atoms in a kaleidoscope. Another quarter of an hour would see the whole surface black, I thought; and already, as the

light increased, I could see small white caps driven across the larger spaces of open water by the roaring wind.

We were wet now to the neck, and weak in the knees from the long night's journey in the teeth of the wind and from the constant strain upon our nerves; but we were hot with the spirit of the race, and reckless as desperate men are wont to be. Those others had vanished in the mist in front of us, but under our feet again was something which we could still walk upon, and, with the glimpse which we had now and again of a black pine in the mist, we were ready, if need be, to plunge in and swim for it. And indeed at this point we were almost as often in the water as out of it. Towards the edges of the lake the ice was breaking up more rapidly than elsewhere, so that we had to go as men go upon stepping-stones, from one small cake to another. Nor was it better with the other floe, between which and our own there was now a space of many hundred yards. Between the end of it, on which we could see our rivals huddled together, and the shore, there was at least six hundred yards of open water.

It was a weird sight in the early dawn, that group scrambling like seals upon the edge of the ice from which great cakes kept detaching themselves, until the whole mass was churning and grinding together in the black water, the cakes rearing up and boarding one

another or sinking suddenly into the ever-growing blackness.

As we stood and looked a fissure ran across the floe upon which we stood, yawned, grew wider and, in a moment, we were rocking upon a detached island over which the water lapped, and drifting—that was the marvel of it—right in the teeth of the wind, to the shore.

But it was not so with the other ice-field. As that broke up into smaller and smaller sections the wind played with them, and ground them together, and drove them away from shore as long as they remained above water.

It seemed inexplicable, or as if the hand of Providence had at last been extended for our rescue, and was drawing us to land and safety, whilst those others were driven back to perish in the stormy cauldron of the lake.

The siwash must have felt what was happening, for he knelt and trailed his hand in the water.

“Dry land close now?” he asked.

“Coming closer, Joe, on our left; we are drifting to it against the wind.”

“Pole, pole!” he cried, “pole hard to the left, the river draws us!” and, suiting the action to the word, he drove down his pole until his shoulder was wet with the water of the lake.

But he could not reach the bottom. Again and

again he tried; and at last I just felt the ooze, though I could get no hold upon it. But he did; and the next moment the course of our ice-raft began to alter a little, and the ooze came up nearer and nearer until we got a firm grip of it with our poles. Then a clumsy effort of mine putting too much weight upon one side of the fragile thing, made it break again; and for thirty or forty yards I was half swimming half clinging to the ice upon which Joe and the Boss still poled for dear life, whilst the detached fragment spun round and round until it shot out of sight through the outlet of the Dease.

They had no leisure to haul me up. The Boss saw that I had hold, and was swimming with them; and in the interests of all of us, he strained every muscle to keep our raft out of the current and drive her inshore. And indeed it was not long that I was alone, for, when within a stone's throw of the shore, the ice dissolved into a score of fragments, and we were all floundering together in the water. But we were out of the suck of the current, and the water was hardly as dangerous as the mud, for, whereas there was not three feet of the former, the latter seemed unfathomable. One man alone would surely have been drowned. The deep ooze would have held his feet, and the longer he stayed and struggled the deeper would he have sunk, until even three feet of water would have been enough to drown what remained of him. But, helping one

another with our poles, we made a better fight of it than a single man could have done, until at last, panting, struggling, fighting for life itself, we staggered into the swamp, and lay motionless and spent in the wet grass, too exhausted to look for a better resting-place than a shallow not deep enough to drown us.

As I lay, the immediate terror of death passed away from me, and it seemed as if plates which had been exposed when I was too busy to look at them were presented to my mental vision. Just as the scream "Pole, pole!" had come to my ears, my eyes must have been looking back upon the lake, which was heaving and breaking like the surface of a cauldron which is just at boiling-point; and in the middle of the tumult, springing wildly from cake to cake, was one lonely figure. If it had been the devil the little floes could not have treated him worse: as he touched them they dissolved beneath his feet. Again and again I saw him sink in the black waters; again and again I saw him gripping the ice edges, and crawling out only to sink again. It seemed cruelty to let him suffer so long; but he would not drown, and when I last saw him, he was still setting his puny strength against the raving wind and the grinding, treacherous ice.

I half rose now and looked back to where I had last seen him, but he was gone. Of the eight, he alone had been left when our ice-raft broke loose; and

now the daylight had come, and, far as the eye could see, the ice was broken into little pieces, near the shore, and beyond, the white caps ran unhindered over the black water. There was no sign of living thing upon the lake; and as I looked I knew that by-and-by, somewhere against the sedges, there would be eight white faces, flush with the water, rising and falling, which never again would grow bright with hope or keen with greed of gold.

"That is the last of Bill," I muttered half to myself.

But the Indian answered me. "Not yet," he said. "Bill wait for Joe at the Chicamon Stone."

CHAPTER VI.

“WHAT do you think of it now, Whitehead?”

It was the Boss who spoke, as we picked our way slowly through the swamp towards a couple of cabins and a ruined store, which stand near the junction of the Dease and the Dease Lake.

We had heard that a party of prospectors was wintering there, and we had some hope of obtaining a boat from them in which to continue our journey—or at the least a solid meal, of which we stood in urgent need.

“I think that we were born to be hanged.”

“Because we can’t drown? But what do you think of the hunt? Are you beginning to believe?”

“In Joe’s creed?—that we shall meet Sandy Bill at the Chicamon Stone? No. If I had not come so far, I would turn back now.”

“I would not. I begin to believe,” said my friend, quietly. “Bill is not dead yet. I think I can *feel* him in the woods now.”

I turned a startled glance on my comrade. Surely

even his great strength and sound common sense was not beginning to give way under the strain of the last two weeks?

But he met my look with a quiet, steady eye, and even laughed a little as he answered me.

"You would never make a woodsman, boy. Things don't talk to you. They used not to talk to me; but I am beginning to hear and feel things now which were always there, but never seemed quite to reach me before. *He* hears them more plainly, that's all;" and, by a gesture, he indicated Siyah Joe, who was now following quietly in our rear.

Just then an axe-stroke rang out clearly in front of us, and I suppose I raised my head at the sound of it.

"Ah! you hear that! That is good, plain, human language, isn't it? and yet not always. Did you ever hear of the Whoopers?"

I had; but I had no time to say so, for at that moment I caught sight of the axeman, and was glad of it. My friend certainly wanted a square meal badly. I had lived now for months with *one* lunatic, but I did not feel equal to living with two of the same kind.

"Hallo! When were you drowned?" asked the man, dropping his axe and coming towards us.

"Last night," answered the Boss, laconically. "Got any grub?"

"Mighty little; but I guess there's some still. Ain't you fellows full up with water?"

"Pretty nearly; but that's poor stuff to travel on. Are you alone?"

"No; my partner is up at the shack. The ice has all gone on the lake, hasn't it?"

"Yes; we came in on the last of it."

"Looks as if you'd swum in. Well, I guess we'll soon be able to get off prospectin' again now."

"Are you going down-stream?"

"Yes."

"Have you any boats?"

"We're building one; but it won't be ready for a week yet."

"Aren't there any on the Dease?"

"They say there's one cached just below Cottonwood Rapids, but I haven't been down to see. Come in."

We bent our heads and entered the dim and comfortable abode in which these two men had passed the long months of winter, sleeping, cooking, smoking—and, I suppose, thinking; though how any man dare think, or could think in such a den, with such a world outside, and the memory of mankind behind him without going mad, passes my understanding. But scores of them do it, and, as very few make any money out of their venture, I suppose that they like it.

"There's nothing but beans and sow belly," said our host; "but you look hungry enough for anything. I guess they are pretty nearly as badly off, if not worse, down at the lower posts."

"Why is that?"

"A crowd came in last fall and had to winter there; and the old man had only enough for himself and the Chinamen on the creek. *They'll* go hungry, poor devils!"

But though food was so scarce that starvation might be threatening other men within comparatively few miles of him, our new friend never stopped to count the cost, but cut into the poor remnant of his bacon as if he had a well-filled store to fall back upon.

Our Western prospector has his faults, but meanness is not one of them. As long as he has a bite or a sup, he will share them with the first man who comes along; and that morning we ate till we could eat no more, and then slept in his dry blankets while he hung up our sodden clothes to drain first and then, if possible, to dry.

It was evening when we woke, and ate again; and as Joe, to my surprise, did not protest, we merely smoked a pipe and turned over again and slept until the dawn was creeping through the chinks in the cabin. It was the first time I had felt rested since I left the mouth of the Stickine, and so good was it to feel a man again, that I was almost keen to take the trail.

"How long will it take us to reach McDame's?" I asked.

"If you make Cottonwood Creek in three days, you will do pretty well; and if you get across that all right, you might make McDame's in another three."

"Is Cotton Wood dangerous?"

"You bet she is! and she'll be just humming now. No man as ever drank whisky could ford that creek for the next month. Two tenderfeet tried to last year. They ain't been heard from since."

"That's so," struck in the other fellow; "but you fellows are in big luck. Do you mind, Seth, that Smith party felled a log across the creek last fall. I guess the log is there yet."

"Should be; there's no tellin'. But if it isn't they can fall another if they can find one handy."

As this was about the sum of their information, we secured from them a certain amount of dried moose-meat, tough as leather, and musty as old parchments, and bade them farewell.

It was true that we seemed to have the hunt to ourselves; but now that the spring was opening, other prospectors might soon appear in the country, and blunder upon the prize for which we had sacrificed so much, so that it behoved us not to linger upon the road unnecessarily.

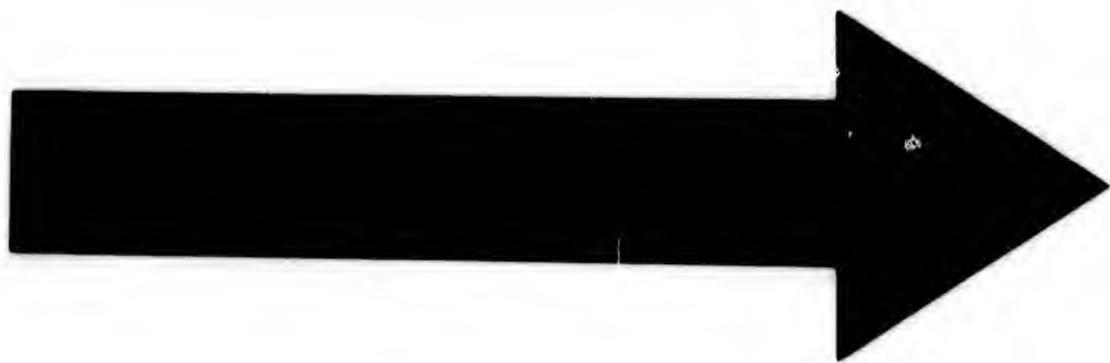
It seems hardly worth while to dwell upon our three days' tramp to Cottonwood Creek. In one of the old

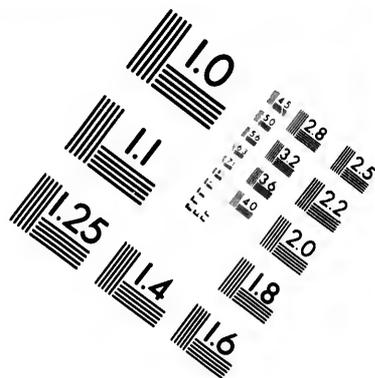
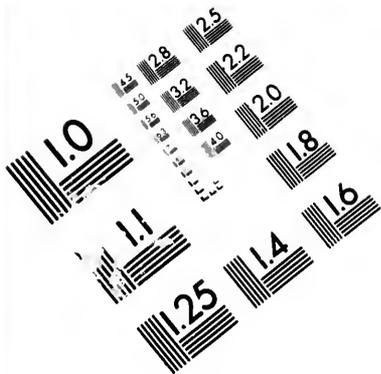
Hudson Bay records of travel, it would occupy less than three lines. In a modern book of travel it would make three vivid chapters. The less you travel the easier it is to write. After a time discomfort becomes commonplace, and danger is only realized when it is a little too late to write about it.

Imagine, if you will, a river-forest as dense as forests grow, with here and there a little axe-slashing to make a rough towing-path for the Indians, but for the most part dense brush through which you can just push your way along bear-trails, with the boughs in your eyes all the time, the roar of waters in your ears, and the pleasant, spicy smell of pine or cedar, crushed currant-bush, or the young buds of the balsam, in your nostrils. Water seemed the one commodity of which there was no lack. It welled up under our feet, roared down the winding river, streamed or dripped from the bushes, and soaked up through the thickest brush-bed which we could make at night.

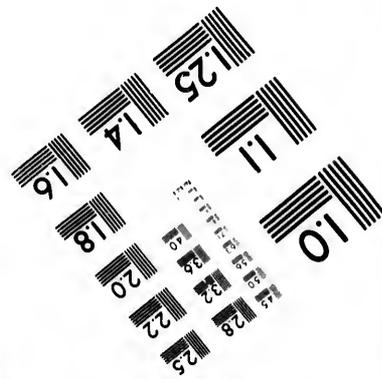
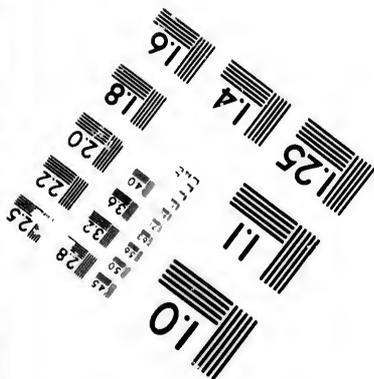
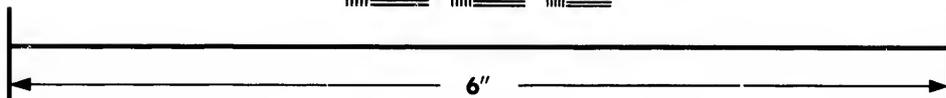
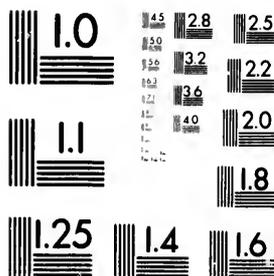
There was plenty of it everywhere; but at Cottonwood Rapids it gathered to a head and indulged in an orgy of evil-doing. We could hear the creek or the rapids, or both, half an hour before we reached them, and we were glad that we had not found a boat in which to run those rapids.

With a first-rate steersman, and a good man in the bow, a crew would no doubt have won through, if they had had way enough upon their boat: but it would



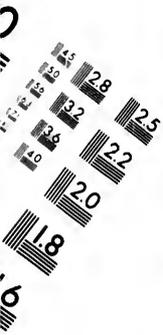


**IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)**



**Photographic
Sciences
Corporation**

23 WEST MAIN STREET
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 873-4533



have been a nice piece of steering, for, right across the stream, in the worst and whitest of the water, great teeth of rock protruded, to touch any one of which would have meant instant destruction. Once upset in that water he would have been a quick man who had time to try to save himself; but if he had fallen in the creek near its mouth, I think his brains would have been dashed out almost before he had had time to get wet.

“There is no wading that,” said the Boss, as we came to it. “If a man could touch bottom, his feet would never stay there; and there is no bridge that I can see, though this must be the crossing.”

“And here is the butt of the cotton wood tree,” I said, pointing to a great stump on the brink.

“Washed out, I suppose; but there is no sign that the water has been as high as that.”

“Tree gone?” asked Siyah Joe.

“Yes, it has gone, Joe.”

The fellow laughed.

“Does Bill think a crik can stop a Tahl Tan?” he muttered. “Better look for another higher up, Whitehead,” he added.

“Bill on the brain,” I said to the Boss. But he did not laugh; he seemed to take the Indian seriously.

We had a long way to go up-stream, and it was bitterly hard work forcing our way through the forest tangle, but we found the right tree at last, and dropped

it neatly across the creek. It did not quite span it; and no blind man but Joe would have crawled across the swaying length of it, much less have dared to jump into space from the end of it. But he would have jumped at the Maelström if we had told him to, and we caught him as he landed, and made the passage in safety, after which we worked our way down to the crossing again for the sake of any trail there might be.

Here there was a surprise for me, though the other two took it as a matter of course.

On the bank where the end of the tree should have rested was a pile of chips, and part of the tree itself dragged into the brush close by. The rain had so bespattered the chips with mud that they did not show white from the other side, but when I handled them I found places where the wood was white enough. They had felt the bite of the axe within the last twenty-four hours, and all round them, a little blurred by the rain, were the square-toed prints of a prospector's boots. Bill had escaped the ice, after all: was in front of us, and had deliberately destroyed the bridge behind him; and in spite of myself, I could not help admiring the dogged tenacity with which this lone man ignored danger, saw his companions die round him, and still struggled towards his point, determined, as he put it, to "get there," in spite of the Almighty Himself.

"No idea of giving in, has he?" said the Boss. "Do

you think that it is worth while going off the trail to look for the boat ? ”

“ He may not have known about it,” I answered.

“ True. Come along then ; ” and we went.

But the Indian stayed on the trail, and in twenty minutes we were back at his side, having found the rough skids which Bill had made, and the little furrow where the boat had been shoved into the water.

“ That will give him four days’ start, even if we can get a boat at McDame’s.”

“ I would follow if he had a month’s start. Any other man would drown between this and the Hyland, running the rapids single-handed ; but *he* won’t.”

“ You’re as mad as the siwash, Boss.”

“ Or as sane. He has not made many mistakes yet.”

There was nothing to answer to this ; so we plodded on in gloomy silence, until we reached the tiny settlement where a poorly paid Hudson Bay man and a few little yellow Chinamen passed the winter.

Here there were two boats, but they would sell neither. They did not want money, though they had come so far to earn it ; but they wanted food badly, and, of course, we could not tell them why we were so anxious to obtain a boat.

The merest hint of a “ strike ” will rouse the most dormant prospector into feverish energy, and for the present we wanted to be alone. So that night we entered upon a course of crime, and, under cover of

darkness, slipped off with the best of the boats, and had our reward in being wrecked upon a snag two hours later. But the damage done was easily remedied, and, though the boat leaked like a sieve, we ran her down in safety to the mouth of the Hyland River. And then began the worst part of our journey—poling like galley-slaves, and travelling always higher and higher, and further and further away from the coming spring. In five days from McDame's we had snow round us again as thick as ever, and the nights had a snap in them which we had already grown unaccustomed to.

But, as we ascended, the country changed rapidly. Everywhere in the banks were veins of quartz: sometimes white and hungry-looking, at other times of a rich, rusty yellow such as the miners love; and in one place we came upon a stringer of galena, which, at another time, would have kept us there for a month prospecting for the main body into which it ought to run.

No doubt the country was becoming richly mineralized. But so far there was no sign of Bill; not even a column of smoke to tell us that he had camped, or a scrap of wreckage to make us hope that he had drowned; and if he reached the ledge before us, in time to put in a dozen stakes, he might go out and record his claim, and snap his fingers at us.

No doubt Tatooch had given him the bearings of the ledge, and, though we might try to hold him for

his share in the outrage upon Siyah Joe, it would be long odds against our getting a conviction in that country, and, even if we did, that would not affect the ownership of the Chicamon Stone.

Under these circumstances it should not be hard to imagine the intense excitement of the last few days of that journey : straining every muscle upon the pole as long as the daylight lasted, watching for any trace of a landing, and at every bend straining our eyes for a glimpse of that lone figure which we knew must still be ahead of us.

But we never saw a sign of a landing, nor other trace of Bill, until I, at least, had again begun to regard him as a myth.

Every day we relied upon the map in Joe's brain for our guidance. At starting he would make us describe the spot minutely, and would calculate the distance done the day before, and then give us some landmark to look out for, from which to make a fresh departure.

In this way we travelled three days, and had risen so rapidly in that time, that in the main chain to which we were approaching, it was deep winter still. On the third day we stopped at the foot of a hogsback.

"Whitehead see no tracks there?" asked Joe.

"None, Joe."

"Land and look well."

I did as I was bid, but could find nothing.

"All the same, we stop here. Bill not know the short cut. He go up to the mouth of the crik. We go over here, and come down on the head-waters. Chicamon Stone pretty close now."

Near the landing we cached our canoe; we had no spare food to cache; and then we climbed our last divide.

From the top of it we could see the Chicamon Stone Creek—a narrow stream running between snow-banks—the ice broken, but the snow still there; and, in the snows of the gulch, we came again upon those square-toed tracks.

After this it was as easy as tracking a grizzly, and as dangerous—or more so, for, if we saw his tracks, there was no good reason why he should not see us; and, if he did, one straight shot would reduce the whole affair to a duel, for blind Joe could not have done any effective shooting, and the odds would have been distinctly in favour of the unencumbered man.

But Bill either did not see his opportunity, or was so crazily set upon driving the first stake that he forgot all else; and, though the tracks told us plainly that he was tramping up and down the long, deep gulch whenever we were resting, neither he nor we were yet much nearer the ledge than we had been a month ago, for in this place of shadows, into which the sun rarely penetrated, the snows still lay heavily, and even the Indian's memory, unaided by his eyes,

could not definitely locate the exact spot at which the ledge lay.

I thought that it was the same old story of a ledge of fabulous richness, which grows less and less real as you approach it, until it finally disappears when you reach the spot where it should be. There have been many such ; but if this was one of the number, two men at any rate did not think so. All day the Indian led us up and down the gulch, looking for places where the snow had slid down and left bare patches of the rock wall ; and all night it seemed to us that another who had been crouching in the brush all day, came out and took up the quest by moonlight.

And, meanwhile, our food was all but spent. If no chinook wind came, or rain to set those snows moving within the next few days, we should be obliged to choose between abandoning the ledge, and starving at the foot of it.

CHAPTER VII.

I SOMETIMES think that in those last few days we were all of us nearly mad.

We had struggled until then as men who race for a prize—one of us perhaps as a hound who races for blood—and in the spirit of contest had been able to overcome the obstacles which we had met.

Man we had struggled against successfully; we had pitted our strength and skill against the currents of the Arctic Slope; we had staked our lives, fortunately, upon the strength of a quivering sheet of ice; in sweat which seemed the very blood of our bodies, we had plodded through clinging brush, deep swamps and blind tangles of fallen timber. We had dispensed with all things which most men need; dared all things, done all things, but now we had our hardest task before us. At our very goal Nature bade us do nothing. "Wait!" she said; and though man may strive against her, who can wait against her?

The spring was at the door, but she might linger

many days yet, and meanwhile the deep snows clung to the sides of the gorge and hid our prize from our eyes. Man's strength could not move that mantle, nor greed's eyes see through it. Here and there was a tiny track on the snow, and at the foot of it the little gleaming ball of pure white detached snow which had made it. That was the precursor of the slides which were to follow, but as yet that which had moved could be measured by handsfull and there were thousands of tons to come.

On the first day we divided what little food we had into daily rations, and then we sat down to wait. But a fever took us before we had waited half a day and drove us out into the canyon to plod backwards and forwards, glaring at the sloping white walls until our eyes ached. Was it in this slide, or in that slide, we asked each other, as we paused at the foot of the great pathways which the snows had ploughed in former years, reaping the pines as man reaps the wheat.

But there was no answer, except Nature's inexorable "Wait;" and meanwhile, though we never saw him, another walked too. He must have lain hid in one of the clumps of brush until we crept back weary to camp, and then his beat began. I believe there was never an hour when some human sentry did not pace at the foot of those silent, mocking snows.

Once I sat hid half the night watching for him, with my finger on the trigger; but I was spared that crime,

and I crept away without having seen him, shamed by the silence and majesty of night. When man was away that still gorge was like a sanctuary of God, and, strangely enough, only the wild man had sense enough, blind as he was, to see it. He too, wearied with waiting, but he waited as one who has a sure hope. It might not be to-day or to-morrow, but he knew that the Fates would bring him and his enemy to the tryst before his night fell, and hour after hour whilst we tried to sleep he would sit blindly staring into space and talking to the man he was to meet.

Over and over again I caught the same words, until it seemed to me as if he were rehearsing a part in a play, and my flesh crept at the grimness of it.

Towards noon of the third day, which we passed at the head of the gorge, the clouds gathered and a warm wind began to blow. The Indian raised his face and snuffed at it as a dog who finds game, and into my brain without my will came thoughts of English daffodils, and the scent of warm English earth.

It was one of those brooding days, when all created things seem hushed, expectant of the recurrent miracle of spring; and when the night came, though it was dark and boisterous, it was so warm that we only lit our fire from habit, or it may be for that sense of homeliness which the ruddy embers stir even in the heart of a wilderness.

The rain began with nightfall, and because of it we

had rigged up a fly with our blankets, and sat, all three together, cowering under it, and as far as the Boss and I were concerned, drowsing like dogs by the hearth. But empty stomachs make poor sleepers, and besides this, the feverishness of the last few days had reached a climax. Joe now was worse than either of us. I could feel him trembling as I sat beside him, and knew that every sense in him was strained to listen.

I would have given much to have screamed or rushed somewhere; but instead, I had to sit and hear Joe's hard-drawn breath and the beat of his heart, and almost I fancied throbbings, and movements, and voices half articulate, but growing plainer every moment somewhere just behind the veil which at other times is drawn between man and the rest of creation.

“Has the new moon come yet?”

The words made my heart leap, and something seemed to stop to hear my answer.

No, it had not come, but by some wonderful instinct or effort of memory, the Tahl Tan was right. It was the night of the new moon.

For another hour, it may be, we all sat watching and waiting, and then by a common impulse all three of us sprang to our feet.

The wind had dropped and a dead, warm stillness dwelt in the valley, when a sudden mighty rushing sound blanched our cheeks and set our knees knocking together, and as we gazed out into the dusk

the tip of the pale new crescent rose above the black fringe of pines on the top of the far side of the canyon.

"The snows move and the new moon has come," said the blind savage, as if he had seen it. "Joe goes now. The white medicine-man waits for him;" and without another word he picked up a great stake and went out into the night.

"He goes to his death if he goes down the canyon now," said the Boss, as we heard the Indian's staff strike a rock from time to time. "I don't know that it matters much. That is the last of our food, and it is long odds that none of us will get out."

"I shall try to as soon as the light comes, ledge or no ledge."

"Curse the ledge!"

And after that we both sat again watching the night go by, hearing from time to time the rushing sound of the sliding snow, and the rending and crushing of the pines it took on its path, and longing to be away from the great things of Nature and safe among the littlenesses of our fellow-men.

It was one of Nature's carnivals that night, and the strange, warm calm of that lonely gorge, broken at intervals by the roar of avalanches and the sound of their reappings, told upon our nerves so that we were tired, white-faced men when the moon went down and the first grey light of dawn crept into the sky.

I think neither of us spoke; but the Boss rose and

kicked the embers into the snow, and for a few minutes we both stood munching our ration of cold and heavy damper. Then he folded the rest of the bread in a handkerchief, and taking his rifle in his hand turned down the canyon.

During the days of our waiting we had cut and squared the stakes with which to locate the ledge when we found it, and had even written out and attached our miners' notice to one of them; and partly from habit, and partly because I wanted a staff to walk with, I picked up this stake as I left camp.

"It is safer to climb, and go by the top."

As the Boss spoke, another slide roared into the canyon.

"Yes, it is longer; but safer, I suppose," I assented.

It had to be a very real danger which would persuade me to go out of my way for it on my way home, but some of the new-piled snow was visible from where we stood, and we knew what it meant to be caught on its path; so we climbed slowly up the north wall of the canyon, and went down along the edge of it, from which we could see, but indistinctly as yet, into the shadowy land below.

But the light had come more generously by the time that we were abreast of the first of the three great slides, where the Boss suddenly stopped.

"Didn't you hear it?" he asked.

"No."

"Listen, then. There it is again."

Surely it was a voice speaking, but it was so faint, and my nerves were so unstrung, that I was hardly sure of it at first, although when once we were well round the bluff, and directly above the slide, we could hear it distinctly enough, and see too the vast sheet of snow piled in the gorge below.

"There is no hurry, white man," it was saying, "and it is no good to call. Joe hears you, but the rocks do not hear, nor the snows, and there is nothing else. The other white men have gone back. They were afraid when the snows began to walk."

We crept to the edge and peered over, and there, crouching on his knees, staring into space as we had so often seen him, was Siyah Joe.

It was the old play he was playing. In front of him, at his feet, was the *débris* of last night's slide, and in it one dark boulder on the far side, a little boulder showing very plainly above the piled whiteness; but there was no one to hear him but ourselves, nor any to answer him.

"Mad!" muttered the Boss, "and the next slide will cover him. Look at the far side."

I looked, and saw how that in places the rock was bare, but great buttresses of snow still hung, as it were, by a thread, from which every minute fresh blocks detached themselves and slid without sound into the valley below.

"What are we to do?" asked my comrade; but before I could answer him the Tahl Tan spoke again.

"If the Indian were not blind he would come to you, white man. It would be easy to come and draw you out. "But he is blind, white man—blind! blind!"

It seemed almost as if a groan came as an echo from the far side of the canyon, but we saw nothing—nothing moved.

"Help! help. For God's sake, help!"

There was no mistake that time, at any rate. The wild, agonized shriek rang through the gorge, and the horror of it would not be drowned even in the silence of the snows.

A low laugh came from the Indian. Men of his race rarely laugh, and if that laugh had any mirth in it, it was the mirth of fiends when lost spirits read the inscription on hell's gates—"There is no return."

"Why does the medicine-man not help himself? He is strong. He said he would get there in spite of the Great Spirit. Let him push away the snow before the ravens come; then it will not be lonely."

He paused for a moment.

"Does the white man remember the black birds of Kula Kullah? By-and-by they will come to him. Round and round they fly long time, then one come and look in his eyes and see he live man, strong man.

Kula Kullah bird heap fear. By-and-by he come closer. White man no move. Crow come closer, closer. Bill see him look in his eyes again. Then peck, peck—one eye gone! Peck, peck—two eyes gone! and Bill see no more—all same Siyah Joe.”

“Give me life! For God’s sake give me my life!”

It almost seemed as if the cry came from the little black boulder in the snows.

“Tkve, Tkve—Life, Life! It is the cry that the Ahts make on the shore in the night. But life is not good for the blind. Can the medicine-man give back the sight he took away?”

“I can; so help me God, I can.”

It was the boulder that spoke.

“White man’s word, Bill.”

“White man’s word, Joe.”

The Indian laughed again; but he rose to his feet and took his great staff in his hand.

“Then call, Bill, and Joe will come to you. But call often, for the Indian cannot see;” and so saying he began to feel his way slowly across the snow. But even to us who watched him, knowing how wonderfully he went without his eyes, it seemed that never man moved as slowly as he did.

“Joe dig you out, and you give him back his sight, and then we stake the Chicamon Stone. Bill, no come behind with the axe. No, no. White man’s word, eh, Bill? Call again, Bill!”

“Here, here!”

And this time there was no mistake about it. The voice came from the boulder, and as we strained our eyes in the growing light, I thought I saw it move.

“My God! It is a man’s head, Boss!”

The head of Joe’s dream!

In his mad determination to stake the ledge at all costs, the poor fool must have gone to the foot of the slide when the new moon rose, and his own movement possibly at the foot of it had set the snows sliding which had caught him and buried him to the neck, holding him down with the weight of a hundred tons, but leaving him whole, though helpless, to look out into the white world until the ravens or death came to release him.

Even so he had pledged a white man’s word and called on the Creator to witness to his last lie, and it seemed as if God had made the lie seem true to the Tahl Tan.

“Here, Joe, here!”

“Coming, Bill, coming. Joe is coming.”

The Indian’s staff almost touched the boulder. It seemed as if it played round it, and dwelt about it. Surely it must touch it.

“Joe is coming; but he is blind, Bill, blind, and cannot see his friend;” and, slowly fumbling with his staff, the Tahl Tan *went by*. Then a scream of despair rent the stillness, and a torrent of mad blasphemy

polluted the place. The mouse saw that the cat played with him. Bill's last lie had failed him.

But another saw it too, and, disregarding all risks, the Boss went over the edge and began to scramble down the steep wall of the gorge, I following him, as I was always ready to do. I doubt if I have much pluck myself, but he was one of those men who inspire pluck in others, and I should have followed him anywhere.

The wall was fearfully steep, and our descent utterly reckless, so that stones flew from under our feet, and a regular slide of rock and gravel went rattling before us into the canyon.

Both those below heard it, and one saw us coming. To him it meant salvation from the very jaws of death, and his wild cry smote us as we dashed to his rescue. But the blind man heard if he did not see, and his ears told him the story not less certainly than Bill's eyes.

In a moment he drew himself up rigid, listening.

"Quick, quick! Save me! For God's sake save me!" cried the head at his feet, its poor eyes straining our way, and a voice behind, answered—

"Yes, Joe save you now; Joe find you now, quick, quick!" and with swift, unerring feet, in startling contrast to his former feigning, the Tahl Tan went to his enemy and stood over him, the huge stake raised in both hands.

“Listen, white man! Listen, white devil!” he hissed. “They are coming. The strong white fools are coming to save you. They spoil blind Indian’s play. Such a fine play too: it was a pity it was so short. They are close now—close, close; do you hear them? Look up, Bill. Blind Indian find you now. Look! Ach! Ach!” And the great stake came down twice with a dull thud in the snow; but twice it missed its mark by a hair’s-breadth.

Again it came down, and again it missed, and we were all but there, and the poor wretch had the courage to be mute with help all so close at hand, and murder striking at his helpless head; when there was a puff of white in the valley, and I, who was the fleeter of the two and in front, was caught in the strong grip of the Boss.

“Back, Whitehead! for your life—back!” and, half dragged by him, half by instinct, I turned almost as I reached those two, and the next moment a cloud of white particles filled the air; something struck me, but I struggled on; something struck me again, and I staggered; and then a wave of white took me to the knees, and a deafening roar filled the whole valley, and it seemed as if a vast snow-shell had exploded in the canyon, and all was sound and movement and whiteness.

When it ceased I hardly knew whether I lived or was dead. I could see and feel, but I could not move.

I was dead from the knees down; but, as good luck would have it, I had all but reached safe ground before the slide caught me, and the Boss had reached it, and before long had me beside him, unhurt, but stunned by the din and the panic.

"Thank God, the dream is over! There's the end of it!"

I followed his glance into the bottom of the gorge where now there was neither white man nor redskin, only one white chaos of tumbled snow, many feet deep, and above, the bare rock-bed of the slide.

Higher and higher we climbed upon the side of safety, and as we went the very hillside was dissolving under us; but there was no more snow to come, and, after an hour's rest, we went back to try to dig out our dead.

But without spades, or an accurate knowledge of the spot at which they lay, we knew that our efforts were hopeless from the first, and, after a day's work, we abandoned it.

"Let us mark the spot, and leave them. It is our only chance of saving ourselves."

I was too spent to answer, but I took up the post I had carried and climbed up the bed of the snow-slide.

"Put a post in there and I will put one in above it, and one on the other side of the gulch, to give us a line if we ever get back," ordered the Boss, and, routing amongst the *débris*, I found what looked like a soft spot, and drove the post home.

It went in so easily that I stooped to see what I had struck, and there, round the base of my post—my post with the miner's notice upon it—was a riband of dull, yellowish matter not very different from the soiled snow.

But it was gouge, the soft, decomposed stuff which sometimes lies between a vein and the country rock in which it is embedded ; and this gouge was full of particles which gleamed with the same steady, unchanging glare, no matter from what point you regarded them.

I was standing upon the price of men's lives—almost the only god that men worship nowadays—the ugly, gleaming metal for which men will give up the spring sunshine, and all that makes life worth living.

I looked up, and saw that the Boss had set up his stake across the gully. It was in a true line with the lead. We had but one more stake to set, a few words as to date and bearings to add to our miner's notice, and we had, without seeking it at the last, staked Siyah Joe's reef, whilst he and his enemy lay buried at the foot of it.

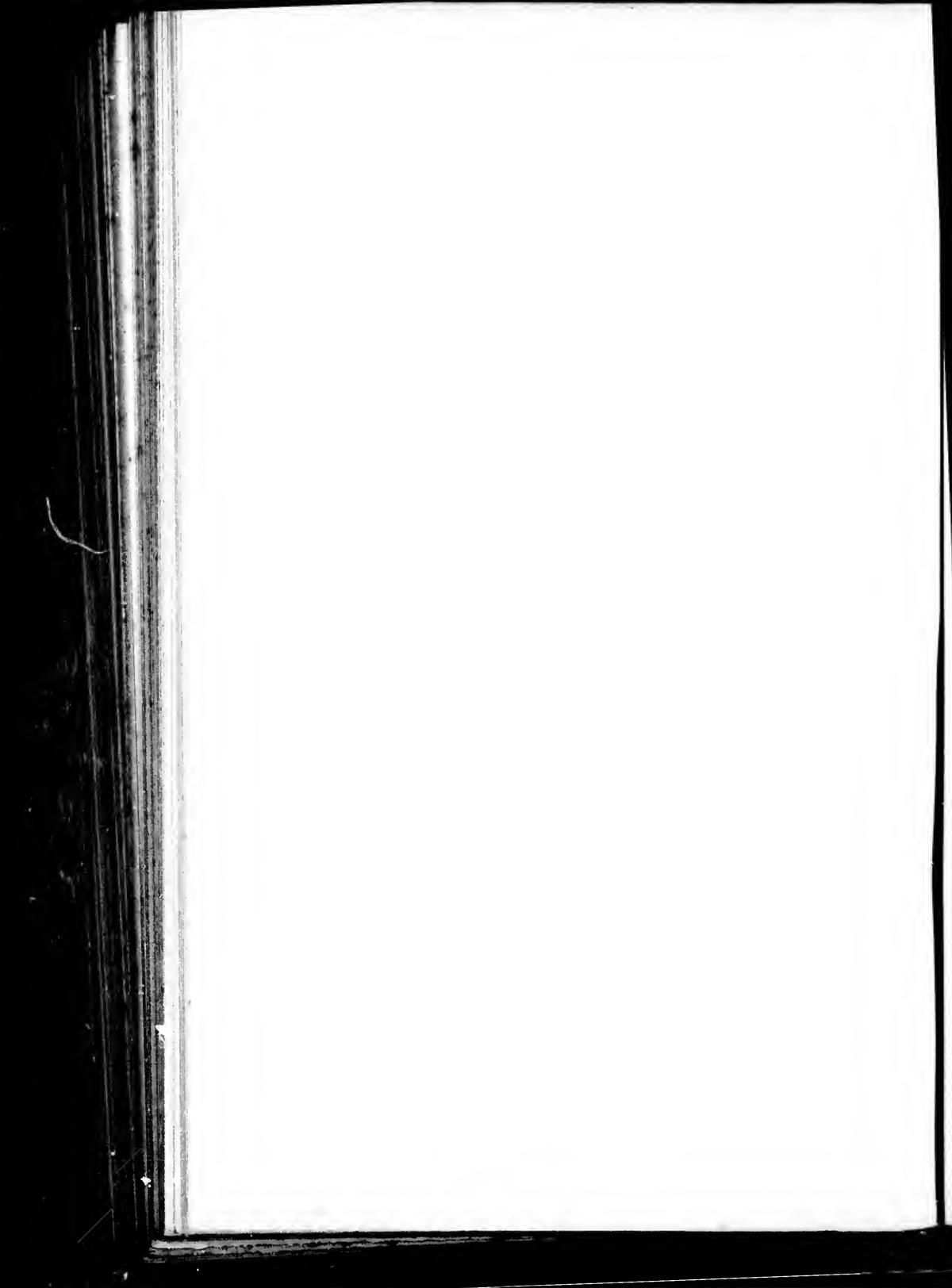
* * * * *

There is practically nothing more to tell. The race or the battle is the thing worth doing, and possibly worth recording ; the prize is only a lure to evoke

effort and develop what is in a man. The prize, as far as I have seen, becomes smaller and more worthless as you draw nearer to it. But I must not be ungrateful.

I crawled out, thanks to the Boss, or this would never have been written; thanks, too, to his sober sanity of mind, I sold out for a comparatively small price to the first bidder, and now what money I have is in the Consols. Any one who mentions mining or business is shown to the door by my servant with surprising alacrity, and I am able to dwell outside the roar of London, and live the country life which dear Mother Nature meant for her children, in sober quiet.

THE END.



FEBRUARY, 1900.

BELL'S INDIAN & COLONIAL LIBRARY.

Issued for Circulation in India and the Colonies only.

MAY BE HAD IN CLOTH, GILT, OR IN PAPER WRAPPERS.

Additional Volumes are issued at regular intervals.

ALEXANDER (Mrs.)	A Ward in Chancery.
ALEXANDER (Mrs.)	A Choice of Evils.
ALEXANDER (Mrs.)	A Fight with Fate.
ALEXANDER (Mrs.)	Mrs. Crichton's Creditor.
ALEXANDER (Mrs.)	Barbara.
ALEXANDER (Mrs.)	The Stepmother.
ALLEN (GRANT)	A Splendid Sin.
ALLEN (GRANT)	An African Millionaire. Illustrated.
ALLEN (GRANT)	The Incidental Bishop.
ANSTEY (F.)	Under the Rose. Illustrated.
APPLETON (GEORGE W.)	The Co-Respondent.
APPLETON (GEORGE W.)	François the Valet.
AUSTEN (JANE)	Pride and Prejudice. Illustrated.
BARING GOULD (S.)	Perpetua.
BARRETT (WILSON) and)	In Old New York.
BARRON (ELWYN))	
BARRINGTON (Mrs. RUSSELL)	Helen's Ordeal.
BENSON (E. F.)	The Rubicon.
BENSON (E. F.)	Limitations.
BENSON (E. F.)	The Babe, B.A.
BICKERDYKE (JOHN)	Her Wild Oats.
BIRRELL (O.)	Behind the Magic Mirror.
BJÖRNSON (BJÖRNSTJERNE) ...	Arne, and the Fisher Lassie.
BLOUNDELLE-BURTON (J.) ...	The Seafarers.
BRONTË (CHARLOTTE)	Shirley.
BROUGHTON (RHODA) and }	A Widower Indeed.
BISLAND (ELIZABETH) }	
BUCHANAN (ROBERT)	Father Anthony.
BURGIN (G. B.)	Tomalyn's Quest.
BURGIN (G. B.)	Settled Out of Court.
BURGIN (G. B.)	Hermits of Gray's Inn.
CAIRD (MONA)	The Wing of Azrael.
CAIRD (MONA)	Pathway of the Gods.
CALVERLEY (C. S.)	Verses and Fly-Leaves.
CAMERON (Mrs. LOVETT)	A Bad Lot.
CAMERON (Mrs. LOVETT)	A Soul Astray.
CAMERON (Mrs. LOVETT)	A Man's Undoing.
CAMERON (Mrs. LOVETT)	Devils' Apples.
CAMERON (Mrs. LOVETT)	A Difficult Matter.
CAMERON (Mrs. LOVETT)	The Ways of a Widow.
CAMERON (Mrs. LOVETT)	A Fair Fraud.

CASTLE (EGERTON)	The Light of Scarthey.
COLEBAN (J. M.)	Her Royal Highness's Love Affair
COLERIDGE (CHRISTABEL)	The Tender Mercies of the Good.
COLERIDGE (S. T.)	Table-Talk and Omniana.
CROCKETT (S. R.)	The Men of the Moss-Hags.
DAUDET (ALPHONSE)	The Hope of the Family.
DAWE (W. C.)	The Emu's Head.
DE LA PASTURE (Mrs. HENRY)	Deborah of Tod's.
DE LA PASTURE (Mrs. HENRY)	Adam Grigson.
DICKENS (CHARLES)	Pickwick Papers. Illustrated.
DICKENS (CHARLES)	A Tale of Two Cities. Illustrated.
DICKENS (CHARLES)	Bleak House.
DOUGALL (L.)	A Dozen Ways of Love.
DOUGLAS (THEO.)	A Legacy of Hate.
DOUGLAS (THEO.)	Nemo.
DOYLE (CONAN)	The White Company.
DOYLE (CONAN)	Rodney Stone. Illustrated.
DOYLE (CONAN)	Uncle Bernac. Illustrated.
DOYLE (CONAN)	The Tragedy of the Korosko.
DU MAURIER (G.)	Trilby. Illustrated.
DU MAURIER (G.)	The Martian. Illustrated.
EBERS (GEORG)	An Indian Princess.
EGERTON (GEORGE)	The Wheel of God.
EMERSON (R. W.)	Essays and Lectures.
EMERSON (R. W.)	English Traits and Nature.
FALKNER (J. MEADE)	Moonfleet.
FENN (G. MANVILLE)	The Star-Gazers.
FENN (G. MANVILLE)	The Case of Ailsa Gray.
FENN (G. MANVILLE)	Sappers and Miners.
FENN (G. MANVILLE)	Cursed by a Fortune.
FENN (G. MANVILLE)	High Play.
FENN (G. MANVILLE)	The Vibart Affair.
FINNEMORE (JOHN)... ..	The Red Men of the Dusk.
FITCHETT (Rev. W. H.)	Deeds that Won the Empire. Illus.
FITCHETT (Rev. W. H.)	Fights for the Flag. Illustrated.
FLETCHER (J. S.)	Mistress Spitfire.
FOSTER (JOHN)... ..	The Evils of Popular Ignorance, &c.
FRANCIS (M. E.)	A Daughter of the Soil.
FRASER (Mrs. HUGH)	The Looms of Time.
GARLAND (HAMBLIN)	Jason Edwards.
GASKELL (Mrs.)	Wives and Daughters.
GERARD (DOROTHEA)	Lot 13.
GERARD (DOROTHEA)	Miss Providence.
GIFT (THEO.)	An Island Princess.
GIFT (THEO.)	Dishonoured.
GISSING (GEORGE)	Denzil Quarrier.
GISSING (GEORGE)	The Emancipated.
GISSING (GEORGE)	In the Year of Jubilee.
GISSING (GEORGE)	Eve's Ransom.
GISSING (GEORGE)	Born in Exile.

- ey.
 Love Affair
 of the Good.
 niana.
 ss-Hags.
 mily.
- Illustrated.
 s. Illustrated.
- ove.
- y.
 trated.
 trated.
 Korosko.
- rated.
- Nature.
- ray.
- e.
- Dusk.
 Empire. Illus.
 Illustrated.
- gnorance, &c.
 oil.
- s.
- ce.
- GISSING (GEORGE) The Unclassed.
 GISSING (GEORGE) The Whirlpool.
 GISSING (GEORGE) Human Odds and Ends.
 GORDON (Lord GRANVILLE)... The Race of To-day.
 GREEN (Mrs. A. K.) That Affair Next Door.
 GREEN (Mrs. A. K.) Lost Man's Lane.
 GRIFFITH (GEORGE)... .. Valdar the Oft-Born. Illustrated.
 GRIFFITH (GEORGE)... .. The Virgin of the Sun
 GRIFFITH (GEORGE)... .. The Destined Maid. Illustrated.
 GRIFFITH (GEORGE)... .. Knaves of Diamonds.
 GRIFFITH (GEORGE)... .. The Great Pirate Syndicate.
 GRIFFITH (GEORGE)... .. Brothers of the Chain.
 GRIFFITH (GEORGE)... .. The Rose of Judah.
 GRIFFITHS (Major ARTHUR)... Ford's Folly, Ltd.
 GRIFFITHS (Major ARTHUR)... Fast and Loose.
 GUNTER (A. C.)... .. A Florida Enchantment.
 HAGGARD (Lieut-Col. ANDREW) Tempest-Torn.
 HAKE (A. EGMONT) Gordon in China and the Soudan
 HARDY (THOMAS) Tess of the D'Urbervilles.
 HARDY (THOMAS) Desperate Remedies.
 HARRADEN (BEATRICE) Ships that Pass in the Night.
 HARTE (BRET) Stories in Light and Shadow.
 HARTE (BRET) Jack Hamlin's Mediation, and other
 HAWTHORNE (JULIAN) A Fool of Nature. [Stories.
 HAWTHORNE (NATHANIEL) ... Transformation. (The Marble Faun.
 HENTY (G. A.) The Woman of the Commune.
 HILL (HEADON) The Spies of the Wight.
 HOLLAND (CLIVE) Marcelle of the Latin Quarter.
 HOOPER (GEORGE) Waterloo. With Maps and Plans.
 HOPE (ANTHONY) Comedies of Courtship.
 HOPE (ANTHONY) Half a Hero.
 HUME (FERGUS) Lady Jezebel.
 HUME (FERGUS) The Rainbow Feather.
 HUME (FERGUS) The Red-Headed Man.
 HUNGERFORD (Mrs.) Peter's Wife.
 HUNGERFORD (Mrs.) A Tug of War.
 HUNT (VIOLET) The Maiden's Progress.
 HUNT (VIOLET) A Hard Woman.
 HUNT (VIOLET) The Way of Marriage.
 HUTCHESON (J. C.) Crown and Anchor.
 HUTCHESON (J. C.) The Pirate Junk.
 HYNE (C. J. CUTLIFFE) Adventures of Captain Kettle. Illus.
 HYNE (C. J. CUTLIFFE) Further Adventures of Capt. Kettle.
 JOCELYN (Mrs. R.) Only a Flirt.
 JOCELYN (Mrs. R.) Lady Mary's Experiences.
 JOCELYN (Mrs. R.) Miss Rayburn's Diamonds.
 JOCELYN (Mrs. R.) Henry Massinger.
 JÓKAI (MAURUS) Eyes Like the Sea.
 KEARY (C. F.) The Two Lancrofts.
 KENNARD (Mrs. E.) The Catch of the County.

KENNARD (Mrs. E.)	... ..	Fooled by a Woman.
KENNARD (Mrs. E.)	... ..	A Riverside Romance.
KENNARD (Mrs. E.)	... ..	At the Tail of the Hounds.
KILLING (RUDYARD)	... ..	Departmental Ditties. Illustrated.
L (X.)	... ..	The Limb.
LEE (ALBERT)	... ..	The Gentleman Pensioner.
LE QUEUX (W.)	... ..	Devil's Dice.
LE QUEUX (W.)	... ..	Zoraida. Illustrated.
LE QUEUX (W.)	... ..	The Great War of 1897. Illus.
LE QUEUX (W.)	... ..	The Eye of Istar. Illustrated.
LE QUEUX (W.)	... ..	Whoso Findeth a Wife.
LE QUEUX (W.)	... ..	The Great White Queen. Illus.
LE QUEUX (W.)	... ..	Stolen Souls.
LE QUEUX (W.)	... ..	Scribes and Pharisees.
LE QUEUX (W.)	... ..	If Sinners Entice Thee.
LE QUEUX (W.)	... ..	England's Peril.
LE QUEUX (W.)	... ..	The Bond of Black.
LE QUEUX (W.)	... ..	Wiles of the Wicked.
MALLOCK (W. H.)	... ..	A Human Document.
MALLOCK (W. H.)	... ..	The Heart of Life.
MALLOCK (W. H.)	... ..	The Individualist.
MARSH (R.)	... ..	In Full Cry.
MARSHALL (A. H.)	... ..	Lord Stirling's Son.
MATHERS (HELEN)	... ..	Bam Wildfire.
MEADE (Mrs. L. T.)	... ..	A Life for a Love.
MEADE (Mrs. L. T.)	... ..	A Son of Ishmael.
MEADE (Mrs. L. T.)	... ..	The Way of a Woman.
MEADE (Mrs. L. T.)	... ..	The Cleverest Woman in England.
MEADE (Mrs. L. T.)	... ..	The Desire of Men.
MEADE (Mrs. L. T.)	... ..	The Wooing of Monica.
MEADE (L. T.) and HALIFAX (CLIFFORD)	}	Stories from the Diary of a Doctor.
MEREDITH (GEORGE)	... ..	Richard Feverel.
MEREDITH (GEORGE)	... ..	Evan Harrington.
MEREDITH (GEORGE)	... ..	The Egoist.
MEREDITH (GEORGE)	... ..	Diana of the Crossways
MEREDITH (GEORGE)	... ..	Lord Ormont and his Aminta.
MEREDITH (GEORGE)	... ..	The Amazing Marriage.
MEREDITH (GEORGE)	... ..	The Tragic Comedians.
MERRIMAN (HENRY SETON)	... ..	With Edged Tools.
MERRIMAN (HENRY SETON)	... ..	The Grey Lady. Illustrated.
MIDDLETON (COLIN)	... ..	Without Respect of Persons.
MIGNET (F. A.)	... ..	History of the French Revolution.
MITFORD (BERTRAM)	... ..	John Ames, Native Commissioner.
MORROW (W. C.)	... ..	The Ape, the Idiot, and other People.
MUDDOCK (J. E.)	... ..	The Star of Fortune.
MUDDOCK (J. E.)	... ..	Stripped of the Tinsel.
MUDDOCK (J. E.)	... ..	The Lost Laird.
MUDDOCK (J. E.)	... ..	In the King's Favour.
NISBET (HUME)	... ..	Kings of the Sea. Illustrated.

NISBET (HUME)	The Revenge of Valerie.
NEEDELL (Mrs. J. H.)	The Honour of Vivien Bruce.
NEWLAND (S.)	Paving the Way. Illustrated.
NEW NOTE, A	
OLIPHANT (Mrs.)	The Prodigals.
OTTOLENGUI (R.)	The Crime of the Century.
PARKER (GILBERT)	The Translation of a Savage.
PARKER (GILBERT) and others	March of the White Guard, &c. Illus-
PATERSON (ARTHUR)	A Man of his Word. [trated.
PAYN (JAMES)	In Market Overt.
PAYN (JAMES)	Another's Burden.
PEMBERTON (MAX)	A Gentleman's Gentleman.
PEMBERTON (MAX)	Christine of the Hills.
PEMBERTON (MAX)	The Phantom Army.
PEMBERTON (MAX)	Signors of the Night.
PHILIPS (F. C.)	Poor Little Bella.
PHILLIPPS-WOLLEY (C.)	One of the Broken Brigade.
PHILLIPPS-WOLLEY (C.)	The Chicamon Stone.
PHILLPOTTS (EDEN)	Some Every-Day Folks.
PHILLPOTTS (EDEN)	My Laughing Philosopher.
PHILLPOTTS (EDEN)	Lying Prophets.
PHILLPOTTS (EDEN)	Children of the Mist.
POUSHKIN (A.)	Prose Tales. Trans. by T. Keane.
PRESCOTT (E. LIVINGSTON) ...	The Rip's Redemption.
PRESCOTT (E. LIVINGSTON) ...	The Measure of a Man.
PRESCOTT (E. LIVINGSTON) ...	Illusion.
QUILLER-COUCH (M.)	The Spanish Maid.
RIDDELL (Mrs. J. H.)	Did He Deserve it?
RIDDELL (Mrs. J. H.)	Fair Abbotsmead.
'RITA'	Joan and Mrs. Carr.
'RITA'	Vignettes: Stories.
RUSSELL (DORA)	A Torn out Page.
RUSSELL (W. CLARK)	A Voyage at Anchor.
SERGEANT (ADELINE)	A Rogue's Daughter.
SERGEANT (ADELINE)	Told in the Twilight.
SERGEANT (ADELINE)	The Love Story of Margaret Wynne.
SERGEANT (ADELINE)	Blake of Oriel.
SERGEANT (ADELINE)	A Rise in the World.
SIX THOUSAND TONS OF GOLD.	
SMART (HAWLEY)	A Member of Tattersall's, &c.
ST. AUBYN (A.)	A Proctor's Wooing.
ST. AUBYN (A.)	A Fair Impostor.
ST. AUBYN (A.)	Bonnie Maggie Lauder.
STABLES (Dr. GORDON)	The Rose of Allandale.
STEAD (W. T.)	Real Ghost Stories.
STEELE (Mrs.)	Lesbia.
STINDE (JULIUS)	The Buchholz Family
STOCKTON (FRANK R.)	The Great Stone of Sardis. Illus-
STOCKTON (FRANK R.)	Associate Hermits. [trated.
THACKERAY (W. M.)	The Newcomes.

THACKERAY (W. M.)	...	...	Vanity Fair.
THOMAS (ANNIE)	...	...	Four Women in the Case.
THOMAS (ANNIE)	...	...	Essentially Human.
THOMAS (ANNIE)	...	...	Dick Rivers.
THOMSON (BASIL)	...	...	The Indiscretions of Lady Asenath.
TIREBUCK (W. E.)	...	...	Meg of the Scarlet Foot.
TIREBUCK (W. E.)	...	...	The White Woman.
TRACY (LOUIS)	...	...	The Final War. Illustrated.
TRACY (LOUIS)	...	...	An American Emperor.
TRACY (LOUIS)	...	...	Lost Provinces. Illustrated
TROLLOPE (ANTHONY)	...	...	Framley Parsonage.
TROLLOPE (ANTHONY)	...	...	Doctor Thorne.
TROLLOPE (ANTHONY)	...	...	Lily Dale.
TYNAN (KATHARINE)	...	...	The Way of a Maid.
UNDERWOOD (FRANCIS)	...	...	Doctor Gray's Quest.
VANDAM (ALBERT D.)	...	...	The Mystery of the Patrician Club.
VANDAM (ALBERT D.)	...	...	French Men and French Manners.
VYNNE (NORA)	...	...	The Priest's Marriage.
WALFORD (L. B.)	...	...	The Archdeacon.
WARDEN (FLORENCE)	...	...	A Perfect Fool.
WARDEN (FLORENCE)	...	...	Kitty's Engagement.
WARDEN (FLORENCE)	...	...	A Spoilt Girl.
WARDEN (FLORENCE)	...	...	A Lady in Black.
WARDEN (FLORENCE)	...	...	Our Widow.
WARDEN (FLORENCE)	...	...	The Mystery of Dudley Horne.
WARDEN (FLORENCE)	...	...	The Girls at the Grange.
WARDEN (FLORENCE)	...	...	Girls will be Girls.
WARDEN (FLORENCE)	...	...	Little Miss Prim.
WARDEN (FLORENCE)	...	...	A Lowly Lover.
WELLS (H. G.)	...	...	When the Sleeper Wakes.
WELLS (H. G.)	...	...	Tales of Time and Space.
WELLS (H. G.)	...	...	Love and Mr. Lewisham.
WESTALL (WILLIAM)	...	...	For Honour and Life.
WICKS (FREDERICK)	...	...	The Infant. Illus. by A. Morrow
WIGGIN (KATE DOUGLAS)	...	...	Marm Liza.
WIGGIN (KATE DOUGLAS)	...	...	Penelope's Experiences in Scotland.
WILKINS (MARY E.)	...	...	Pembroke.
WILKINS (MARY E.)	...	...	Madelon.
WILKINS (MARY E.)	...	...	Jerome.
WILKINS (MARY E.)	...	...	Silence, and other Stories.
WINTER (JOHN STRANGE)	...	...	A Born Soldier.
WINTER (JOHN STRANGE)	...	...	A Blameless Woman.
WINTER (JOHN STRANGE)	...	...	A Magnificent Young Man.
WINTER (JOHN STRANGE)	...	...	Bootles' Children, and other Stories.
WINTER (JOHN STRANGE)	...	...	The Peacemakers.
WINTER (JOHN STRANGE)	...	...	Heart and Sword.
WINTER (JOHN STRANGE)	...	...	A Name to Conjure With.

AN ALPHABETICAL LIST OF THE BOOKS CONTAINED IN BOHN'S LIBRARIES.

774 Volumes, Small Post 8vo. cloth. Price £164 16s. 6d.

Complete Detailed Catalogue will be sent on application.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Addison's Works. 6 vols. 3s. 6d. each.</p> <p>Aeschylus. Verse Trans. by Anna Swanwick. 5s.
— Prose Trans. by T. A. Buckley. 3s. 6d.</p> <p>Agassiz & Gould's Comparative Physiology. 5s.</p> <p>Alfieri's Tragedies. Trans. by Bowring. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.</p> <p>Alford's Queen's English. 1s. and 1s. 6d.</p> <p>Allen's Battles of the British Navy. 2 vols. 5s. each.</p> <p>Amianus Marcellinus. Trans. by C. D. Yonge. 7s. 6d.</p> <p>Andersen's Danish Tales. Trans. by Caroline Peachey. 5s.</p> <p>Antoninus (Marcus Aurelius). Trans. by George Long. 3s. 6d.</p> <p>Apollonius Rhodius. The Argonautica. Trans. by E. P. Coleridge. 5s.</p> <p>Appian's Roman History. Trans. by Horace White. 2 vols. 6s. each.</p> <p>Apuleius, The Works of. 5s.</p> <p>Ariosto's Orlando Furioso. Trans. by W. S. Rose. 2 vols. 5s. each.</p> <p>Aristophanes. Trans. by W. J. Hickie. 2 vols. 5s. each.</p> <p>Aristotle's Works. 5 vols. 5s. each; 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.</p> <p>Arian's Anabasis. Trans. by E. J. Chinnock. 5s.</p> <p>Ascham's Scholemaster. (J. E. B. Mayor.) 1s.</p> <p>Bacon's Essays and Historical Works, 3s. 6d.; Essays, 1s. and 1s. 6d.; Novum Organum, and Advancement of Learning, 5s.</p> | <p>Ballads and Songs of the Peasantry. By Robert Bell. 3s. 6d.</p> <p>Bass's Lexicon to the Greek Test. 2s.</p> <p>Bax's Manual of the History of Philology. 5s.</p> <p>Beaumont and Fletcher. Leigh Hunt's Selections. 3s. 6d.</p> <p>Bechstein's Cage and Chamber Birds. 5s.</p> <p>Beckmann's History of Inventions. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.</p> <p>Bede's Ecclesiastical History and the A.S. Chronicle. 5s.</p> <p>Bell (Sir C.) On the Hand. 5s.
— Anatomy of Expression. 5s.</p> <p>Bentley's Phalaris. 5s.</p> <p>Berkeley's Works. (Sampson.) With Introduction by Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, M.P. 3 vols. 5s. each.</p> <p>Björnson's Arne and The Fisher Lassie. Trans. by W. H. Low. 3s. 6</p> <p>Blair's Chronological Tables. 10s
Index of Dates. 2 vols. 5s. each.</p> <p>Bleek's Introduction to the Old Testament. 2 vols. 5s. each.</p> <p>Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy. &c. 5s.</p> <p>Bohn's Dictionary of Poetical Quotations. 6s.</p> <p>Bond's Handy Book for Verifying Dates, &c. 5s.</p> <p>Bonomi's Nineveh. 5s.</p> <p>Boswell's Life of Johnson. (Napier.) 6 vols. 3s. 6d. each.</p> <p>Brand's Popular Antiquities. 3 vols. 5s. each.</p> <p>Bremer's Works. Trans. by Mary Howitt. 4 vols. 3s. 6d. each.</p> |
|---|--|

- Bridgewater Treatises.** 9 vols. Various prices.
- Brink** (B. Ten). *Early English Literature.* 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Five Lectures on Shakespeare. 3s. 6d.
- Browne's** (Sir Thomas) Works. 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Buchanan's** Dictionary of Scientific Terms. 6s.
- Buckland's** Geology and Mineralogy. 2 vols. 15s.
- Burke's** Works and Speeches. 8 vols. 3s. 6d. each. *The Sublime and Beautiful.* 1s. and 1s. 6d. *Reflections on the French Revolution.* 1s.
- *Life*, by Sir James Prior. 3s. 6d.
- Burney's** *Evelina.* 3s. 6d. *Cecilia.* 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Burns' Life** by Lockhart. Revised by W. Scott Douglas. 3s. 6d.
- Burn's** *Ancient Rome.* 7s. 6d.
- Burton's** *Anatomy of Melancholy.* (A. R. Shilleto.) 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Burton's** *Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah.* 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Butler's** *Analogy of Religion, and Sermons.* 3s. 6d.
- Butler's** *Hudibras.* 5s.; or 2 vols., 5s. each.
- Caesar.** Tran. by W.A.M. Devitte. 5s.
- Camoens' Lusiad.** Mickle's Translation, revised. 3s. 6d.
- Carafas** (The) of Maddaloni. By Alfred de Reumont. 3s. 6d.
- Carpenter's** *Mechanical Philosophy,* 5s. *Vegetable Physiology,* 6s. *Animal Physiology,* 6s.
- Carrel's** *Counter Revolution under Charles II. and James II.* 3s. 6d.
- Cattermole's** *Evenings at Haddon Hall.* 5s.
- Catullus** and *Tibullus.* Trans. by W. K. Kelly. 5s.
- Cellini's** *Memoirs.* (Roscoe.) 3s. 6d.
- Cervantes' Exemplary Novels.** Trans. by W. K. Kelly. 3s. 6d.
- *Don Quixote.* Motteux's Trans. revised. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Cervantes' Galatea.** Trans. by G. W. J. Gyll. 3s. 6d.
- Chalmers** *On Man.* 5s.
- Channing's** *The Perfect Life.* 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Chaucer's** Works. Bell's Edition, revised by Skeat. 4 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Chess Congress of 1862.** By J. Löwenthal. 5s.
- Chevreur** *on Colour.* 5s. and 7s. 6d.
- Chillingworth's** *The Religion of Protestants.* 3s. 6d.
- China:** *Pictorial, Descriptive, and Historical.* 5s.
- Chronicles of the Crusades.** 5s.
- Cicero's** Works. Trans. by Prof. C. D. Yonge and others. 7 vols. 5s. each. 1 vol., 3s. 6d.
- *Letters.* Trans. by E. S. Shuckburgh, M.A. Vols. I. and II. 5s. each. [III. and IV. in the Press.]
- *Friendship and Old Age.* 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Clark's** *Heraldry.* (Planché.) 5s. and 15s.
- Classic Tales.** 3s. 6d.
- Coleridge's** *Prose Works.* (Ashe.) 6 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Comte's** *Philosophy of the Sciences.* (G. H. Lewes.) 5s.
- *Positive Philosophy.* (Harriet Martineau.) 3 vols. 5s. each.
- Condé's** *History of the Arabs in Spain.* 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Cooper's** *Biographical Dictionary.* 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Cowper's** Works. (Southey.) 8 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Coxe's** *House of Austria.* 4 vols. 3s. 6d. each. *Memoirs of Marlborough.* 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each. *Atlas to Marlborough's Campaigns.* 10s. 6d.
- Cralk's** *Pursuit of Knowledge.* 5s.
- Craven's** *Young Sportsman's Manual.* 5s.
- Cruikshank's** *Punch and Judy.* 5s. *Three Courses and a Desert.* 5s.
- Cunningham's** *Lives of British Painters.* 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each.

- Trans. by G.
Life. 1s.
ll's Edition,
3s. 6d. each.
62. By J.
s. and 7s. 6d.
Religion of
riptive, and
des. 5s.
s. by Prof. C.
vols. 5s. each.
E. S. Shuck-
nd II. 5s. each.
in the Press.
Age. 1s. and
lanché.) 5s.
rks. (Ashe.)
the Sciences.
ny. (Harriet
5s. each.
he Arabs in
each.
Dictionary.
they.) 8 vols.
ria. 4 vols.
Marlborough.
Atlas to Mar-
lor. 6d.
ledge. 5s.
an's Manual.
l Judy. 5s.
sert. 5s.
of British
z. each.
- Dante.** Trans. by Rev. H. F. Cary.
3s. 6d. Inferno. Separate, 1s. and
1s. 6d. Purgatorio. 1s. and 1s. 6d.
Paradiso. 1s. and 1s. 6d.
— Trans. by I. C. Wright. (Flax-
man's Illustrations.) 5s.
— Inferno. Italian Text and Trans.
by Dr. Carlyle. 5s.
— Purgatorio. Italian Text and
Trans. by W. S. Dugdale. 5s.
De Commines' Memoirs. Trans. by
A. R. Scoble. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
Defoe's Novels and Miscel. Works.
6 vols. 3s. 6d. each. Robinson
Crusoe (Vol. VII.) 3s. 6d. or 5s.
The Plague in London. 1s. and
1s. 6d.
**Deloime on the Constitution of Eng-
land.** 3s. 6d.
Demmin's Arms and Armour. Trans.
by C. C. Black. 7s. 6d.
Demosthenes' Orations. Trans. by
C. Rann Kennedy. 4 vols. 5s., and
1 vol. 3s. 6d.
— Orations On the Crown. 1s. and
1s. 6d.
De Stael's Corinne. Trans. by Emily
Baldwin and Paulina Driver. 3s. 6d.
Devey's Logic. 5s.
**Dictionary of Greek and Latin
Quotations.** 5s.
— of Poetical Quotations (Bohn.) 6s.
— of Scientific Terms. (Buchanan.) 6s.
— of Biography. (Cooper.) 2 vols.
5s. each.
— of Noted Names of Fiction.
(Wheeler.) 5s.
— Of Obsolete and Provincial Eng-
lish. (Wright.) 2 vols. 5s. each.
Didron's Christian Iconography.
2 vols. 5s. each.
Diogenes Laertius. Trans. by C. D.
Yonge. 5s.
Dobree's Adversaria. (Wagner.)
(2 vols.) 5s. each.
Dodd's Epigrammatists. 6s.
Donaldson's Theatre of the Greeks.
5s.
**Draper's History of the Intellectual
Development of Europe.** 2 vols. 5s.
each.
- Dunlop's History of Fiction.** 2 vols.
5s. each.
Dyer's History of Pompeii.
— The City of Rome. 5s.
Dyer's British Popular Customs. 5s.
Early Travels in Palestine. (Wright.)
5s.
Eaton's Waterloo Days. 1s. and
1s. 6d.
Ebers' Egyptian Princess. Trans. by
E. S. Buchheim. 3s. 6d.
Edgeworth's Stories for Children.
3s. 6d.
**Ellis' Specimens of Early English
Metrical Romances.** (Halliwell.) 5s.
Elze's Life of Shakespeare. Trans.
by L. Dora Schmitz. 5s.
Emerson's Works. 3 vols. 3s. 6d.
each, or 5 vols. 1s. each.
Ennemoser's History of Magic.
2 vols. 5s. each.
Epictetus. Trans. by George Long.
5s.
Euripides. Trans. by E. P. Coleridge
2 vols. 5s. each.
Eusebius' Eccl. History. Trans. by
C. F. Cruse. 5s.
Evelyn's Diary and Correspondence.
(Bray.) 4 vols. 5s. each.
Fairholt's Costume in England.
(Dillon.) 2 vols. 5s. each.
Fielding's Joseph Andrews. 3s. 6d.
Tom Jones. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
Amelia. 5s.
Flaxman's Lectures on Sculpture. 6s.
Florence of Worcester's Chronicle.
Trans. by T. Forester. 5s.
Foster's Works. 10 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
Franklin's Autobiography. 1s.
Gaspary's Italian Literature. Trans.
by H. Oelsner, M.A., Ph.D. Vol. I.
3s. 6d.
Gesta Romanorum. Trans. by Swan
and Hooper. 5s.
Gibbon's Decline and Fall. 7 vols.
3s. 6d. each.
Gilbart's Banking. 2 vols. 5s. each.
Gil Blas. Trans. by Smollett. 6s.

- Giraldus Cambrensis.** 5s.
- Goethe's Works and Correspondence**, including Autobiography and Annals, Faust, Elective Affinities, Werther, Wilhelm Meister, Poems and Ballads, Dramas, Reinecke Fox, Tour in Italy and Miscellaneous Travels, Early and Miscellaneous Letters, Correspondence with Eckermann and Soret, Zelter and Schiller, &c., &c. By various Translators. 16 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Faust. Text with Hayward's Translation. (Buchheim.) 5s.
- Faust. Part I. Trans. by Anna Swanwick. 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Boyhood. (Part I. of the Autobiography.) Trans. by J. Oxenford. 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Reinecke Fox. Trans. by A. Rogers. 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Goldsmith's Works.** (Gibbs.) 5 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Plays. 1s. and 1s. 6d. Vicar of Wakefield. 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Grammont's Memoirs and Boscobel Tracts.** 5s.
- Gray's Letters.** (D. C. Tovey.) *[In the press.]*
- Greek Anthology.** Trans. by E. Burges. 5s.
- Greek Romances.** (Theagenes and Chariclea, Daphnis and Chloe, Clitopho and Leucippe.) Trans. by Rev. R. Smith. 5s.
- Greek Testament.** 5s.
- Greene, Marlowe, and Ben Jonson's Poems.** (Robert Bell.) 3s. 6d.
- Gregory's Evidences of the Christian Religion.** 3s. 6d.
- Grimm's Gammer Grethel.** Trans. by E. Taylor. 3s. 6d.
- German Tales. Trans. by Mrs. Hunt. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Grossi's Marco Visconti.** 3s. 6d.
- Guizot's Origin of Representative Government in Europe.** Trans. by A. R. Scoble. 3s. 6d.
- The English Revolution of 1640. Trans. by W. Hazlitt. 3s. 6d.
- History of Civilisation. Trans. by W. Hazlitt. 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Hall (Robert).** Miscellaneous Works. 3s. 6d.
- Handbooks of Athletic Sports.** 8 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Handbook of Card and Table Games.** 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- of Proverbs. By H. G. Bohn. 5s.
- of Foreign Proverbs. 5s.
- Hardwick's History of the Thirty-nine Articles.** 5s.
- Harvey's Circulation of the Blood.** (Bowie.) 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Hauff's Tales.** Trans. by S. Mendel. 3s. 6d.
- The Caravan and Sheik of Alexandria. 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Hawthorne's Novels and Tales.** 4 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Hazlitt's Lectures and Essays.** 7 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Heaton's History of Painting.** (Cosmo Monkhouse.) 5s.
- Hegel's Philosophy of History.** Trans. by J. Sibree. 5s.
- Heine's Poems.** Trans. by E. A. Bowring. 3s. 6d.
- Travel Pictures. Trans. by Francis Storr. 3s. 6d.
- Helps (Sir Arthur).** Life of Columbus. 3s. 6d.
- Life of Pizarro. 3s. 6d.
- Life of Cortes. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Life of Las Casas. 3s. 6d.
- Life of Thomas Brassey. 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Henderson's Historical Documents of the Middle Ages.** 5s.
- Henfrey's English Coins.** (Keary.) 6s.
- Henry (Matthew) On the Psalms.** 5s.
- Henry of Huntingdon's History.** Trans. by T. Forester. 5s.
- Herodotus.** Trans. by H. F. Cary. 3s. 6d.
- Wheeler's Analysis and Summary of. 5s. Turner's Notes on. 5s.

aneous Works.
 Sports. 8 vols.
 Table Games.
 G. Bohn. 5s.
 5s.
 of the Thirty-
 of the Blood.
 6d.
 by S. Mendel.
 Sheik of Alex-
 and Tales.
 Essays. 7 vols.
 inting. (Cosmo
 History. Trans.
 ns. by E. A.
 ns. by Francis
 e of Columbus.
 6d.
 vols. 3s. 6d.
 3s. 6d.
 assey. 1s. and
 l Documents
 s.
 ns. (Keary.)
 e Psalms. 5s.
 n's History.
 5s.
 H. F. Cary.
 nd Summary
 s on. 5s.

Hesiod, Callimachus and Theognis. Trans. by Rev. J. Banks. 5s.
Hoffmann's Tales. The Serapion Brethren. Trans. by Lieut.-Colonel Ewing. 2 vols. 3s. 6d.
Hogg's Experimental and Natural Philosophy. 5s.
Holbein's Dance of Death and Bible Cuts. 5s.
Homer. Trans. by T. A. Buckley. 2 vols. 5s. each.
Hooper's Waterloo. 3s. 6d.
 — Sedan. 3s. 6d.
Horace. A New Literal Prose Translation By A. Hamilton Bryce, LL.D. 3s. 6d.
Hugo's Dramatic Works. Trans. by Mrs. Crosland and F. L. Slous. 3s. 6d.
 — Hernani. Trans. by Mrs. Crosland. 1s.
 — Poems. Trans. by various writers. Collected by J. H. L. Williams. 3s. 6d.
Humboldt's Cosmos. Trans. by Otté, Paul, and Dallas. 4 vols. 3s. 6d. each, and 1 vol. 5s.
 — Personal Narrative of his Travels. Trans. by T. Ross. 3 vols. 5s. each.
 — Views of Nature. Trans. by Otté and Bohn. 5s.
Humphreys' Coin Collector's Manual. 2 vols. 5s. each.
Hungary, History of. 3s. 6d.
Hunt's Poetry of Science. 5s.
Hutchinson's Memoirs. 3s. 6d.
India before the Sepoy Mutiny. 5s.
Ingulph's Chronicles. 5s.
Irving (Washington). Complete Works. 15 vols. 3s. 6d. each; or in 18 vols. 1s. each, and 2 vols. 1s. 6d. each.
 — Life and Letters. By Pierre E. Irving. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
Isocrates. Trans. by J. H. Freese. Vol. I 5s.
James' Life of Richard Cœur de Lion. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
 — Life and Times of Louis XIV. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.

Jameson (Mrs.) Shakespeare's Heroines. 3s. 6d.
Jesse (E.) Anecdotes of Dogs. 5s.
Jesse (J. H.) Memoirs of the Court of England under the Stuarts. 3 vols. 5s. each.
 — Memoirs of the Pretenders. 5s.
Johnson's Lives of the Poets. (Napier.) 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
Josephus. Whiston's Translation, revised by Rev. A. R. Shilleto. 5 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
Joyce's Scientific Dialogues. 5s.
Jukes-Browne's Handbook of Physical Geology. 7s. 6d. Handbook of Historical Geology. 6s. The Building of the British Isles 7s. 6d.
Julian the Emperor. Trans. by Rev. C. W. King. 5s.
Junius's Letters. Woodfall's Edition, revised. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
Justin, Cornelius Nepos, and Eutropius. Trans. by Rev. J. S. Watson. 5s.
Juvenal, Persius, Sulpicia, and Lucilius. Trans. by L. Evans. 5s.
Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. Trans. by J. M. D. Meiklejohn. 5s.
 — Prolegomena, &c. Trans. by E. Belfort Bax. 5s.
Kelghtley's Fairy Mythology. 5s. Classical Mythology. Revised by Dr. L. Schmitz. 5s.
Kidd On Man. 3s. 6d.
Kirby On Animals. 2 vols. 5s. each.
Knight's Knowledge is Power. 5s.
La Fontaine's Fables. Trans by E. Wright. 3s. 6d.
Lamartine's History of the Girondists. Trans. by H. T. Ryde. 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
 — Restoration of the Monarchy in France. Trans. by Capt. Rafer. 4 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
 — French Revolution of 1848. 3s. 6d.
Lamb's Essays of Elia and Eliana. 3s. 6d., or in 3 vols. 1s. each.
 — Memorials and Letters. Talfourd's Edition, revised by W. C. Hazlitt. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
 — Specimens of the English Dramatic Poets of the Time of Elizabeth. 3s. 6d.

- Lanzi's History of Painting in Italy.** Trans. by T. Roscoe. 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Lappenberg's England under the Anglo-Saxon Kings.** Trans. by B. Thorpe. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Lectures on Painting.** By Barry, Opie, and Fuseli. 5s.
- Leonardo da Vinci's Treatise on Painting.** Trans. by J. F. Rigaud. 5s.
- Lepsius' Letters from Egypt, &c.** Trans. by L. and J. B. Horner. 5s.
- Lessing's Dramatic Works.** Trans. by Ernest Bell. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each. Nathan the Wise and Minna von Barnhelm. 1s. and 1s. 6d. Laokoon, Dramatic Notes, &c. Trans. by E. C. Beasley and Helen Zimmern. 3s. 6d. Laokoon separate. 1s. or 1s. 6d.
- Lilly's Introduction to Astrology.** (Zadkiel.) 5s.
- Livy.** Trans. by Dr. Spillan and others. 4 vols. 5s. each.
- Locke's Philosophical Works.** (J. A. St. John.) 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each. — Life. By Lord King. 3s. 6d.
- Lodge's Portraits.** 8 vols. 5s. each.
- Longfellow's Poetical and Prose Works.** 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Lowdon's Natural History.** 5s.
- Lowndes' Bibliographer's Manual** 6 vols. 5s. each.
- Lucan's Pharsalia.** Trans. by H. T. Riley. 5s.
- Lucian's Dialogues.** Trans. by H. Williams. 5s.
- Lucretius.** Trans. by Rev. J. S. Watson. 5s.
- Luther's Table Talk.** Trans. by W. Hazlitt. 3s. 6d. — Autobiography. (Michelet.) Trans. by W. Hazlitt. 3s. 6d.
- Machiavelli's History of Florence, &c.** Trans. 3s. 6d.
- Mallet's Northern Antiquities.** 5s.
- Mantell's Geological Excursions through the Isle of Wight, &c.** 5s. Petrifications and their Teachings. 6s. Wonders of Geology. 2 vols. 7s. 6d. each.
- Manzoni's The Betrothed.** 5s.
- Marco Polo's Travels.** Marsden's Edition, revised by T. Wright. 5s.
- Martial's Epigrams.** Trans. 7s. 6d.
- Martineau's History of England, 1800-15.** 3s. 6d. — History of the Peace, 1816-46. 4 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Matthew Paris.** Trans. by Dr. Giles. 3 vols. 5s. each.
- Matthew of Westminster.** Trans. by C. D. Yonge. 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Maxwell's Victories of Wellington.** 5s.
- Menzel's History of Germany.** Trans. by Mrs. Horrocks. 3 vols. 3s. 6d. ea.
- Michael Angelo and Raffaele.** By Duppa and Q. de Quincy. 5s.
- Michelet's French Revolution.** Trans. by C. Cocks. 3s. 6d.
- Mignet's French Revolution.** 3s. 6d.
- Mill (John Stuart).** Early Essays. 3s. 6d.
- Miller's Philosophy of History** vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Milton's Poetical Works.** (J. Montgomery.) 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each. — Prose Works. (J. A. St. John.) 5 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Mitford's Our Village.** 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Molière's Dramatic Works.** Trans. by C. H. Wall. 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each. — The Miser, Tartuffe, The Shop-keeper turned Gentlemen. 1s. & 1s. 6d.
- Montagu's (Lady M. W.) Letters and Works.** (Wharnclyffe and Moy Thomas.) 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Montaigne's Essays.** Cotton's Trans. revised by W. C. Hazlitt. 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws.** Nugent's Trans. revised by J. V. Prichard. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Morphy's Games of Chess.** (Löwenthal.) 5s.
- Motley's Dutch Republic.** 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Mudie's British Birds.** (Martin.) 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Naval and Military Heroes of Great Britain.** 6s.

- Marsden's Wright. 5s.
 Trans. 7s. 6d.
 of England,
 Peace, 1815-46.
- by Dr. Giles.
- nster. Trans.
 vols. 5s. each.
 of Wellington.
- rmany. Trans.
 vols. 3s. 6d. ea.
- Raffaele. By
 incy. 5s.
- Revolution.
 3s. 6d.
- olution. 3s. 6d.
- Early Essays.
- of History
- rks. (J. Mont-
 r. 6d. each.
- A. St. John.)
- 2 vols. 3s. 6d.
- Works. Trans
 s. 3s. 6d. each.
- ffe, The Shop-
 en. 1s. & 1s. 6d.
- W.) Letters
 eliffe and Moy
 each.
- otton's Trans.
 azlitt. 3 vols.
- f Laws. Nu-
 d by J. V.
 6d. each.
- Chess. (Lö-
 lic. 3 vols.
- (Martin.) 2
- pes of Great
- Neander's History of the Christian Religion and Church.** 10 vols. Life of Christ. 1 vol. Planting and Training of the Church by the Apostles. 2 vols. History of Christian Dogma. 2 vols. Memorials of Christian Life in the Early and Middle Ages. 16 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Nibelungs, Lay of the.** Trans. by Alice Horton and Edward Bell, M.A. 5s.
- Nicolini's History of the Jesuits.** 5s.
- North's Lives of the Norths.** (Jesopp.) 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Nugent's Memorials of Hampden.** 5s.
- Ockley's History of the Saracens.** 3s. 6d.
- Oman (J. C.) The Great Italian Epics.** 3s. 6d.
- Ordericus Vitalls.** Trans. by T Forester. 4 vols. 5s. each.
- Ovid.** Trans. by H. T. Riley. 3 vols. 5s. each.
- Pascal's Thoughts.** Trans. by C. Kegan Paul. 3s. 6d.
- Paul's Life of Alfred the Great, &c.** 5s.
- Life of Cromwell. 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Pausanias' Description of Greece.** Trans. by Rev. A. R. Shilleto. 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Pearson on the Creed.** (Walford.) 5s.
- Pepys' Diary.** (Braybrooke.) 4 vols. 5s. each.
- Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry.** (Prichard.) 2 vols. 3s. 6d. ea.
- Petrarch's Sonnets.** 5s.
- Pettigrew's Chronicles of the Tombs.** 5s.
- Philo-Judæus.** Trans. by C. D. Yonge. 4 vols. 5s. each.
- Pickering's Races of Man.** 5s.
- Pindar.** Trans. by D. W. Turner. 5s.
- Planché's History of British Costume.** 5s.
- Plato.** Trans. by H. Cary, G. Burges, and H. Davis. 6 vols. 5s. each.
- Apology, Crito, Phædo, Protagoras. 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Day's Analysis and Index to the Dialogues. 5s.
- Plautus.** Trans. by H. T. Riley. 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Trinummus, Menæchmi, Aulularia, Captivi. 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Pliny's Natural History.** Trans. by Dr. Bostock and H. T. Riley. 6 vols. 5s. each.
- Pliny the Younger, Letters of.** Melmoth's trans. revised by Rev. F. C. T. Bosanquet. 5s.
- Plotinus: Select Works of.** Tom Taylor's trans. (G. R. S. Mead.) 5s.
- Plutarch's Lives.** Trans. by Stewart and Long. 4 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Moralia. Trans. by Rev. C. W. King and Rev. A. R. Shilleto. 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Poetry of America.** (W. J. Linton.) 3s. 6d.
- Political Cyclopædia.** 4 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Polyglot of Foreign Proverbs.** 5s.
- Pope's Poetical Works.** (Carruthers.) 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Homer. (J. S. Watson. 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Life and Letters. (Carruthers.) 5s.
- Pottery and Porcelain.** (H. G. Bohn. 5s. and 10s. 6d.
- Poushkin's Prose Tales.** Trans. by T. Keane. 3s. 6d.
- Propertius.** Trans. by Rev. P. J. F. Gantillon. 3s. 6d.
- Prout (Father), Reliques.** 5s.
- Quintilian's Institutes of Oratory.** Trans. by Rev. J. S. Watson. 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Racine's Tragedies.** Trans. by R. B. Boswell. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Ranke's History of the Popes.** Trans. by E. Foster. 3 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Latin and Teutonic Nations. Trans. by P. A. Ashworth. 3s. 6d.
- History of Servia. Trans. by Mrs. Kerr. 3s. 6d.
- Rennie's Insect Architecture.** (J. G. Wood.) 5s.
- Reynold's Discourses and Essays.** (Beechy.) 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.

- Ricardo's Political Economy.** (Gonner.) 5s.
- Richter's Levana.** 3s. 6d.
— Flower Fruit and Thorn Pieces. Trans. by Lieut.-Col. Ewing. 3s. 6d.
- Roger de Hovenden's Annals.** Trans. by Dr. Giles. 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Roger of Wendover.** Trans. by Dr. Giles. 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Rogot's Animal and Vegetable Physiology.** 2 vols. 6s. each.
- Rome in the Nineteenth Century.** (C. A. Eaton.) 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Roscoe's Leo X.** 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
— Lorenzo de' Medici. 3s. 6d.
- Russia, History of.** By W. K. Kelly. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Sallust, Florus, and Velleius Paterculus.** Trans. by Rev. J. S. Watson. 5s.
- Schiller's Works.** Including History of the Thirty Years' War, Revolt of the Netherlands, Wallenstein, William Tell, Don Carlos, Mary Stuart, Maid of Orleans, Bride of Messina, Robbers, Fiesco, Love and Intrigue, Demetrius, Ghost-Seer, Sport of Divinity, Poems, Aesthetical and Philosophical Essays, &c. By various translators. 7 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
— Mary Stuart and The Maid of Orleans. Trans. by J. Mellish and Anna Swanwick. 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Schlegel's (F.) Lectures and Miscellaneous Works.** 5 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
— (A. W.) Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature. 3s. 6d.
- Schopenhauer's Essays.** Selected and trans. by E. Belfort Bax. 5s.
— On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason and on the Will in Nature. Trans. by Mdme. Hillebrand. 5s.
- Schouw's Earth, Plants, and Man.** Trans. by A. Henfrey. 5s.
- Schumann's Early Letters.** Trans. by May Herbert. 3s. 6d.
— Reissmann's Life of. Trans. by A. L. Alger. 3s. 6d.
- Seneca on Benefits.** Trans. by Aubrey Stewart. 2s. 6d.
— Minor Essays and On Clemency. Trans. by Aubrey Stewart. 5s.
- Sharpe's History of Egypt.** 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Sheridan's Dramatic Works.** 3s. 6d.
— Plays. 1s. and 1s. 6d.
- Sismond's Literature of the South of Europe.** Trans. by T. Roscoe. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Six Old English Chronicles.** 5s.
- Smith (Archdeacon). Synonyms and Antonyms.** 5s.
- Smith (Adam). Wealth of Nations.** (Belfort Bax.) 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
— Theory of Moral Sentiments. 3s. 6d.
- Smith (Pye). Geology and Scripture.** 5s.
- Smollett's Novels.** 4 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Smyth's Lectures on Modern History.** 2 vols. 3s. 6d. each.
- Soorates' Ecclesiastical History.** 5s.
- Sophocles.** Trans. by E. P. Coleridge, M.A. 5s.
- Southey's Life of Nelson.** 5s.
— Life of Wesley. 5s.
— Life, as told in his Letters. By J. Dennis. 3s. 6d.
- Sozomen's Ecclesiastical History.** 5s.
- Spinoza's Chief Works.** Trans. by R. H. M. Elwes. 2 vols. 5s. each.
- Stanley's Dutch and Flemish Painters.** 5s.
- Starling's Noble Deeds of Women.** 5s.
- Staunton's Chess Player's Handbook.** 5s. Chess Praxis. 5s. Chess Players' Companion. 5s. Chess Tournament of 1851. 5s.
- Stöckhardt's Experimental Chemistry** (Heaton.) 5s.
- Strabo's Geography.** Trans. by Falconer and Hamilton. 3 vols. 5s. each.
- Strickland's Queens of England.** 6 vols. 5s. each. Mary Queen of Scots. 2 vols. 5s. each. Tudor and Stuart Princesses. 5s.

s. Trans. by
6*d.*
d On Clemency.
ewart. 5*s.*
Egypt. 2 vols.
Works. 3*s.* 6*d.*
s. 6*d.*
e of the South
y T. Roscoe. 2
onicles. 5*s.*
Synonyms and
alth of Nations.
s. 3*s.* 6*d.* each.
oral Sentiments.
y and Scripture.
4 vols. 3*s.* 6*d.*
Modern History.
al History. 5*s.*
by E. P. Cole-
son. 5*s.*
5*s.*
his Letters. By
cal History. 5*s.*
ks. Trans. by
vols. 5*s.* each.
emish Painters.
ds of Women.
er's Handbook.
Chess Players'
ess Tournament
ental Chemistry
Trans. by
n. 3 vols. 5*s.*
f England. 6
ary Queen of
h. Tudor and

- Stuart & Revett's** Antiquities of Athens. 5*s.*
Suetonius' Lives of the Caesars and of the Grammarians. Thomson's trans. revised by T. Forester. 5*s.*
Sully's Memoirs. Mrs. Lennox's trans. revised. 4 vols. 3*s.* 6*d.* each.
Swift's Prose Works. (Temple Scott.) With Introduction by W. E. H. Lecky. 11 vols. 3*s.* 6*d.* each.
[Vols. 1-4 and 8 ready.]
Tacitus. The Oxford trans. revised. 2 vols. 5*s.* each.
Tales of the Genii. Trans. by Sir Charles Morell. 5*s.*
Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered. Trans. by J. H. Wifien. 5*s.*
Taylor's Holy Living and Holy Dying. 3*s.* 6*d.*
Terence and Phædrus. Trans. by H. T. Riley. 5*s.*
Theocritus, Bion, Moschus, and Tyrtæus. Trans. by Rev. J. Banks. 5*s.*
Theodoret and Evagrius. 5*s.*
Thierry's Norman Conquest. Trans. by W. Hazlitt. 2 vols. 3*s.* 6*d.* each.
Thucydides. Trans. by Rev. H. Dale. 2 vols. 3*s.* 6*d.* each.
— Wheeler's Analysis and Summary of. 5*s.*
Thudichum's Treatise on Wines. 5*s.*
Trevelyan's Ladies in Parliament. 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.*
Ulrici's Shakespeare's Dramatic Art. Trans. by L. Dora Schmitz. 2 vols. 3*s.* 6*d.* each.
Uncle Tom's Cabin. 3*s.* 6*d.*
Ure's Cotton Manufacture of Great Britain. 2 vols. 5*s.* each.
— Philosophy of Manufacture. 7*s.* 6*d.*
Vasari's Lives of the Painters. Trans. by Mrs. Foster. 6 vols. 3*s.* 6*d.* each.
Virgil. Trans. by A. Hamilton Bryce, LL.D. 3*s.* 6*d.*
Voltaire's Tales. Trans. by R. B. Boswell. 3*s.* 6*d.*
Walton's Angler. 5*s.*
— Lives. (A. H. Bullen.) 5*s.*
Waterloo Days. By C. A. Eaton. 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.*
Wellington, Life of. By 'An Old Soldier.' 5*s.*
Werner's Templars in Cyprus. Trans. by E. A. M. Lewis. 3*s.* 6*d.*
Westropp's Handbook of Archaeology. 5*s.*
Wheatley. On the Book of Common Prayer. 3*s.* 6*d.*
Wheeler's Dictionary of Noted Names of Fiction. 5*s.*
White's Natural History of Selborne. 5*s.*
Wieseler's Synopsis of the Gospels. 5*s.*
William of Malmesbury's Chronicle. 5*s.*
Wright's Dictionary of Obsolete and Provincial English. 2 vols. 5*s.* each.
Xenophon. Trans. by Rev. J. S. Watson and Rev. H. Dale. 3 vols 5*s.* each.
Young's Travels in France, 1787-89. (M. Betham-Edwards.) 3*s.* 6*d.*
— Tour in Ireland, 1776-9. (A. W. Hutton.) 2 vols. 3*s.* 6*d.* each.
Yule-Tide Stories. (B. Thorpe. 5*s.*

THE ALL-ENGLAND SERIES.

HANDBOOKS OF ATHLETIC GAMES.

The only Series issued at a moderate price, by Writers who are in the first rank in their respective departments.

'The best and most reliable brief descriptions of athletic sports and games yet published.'
Morning Post.

Small 8vo, cloth, Illustrated. Price 1s. each.

- Cricket.** By the Hon. and Rev. E. LYTTELTON.
- Lawn Tennis.** By H. W. W. WILBERFORCE. With a Chapter for Ladies, by Mrs. HILLYARD.
- Tennis and Rackets and Fives.** By JULIAN MARSHALL, Major J. SPENS, and Rev. J. A. ARNAN TAIT.
- Golf.** By W. T. LINSKILL.
- Rowing and Sculling.** By W. B. WOODGATE.
- Sailing.** By E. F. KNIGHT. Double vol. 2s.
- Swimming.** By MARTIN and J. RACSTER COBBETT.
- Canoeing.** By J. D. HAYWARD, M.D. Double vol. 2s.
- Camping Out.** By A. A. MACDONELL, M.A. Double vol. 2s.
- Mountaineering.** By CLAUDE WILSON, M.D. With Illustrations by Ellis Carr. Double vol. 2s.
- Riding.** A Handbook to Practical Horsemanship. By W. A. KERR, V.C. Double vol. 2s.
- Riding for Ladies.** By W. A. KERR, V.C.
- Dancing.** By EDWARD SCOTT. Double vol. 2s.
- Cycling.** By H. H. GRIFFIN, L.A.C., N.C.U., C.T.C. With a Chapter for Ladies, by Miss L. C. DAVIDSON.
- Cycle Touring.** By A. W. RUMNEY, M.A.
- Athletics.** By H. H. GRIFFIN.
- Boxing.** By R. G. ALLANSON-WINN. With Prefatory Note by Bat Mullins.
- Wrestling.** By WALTER ARMSTRONG ('Cross-buttock').
- Fencing.** By H. A. COLMORE DUNN.
- Broadword and Singlestick.** By R. G. ALLANSON-WINN and C. PHILLIPS-WOLLEY.
- Gymnastics.** By A. F. JENKIN. Double vol. 2s.
- Gymnastic Competition and Display exercises.** Compiled by F. GRAF.
- Indian Clubs.** By A. F. JENKIN and G. T. B. COBBETT.
- Dumb Bells.** By F. GRAF.
- Football—Rugby Game.** By HARRY VASSAL.
- Football—Association Game.** By C. W. ALCOCK.
- Hockey.** By F. S. CRESWELL. (In Paper Cover, 6d.)
- Skating.** By DOUGLAS ADAMS. With Chapter or Ladies, by Miss L. CHEETHAM and a Chapter on Speed Skating, by a Fen Skater. Double vol. 2s.
- Baseball.** By NEWTON CRANE.
- Rounders, Bowls, Quoits, Curling, Skittles, &c.** By J. M. WALKER and C. C. MOTT.

THE CLUB SERIES OF CARD AND TABLE GAMES.

Small 8vo, cloth, Illustrated. Price 1s. each.

- Whist.** By Dr. WM. POLE, F.R.S.
- Solo Whist.** By ROBERT F. GREEN.
- Billiards.** By Major-Gen. A. W. DRAVSON, F.R.A.S. With a Preface by W. J. PEALL.
- Bridge.** By ROBERT F. GREEN.
- Chess.** By ROBERT F. GREEN.
- Chess Openings.** By ISIDOR GUNSBURG.
- The Two-Move Chess Problem.** By B. G. LAWS.
- Draughts and Backgammon.** By BERKELEY.
- Reversi and Go Bang.** By 'BERKELEY.'
- Dominoes and Solitaire.** By 'BERKELEY.'
- Bézique and Cribbage.** By 'BERKELEY.'
- Écarte and Euchre.** By 'BERKELEY.'
- Piquet and Rubicon Piquet.** By 'BERKELEY.'
- Skat.** By LOUIS DIEHL.
- Round Games.** By BAXTER-WRAY.
- Card Tricks and Puzzles.** By 'BERKELEY' and T. B. ROWLAND.
- Parlour and Playground Games.** By Mrs. LAURENCE GOMME.

LONDON: GEORGE BELL & SONS, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN

SERIES.

GAMES.

by Writers who are
Departments.

and games yet published.
Morning Post.

each.

g. By A. W. RUMNEY,

by H. H. GRIFFIN,

E. G. ALLANSON-WINN.

Note by Bat Mullins.

By WALTER ARM-
(s-buttocked').

H. A. COLMORE DUNN.

and Singlestick. By

ALLANSON-WINN and C.

ALLEY.

By A. F. JENKIN.

Competition and Dis-

Compiled by F. GRAF.

By A. F. JENKIN

ROBBETT.

By F. GRAF.

Rugby Game. By

Association Game.

CK.

By F. S. CRESWELL.

(r, 6d.)

By DOUGLAS ADAMS.

for or Ladies, by Miss L.

and a Chapter on Speed

on Skater. Double vol. 2s.

NEWTON CRANE.

Walls, Quoits, Curl-

&c. By J. M. WALKER

BLE GAMES.

ch.

Solitaire.

Cribbage.

achre.

bicon Piquet.

s DIEHL.

By BAXTER-WRAY.

d Puzzles.

and T. B. ROWLAND.

ayground Games.

LE GOMME.

COVENT GARDEN

