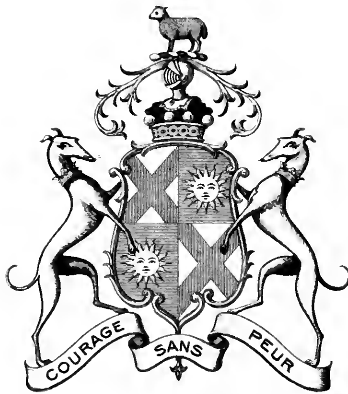
DOWN THE COLUMBIA

LEWIS R. FREEMAN



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DOWN THE COLUMBIA

Courtesy of Byron Harmon, Banff

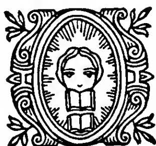
MT. SIR DONALD, WHICH DRAINS FROM ALL SIDES TO THE COLUMBIA

DOWN THE COLUMBIA

BY

LEWIS R. FREEMAN
AUTHOR OF "IN THE TRACKS OF THE TRADES,"
"HELL'S HATCHES," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS



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TO

C. L. CHESTER

Hoping he will find in these pages
some compensation for the fun
he missed in not being along.

1268901

INTRODUCTION

The day on which I first conceived the idea of a boat trip down the Columbia hangs in a frame all its own in the corridors of my memory. It was a number of years ago—more than a dozen, I should say. Just previously I had contrived somehow to induce the Superintendent of the Yellowstone National Park to grant me permission to attempt a winter journey on ski around this most beautiful of America's great playgrounds. He had even sent a Government scout along to keep, or help, me out of trouble. We were a week out from the post at Mammoth Hot Springs.

Putting the rainbow revel of the incomparable Canyon behind, we had crossed Yellowstone Lake on the ice and fared onward and upward until we came at last to the long climb where the road under its ten feet of snow wound up to the crest of the Continental Divide. It was so dry and cold that the powdery snow overlying the crust rustled under our ski like autumn leaves. The air was diamond clear, so transparent that distant mountain peaks, juggled in the wizardry of the lens of the light, seemed fairly to float upon the eyeball.

At the summit, where we paused for breath, an old Sergeant of the Game Patrol, letting down a tin can on a string, brought up drinks from an air-hole which he claimed was teetering giddily upon the very ridgepole of North America.

"If I dip to the left," he said, suiting the action to

the word, "it's the Pacific I'll be robbing of a pint of Rocky Mountain dew; while if I dip to the right it's the Atlantic that'll have to settle back a notch. And if I had a string long enough, and a wing strong enough, to cast my can over there beyond Jackson's Hole," he went on, pointing southeasterly to the serrated peaks of the Wind River Mountains, "I could dip from the fount of the Green River and keep it from feeding the Colorado and the Gulf of California by so much."

That led me to raise the question of boating by river from the Great Divide to the sea, and the Scout, who knew something of the Madison, Jefferson and Gallatin to the east, and of the Salmon, Clearwater and Snake to the west, said he reckoned the thing could be done in either direction provided a man had lots of time and no dependent family to think of and shake his nerve in the pinches.

The old Sergeant agreed heartily. River boating was good, he said, because it was not opposed to Nature, like climbing mountains, for instance, where you were bucking the law of gravity from start to finish. With a river it was all easy and natural. You just got into your boat and let it go. Sooner or later, without any especial effort on your part, you reached your objective. You might not be in a condition to appreciate the fact, of course, but just the same you got there, and with a minimum of hard work. Some rivers were better for boating than others for the reason that you got there quicker. The Snake and the Missouri were all very well in their way, but for him, he'd take the Columbia. There was a river that

started in mountains and finished in mountains. It ran in mountains all the way to the sea. No slack water in all its course. It was going somewhere all the time. He had lived as a kid on the lower Columbia and had trapped as a man on the upper Columbia; so he ought to know. *There* was a "he" river if there ever was one. If a man really wanted to travel from snowflake to brine and not be troubled with "on-wee" on the way, there was no stream that ran one-two-three with the Columbia as a means of doing it.

That night, where we steamed in the black depths of a snow-submerged Government "Emergency" cabin, the Sergeant's old Columbia memories thawed with the hunk of frosted beef he was toasting over the sheet-iron stove. He told of climbing for sheep and goat in the high Kootenay, of trailing moose and caribou in the valleys of the Rockies, and finally of his years of trapping on the creeks and in the canyons that run down to the Big Bend of the Columbia; of how he used to go down to Kinbasket Lake in the Fall, portaging or lining the three miles of tumbling cascades at Surprise Rapids, trap all winter on Sullivan Creek or Middle River, and then come out in the Spring to Revelstoke, playing ducks-and-drakes with his life and his scarcely less valuable catch of marten, mink and beaver running the riffles at Rock Slide, Twelve Mile and the terrible *Dalles des Morts*. He declared that there were a hundred miles of the Big Bend of the Columbia that had buffaloed to a fare-ye-well any equal stretch on any of the great rivers of North America for fall, rocks and wild rip-rarin' water generally. But the dread Rapids of Death and the

treacherous swirls and eddies of Revelstoke Canyon were not the last of swift water by a long shot. Just below the defile of the Arrow Lakes the white caps began to rear their heads again, and from there right on down through the seven hundred miles and more to tide-water below the Cascade Locks in Oregon there was hardly a stretch of ten miles without its tumble of rapids, and mostly they averaged not more than three or four miles apart.

"She's sure some 'he' river," the old chap concluded as he began to unroll his blankets, "going somewhere all the time, tumbling over itself all the way trying to beat itself to the finish."

Confusing as the Sergeant was with his "he" and "she" and "it" as to the gender of the mighty Oregon, there was no question of the fascination of the pictures conjured up by his descriptions of that so-well-called "Achilles of Rivers." Before I closed my eyes that night I had promised myself that I should take the first opportunity to boat the length of the Columbia, to follow its tumultuous course from its glacial founts to the salt sea brine, to share with it, to jostle it in its "tumble to get there first."

I held by that resolve for more than a dozen years, although, by a strange run of chance, I was destined to have some experience of almost every one of the great rivers of the world before I launched a boat upon the Columbia. My appetite for swift water boating had grown by what it fed on. I had come more and more to the way of thinking of my Yellowstone companion who held that boating down rivers was good because it was not opposed to Nature, "like mountain climb-

ing, for instance, where you bucked the law of gravity all the way." In odd craft and various, and of diverse degree of water worthiness, I had trusted to luck and the law of gravity to land me somewhere to seaward of numerous up-river points of vantage to which I had attained by means of travel that ranged all the way from foot and donkey-back to elephant and auto. The Ichang gorges of the Yangtze I had run in a *sampan* manned by a yelling crew of Szechuan coolies, and the Salween and Irawadi below the Yunnan boundary in weird Burmese canoes whose crews used their legs as well as their arms in plying their carved paddles. I had floated down the Tigris from Diarbekir to Mosul on a *kalek* of inflated sheepskins, and the Nile below the Nyanzas in a cranky craft of zebra hide, whose striped sides might have suggested the idea of modern marine camouflage. On the middle Niger I had used a condemned gunboat's life-raft, and on the Zambesi a dugout of saffron-tinted wood so heavy that it sank like iron when capsized. And it had been in native dugouts of various crude types that I had boated greater or lesser lengths of the swifter upper stretches of the Orinoco, Amazon and Parana.

But through it all—whether I was floating in a reed-wrapped *balsa* on Titacaca or floundering in a pitch-smeared *gufa* on the Euphrates—pictures conjured up by remembered phrases of the old ex-trapper keep rising at the back of my brain. "The big eddy at the bend of Surprise Rapids, where you go to look for busted boats and dead bodies;" "the twenty-one mile of white water rolling all the way from Kinbasket Lake to Canoe River;" "the double

googly intake at the head of Gordon Rapid;" "the black-mouthed whirlpool waiting like a wild cat at the foot of *Dalles des Morts*"—how many times had I seen all these in fancy! And at last the time came when those pictures were to be made real—galvanized into life.

It was well along toward the end of last summer that my friend C. L. Chester, whose work in filming the scenic beauties of out-of-the-way parts of the world has made the name Chester-Outing Pictures a byword on both sides of the Atlantic, mentioned that he was sending one of his cameramen to photograph the sources of the Columbia in the Selkirks and Rockies of western Canada. Also that he was thinking of taking his own holiday in that incomparably beautiful region. He supposed I knew that there were considerable areas here that had barely been explored, to saying nothing of photographed. This was notably so of the Big Bend country, where the Columbia had torn its channel between the Rockies and Selkirks and found a way down to the Arrow Lakes. He was especially anxious to take some kind of a boat round the hundred and fifty miles of canyon between Beavermouth and Revelstoke and bring out the first movies of what he had been assured was the roughest stretch of swift water on any of the important rivers of the world. Was there, by any chance, a possibility that my plans and commitments were such that I would be free to join him in the event that he made the trip personally?

As a matter of fact there were several things that should have prevented my breaking away for a trip to

the upper Columbia in September, not the least among which was a somewhat similar trip I had already planned for the Grand Canyon of the Colorado that very month. But the mention of the Big Bend was decisive. "I'll go," I said promptly. "When do you start?"

It was finally arranged that I should go on ahead and engage men and boats for the Big Bend part of the trip, while Chester would endeavour to disentangle himself from business in Los Angeles and New York in time to join his cameraman and myself for a jaunt by packtrain to the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers. The latter is one of the high glacial sources of the Columbia in the Selkirks, and Chester, learning that it had never been photographed, desired especially to visit it in person. Returning from our visit to the source of the river, we planned to embark on the boating voyage around the Big Bend. It was not until business finally intervened to make it impossible for Chester to get away for even a portion of the trip which he had been at such trouble to plan, that I decided to attempt the voyage down the Columbia as I had always dreamed of it—all the way from the eternal snows to tidewater. At Chester's suggestion, it was arranged that his cameraman should accompany me during such portion of the journey as the weather was favourable to moving picture work.

Our preliminary work and exploration among the sources of the river over (this was carried on either on foot or by packtrain, or in runs by canoe over short navigable stretches of the upper river), we pushed off from Beavermouth, at the head of the Big Bend.

For this most arduous part of the voyage there were four in the party, with a big double-ended boat specially built for rough water. Further down, for a considerable stretch, we were three, in a skiff. Then, for a couple of hundred miles, there were four of us again, manning a raft and a towing launch. After that we were two—just the cameraman and myself, with the skiff. Him I finally dropped at the foot of Priest Rapids, fifty miles above Pasco, and the last two hundred and fifty miles down to Portland I rode alone. This "solo" run—though a one-man boat crew is kept rather too busy in swift water to have much time for enjoying the scenery—was far from proving the least interesting period of the journey.

So far as I have been able to learn, my arrival in Portland marked the end of the first complete journey that has been made from the glacial sources of the Columbia to tidewater. David Thompson, scientist and explorer for the Northwest Company, racing against the Astor sea expedition to be first to establish a post at the mouth of the Columbia, boated down a very large part of the navigable part of the river over a hundred years ago. I have found no evidence, however, that he penetrated to the glacial fields in the Selkirks above Windermere and Columbia Lake from which spring the main feeders of the upper river. Thompson's, and all of the other voyages of the early days of which there is authentic record, started from Boat Encampment, where the road from the plains and Montreal led down to the Columbia by the icy waters of Portage River, or, as it is now called, Wood River. Thus all of the old Hudson Bay and North-

west voyageurs ran only the lower seventy-five miles of the Big Bend, and avoided what is by far its worst water—Surprise Rapids and the twenty-one miles of cascades below Kinbasket Lake. Ross Cox, Alexander Ross and Franchiere, whose diaries are the best commentaries extant upon early Columbia history, had no experience of the river above Boat Encampment. Lewis and Clark, and Hunt, with the remnants of the Astor transcontinental party, boated the river only below the Snake, and this was also true of Whitman and the other early missionaries and settlers. Frémont made only a few days' journey down the river from the Dalles.

Of recent down-river passages, I have been able to learn of no voyageur who, having rounded the Big Bend, continued his trip down to the lower Columbia. The most notable voyage of the last three or four decades was that of Captain F. P. Armstrong and J. P. Forde, District Engineer of the Department of Public Works of Nelson, British Columbia, who, starting at the foot of the Lower Arrow Lake in a Peterboro canoe, made the run to Pasco, just above the mouth of the Snake, in ten days. As Captain Armstrong already knew the upper Columbia above the Arrow Lakes from many years of steamboating and prospecting, and as both he and Mr. Forde, after leaving their canoe at Pasco, continued on to Astoria by steamer, I am fully convinced that his knowledge of that river from source to mouth is more comprehensive than that of any one else of the present generation. This will be, perhaps, a fitting place to acknowledge my obligation to Captain Armstrong (who

accompanied me in person from the mouth of the Kootenay to the mouth of the Spokane) for advice and encouragement which were very considerable factors in the ultimate success of my venture. To Mr. Forde I am scarcely less indebted for his courtesy in putting at my disposal a copy of his invaluable report to the Canadian Government on the proposal to open the Columbia to through navigation to the Pacific Ocean.

Compared to the arduous journeys of the old Astorian and Hudson Bay voyageurs on the Columbia, my own trip—even though a considerably greater length of river was covered than by any of my predecessors—was negligible as an achievement. Only in rounding the Big Bend in Canada does the voyageur of to-day encounter conditions comparable to those faced by those of a hundred, or even fifty years ago who set out to travel on any part of the Columbia. For a hundred miles or more of the Bend, now just as much as in years long gone by, an upset with the loss of an outfit is more likely than not to spell disaster and probably tragedy. But in my own passage of the Big Bend I can claim no personal credit that those miles of tumbling water were run successfully. I was entirely in the hands of a pair of seasoned old river hands, and merely pulled an oar in the boat and did a few other things when I was told.

But it is on the thousand miles of swiftly flowing water between the lower end of the Big Bend and the Pacific that conditions have changed the most in favour of the latter day voyageur. The rapids are, to be sure, much as they must have appeared to Thompson,

Ross, Franchiere and their Indian contemporaries. The few rocks blasted here and there on the lower river in an attempt to improve steamer navigation have not greatly simplified the problems of the man in a rowboat or canoe. Nor is an upset in any part of the Columbia an experience lightly to be courted even to-day. Even below the Big Bend there are a score of places I could name offhand where the coolest kind of an old river hand, once in the water, would not have one chance in ten of swimming out. In half a hundred others he might reckon on an even break of crawling out alive. But if luck were with him and he *did* reach the bank with the breath in his body, then his troubles would be pretty well behind him. Below the Canadian border there is hardly ten miles of the river without a farm, a village, or even a town of fair size. Food, shelter and even medical attention are not, therefore, ever more than a few hours away, so that the man who survives the loss of his boat and outfit is rarely in serious straits.

But in the case of the pioneers, their troubles in like instance were only begun. What between hostile Indians and the loss of their only means of travel, the chances were all against their ever pulling out with their lives. The story of how the vicious cascade of the *Dalles des Morts* won its grisly name, which I will set down in its proper place, furnishes a telling instance in point.

It is a callous traveller who, in strange lands and seas, does not render heart homage to the better men that have gone before him. Just as you cannot sail the Pacific for long without fancying that Cook and

Drake and Anson are sharing your night watches, so on the Columbia it is Thompson and Cox and Lewis and Clark who come to be your guiding spirits. At the head of every one of the major rapids you land just as you know they must have landed, and it is as through their eyes that you survey the work ahead. And when, rather against your better judgment, you decide to attempt to run a winding gorge where the sides are too steep to permit lining and where a portage would mean the loss of a day—you know that the best of the men who preceded you must have experienced the same hollowness under the belt when they were forced to the same decision, for were they not always gambling at longer odds than you are? And when, elate with the thrill of satisfaction and relief that come from knowing that what had been a menacing roar ahead has changed to a receding growl astern, you are inclined to credit yourself with smartness for having run a rapid where Thompson lined or Ross Cox portaged, that feeling will not persist for long. Sooner or later—and usually sooner—something or somebody will put you right. A broken oar and all but a mess-up in an inconsiderable riffle was all that was needed to quench the glow of pride that I felt over having won through the roughly tumbling left-hand channel of Rock Island Rapids with only a short length of lining. And it was a steady-eyed old river captain who brought me back to earth the night I told him—somewhat boastfully, I fear—that I had slashed my skiff straight down the middle of the final pitch of Umatilla Rapids, where Lewis and Clark had felt they had to portage.

"But you must not forget," he said gently, with just the shadow of a smile softening the line of his firm lips, "that Lewis and Clark had something to lose besides their lives—that they had irreplaceable records in their care, and much work still to do. It was their duty to take as few chances as possible. But they never let the risk stop them when there wasn't any safer way. When you are pulling through Celilo Canal a few days from now, and being eased down a hundred feet in the locks, just remember that Lewis and Clark put their whole outfit down the Tumwater and Five-Mile Rapids of the Dalles, in either of which that skiff of yours would be sucked under in half a minute."

Bulking insignificantly as an achievement as does my trip in comparison with the many Columbia voyages, recorded and unrecorded, of early days, it still seems to me that the opportunity I had for a comprehensive survey of this grandest scenically of all the world's great rivers gives me warrant for attempting to set down something of what I saw and experienced during those stirring weeks that intervened between that breathless moment when I let the whole stream of the Columbia trickle down my back in a glacial ice-cave in the high Selkirks, and that showery end-of-the-afternoon when I pushed out into tidewater at the foot of the Cascades.

It is scant enough justice that the most gifted of pens can do to Nature in endeavouring to picture in words the grandest of her manifestations, and my own quill, albeit it glides not untrippingly in writing of lighter things, is never so inclined to halt and sputter

as when I try to drive it to its task of registering in black scrawls on white paper something of what the sight of a soaring mountain peak, the depth of a black gorge with a white stream roaring at the bottom, or the morning mists rising from a silently flowing river have registered on the sensitized sheets of my memory. Superlative in grandeur to the last degree as are the mountains, glaciers, gorges, waterfalls, cascades and cliffs of the Columbia, it is to my photographs rather than my pen that I trust to convey something of their real message.

If I can, however, pass on to my readers some suggestion of the keenness of my own enjoyment of what I experienced on the Columbia—of the sheer *joie de vivre* that is the lot of the man who rides the running road; it will have not been in vain that I have cramped my fingers and bent my back above a desk during several weeks of the best part of the California year. Robert Service has written something about

> "Doing things just for the doing,
> Letting babblers tell the story . . ."

Shall I need to confess to my readers that the one cloud on the seaward horizon during all of my voyage down the Columbia was brooding there as a consequence of the presentiment that, sooner or later, I should have to do my own babbling?

Pasadena, July, 1921.

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DOWN THE COLUMBIA

DOWN THE COLUMBIA

CHAPTER I

PREPARING FOR THE BIG BEND

The itinerary of our Columbia trip as originally planned in Los Angeles called, first, for an expedition to the source of the river, next, a voyage by boat around the Big Bend from Beavermouth to Revelstoke, and, finally, if there was time and good weather held, a voyage of indefinite length on toward the sea. As the trip to the glaciers was largely a matter of engaging a good packer well in advance, while there was no certainty of getting any one who would undertake the passage of the Big Bend, it was to the latter that we first directed our attention. Chester wired the Publicity Department of the Canadian Pacific and I wrote friends in various parts of British Columbia. The C. P. R. replied that they had requested their Sub-Divisional Superintendent at Revelstoke to institute inquiries for boatmen in our behalf. The only one of my friends who contributed anything tangible stated that "while the Columbia above Golden and below Revelstoke was admirably suited to pleasure boating, any attempt to run the Big Bend between those points would result in almost certain disaster."

As this appeared to be about the extent of what we

were likely to learn from a distance, I decided to start north at once to see what could be arranged on the ground. Victoria yielded little save some large scale maps, and even these, they assured me in the Geographic Department of the B. C. Government where I secured them, were very inaccurate as to detail. The Big Bend region, it appeared, had never been surveyed north of the comparatively narrow zone of the C. P. R. grant. Several old hunting friends whom I met at the Club, although they had ranged the wildernesses of the Northwest from the Barren Lands to Alaska, spoke of the Big Bend as a veritable *terra incognita*.

"It's said to be a great country for grizzly," one of them volunteered, "but too hard to get at. Only way to get in and out is the Columbia, and that is more likely to land you in Kingdom Come than back in Civilization. Best forget about the Big Bend and go after sheep and goat and moose in the Kootenays."

At Kamloops I was told of an Indian who had gone round the Big Bend the previous May, before the Spring rise, and come out not only with his own skin, but with those of seven grizzlies. I was unable to locate the Indian, but did find a white man who had made the trip with him. This chap spent half an hour apparently endeavouring to persuade me to give up the trip on account of the prohibitive risk (my experience on other rivers, he declared, would be worse than useless in such water as was to be encountered at Surprise, Kinbasket and Death Rapids) and about an equal amount of time trying to convince me that my life would be perfectly safe if only I would en-

gage him and his Indian and confide it to their care. As the consideration suggested in return for this immunity figured out at between two and three times the rate we had been expecting to pay for boatmen, I had to decline to take advantage of it.

Finally, in Revelstoke, through the efforts of T. C. McNab of the Canadian Pacific, who had been at considerable trouble to line up possible candidates for a Big Bend trip, I met Bob Blackmore. After that things began moving toward a definite end.

"You won't find old Bob Blackmore an active church-worker," I was told in Revelstoke, "and at one time he had the reputation of being the smoothest thing in the way of a boot-legger in this part of B. C. But he drinks little himself, is a past-master of woodcraft, a dead shot, and has twice the experience of swift-water boating of any man on the upper Columbia. In spite of the fact that he has undergone no end of hardship in his thirty years of packing, hunting, prospecting, trapping and boating all over the West, he's as hard to-day at fifty odd as most men are at thirty. Because he dished a boatload of freight last year somewhere up river, there are a few who are saying that old Bob Blackmore is losing his grip. Don't believe it. He was never better in his life than he is right now, and if you can persuade him to run your show round the Big Bend you're in luck. Once you start, you'll come right on round to Revelstoke all right. No fear on that score. But if you have old Bob Blackmore you'll stand a jolly lot better chance of arriving on top of the water."

I found Bob Blackmore at his river-side home in the

old town—what had been the metropolitan centre of Revelstoke in the days when it was the head of navigation of steamers from below the Arrow Lakes, and before the railway had come to drag settlement a mile northeastward and away from the Columbia. He was picking apples with one hand and slapping mosquitoes with the other—a grey-haired, grey-eyed man of middle height, with a muscular torso, a steady stare, and a grip that I had to meet half way to save my fingers. He might have passed for a well-to-do Middle Western farmer except for his iron-grey moustaches, which were long and drooping, like those affected by cowboy-town sheriffs in the movies.

I knew at once that this was the man I wanted, and my only doubt was as to whether or not he felt the same way about me. They had told me in town that Blackmore, having some means and being more or less independent, never went out with a man or an outfit he did not like. I felt that it was I who was on approval, not he. I need not have worried, however. In this instance, at least, Bob Blackmore's mind was made up in advance. It was the movies that had done it.

"The C. P. R. people wrote me that you might be wanting me for the Bend," he said genially after I had introduced myself, "and on the chance that we would be hitching up I have put my big boat in the water to give her a good soaking. I've figured that she's the only boat on the upper river that will do for what you want. I reckon I know them all. She'll carry three or four times as much as the biggest Peterboro. Besides, if you tried to go round in canoes,

you'd be portaging or lining in a dozen places where I would drive this one straight through. With any luck, and if the water doesn't go down too fast, I'd figure on going the whole way without taking her out of the river at more'n one place, and maybe not there."

"So you're willing to go ahead and see us through," I exclaimed delightedly. "They told me in the town that you'd probably need a lot of persuading, especially as you've been saying for the last two or three years that you were through with the Bend for good and all."

Blackmore grinned broadly and somewhat sheepishly. "So I have," he said. "Fact is, I've never yet been round the Bend that I didn't tell myself and everybody else that I'd never try it again. I really meant it the last time, which was three or four years ago. And I've really meant it every time I said it right up to a few days back, when I heard that you wanted to take a movie machine in there and try and get some pictures. If that was so, I said to myself, it was sure up to me to do what I could to help, for there's scenery in there that is more worth picturing than any I've come across in thirty years of knocking around all over the mountain country of the West. So I'm your man if you want me. Of course you know something of what you're going up against in bucking the Bend?"

"Yes," I replied a bit wearily. "I've been hearing very little else for the last week. Let's talk about the scenery."

"So they've been trying to frighten you out of it," he said with a sympathetic smile. "They always do

that with strangers who come here to tackle the Bend. And mostly they succeed. There was one chap they couldn't stop, though. He was a professor of some kind from Philadelphia. Fact is, he wasn't enough frightened. That's a bad thing with the Columbia, which isn't to be taken liberties with. I buried him near the head of Kinbasket Lake. We'll see his grave when we come down from Surprise Rapids. I'll want to stop off for a bit and see if the cross I put up is still standing. He was . . ."

"Et tu Brute," I muttered under my breath. Then, aloud: "Let's look at the boat."

Already this penchant of the natives for turning the pages of the Big Bend's gruesome record of death and disaster was getting onto my nerves, and it was rather a shock to find even the quiet-spoken, steady-eyed Blackmore addicted to the habit. Afterwards, when I got used to it, I ceased to mind. As a matter of fact, the good souls could no more help expatiating on what the Big Bend had done to people who had taken liberties with it than an aviator who is about to take you for a flight can help leading you round back of the hangar and showing you the wreckage of his latest crash. It seems to be one of the inevitable promptings of the human animal to warn his brother animal of troubles ahead. This is doubtless the outgrowth of the bogies and the "don'ts" which are calculated to check the child's explorative and investigative instincts in his nursery days. From the source to the mouth of the Columbia it was never (according to the solicitous volunteer advisers along the way) the really dangerous rapids that I had put behind me.

These were always somewhere ahead—usually just around the next bend, where I would run into them the first thing in the morning. Luckily, I learned to discount these warnings very early in the game, and so saved much sleep which it would have been a real loss to be deprived of.

Blackmore led the way back through his apple orchard and down a stairway that descended the steeply-sloping river bank to his boat-house. The Columbia, a quarter of a mile wide and with just a shade of grey clouding its lucent greenness to reveal its glacial origin, slid swiftly but smoothly by with a purposeful current of six or seven miles an hour. A wing-dam of concrete, evidently built to protect the works of a sawmill a bit farther down stream, jutted out into the current just above, and the boat-house, set on a raft of huge logs, floated in the eddy below.

There were two boats in sight, both in the water. Blackmore indicated the larger one of the pair—a double-ender of about thirty feet in length and generous beam—as the craft recommended for the Big Bend trip. "I built her for the Bend more than fifteen years ago," he said, tapping the heavy gunwale with the toe of his boot. "She's the only boat I know that has been all the way round more than once, so you might say she knows the road. She's had many a hard bump, but—with any luck—she ought to stand one or two more. Not that I'm asking for any more than can be helped, though. There's no boat ever built that will stand a head-on crash 'gainst a rock in any such current as is driving it down Surprise or Kinbasket or Death Rapids, or a dozen other runs of

swift water on the Bend. Of course, you're going to hit once in a while, spite of all you can do; but, if you're lucky, you'll probably kiss off without staving in a side. If you're not—well, if you're not lucky, you have no business fooling with the Bend at all.

"Now what I like about this big boat of mine," he continued, taking up the scope of the painter to bring her in out of the tug of the current, "is that she's a lucky boat. Never lost a man out of her—that is, directly—and only one load of freight. Now with that one (indicating the smaller craft, a canoe-like double-ender of about twenty feet) it's just the other way. If there's trouble around she'll have her nose into it. She's as good a built boat as any on the river, easy to handle up stream and down—but unlucky. Why, only a few weeks ago a lad from the town borrowed her to have a bit of a lark running the ripple over that dam there. It's covered at high water, and just enough of a pitch to give the youngsters a little excitement in dropping over. Safe enough stunt with any luck at all. But that boat's not lucky. She drifted on sidewise, caught her keel and capsized. The lad and the two girls with him were all drowned. They found his body a week or two later. All his pockets were turned wrong-side-out and empty. The Columbia current most always plays that trick on a man—picks his pockets clean. The bodies of the girls never did show up. Probably the sand got into their clothes and held them down. That's another little trick of the Columbia. She's as full of tricks as a box of monkeys, that old stream there, and you've got to

keep an eye lifting for 'em all the time if you're going to steer clear of trouble."

"It won't be the first time I've had my pockets picked," I broke in somewhat testily. "Besides, if you're going to charge me at the rate that Indian I heard of in Kamloops demanded, there won't be anything left for the Columbia to extract."

That brought us down to business, and I had no complaint to make of the terms Blackmore suggested—twelve dollars a day for himself and boat, I to buy the provisions and make my own arrangements with any additional boatmen. I already had sensed enough of the character of the work ahead to know that a good boatman would be cheap at any price, and a poor one dear if working only for his grub. Blackmore was to get the big boat in shape and have it ready to ship by rail to Beavermouth (at the head of the Bend and the most convenient point to get a craft into the river) when I returned from the source of the Columbia above Windermere.

Going on to Golden by train from Revelstoke, I looked up Captain F. P. Armstrong, with whom I had already been in communication by wire. The Captain had navigated steamers between Golden and Windermere for many years, they told me at C. P. R. headquarters in Revelstoke, and had also some experience of the Bend. He would be unable to join me for the trip himself, but had spoken to one or two men who might be induced to do so. In any event his advice would be invaluable.

I shall have so much to say of Captain Armstrong in the account of a later part of my down-river voy-

age that the briefest introduction to a man who has been one of the most picturesque personalities in the pioneering history of British Columbia will suffice here. Short, compactly but cleanly built, with iron-grey hair, square, determined jaw and piercing black eyes, he has been well characterized as "the biggest little man on the upper Columbia." Although he confessed to sixty-three years, he might well have passed for fifty, a circumstance which doubtless had much to do with the fact that he saw three years of active service in the transport service on the Tigris and Nile during the late war. Indeed, as became apparent later, he generally had as much reserve energy at the end of a long day's paddling as another man I could mention who is rather loath to admit forty.

Captain Armstrong explained that he was about to close the sale of one of his mines on a tributary of the upper Columbia, and for that reason would be unable to join us for the Big Bend trip, as much as he would have enjoyed doing so. In the event that I decided to continue on down the Columbia after circling the Bend, it was just possible he would be clear to go along for a way. He spoke highly of Blackmore's ability as a river man, and mentioned one or two others in Golden whom he thought might be secured. Ten dollars a day was the customary pay for a boatman going all the way round the Bend. That was about twice the ordinary wage prevailing at the time in the sawmills and lumber camps. The extra five was partly insurance, and partly because the work was hard and really good river men very scarce. It was

Courtesy of Byron Harmon, Banff

MT. ASSINIBOINE, NEAR THE HEADWATERS OF THE COLUMBIA

TWIN FALLS

TAKAKAW FALLS

TWO GREAT CATARACTS OF THE COLUMBIA WATERSHED

fair pay for an experienced hand. A poor boatman was worse than none at all, that is, in a pinch, while a good one might easily mean the difference between success and disaster. And of course I knew that disaster on the Bend—with perhaps fifty miles of trackless mountains between a wet man on the bank and the nearest human habitation—was spelt with a big D.

So far as I can remember, Captain Armstrong was the only one with whom I talked in Golden who did not try to dramatize the dangers and difficulties of the Big Bend. Seemingly taking it for granted that I knew all about them, or in any case would hear enough of them from the others, he turned his attention to forwarding practical plans for the trip. He even contributed a touch of romance to a venture that the rest seemed a unit in trying to make me believe was a sort of a cross between going over Niagara in barrel and a flight to one of the Poles.

"There was a deal of boot-legging on the river between Golden and Boat Encampment during the years the Grand Trunk was being built," he said as we pored over an outspread map of the Big Bend, "for that was the first leg of the run into the western construction camps, where the sale of liquor was forbidden by law. Many and many a boatload of the stuff went wrong in the rapids. This would have been inevitable in any case, just in the ordinary course of working in such difficult water. But what made the losses worse was the fact that a good many of the bootleggers always started off with a load under their belts as well as in their boats. Few of the bodies were ever

found, but with the casks of whisky it was different, doubtless because the latter would float longer and resist buffeting better. Cask after cask has kept turning up through the years, even down to the present, when B. C. is a comparative desert. They are found in the most unexpected places, and it's very rare for a party to go all the way round the Bend without stumbling onto one. So bear well in mind you are not to go by anything that looks like a small barrel without looking to see if it has a head in both ends. If you have time, it will pay you to clamber for a few hours over the great patch of drift just below Middle River on Kinbasket Lake. That's the one great catch-all for everything floatable that gets into the river below Golden. I've found just about everything there from a canary bird cage to a railway bridge. Failing there (which will only be because you don't search long enough), dig sixteen paces northwest by compass from the foundation of the west tower of the abandoned cable ferry just above Boat Encampment."

"How's that again!" I exclaimed incredulously. "Sure you aren't confusing the Big Bend with the Spanish Main?"

"If you follow my directions," replied the Captain with a grin, "you'll uncover more treasure for five minutes' scratching than you'd be likely to find in turning over the Dry Tortugas for five years. You see, it was this way," he went on, smiling the smile of a man who speaks of something which has strongly stirred his imagination. "It was only a few weeks after Walter Steinhoff was lost in Surprise Rapids

that I made the trip round the Bend in a Peterboro to examine some silver-lead prospects I had word of. I had with me Pete Bergenham (a first-class river man; one you will do well to get yourself if you can) and another chap. This fellow was good enough with the paddle, but—though I didn't know it when I engaged him—badly addicted to drink. That's a fatal weakness for a man who is going to work in swift water, and especially such water as you strike at Surprise and the long run of Kinbasket Rapids. The wreckage of Steinhoff's disaster (Blackmore will spin you the straightest yarn about that) was scattered all the way from the big whirlpool in Surprise Rapids down to Middle River, where they finally found his body. We might easily have picked up more than the one ten-gallon cask we bumped into, floating just submerged, in the shallows of the mud island at the head of Kinbasket Lake.

"I didn't feel quite right about having so much whisky along; but the stuff had its value even in those days, and I would have felt still worse about leaving it to fall into the hands of some one who would be less moderate in its use than would I. I knew Pete Bergenham was all right, and counted on being able to keep an eye on the other man. That was just where I fell down. I should have taken the cask to bed with me instead of leaving it in the canoe.

"When the fellow got to the whisky I never knew, but it was probably well along toward morning. He was already up when I awoke, and displayed unwonted energy in getting breakfast and breaking camp. If I had known how heavily he had been tip-

pling I would have given him another drink before pushing off to steady his nerve. That might have held him all right. As it was, reaction in mind and body set in just as we headed into that first sharp dip below the lake—the beginning of the twenty-one miles of Kinbasket Rapids. At the place where the bottom has dropped out from under and left the channel blocked by jagged rocks with no place to run through, he collapsed as if kicked in the stomach, and slithered down into the bottom of the canoe, blubbering like a baby. We just did manage to make our landing above the cascade. With a less skilful man than Bergenham at the stern paddle we would have failed, and that would have meant that we should probably not have stopped for good before we settled into the mud at the bottom of the Arrow Lakes.

"Even after that I could not find it in my heart to dish for good and all so much prime whisky. So I compromised by burying it that night, after we had come through the rapids without further mishap, at the spot I have told you of. That it was the best thing to do under the circumstances I am quite convinced. The mere thought that it was still in the world has cheered me in many a thirsty interval—yes, even out on the Tigris and the Nile, when there was no certainty I would ever come back to get it again.

"And now I'm going to tell you how to find it, for there's no knowing if I shall ever have a chance to go for it myself. If you bring it out to Revelstoke safely, we'll split it fifty-fifty, as they say on your side of the line. All I shall want to know is who your other boatmen are going to be. Blackmore is all right, but if

any one of the men whom he takes with him is a real drinker, you'd best forget the whole thing. If it's an 'all-sober' crew, I'll give you a map, marked so plainly that you can't go wrong. It will be a grand haul, for it was Number One Scotch even when we planted it there, and since then it has been ageing in wood for something like ten years. I suppose you'll be keen to smuggle your dividend right on down into the 'The Great American Desert'?" he concluded with a grin.

"Trust me for that," I replied with a knowing shake of my head. "I didn't spend six months writing up opium smuggling on the China Coast for nothing." Then I told him the story of the Eurasian lady who was fat in Amoy and thin in Hongkong, and who finally confessed to having smuggled forty pounds of opium, three times a week for five years, in oiled silk hip- and bust-pads.

"You must have a lot of prime ideas," said the Captain admiringly. "You ought to make it easy, especially if you cross the line by boat. How would a false bottom . . . but perhaps it would be safer to float it down submerged, with an old shingle-bolt for a buoy, and pick it up afterwards."

"Or inside my pneumatic mattress," I suggested. "But perhaps it would taste from the rubber." By midnight we had evolved a plan which could not fail, and which was almost without risk. "The stuff's as good as in California," I told myself before I went to sleep—"and enough to pay all the expenses of my trip in case I should care to boot-leg it, which I won't."

Captain Armstrong's mention of the Steinhoff disaster was not the first I had heard of it. The chap

with whom I had talked in Kamloops had shown me a photograph of a rude cross that he and his Indian companion had erected over Steinhoff's grave, and in Revelstoke nearly every one who spoke of the Bend made some reference to the tragic affair. But here in Golden, which had been his home, the spectacularity of his passing seemed to have had an even more profound effect. As with everything else connected with the Big Bend, however, there was a very evident tendency to dramatize, to "play up," the incident. I heard many different versions of the story, but there was one part, the tragic finale, in which they all were in practical agreement. When his canoe broke loose from its line, they said, and shot down toward the big whirlpool at the foot of the second cataract of Surprise Rapids, Steïnhoff, realizing that there was no chance of the light craft surviving the maelstrom, coolly turned round, waved farewell to his companions on the bank, and, folding his arms, went down to his death. Canoe and man were sucked completely out of sight, never to be seen again until the fragments of the one and the battered body of the other were cast up, weeks later, many miles below.

It was an extremely effective story, especially as told by the local member in the B. C. Provincial Assembly, who had real histrionic talent. But somehow I couldn't quite reconcile the Nirvanic resignation implied by the farewell wave and the folded arms with the never-say-die, cat-with-nine-lives spirit I had come to associate with your true swift-water boatman the world over. I was quite ready to grant that the big sockdolager of a whirlpool below the second pitch

of Surprise Rapids was a real all-day and all-night sucker, but the old river hand who gave up to it like the Kentucky coons at the sight of Davy Crockett's squirrel-gun wasn't quite convincing. That, and the iterated statement that Steinhoff's canoe-mate, who was thrown into the water at the same time, won his way to the bank by walking along the bottom *beneath* the surface, had a decidedly steadying effect on the erratic flights to which my fancy had been launched by Big Bend yarns generally. There had been something strangely familiar in them all, and finally it came to me—Chinese *feng-shui* generally, and particularly the legends of the sampan men of the portage villages along the Ichang gorges of the Yangtze. The things the giant dragon lurking in the whirlpools at the foot of the rapids would do to the luckless ones he got his back-curving teeth into were just a slightly different way of telling what the good folk of Golden claimed the Big Bend would do to the hapless wights who ventured down its darksome depths.

Now that I thought of it in this clarifying light, there had been "dragon stuff" bobbing up about almost every stretch of rough water I had boated. Mostly it was native superstition, but partly it was small town pride—pride in the things their "Dragon" had done, and would do. Human nature—yes, and river rapids, too—are very much the same the world over, whether on the Yangtze, Brahmaputra or upper Columbia.

That brought the Big Bend into its proper perspective. I realized that it was only water running down hill after all. Possibly it was faster than any-

thing I had boated previously, and certainly—excepting the Yukon perhaps—colder. A great many men had been drowned in trying to run it; but so had men been drowned in duck-ponds. But many men had gone round without disaster, and that would I do, *Imshallah.* I always liked that pious Arab qualification when speaking of futurities. Later I applied the name—in fancy—to the skiff in which I made the voyage down the lower river.

Yes, undoubtedly the most of the yarns and the warnings were "dragon stuff" pure and simple, but Romance remained. A hundred miles of river with possible treasure lurking in every eddy, and one place where it *had* to be! I felt as I did the first time I read "Treasure Island," only more so. For that I had only *read,* and now I was going to search for myself—yes, and I was going to find, too. It was a golden sunset in more ways than one the evening before I was to leave for the upper river. Barred and spangled and fluted with liquid, lucent gold was the sky above hills that were themselves golden with the tints of early autumn. And in the Northwest there was a flush of rose, old rose that deepened and glowed in lambent crimson where a notch between the Selkirks and Rockies marked the approximate location of historic Boat Encampment. "Great things have happened at Boat Encampment," I told myself, "and its history is not all written." Then: "Sixteen paces northwest by compass from the foundation of the west tower of the abandoned cable ferry . . ." Several times during dinner that evening I had to check myself from humming an ancient song. "What's that

about, '*Yo, ho, ho and a bottle of rum*'?" queried the mackinaw drummer from Winnipeg who sat next me. "I thought you were from the States. I don't quite see the point."

"It's just as well you don't," I replied, and was content to let it go at that.

CHAPTER II

UP HORSE THIEF CREEK

WHEN I started north from Los Angeles toward the end of August Chester, held up for the moment by business, was hoping to be able to shake free so as to arrive on the upper Columbia by the time I had arrangements for the Big Bend voyage complete. We would then go together to the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers before embarking on the Bend venture. Luck was not with him, however. The day I was ready to start on up river from Golden I received a wire stating that he was still indefinitely delayed, and that the best that there was now any chance of his doing would be to join me for the Bend. He had ordered his cameraman to Windermere, where full directions for the trip to the glaciers awaited him. He hoped I would see fit to go along and help with the picture, as some "central figure" besides the guides and packers would be needed to give the "story" continuity. I replied that I would be glad to do the best I could, and left for Lake Windermere by the next train. Few movie stars have ever been called to twinkle upon shorter notice.

One is usually told that the source of the Columbia is in Canal Flats, a hundred and fifty miles above Golden, and immediately south of a wonderfully lovely mountain-begirt lake that bears the same name as the river. This is true in a sense, although, strictly speak-

ing, the real source of the river—the one rising at the point the greatest distance from its mouth—would be the longest of the many mountain creeks which converge upon Columbia Lake from the encompassing amphitheatre of the Rockies and Selkirks. This is probably Dutch Creek, which rises in the perpetual snow of the Selkirks and sends down a roaring torrent of grey-green glacier water into the western side of Columbia Lake. Scarcely less distant from the mouth of the Columbia are the heads of Toby and Horse Thief creeks, both of which bring splendid volumes of water to the mother river just below Lake Windermere.

It was the presence of the almost totally unknown Lake of the Hanging Glaciers near the head of the Horse Thief Creek watershed that was responsible for Chester's determination to carry his preliminary explorations up to the latter source of the Columbia rather than to one slightly more remote above the upper lake. We had assurance that a trail, upon which work had been in progress all summer, would be completed by the middle of September, so that it would then be possible for the first time to take pack-horses and a full moving-picture outfit to one of the rarest scenic gems on the North American continent, the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers. To get the first movies of what is claimed to be the only lake in the world outside of the polar regions that has icebergs perpetually floating upon its surface was the principal object of Chester in directing his outfit up Horse Thief Creek. My own object was to reach one of the several points where the Columbia took its rise in the

glacial ice, there to do a right-about and start upon my long-dreamed-of journey from snow-flake to brine.

It is a dozen years or more since one could travel the hundred miles of the Columbia between Golden and Lake Windermere by steamer. The comparatively sparse population in this rich but thinly settled region was not sufficient to support both rail and river transport, and with the coming of the former the latter could not long be maintained. Two or three rotting hulks on the mud by the old landing at Golden are all that remain of one of the most picturesque steamer services ever run, for those old stern-wheelers used to flounder up the Columbia to Windermere, on through Mud and Columbia Lakes to Canal Flats, through a log-built lock to the Kootenay watershed, and then down the winding canyons and tumbling rapids of that tempestuous stream to Jennings, Montana. Those were the bonanza days of the upper Columbia and Kootenay—such days as they have never seen since nor will ever see again. I was to hear much of them later from Captain Armstrong when we voyaged a stretch of the lower river together.

There is a train between Golden and Windermere only three times a week. It is an amiable, ambling "jerk-water," whose conductor does everything from dandling babies to unloading lumber. At one station he held over for five minutes to let me run down to a point where I could get the best light on a "reflection" picture in the river, and at another he ran the whole train back to pick up a basket of eggs which had been overlooked in the rush of departure. The

Canadian Pacific has the happy faculty of being all things to all men. Its main line has always impressed me as being the best-run road I have ever travelled on in any part of the world, including the United States. One would hardly characterize its little country feeders in the same words, but even these latter, as the instances I have noted will bear out, come about as near to being run for the accommodation of the travelling public as anything one will ever find. There is not the least need of hurrying this Golden-Windermere express. It stops over night at Invermere anyway, before continuing its leisurely progress southward the next morning.

Chester's cameraman met me with a car at the station, and we rode a mile to the hotel at Invermere, on the heights above the lake. His name was Roos, he said—Len H. Roos of N. Y. C. It was his misfortune to have been born in Canada, he explained, but he had always had a great admiration for Americans, and had taken out his first papers for citizenship. He could manage to get on with Canadians in a pinch, he averred further; but as for Britishers—no "Lime-juicers" for him, with their "G'bly'me's" and afternoon teas. I saw that this was going to be a difficult companion, and took the occasion to point out that, since he was going to be in Canada for some weeks, it might be just as well to bottle up his rancour against the land of his birth until he was back on the other side of the line and had completed the honour he intended to do Uncle Sam by becoming an American citizen. Maybe I was right, he admitted thoughtfully; but it would be a hard thing for him to do, as he

was naturally very frank and outspoken and a great believer in saying just what he thought of people and things.

He was right about being outspoken. He had also rather a glittering line of dogma on the finer things of life. Jazz was the highest form of music (he ought to know, for had he not played both jazz and grand opera when he was head drummer of the Galt, Ontario, town band?); the Mack Sennett bathing comedy was his *belle ideal* of kinematic art; and the newspapers of William Hearst were the supreme development of journalism. This latter he knew, because he had done camera work for a Hearst syndicate himself. I could manage to make a few degrees of allowance for jazz and the Mack Sennett knockabouts under the circumstances, but the deification of Hearst created an unbridgeable gulf. I foresaw that "director" and "star" were going to have bumpy sledding, but also perceived the possibility of comedy elements which promised to go a long way toward redeeming the enforced partnership from irksomeness, that is, if the latter were not too prolonged. That it could run to six or seven weeks and the passage of near to a thousand miles of the Columbia without turning both "director" and "star" into actual assassins, I would never have believed. Indeed, I am not able to figure out even now how it could have worked out that way. I can't explain it. I merely state the fact.

Walter Nixon, the packer who was to take us "up Horse Thief," had been engaged by wire a week previously. His outfit had been ready for several days,

and he called at the hotel the evening of my arrival to go over the grub list and make definite plans. As there were only two of us, he reckoned that ten horses and two packers would be sufficient to see us through. The horses would cost us two dollars a day a head, and the packers five dollars apiece. The provisions he would buy himself and endeavour to board us at a dollar and a half apiece a man. This footed up to between thirty-five and forty dollars a day for the outfit, exclusive of the movie end. It seemed a bit stiff offhand, but was really very reasonable considering present costs of doing that kind of a thing and the thoroughly first-class service Nixon gave us from beginning to end.

Nixon himself I was extremely well impressed with. He was a fine up-standing fellow of six feet or more, black-haired, black-eyed, broad-shouldered and a swell of biceps and thigh that even his loose-fitting mackinaws could not entirely conceal. I liked particularly his simple rig-out, in its pleasing contrast to the cross-between-a-movie-cowboy-and-a-Tyrolean-yodeler garb that has come to be so much affected by the so-called guides at Banff and Lake Louise. Like the best of his kind, Nixon was quiet-spoken and leisurely of movement, but with a suggestion of powerful reserves of both vocabulary and activity. I felt sure at first sight that he was the sort of a man who could be depended upon to see a thing through whatever the difficulties, and I never had reason to change my opinion on that score.

It was arranged that night that Nixon should get away with the pack outfit by noon of the next day, and

make an easy stage of it to the Starbird Ranch, at the end of the wagon-road, nineteen miles out from Invermere. The following morning Roos and I would come out by motor and be ready to start by the time the horses were up and the packs on. That gave us an extra day for exploring Windermere and the more imminent sources of the Columbia.

Roos' instructions from Chester called for a "Windermere Picture," in which should be shown the scenic, camping, fishing and hunting life of that region. The scenic and camping shots he had already made; the fish and the game had eluded him. I arrived just in time to take part in the final scurry to complete the picture. The fish to be shown were trout, and the game mountain sheep and goat, or at least that was the way Roos planned it at breakfast time. When inquiry revealed that it would take a day to reach a trout stream, and three days to penetrate to the haunts of the sheep and goats, he modified the campaign somewhat to conform with the limited time at our disposal. Close at hand in the lake there was a fish called the squaw-fish, which, floundering at the end of a line, would photograph almost like a trout, or so the hotel proprietor thought. And the best of it was that any one could catch them. Indeed, at times one had to manœuvre to keep them from taking the bait that was meant for the more gamy and edible, but also far more elusive, ling or fresh-water cod. As for the game picture, said Roos, he would save time by having a deer rounded up and driven into the lake, where he would pursue it with a motor boat and shoot the required hunting pictures. He would like

to have me dress like a tourist and do the hunting and fishing. That would break me in to adopting an easy and pleasing manner before the camera, so that a minimum of film would be spoiled when he got down to our regular work on the Hanging Glacier picture. It wouldn't take long. That was the advantage of "news" training for a cameraman. You could do things in a rush when you had to.

Mr. Clelland, secretary of the Windermere Company, courteously found us tackle and drove us down to the outlet of the lake to catch the squaw-fish. Three hours later he drove us back to the hotel for lunch without one single fragment of our succulent salt-pork bait having been nuzzled on its hook. I lost my "easy and pleasing manner" at the end of the first hour, and Roos—who was under rather greater tension in standing by to crank—somewhat sooner. He said many unkind things about fish in general and squaw-fish in particular before we gave up the fight at noon, and I didn't improve matters at all by suggesting that I cut out the picture on a salmon can label, fasten it to my hook, and have him shoot me catching that. There was no sense whatever in the idea, he said. You had to have studio lighting to get away with that sort of thing. He couldn't see how I could advance such a thing seriously. As I had some doubts on that score myself, I didn't start an argument.

In the afternoon no better success attended our effort to make the hunting picture,—this because no one seemed to know where a deer could be rounded up and driven into the lake. Again I discovered a way

to save this situation. On the veranda of the country club there was a fine mounted specimen of *Ovis Canadensis,* the Canadian mountain sheep. By proper ballasting, I pointed out to Roos, this fine animal could be made to submerge to a natural swimming depth—say with the head and shoulders just above the water. Then a little Evinrude engine could be clamped to its hind quarters and set going. Forthwith the whole thing must start off ploughing across the lake just like a live mountain sheep. By a little manœuvring it ought to be possible to shoot at an angle that would interpose the body of the sheep between the eye and the pushing engine. If this proved to be impossible, perhaps it could be explained in a sub-title that the extraneous machinery was a fragment of mowing-machine or something of the kind that the sheep had collided with and picked up in his flight. Roos, while admitting that this showed a considerable advance over my salmon-label suggestion of the morning, said that there were a number of limiting considerations which would render it impracticable. I forget what all of these were, but one of them was that our quarry couldn't be made to roll his eyes and register "consternation" and "mute reproach" in the close-ups. I began to see that there was a lot more to the movie game than I had ever dreamed. But what a stimulator of the imagination it was!

As there was nothing more to be done about the hunting and fishing shots for the present, we turned our attention to final preparations for what we had begun to call the "Hanging Glacier Picture." Roos

said it would be necessary to sketch a rough sort of scenario in advance—nothing elaborate like "Broken Blossoms" or "The Perils of Pauline" (we hadn't the company for that kind of thing), but just the thread of a story to make the "continuity" ripple continuously. It would be enough, he thought, if I would enact the rôle of a gentleman-sportsman and allow the guides and packers to be just their normal selves. Then with these circulating in the foreground, he would film the various scenic features of the trip as they unrolled. All the lot of us would have to do would be to act naturally and stand or lounge gracefully in those parts of the picture where the presence of human beings would be best calculated to balance effectively and harmoniously the composition. I agreed cheerfully to the sportsman part of my rôle, but demurred as to "gentleman." I might manage it for a scene, but for a sustained effort it was out of the question. A compromise along this line was finally effected. I engaged to act as much like a gentleman as I could for the opening shot, after which I was to be allowed to lapse into the seeming of a simple sportsman who loved scenery-gazing more than the pursuit and slaying of goat, sheep and bear. Roos observed shrewdly that it would be better to have the sportsman be more interested in scenery than game because, judging from our experience at Windermere, we would find more of the former than the latter. He was also encouragingly sympathetic about my transient appearance as a gentleman. "I only want about fifty feet of that," he said as he gave me

a propitiating pat on the back; "besides, it's all a matter of clothes anyhow."

Before we turned in that night it transpired that Chester's hope of being the first to show moving pictures of the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers to the world was probably doomed to disappointment, or, at the best, that this honour would have to be shared with an equally ambitious rival. Byron Harmon, of Banff, formerly official photographer for the Canadian Pacific, arrived at Invermere and announced that he was planning to go "up Horse Thief" and endeavour to film a number of the remarkable scenic features which he had hitherto tried to picture in vain. His schedule was temporarily upset by the fact that we had already engaged the best pack-train and guides available. Seasoned mountaineer that he was, however, this was of small moment. A few hours' scurrying about had provided him with a light but ample outfit, consisting of four horses and two men, with which he planned to get away in the morning. He was not in the least perturbed by the fact that Roos had practically a day's start of him. "There's room for a hundred cameramen to work up there," he told me genially; "and the more the world is shown of the wonders of the Rockies and the Selkirks, the more it will want to see. It will be good to have your company, and each of us ought to be of help to the other."

I had some difficulty in bringing Roos to a similarly philosophical viewpoint. His "Hearst" training impelled him to brook no rivalry, to beat out the other man by any means that offered. He had the better packtrain, he said, to say nothing of a day's start.

Also, he had the only dynamite and caps available that side of Golden, so that he would have the inside track for starting avalanches and creating artificial ice-bergs in the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers. I would like to think that it was my argument that, since it was not a "news" picture he was after, the man who took the most time to his work would be the one to get the best results, was what brought him round finally. I greatly fear, however, it was the knowledge that the generous Harmon had a number of flares that did the trick. He had neglected to provide flares himself, and without them work in the ice caves—second only in interest to the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers itself—would be greatly circumscribed. At any rate, he finally agreed to a truce, and we took Harmon out to the end of the road in our car the following morning. Of the latter's really notable work in picturing the mountains of western Canada I shall write later.

The horses were waiting, saddled and packed, as we drove up to the rendezvous. The packer was a powerfully built fellow, with his straight black hair and high cheek bones betokening a considerable mix-ture of Indian blood. His name was Buckman—Jim Buckman. He was the village blacksmith of Athal-mere, Nixon explained. He was making plenty of money in his trade, but was willing to come along at a packer's wage for the sake of the experience as an actor. The lure of the movies was also responsible for the presence of Nixon's fourteen-year-old son, Gor-don, who had threatened to run away from home if he wasn't allowed to come along. He proved a useful acquisition—more than sufficiently so, it seemed to

me, to compensate for what he did to the jam and honey.

Roos called us around him and gave instructions for the "business" of the opening shot. Nixon and Jim were to be "picked up" taking the last of the slack out of a "diamond hitch," Gordon frolicking in the background with his dog. When the car drove up, Nixon was to take my saddle horse by the bridle, walk up and shake hands with me. Then, to make the transition from Civilization to the Primitive (movie people never miss a chance to use that word) with a click, I was to step directly from the car into my stirrups. "Get me!" admonished Roos; "straight from the running board to the saddle. Don't touch the ground at all. Make it snappy, all of you. I don't want any of you to grow into 'foot-lice.' "

My saddle horse turned out to be a stockily-built grey of over 1200 pounds. He looked hard as nails and to have no end of endurance. But his shifty eye and back-laid ears indicated temperamentality, so that Nixon's warning that he "warn't exactly a lady's hawss" was a bit superfluous. "When you told me you tipped the beam at two-forty," he said, "I know'd 'Grayback' was the only hawss that'd carry you up these trails. So I brung him in, and stuffed him up with oats, and here he is. He may dance a leetle on his toes jest now, but he'll gentle down a lot by the end of a week."

Whether "Grayback" mastered all of the "business" of that shot or not is probably open to doubt, but that he took the "Make it snappy!" part to heart there was no question. He came alongside like a

lamb, but the instant I started to make my transition from "Civilization to the Primitive with a click" he started climbing into the car. The only click I heard was when my ear hit the ground. Roos couldn't have spoiled any more film than I did cuticle, but, being a "Director," he made a good deal more noise about it. After barking his hocks on the fender, "Grayback" refused to be enticed within mounting distance of the car again, so finally, with a comparatively un-clicky transition from Civilization to the Primitive, I got aboard by the usual route from the ground.

The next shot was a quarter of a mile farther up the trail. Here Roos found a natural sylvan frame through which to shoot the whole outfit as it came stringing along. Unfortunately, the "Director" failed to tell the actors not to look at the camera—that, once and for all, the clicking box must be reckoned as a thing non-existent—and it all had to be done over again. The next time it was better, but the actors still had a wooden expression on their faces. They didn't look at the camera, but the expression on their faces showed that they were conscious of it. Roos then instructed me to talk to my companions, or sing, or do anything that would take their minds off the camera and make them appear relaxed and natural. That time we did it famously. As each, in turn, cantered by the sylvan bower with its clicking camera he was up to his neck "doing something." Nixon was declaiming Lincoln's Gettysburg speech as he had learned it from his phonograph, Gordon was calling his dog, Jim was larruping a straggling pinto and cursing it in fluent local idiom, and I was singing

"Onward, Christian Soldiers!" We never had any trouble about "being natural" after that; but I hope no lip reader ever sees the pictures.

After picking up Roos and his camera we made our real start. One pack-horse was reserved for the camera and tripod, and to prevent him from ranging from the trail and bumping the valuable apparatus against trees or rocks, his halter was tied to the tail of Nixon's saddle animal. Except that the latter's spinal column must have suffered some pretty severe snakings when the camera-carrier went through corduroy bridges or lost his footings in fords, the arrangement worked most successfully. The delicate instrument was not in the least injured in all of the many miles it was jogged over some of the roughest trails I have ever travelled.

The sunshine by which the last of the trail shots was made proved the parting glimmer of what had been a month or more of practically unbroken fair weather. Indeed, the weather had been rather too fine, for, toward the end of the summer, lack of rain in western Canada invariably means forest fires. As these had been raging intermittently for several weeks all over British Columbia, the air had become thick with smoke, and at many places it was impossible to see for more than a mile or two in any direction. Both Roos and Harmon had been greatly hampered in their work about Banff and Lake Louise by the smoke, and both were, therefore, exceedingly anxious for early and copious rains to clear the air. Otherwise, they said, there was no hope of a picture of the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers that would be worth

the film it was printed on. They must have rain. Their prayer was about to be answered, in full measure, pressed down and running over—and then some.

We had been encountering contending currents of hot and cold air all the way up the wagon-road from Invermere and the lower valley. Now, as we entered the mountains, these became more pronounced, taking the form of scurrying "dust-devils" that attacked from flank and van without method or premonitory signal. The narrowing gorge ahead was packed solid with a sullen phalanx of augmenting clouds, sombre-hued and sagging with moisture, and frequently illumined with forked lightning flashes discharged from their murky depths. Nixon, anxious to make camp before the storm broke, jogged the horses steadily all through the darkening afternoon. It was a point called "Sixteen-mile" he was driving for, the first place we would reach where there was room for the tent and feed for the horses. We were still four miles short of our destination when the first spatter of ranging drops opened up, and from there on the batteries of the storm concentrated on us all the way.

We made camp in a rain driving solidly enough to deflect the stroke of an axe. I shall not enlarge upon the acute discomfort of it. Those who have done it will understand; those who have not would never be able to. It was especially trying on the first day out, before the outfit had become shaken down and one had learned where to look for things. Nixon's consummate woodcraftsmanship was put to a severe test, but emerged triumphant. So, too, Jim, who proved himself as impervious to rain as to ill-temper. The

fir boughs for the tent floor came in dripping, of course, but there were enough dry tarpaulins and blankets to blot up the heaviest of the moisture, and the glowing little sheet-iron stove licked up the rest. A piping hot dinner drove out the last of the chill, and we spent a snug, comfy evening listening to Nixon yarn about his mountaineering exploits and of the queer birds from New York and London whom he had nursed through strange and various intervals of moose and sheep-hunting in the Kootenays and Rockies. We slept dry but rather cold, especially Roos, who ended up by curling round the stove and stoking between shivers. Nixon and Jim drew generously on their own blanket rolls to help the both of us confine our ebbing animal heat, and yet appeared to find not the least difficulty in sleeping comfortably under half the weight of cover that left us shaking. It was all a matter of what one was used to, of course, and in a few days we began to harden.

It was September tenth that we had started from Invermere, hoping at the time to be able to accomplish what we had set out to do in from four to six days. The rain which had come to break the long dry spell put a very different face on things, however. The eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth we were held in our first camp by an almost continuous downpour, which turned the mountain streams into torrents and raised Horse Thief till it lapped over the rim of the flat upon which our tent was pitched. The night of the thirteenth, with a sharp drop of the temperature, the rain turned to snow, and we crawled out on the fourteenth to find the valley under a light blanket of

white. Then the clouds broke away and the sunshine and shadows began playing tag over the scarps and buttresses of the encompassing amphitheatre of mountains. For the first time there was a chance for a glimpse of the new world into which we had come. The transition from the cultivation and the gentle wooded slopes of Windermere was startling. Under the mask of the storm clouds we had penetrated from a smooth, rounded, pleasant country to one that was cliffy and pinnacled and bare—a country that was all on end, a land whose bones showed through. A towering Matterhorn reared its head six or eight thousand feet above us, and so near that slabs of rock cracked away from its scarred summit were lying just across the trail from the tent. The peaks walling in Horse Thief to the north were not so high but no less precipitous and barren, while to the west a jumble of splintered pinnacles whose bases barred the way were still lost in the witch-dance of the clouds. A tourist folder would have called it a "Land of Titans," but Jim, leaning on his axe after nicking off a fresh back-log for the camp fire, merely opined it was "some skookum goat country. But not a patch," he added, "to what we'll be hittin' to-night if we get them *geesly* hawsses rounded up in time fer a start 'fore noon."

It appeared that the horses, with their grazing spoiled by the snow, had become restless, broken through the barrier Nixon had erected at a bridge just below camp, and started on the back trail for Invermere. As their tracks showed that they had broken into a trot immediately beyond the bridge, it looked

like a long stern-chase, and Nixon did not reckon on being able to hit the trail for several hours. Roos grasped the occasion to make a couple of "camp life" shots his fertile brain had conceived the idea of during the long storm-bound days of enforced inaction. In one of these the "sportsman" was to go to bed in silhouette by candlelight. Ostensibly this was to be the shadow of a man crawling into his blankets *inside* of the tent, and taken from the outside. In reality, however, Roos set up his camera *inside* of the tent and shot the antics of the shadow the sunlight threw on the canvas when I went through the motions of turning in close against the *outside* of the wall. This went off smartly and snappily; but I would have given much for a translation of the voluble comments of a passing Indian who pulled up to watch the agile action of the retiring "sportsman."

It was while Roos was rehearsing me for this shot that Gordon must have heard him iterating his invariable injunction that I should not be a "foot-hog," meaning, I shall hardly need to explain, that I should be quick in my movements so as not to force him to use an undue footage of film. A little later I overheard the boy asking Jim what a "foot-hog" was. "I don't quite *kumtrux* myself," the sturdy blacksmith-packer replied, scratching his head. "It sounds as if it might be suthin like pig's feet, but they want actin' as if they wuz ready to eat anythin', 'less it was each other." Now that I think of it, I can see how the clash of the artistic temperaments of "Director" and "Star" over just about every one of the shots they made might have given Jim that impression.

THE "TURNING-IN" SCENE SHOT IN SILHOUETTE (*above*)
"REVERSE" OF THE "GOING-TO-BED" SHOT (*below*)

ON THE HORSE THIEF TRAIL

A DEAD-FALL ON THE TRAIL

The other shot we made that morning was one which Roos had labelled as "Berry Picking and Eating" in his tentative scenario. The "sportsman" was to fare forth, gather a bowlful of raspberries, bring them back to camp, put sugar and condensed milk on them, and finally eat them, all before the camera. I objected to appearing in this for two reasons: for one, because berry-picking was not a recognized out-door sport, and, for another, because I didn't like raspberries. Roos admitted that berry-picking was not a sport, but insisted he had to have the scene to preserve his continuity. "Gathering and eating these products of Nature," he explained, "shows how far the gentleman you were in the first scene has descended toward the Primitive. You will be getting more and more Primitive right along, but we must register each step on the film, see?" As for my distaste for raspberries, Roos was quite willing that, after displaying the berries heaped in the bowl in a close-up, I should do the real eating with strawberry jam. It was that last which overcame my spell of "temperament." Both Roos and Gordon already had me several pots down in the matter of jam consumption, and I was glad of the chance to climb back a notch.

We found raspberry bushes by the acre but, thanks to the late storm, almost no berries. This didn't matter seriously in the picking shot, for which I managed to convey a very realistic effect in pantomime, but for the heaped-high close-up of the bowl it was another matter. One scant handful was the best that the four of us, foraging for half an hour, could bring in. But

I soon figured a way to make these do. Opening a couple of tins of strawberry jam into the bowl, I rounded over smoothly the bright succulent mass and then made a close-set raspberry mosaic of one side of it. That did famously for the close-up. As I settled back for the berry-eating shot Roos cut in sharply with his usual: "Snappy now! Don't be a foot-hog!" Gordon, who had been digging his toe into the mud for some minutes, evidently under considerable mental stress, lifted his head at the word. "Hadn't you better say 'jam-hog', Mr. Roos?" he queried plaintively.

"I'm afraid it wouldn't be any use," was the dejected reply. Roos was right. At the word "Action!" I dug in with my spoon on the unpaved side of the bowl of jam, and several turns before the crank ceased revolving there was nothing left but a few daubed raspberries and several broad red smears radiating from my mouth. Roos tossed the two empty jam tins into the murky torrent of Horse Thief Creek and watched them bob away down stream. "You're getting too darn primitive," he said peevishly.

It was nearly eleven o'clock before Nixon came with the horses; but we had camp struck and the packs made, so there was little delay in taking the trail. The bottom of the valley continued fairly open for a few miles, with the swollen stream serpentining across it, turned hither and thither by huge log-jams and fortress-like rock islands. Where the North Fork came tumbling into the main creek in a fine run of cascades there was a flat several acres in extent and good camping ground. Immediately above the valley narrowed to a steep-sided canyon, and continued

so all the way up to the snow and glacier-line. The trail from now on was badly torn and washed and frequently blocked with dead-falls. Or rather it had been so blocked up to a day or two previously. Now I understood the reason for Nixon's complaisance when Harmon's outfit, travelling in the rain, had passed our camp a couple of days before. "Don't worry, sonny," he had said in comforting the impetuous Roos; "we won't lose any time, and we will save a lot of chopping." And so it had worked out. Harmon's men had cut the dead-falls out of the whole twelve miles of trail between North Fork and the Dragon-Tail Glacier.

Even so it was a beastly stretch of trail. The stream, completely filling the bottom of the gorge, kept the path always far up the side of the mountain. There were few dangerous precipices, but one had always to be on the lookout to keep his head from banging on dead-falls just high enough to clear a pack, and which, therefore, no one would take the trouble to cut away. The close-growing shrubbery was dripping with moisture, and even riding second to Nixon, who must have got all the worst of it, I found myself drenched at the end of the first half mile. Riding through wet underbrush can wet a man as no rain ever could. No waterproof ever devised offers the least protection against it; nothing less than a safe deposit vault on wheels could do so.

Streams, swollen by the now rapidly melting snow, came tumbling down—half cataract, half cascade—all along the way. At the worst crossings these had been roughly bridged, as little footing for men or horses

was afforded by the clean-swept rock. Only one crossing of the main stream was necessary. It was a good natural ford at low water, but quite out of the question to attempt at high. We found it about medium—a little more than belly deep and something like an eight-mile current. With a foot more water it would have commenced to get troublesome; with another two feet, really dangerous. That prospect, with the rapidly rising water, was reserved for our return trip.

Such a road was, of course, wonderfully picturesque and colourful, and Roos, with a quick eye for an effective composition, made the most of his opportunities for "trail shots." A picture of this kind, simple enough to look at on the screen, often took half an hour or more to make. The finding of a picturesque spot on the trail was only the beginning. This was useless unless the light was right and a satisfactory place to set up the tripod was available. When this latter was found, more often than not a tree or two had to be felled to open up the view to the trail. Then—as the party photographed had to be complete each time, and with nothing to suggest the presence of the movie camera or its operator—Roos' saddle horse and the animal carrying his outfit had to be shuttled along out of line and tied up where they would not get in the picture. This was always a ticklish operation on the narrow trails, and once or twice the sheer impossibility of segregating the superfluous animals caused Roos to forego extremely effective shots.

The mountains became higher and higher, and steeper and steeper, the farther we fared. And the

greater the inclines, the more and more precarious was the hold of the winter's snow upon the mountainsides. At last we climbed into a veritable zone of avalanches—a stretch where, for a number of miles, the deep-gouged troughs of the snow-slides followed each other like the gullies in a rain-washed mudbank. Slide-time was in the Spring, of course, so the only trouble we encountered was in passing over the terribly violated mountainsides. If the trail came to the track of an avalanche far up on the mountainside, it meant descending a cut-bank to the scoured bedrock, click-clacking along over this with the shod hooves of the horses striking sparks at every step for a hundred yards or more, and then climbing out again. If the path of the destroyer was encountered low down, near the river, the way onward led over a fifty-feet-high pile of upended trees, boulders and sand. In nearly every instance one could see where the slides had dammed the stream a hundred feet high or more, and here and there were visible swaths cut in the timber of the further side, where the buffer of the opposite mountain had served to check the onrush.

The going for the horses was hard at all times, but worst perhaps where the dam of a slide had checked the natural drainage and formed a bottomless bog too large for the trail to avoid. Here the hard-blown animals floundered belly deep in mud and rotten wood, as did also their riders when they had to slide from the saddles to give their mounts a chance to reach a solid footing. The polished granite of the runways of the slide was almost as bad, for here the horses were repeatedly down from slipping. My air-tread-

ing, toe-dancing "Grayback" of the morning was gone in the back and legs long before we reached the end. My weight and the pace (Nixon was driving hard to reach a camping place before a fresh gathering of storm clouds were ready to break) had proved too much for him. The fighting light was gone from his eye, his head was between his legs, and his breath was expelled with a force that seemed to be scouring the lining from his bleeding nostrils. Dropping back to slacken his girths and breathe him a moment before leading him up the last long run of zigzags, I heard the sobbing *diminuendo* of the pack-train die out in the sombre depths above. It was like the shudder of sounds that rise through a blow-hole where the sea waves are pounding hard on the mouth of a subterranean grotto.

I had developed a warm and inclusive sympathy for "Grayback" before I reached the crest of that final shoulder of mountain we had to surmount, but lost most of it on the slide back to the valley when, in lieu of anything else to hand as he found himself slipping, he started to canter up my spine. I found Nixon and Jim throwing off packs on a narrow strip of moss-covered bottom between the drop-curtain of the fir-covered mountainside and the bank of the creek. It was practically the only place for a camp anywhere in the closely-walled valley. Slide-wreckage claimed all the rest of it. An upward trickle of lilac smoke a half mile above told where Harmon's outfit had effected some sort of lodgment, but it was on a *geesly* slither of wet side-hill, Nixon said, and badly exposed

to the wind that was always sucking down from the glacier.

The moss underfoot was saturated with water, but with an hour of daylight and pines close at hand this was a matter of small moment. We were well under cover by the time the snuffer of the darkness clapped sharply down, and with a good day's supply of wood for stove and camp-fire piled up outside the tent. Not having stopped for lunch on the trail, we were all rather "peckish" (to use Nixon's expression) by the time dinner was ready. After that there was nothing much to bother about. Nixon told goat hunting stories all evening, putting a fresh edge on his axe the while with a little round pocket whetstone. A Canadian guide is as cranky about his private and personal axe as a Chicago clothing drummer is about his razors. So it was only to be expected that Nixon took it a bit hard when Roos had employed his keenly whetted implement to crack open a hunk of quartz with. That was the reason, doubtless, why most of his stories had to do with the fool escapades of various of the *geesly* (that was Nixon's favourite term of contempt, and a very expressive one it was) tenderfeet he had guided. But one of his yarns (and I think a true one) was of a time that he was caught by a storm at ten thousand feet in the Rockies and had to spend the night on the rocks a mile above the timber-line. Lightly dressed and without a blanket, the only protection he had from a temperature many degrees below freezing was from the carcasses of the two freshly-shot goats that had lured him there. Splitting these

down the middle with his hunting knife, he had covered himself with them, entrails and all, in the hope that the remaining animal heat would keep him alive till daylight. Man and goat were frozen to one stiff mass by morning, but the man had still enough vitality to crack himself loose and descend to his camp. The exposure and hardship some of these northwest mountaineers have survived is almost beyond belief.

I went to sleep with the sizzle of snowflakes on the dying embers of the camp-fire in my ears, and awoke to find the tent roof sagging down on my ear under the weight of a heavy night's fall. The storm was over for the moment, but the clouds were still lurking ominously above the glacier, and there was little light for pictures. Harmon, crossing the several channels of the creek on fallen logs, came over later in the day. He had been stormbound ever since his arrival, he said, and had done nothing at all in taking either stills or movies yet. But fires and smoke were finished for the year now, he added philosophically, and it was his intention to remain until he got what he was after. Before he left he told me something of his work. "Stills," it appeared, were the main thing with him; his movie work was carried on merely as a side-line to pay the expenses of trips he could not otherwise afford. He had been photographing in the Selkirks and Rockies for a dozen years, and he would not be content to rest until the sets of negatives—as nearly perfect as they could be made—of every notable peak and valley of western Canada. Then he was going to hold a grand exhibition of mountain photographs at Banff and retire. The Lake of the Hanging Gla-

ciers was one of the very few great scenic features he had never photographed, and he only hoped he would be able to do it justice. The fine reverence of Harmon's attitude toward the mountains that he loved was completely beyond Roos' ken. "I never worries about not doing 'em justice—not for a minute. What does worry me is whether or not these cracked up lakes and glaciers are going to turn out worth my coming in to do justice to. Get me?" "Yes, I think so," replied the veteran with a very patient smile.

CHAPTER III

AT THE GLACIER

SNOW flurries kept us close to camp all that day. The next one, the sixteenth, was better, though still quite hopeless for movie work. After lunch we set out on foot for the big glacier, a mile above, from which the creek took its life. The clouds still hung too low to allow anything of the mountains to be seen, but one had the feeling of moving in a long narrow tunnel through which a cold jet of air was constantly being forced. A few hundred yards above our camp was a frightful zone of riven trees mixed with gravel and boulders. It was one of the strangest, one of the savagest spots I ever saw. It was the battle ground of two rival avalanches, Nixon explained, two great slides which, with the impetus of six or eight thousand feet of run driving uncounted millions of tons of snow and earth, met there every spring in primeval combat. No man had ever seen the fantastic onslaught (for no man could reach that point in the springtime), but it was certain that the remains of it made a mighty dam all the way across the valley. Then the creek would be backed up half way to the glacier, when it would accumulate enough power to sweep the obstruction away and scatter it down to the Columbia.

Straight down the respective paths of the rival slides, and almost exactly opposite each other, tumbled two splendid cascades. The hovering storm clouds

cut off further view of them a few hundred feet above the valley, but Nixon said that they came plunging like that for thousands of feet, from far up into the belt of perpetual snow. The one to the east (which at the moment seemed to be leaping straight out of the heart of a sinister slaty-purple patch of cumulo-nimbus) drained the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers; that to the west a desolate rock and ice-walled valley which was rimmed by some of the highest summits in the Selkirks. Our road to the lake would be wet with the spray of the former for a good part of the distance.

We were scrambling through a land of snow-slides all the way to the glacier. For the first half mile patches of stunted fir survived here and there, due to being located in the lee of some cliff or other rocky outcrop which served to deflect the spring-time onslaughts from above; then all vegetation ceased and nothing but snow-churned and ice-ground rock fragments remained. All along the last quarter of a mile the successive stages of the glacier's retreat were marked by great heaps of pulverized rock, like the tailings at the mouth of a mine. Only the face of the glacier and the yawning ice caves were visible under the cloud-pall. The queerly humped uplift of the "dragon" moraine could be dimly guessed in the shifting mists that whirled and eddied in the icy draughts from the caves.

Our principal object in going up to the grottoes on so inclement a day was to experiment with our dynamite on the ice, with a view to turning our knowledge to practical use in making artificial icebergs for the movies in the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers. Se-

lecting what looked like a favourable spot at the base of what seemed a "fracturable" pinnacle of grey-green ice, we dug a three-feet-deep hole with a long-handled chisel, pushed in two sticks of sixty per cent. dynamite, tamped it hard with snow after attaching a lengthy fuse, touched a match to the latter and retired to a safe distance. The result, to put it in Roos' latest imported slang, was an "oil can," which connotes about the same thing as fizzle, I took it. There's a deal of kick in two sticks of "sixty per" set off in rock, but here it was simply an exuberant "whouf" after the manner of a blowing porpoise. A jet of soft snow and ice shot up some distance, but the pinnacle never trembled. And the hole opened up was smooth-sided and clean, as if melted out with hot water. Not the beginning of a crack radiated from it. Jim opined that a slower burning powder might crack ice, but there was certainly no hope of "sixty per" doing the trick. It was evident that we would have to find some other way of making artificial icebergs. We did. We made them of rock. But I won't anticipate.

It snowed again in the night, snowed itself out for a while. The following morning it was warm and brilliantly clear, and for the first time there was a chance to see what sort of a place it was to which we had entered. For a space the height and abruptness of the encompassing walls seemed almost appalling; it was more like looking up out of an immeasurably vast crater than from a valley. All around there were thousands of feet of sheer rocky cliff upon which no snow could effect a lodgment; and above these more thousands of feet solid with the glittering green of

glacial ice and the polished marble of eternal snow. The jagged patch of sky was a vivid imperial blue, bright and solid-looking like a fragment of rich old porcelain. The morning sun, cutting through the sharp notches between the southeastern peaks, was dappling the snow fields of the western walls in gay splashes of flaming rose and saffron, interspersed with mottled shadows of indigo and deep purple. Reflected back to the still shadowed slopes of the eastern walls, these bolder colours became a blended iridescence of amethyst, lemon and pale misty lavender. The creek flowed steely cold, with fluffs of grey-wool on the riffles. The tree patches were black, dead funereal black, throwing back no ray of light from their down-swooping branches. The air was so clear that it seemed almost to have assumed a palpability of its own. One imagined things floating in it; even that it might tinkle to the snip of a finger nail, like a crystal rim.

In movies as in hay-making, one has to step lively while the sun shines. This was the first good shooting light we had had, and no time was lost in taking advantage of it. Long before the sun had reached the bottom of the valley we were picking our way up toward the foot of the glacier, this time on horseback. Early as we had started, the enterprising Harmon had been still earlier. He was finishing his shots of the face of the glacier and the mouth of the ice caves as we came up. He would now leave the field clear for Roos for an hour, he said, while he climbed to the cliffs above the glacier to make a goat-hunting picture. That finished, he would return and, by the light of his

flares both parties could shoot the interior of the ice caves. Before starting on his long climb, Harmon briefly outlined the scenario of his "goat" picture, part of which had already been shot. Two prospectors—impersonated by his guide and packer—having been in the mountains for many weeks without a change of diet, had become terribly sick of bacon. Finally, when one of them had disgustedly thrown his plate of it on the ground, even the camp dog, after a contemptuous sniff, had turned his back. He had had no trouble in getting the men to register "disgust," Harmon explained, but that "contemptuous sniff" business with the dog was more difficult. After their voracious Airedale pup had wolfed three plates of bacon without paying the least heed to the director's attempts to frighten him off at the psychological moment, they had tried thin strips of birch-bark, trimmed to represent curling rashers. Even these the hungry canine had persisted in licking, probably because they came from a greasy plate. Finally Harmon hit upon the expedient of anointing the birch-bark rashers with some of the iodine carried as an antiseptic in the event of cuts and scratches. "If the pup ate it, of course it would die," he explained; "but that would be no more than he deserved in such a case." But the plan worked perfectly. After his first eager lick, the outraged canine had "sniffed contemptuously" at the pungent fumes of the iodine, and then backed out of the picture with a wolfish snarl on his lifted lip.

Then the packer registered "fresh meat hunger" ("cut-in" of a butcher shop to be made later), immediately after which the guide pointed to the cliffs

Courtesy of Byron Harmon, Banff

LOOKING TOWARD THE ENTRANCE OF THE ICE CAVE

Courtesy of Byron Harmon, Banff

WHERE THE HANGING GLACIER IS ABOUT TO FALL

above the camp where some wild goats were frisking. By the aid of his long-distance lens, Harmon had shot the goats as they would appear through the binoculars the guide and packers excitedly passed back and forth between them. And now they were going forth to shoot the goats. Or rather they were going forth to "shoot" the goats, for these had already been shot with a rifle. In order to avoid loss of time in packing his cumbersome apparatus about over the cliffs, Harmon had sent out Conrad, his Swiss guide, the previous afternoon, with orders to shoot a goat—as fine a specimen as possible—and leave it in some picturesque spot where a re-shooting could be "shot" with the camera when the clouds lifted. The keen-eyed Tyrolese had experienced little difficulty in bringing down two goats. One of these—a huge "Billy"—he had left at the brink of a cliff a couple of thousand feet above the big glacier, and the other—a half-grown kid—he had brought into camp to cut up for the "meat-guzzling" shots with which guide, packer and canine were to indulge in as a finale. It was a cleverly conceived "nature" picture, one with a distinct "educational" value; or at least it was such when viewed from "behind the camera." Roos was plainly jealous over it, but, as he had no goats of his own, and as Harmon's goat was hardly likely to be "borrowable" after bouncing on rock pinnacles for a thousand feet, there was nothing to do about it. He would have to make up by putting it over Harmon on his "glacier stuff," he said philosophically. And he did; though it was only through the virtuosity of his chief actor.

Harmon had confined his glacier shots to one of his

party riding up over the rocks, and another of it grouped at the entrance of the largest cave and looking in. Being an old mountaineer, he was disinclined to take any unnecessary chances in stirring up a racket under hanging ice. Roos was new to the mountains, so didn't labour under any such handicap. His idea was to bring the whole outfit right up the middle of the stream and on into the cave. The approach and the entrance into the mouth of the cave were to be shot first from the outside, and then, in silhouette, from the inside.

Nixon, pointing out that the roof of the cave had settled two or three feet since we were there yesterday and that the heat seemed to be honeycombing all the lower end of the glacier pretty badly, said that he didn't like the idea of taking horses inside, but would do so if it would make a better picture that way. He was quite willing to take chances if there was any reason for it. But what he did object to was trying to take the horses up the middle of the stream over big boulders when it would be perfectly plain to any one who saw the picture that there was comparatively smooth going on either side. "You can easy break a hawss' leg in one of them *geesly* holes," he complained; "but the loss of a hawss isn't a patch to what I'd feel to have some guy that I've worked with see the pictur' and think I picked that sluiceway as the best way up."

Roos replied with a rush of technical argument in which there was much about "continuity" and "backlighting," and something about using the "trick crank so that the action can be speeded up when it's run."

Not knowing the answer to any of this, Nixon finally shrugged his shoulders helplessly and signalled for Jim to bring up the horses. There was no need of a "trick crank" to speed up the action in the stream, for that glacial torrent, a veritable cascade, had carried away everything in its course save boulders four or five feet high. Nixon, in a bit of a temper, hit the ditch as though he were riding a steeplechase. So did Jim and Gordon. All three of them floundered through without mishap. "Grayback" tried to climb up on the tip of a submerged boulder, slipped with all four feet at once and went over sidewise. I kicked out my stirrups, but hit the water head first, getting considerably rolled and more than considerably wet. To Roos' great indignation, this occurred just outside the picture, but he had the delicacy not to ask me to do it over again.

Taking the horses inside the cave was a distinctly ticklish performance, though there could be no question of its effectiveness as a picture. Roos set up a hundred feet in from the fifty-feet-wide, twenty-feet-high mouth and directed us to ride forward until a broad splashing jet of water from the roof blocked our way, and then swing round and beat it out. "Beat it out snappy!" he repeated. "Get me?" "Yep, *I* got you," muttered Nixon; "you're in luck if nothin' else does."

The ice that arched above the entrance looked to me like the salt-eaten packing round an ice-cream can as we pushed up and under it. The horses could hardly have noticed this, and it must have been their instincts —their good sound horse-sense—that warned them

that a dark hole full of hollow crackings and groanings and the roar of falling water was no place for self-respecting equines to venture. It took a deal of spurring and swearing to force them inside, and most of the linear distance gained was covered in circles on their hind legs. It was old "Grayback" whose nerves gave way first; he that started the stampede back to light and sunshine. There was no question but what we "beat it snappy."

Roos came out rubbing his hands gleefully. "That photographed like a million dollars," he cried with enthusiasm. "Now just one thing more. . . ." And forthwith he revealed what had been in his heart ever since he chanced onto that "natural shower bath" in the cave the previous afternoon. No one could deny that it was a natural shower bath. And since it *was* a natural shower bath, what could be more natural than for some one to take a shower under it? How would Nixon feel about trying it? Or Jim? He admitted that it might be something of a shock, but he was willing to make that all right. Would ten dollars be fair? Or say twenty? Or why not twenty-five? He knew Mr. Chester didn't reckon cost when it was a question of getting a high class, he might say a unique, picture. Now which should it be? Nixon, a bit snappily, said his rheumatism put him out of the running, and Jim was equally decided. Money wouldn't tempt him to go even into the Columbia at Windermere, let alone a liquid icicle under a glacier.

And right then and there I did a thing which Roos maintained to the end of our partnership repaid him for all the grief and worry I had caused him to date,

and much that was still to accrue. "Since I've got to take a bath and dry these wet togs out sooner or later," I said with a great assumption of nonchalance, "perhaps the ice cave will do as well as anywhere else. Just promise me you won't spring a flare on the scene, and build a fire to dry my clothes by. . . ." Roos was gathering wood for a fire before I finished speaking. As for the flares, Harmon had not given him any yet. It was only a silhouette he wanted—but that would show up like a million dollars in the spray and ice. There never had been such a picture; perhaps would never be again. I wasn't joking, was I? And primitive . . .

"Go on and set up," I cut in with. "I'll be there by the time you're ready to shoot. And don't ever let me hear you say primitive again. Oh, yes—and you needn't remind me to 'Be snappy!' There won't be any trouble on that score. Just make sure your lens is fast enough to catch the action."

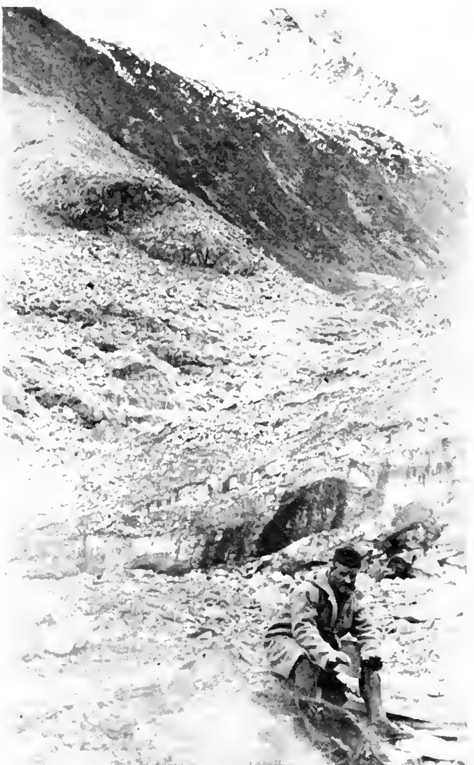
I've had many a plunge overboard off the California coast that shocked me more than that "natural shower bath" did, but never a one with so exhilarant a reaction. Stripping off my wet clothes by the fire, I slipped into my big hooded "lammy" coat and hippity-hopped into the cave. Roos, set up ten yards inside the splashing jet from the roof, was already standing by to shoot. At his call of "Action!" I jumped out of my coat and into the black, unsparkling column of water. There was a sharp sting to the impact, but it imparted nothing of the numbing ache that accompanies immersion in water a number of degrees less cold than this—a feeling which I came

later to know only too well on the Columbia. Nixon had warned me against tempting Providence again by making any unnecessary racket in the cave, but it was no use. No one could have the fun that I was having and not holler. It was against nature. Whooping like a Comanche, I continued my hydro-terpsichorean revel until a muffled "Nuff" from Roos called a halt. He had come to the end of his roll. I have been in more of a shiver coming out of the Adriatic at the Lido in August than I was when I ambled back to dry off by the fire and the sunshine. Glowing with warmth, I even loafed along with my dressing, as one does at Waikiki.

"You'd make a fortune pulling the rough stuff in the movies," Roos exclaimed, patting me on the back. "You've got everything the real gripping cave-man *has* to have—size, beef, a suggestion of brutal, elemental force, primitive. . . ." I chucked a burning brand at him and went over to borrow Nixon's glass. A shot from far up the cliffs told that Harmon's "goat-hunt" was in full cry. The real thrill of the day was about to come off; rather more of a thrill, indeed, than any one was prepared for, Harmon included.

While we had been filming our "cave stuff" Harmon had finished setting the stage for his picture. He had two shots to make—one of his packers firing at the goat at the top of the cliff, and the other of the body of the goat falling to the glacier. Conrad, the Tyrolean, climbing like a fly, had scaled the face of the cliff and was standing by for the signal to start the goat "falling." The shot which had attracted my

MY SHOWER BATH IN AN ICE CAVE



WARMING UP AFTER MY GLACIAL SHOWER BATH

ROSS AND HARMON. DRAGON MORAINE IN DISTANCE (*above*)

THE HORSES IN THE MOUTH OF THE ICE CAVE (*below*)

attention had been the packer discharging his rifle at the goat, which had been propped up in a life-like position, as though peering down onto the glacier. Harmon was still cranking when I got him in focus, while the packer had jumped to his feet and was executing a *pas seul* evidently intended to convey the impression he had made a hit. A curl of blue smoke from his rifle was still floating in the air. They had contrived that effective little touch by dribbling a bit of melted butter down the barrel before firing. Smokeless powder is hardly "tell-tale" enough for movie work.

Harmon now moved over and set up at the foot of the cliff, apparently to get as near as possible to the point where the goat was going to hit. As the sequel proves, he judged his position to a hair. Now he made his signal. I saw the flutter of his handkerchief. The goat gave a convulsive leap, and then shot straight out over the brink of the cliff. From where we stood I could plainly see the useful Conrad "pulling the strings," but from where Harmon was set up this would hardly show. He was too careful to overlook a point like that in a "nature picture." The white body caromed sharply off a couple of projecting ledges, and then, gathering momentum, began to describe a great parabola which promised to carry it right to the foot of the cliff.

I had kept my eyes glued to the glass from the start, but it was Nixon's unaided vision which was first to catch the drift of what was impending. "You couldn't drive a six-hawss team 'tween the side o' Mista Ha'mon's head and the trail in the air that

geesly goat's going to make passing by," he said with a calculating drawl. "Not so su' you could squeeze a pack-hawss through." Then, a couple of seconds later: "No' ev'n a big dawg." And almost immediately: "By Gawd, it's going to get him!"

And that surely was what it looked like, to every one at least but the calmly cranking Harmon. He went on humping his back above the finder, and I could see the even rise and fall of his elbow against the snow. The dot of white had become a streak of grey, and it was the swift augmentation of this in his finder which finally (as he told me later) caused Harmon suddenly to duck. To me it looked as if the flying streak had passed right through him, but he was still there at the foot of his tripod after the Bolt of Wrath, striking the surface of the glacier with a resounding impact, threw up a fountain of pulverized snow and laid still. He was never quite sure whether it was the almost solid cushion of air or a side-swipe from a hoof or horn that joggled the tripod out of true. It was a near squeeze, for the flying body, which must have weighed all of two hundred pounds, was frozen hard as a rock. Conrad came staggering down with the remnants of the battered trunk over his shoulders. Only the heart and liver were fit to eat. The rest was a sausage of churned meat and bone splinters. There was no question about its fall having limbered it up.

The illumination of the cave by the calcium flares was beautiful beyond words to describe, or at least so I was told. The first one was a failure, through the outward draught of air carrying the smoke back onto

the cameras. I had set this off in a side gallery, about a hundred yards in from the mouth, with the idea of throwing a sort of concealed back light. Foolishly opening my eyes while the calcium was burning, I was completely blinded by the intense glare and did not regain my sight for several minutes. Harmon's packer, who held the next flare set off—this time to the leeward of the cameras—had still worse luck. A flake of the sputtering calcium kicked back up his sleeve and inflicted a raw, round burn with half the colours of the spectrum showing in its concentric rings of singed cuticle. The chap displayed astonishing nerve in refusing to relinquish his grip on the handle of the flare and thus ruin the picture. I most certainly would never have done so myself. Roos described the glittering ice walls as a "veritable Aladdin's Cave of jewels," and only regretted that he couldn't have had that lighting on my shower-bath.

That night we tried a camp-fire scene by flare. Roos set up on the further bank of the side channel of the creek which flowed past the tent. Between the door of the tent and the water a hole was dug in such a way that light from it would shine on a group in front of the tent but not on the lens of the camera. The glow from a flare burning in this hole represented the camp-fire. I was supposed to stroll up and tell a jovial story to Nixon, Jim and Gordon, who were to be "picked up" already seated around the fire. I made my entrance very snappily, but, unluckily, the blanket roll upon which I sat down spread out and let me back against the corner of the glowing sheet-iron stove, which was set up just inside the tent open-

ing. Seeing I had not rolled out of the picture, Roos shouted for me to carry on, as it was the last flare. So, with the reek of burning wool rising behind me, I did carry on, making plausible gestures intended to convey the idea that the bit of comedy was just a humorous piece of by-play of my own. I carried on for something over half a minute. The only circumstance that prevented my carrying on my back the print of the corner of the stove for the rest of my days was the fact that the combined thicknesses of my duffle coat, lumberman's shirt, sweater and heavy woollen undershirt were interposed to absorb the heat. The duffle coat was the worst sufferer, coming out with a bar-sinister branded most of the way through its half inch of pressed brown wool.

CHAPTER IV

THE LAKE OF THE HANGING GLACIERS

It was now neck-or-nothing with the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers picture. Having already been out much longer than we had expected to be, there were left only provisions for two days. Nixon had suggested making a hurried trip out and bringing in fresh supplies, but as the time set by Chester for his arrival for the Big Bend trip was already past, I did not feel warranted in prolonging the present jaunt any further. If the morrow was fair all would be well; if not, the main object of our trip would be defeated.

By great good luck the clear weather held. There was not a cloud hovering above the mountains at daybreak the following morning, and we got away for an early start to make the most of our opportunity. Nixon himself had run and cut out the trail to the Lake earlier in the summer, but horses had never been taken over it. Though it was extremely steep in pitches, our maiden passage was marked with few difficulties. Much to Nixon's surprise and satisfaction, only one big deadfall had been thrown down to block the way, and our enforced halt here gave Roos the opportunity for a very effective "trail shot." He also got some striking "back-lighting stuff" at spots along the interminable cascade that was tumbling and bounding beside the trail. The elevation of our camp on the creek was something like six thousand feet, and

that of the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers a bit under eight thousand. The trail is between three and four miles long, and we were rather over two hours in making the climb. There were several halts out of this; steady plugging would do it much quicker.

Timber-line was passed half a mile below the lake, the last of the trees being left behind in a wonderful little mountain park studded with gnarled pines and still bright with late wild flowers. The autumn colouring here was a marvellous chromatic revel in dull golds and soft, subdued browns—the shedding tamaracks and the dying meadow grasses.

Clambering on foot up a steep-sided hillock that appeared to be an ancient glacial moraine augmented by many slides, we suddenly found ourselves on the edge of the high-water level of the lake. The transition from the flower-strewn meadow to a region of almost Arctic frigidity was practically instantaneous —the matter of a half dozen steps. One moment we were climbing in a cliff-walled valley, with rocky buttresses and pinnacles soaring for thousands of feet on either side, and with brown-black gravel and thinning brown-grey bunch grass under foot and ahead; the next, as we gained the crest of the old terminal moraine, the landscape opened up with a blinding flash and we were gazing at a sparkling emerald lake clipped in the embrace of an amphitheatre of glaciers and eternal snow, and floating full of icebergs and marble-mottled shadows. The "Hanging Glacier"—perhaps a mile wide across its face, and rearing a solid wall of ice a couple of hundred feet in the sheer —closed the further or southeastern end of the lake.

Behind the glacier was a cliff of two thousand feet or more in height. It appeared to be almost solid ice and snow, but must have been heavily underlaid with native rock to maintain its abruptness as it did. Higher still a snow-cap, bright and smooth as polished marble, extended to the crest of the range and formed a glittering line against the cobalt of the sky. Of all the scenic gems of the North American continent, I recall none which is so well entitled to the characterization of "unique" as this white-flaming little jewel of the high Selkirks.

The lake was now rapidly receding to its winter low-water level, and to reach its brink we had to press on across three hundred yards of black boulders which were evidently covered in the time of the late spring floods. Ordinarily one would have expected the worst kind of rough and slippery walking here, but, to my great surprise, the great rocks were set as solid and as level as a pavement of mosaic. The reason for this became plain when we approached the water, where a flotilla of small icebergs, rising and falling to the waves kicked up by the brisk breeze drawing down the lake, were steadily thump-thumping the bottom with dull heavy blows which could be felt underfoot a hundred yards away. This natural tamping, going on incessantly during the months of high-water, was responsible for the surprising smoothness of the rocky waste uncovered by the winter recession. The great boulders had literally been hammered flat.

The icebergs, which were formed by the cracking off of the face of the great glacier filled half of the

lake. They varied in size from almost totally submerged chunks a few feet in diameter to huge floating islands of several hundred. They were of the most fantastic shapes, especially those which had been longest adrift and therefore most exposed to the capricious action of the sun. By and large, the effect was that of a Gargantuan bowl sprinkled with puffy white popcorn. But if one took his time and searched carefully enough there were very few things of heaven or earth that were not represented in the amazing collection. One berg, floating on another, had been reduced by the sun to the seeming of a gigantic view camera—box, bellows and lens. A number of famous groups of statuary were there, but of course very much in the rough. "The Thinker" was perhaps the best of these, but even Rodin would have wanted to do a bit more "finishing" on the glacial cave-man humped up on his icy green pedestal. Roos, who had never heard of Rodin, said it reminded him of me drying out after my shower-bath in the ice-cave. His facile imagination also discovered something else. He had once seen a picture of "Lohengrin's Farewell" in a Victrola record price-list, and there was a much sun-licked hunk of ice, very near the shore, which suggested the barge to him, swans and all. I saw the barge all right, but the Pegasus of my imagination had to have some spurring before he would take the "swan" hurdle.

It was Roos' idea that I should swim off, clamber over the side of the barge, lassoo the "near" swan with a piece of pack-rope to represent reins, and let him shoot me as "Lohengrin." It wouldn't exactly

Courtesy of Byron Harmon, Banff

LOOKING ACROSS THE LAKE OF THE HANGING GLACIERS

Courtesy of Byron Harmon, Banff

THE LAKE OF THE HANGING GLACIERS, TAKEN FROM THE ICE WALLS, LOOKING NORTH

run into the "continuity" of the "sportsman" picture, he admitted; but he thought that Chester might use it, with a lot of other odds and ends, under some such title as "Queer People in Queer Places." The idea appealed to me strongly. "Lohengrin's Farewell" had always moved me strangely; and here was a chance actually to appear in the classic rôle! "You bet I'll do it," I assented readily. "What shall I wear?" The "Shining Armour," which we both seemed to connect with "Lohengrin," happened to be one of the things not brought up in our saddle-bags that morning. We were in a hot discussion as to the best manner of improvising a helmet and cuirass out of condensed milk and sardine tins, when Nixon, asking if we knew that the sun only shone about three hours a day in that "*geesly* crack in the hills," dryly opined that we should take our pictures of the lake while there was plenty of light. That sounded sensible, and we started feverishly to hurry through with the routine grind so as to be free to do proper justice to "Lohengrin." As Fate would have it, however, that which was presently revealed to me of the ways of fresh-water icebergs quenched effectually my desire to swim off and take liberties with the capricious things at close quarters.

After making a number of scenic shots, Roos announced that he was ready to go ahead with the "falling iceberg" stuff. As it was quite out of the question making our way along the base of the cliffs on either side of the lake to the face of the glacier in the limited time at our disposal, and, moreover, as we had already demonstrated the impossibility of making artificial

icebergs with "sixty per" dynamite, it became necessary to improvise something closer at hand. It was Roos' idea that a piece of cliff cracked off into the lake might produce the effect desired, especially if "cut" with discrimination. "Here's the way it goes," he explained. "The cracked off rock plunks down into the lake right into the middle of a bunch of floating icebergs. I starts cranking at the splash, and with the bergs all rolling about and bumping into each other no one can tell but what it was one of them that really started it. Then I'll pick you up hopping up and down on the bank and registering 'surprise' and 'consternation'; and then follow with a close-up of you standing on that high rock, looking down on the quieting waves with folded arms. Now you register 'relief' and finally a sort of 'awed wonder.' Then you take a big breath and raise your eyes to the face of the glacier. You keep right on registering 'awed wonder' (only more intense) and as I fade you out you shake your head slowly as if the mighty mysteries of Nature were beyond your understanding. Get me? They ought to colour the film for that dark blue in the laboratory (I could tell 'em just the solution to make that ice look cold), and the sub-title ought to be 'The Birth of an Iceberg,' and . . ."

"Jim's the midwife, is he?" I cut in. "Yes, I get you. Tell him to uncork some of that 'sixty per' 'Twilight Sleep' of his and I'll stand by for the christening."

After a careful technical examination of the terrain, Jim, chief "Powder Monkey," located what he thought was a favourable spot for operations and

started to enlarge a thin crack in the cliff to make it take five sticks of dynamite. That was more than half of our remaining stock; but Roos was insisting on a big iceberg, and plenty of powder was the best way to insure success. It must have been the tamping that was at the bottom of the trouble, for moss and damp earth are hardly solid enough to deflect the kick of the dynamite in the desired direction. At any rate, although there was a roaring detonation, the mighty force released was expended outward rather than inward. The face of the cliff hardly shivered, and only an inconsiderable trickle of broken rocks and sand slid down into the lake. Too sore to take more than hostile notice of Nixon's somewhat rough and ready little *mot* about the " 'Birth o' the Iceberg' turning out a *geesly* miscarriage," Roos clapped the cap over his lens, unscrewed the crank and began taking his camera off its tripod. That rather hasty action was responsible for his missing by a hair what I am certain was the greatest opportunity ever presented to a moving picture operator to film one of the most stupendous of Nature's manifestations.

The roar of the detonating dynamite reverberated for half a minute or more among the cliffs and peaks, and it was just after the last roll had died out that a renewed rumble caused me to direct a searching gaze to the great wall of ice and snow that towered above the farther end of the lake. For an instant I could not believe my eyes. It could not be possible that the whole mountainside was toppling over! And yet that was decidedly the effect at a first glance. From the rim of the snow-cap down to the back of the glacier—

a mile wide and two thousand feet high—there was one solid, unbroken Niagara of glittering, coruscant ice and snow. Like a curtain strung with diamonds and pearls and opals it streamed, while the shower of flaming colours was reflected in the quivering waters of the lake in fluttering scarves of sun-shot scarlet, in tenuous ribbons of lavender, jade and primrose. It was only when the last shreds of this marvellous banner had ceased to stream (at the end of thirty or forty seconds perhaps) that I saw what it was that had caused it. The whole hair-poised brink of the great snow-cap—sharply jolted, doubtless, by the explosion of the dynamite—had cracked away and precipitated itself to the glacier level, nearly half a mile below. The shock to the latter appeared to have had the effect of jarring it sufficiently to crack down great blocks all along its face. The glacier had, in fact, been shocked into giving birth to a whole litter of real icebergs where, nearer at hand, we had failed dismally in our efforts to incubate even an artificial one. As glacial obstetricians it appeared that we still had much to learn.

Roos made a great effort to get his camera set up again in time to make it record something of the wonderful spectacle. He was just too late, however. Only a few thin trickles of snow were streaking the face of the cliff when he finally swung his powerful tele-photo lens upon it, and even these had ceased before he had found his focus. It was no end of a pity. I saw several of the great *valangas* started by the Austrian and Italian artillery in the Dolomites, and, previous to that, what I had thought were very con-

siderable slides on Aconcagua and Chimborazi, in the Andes, and on Kinchinjunga and among the hanging ice-fields above the Zoji-la in the Himalayas. But any half dozen of the greatest of these would have been lost in that mighty avalanche of ice and snow that we saw descend above the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers. Nixon, with a lifetime spent in the Selkirks and Rockies, said he had never seen anything to compare with it.

Jim, reporting that he still had three sticks of dynamite in hand, said he reckoned there might be a better chance of starting an "iceberg" on the southern side of the lake than on the northern one, where we had failed to accomplish anything. The southern slope was even more precipitous than the northern, he pointed out, and he had his eye on a rock which looked as if a charge might turn it over and start it rolling. "You never can tell what you may be startin' among a bunch o' tiltin' rocks like them 'uns," he said hopefully. Nixon's muttered "That ain't no *geesly* hooch dream" might have meant several things; but I took it that he intended to imply that there was too much "unstable equilibrium" along that southern shore to make it the sort of a place that a neurasthenic would seek out for a rest cure. I felt the same way about it, only more so; but Roos' disappointment over what he had already missed was so keen that neither of us had the heart to interpose any objections when he told Jim to go ahead and see what he could do. As two sticks of dynamite were already promised to Harmon, the trick, if it came off, would have to be pulled with one. Spitting tobacco juice on the taffy-like cylinder

for luck, Jim clambered off up the cliff and planted it under his "likely rock," Roos meantime setting up in a favourable position below.

Whether Jim's "tobaccanalian libation" had anything to do with it or not, this time luck was with us. The sharp blast kicked Jim's rock up on one ear, where it teetered for a second or two indecisively before rolling over sidewise and coming down kerplump on a huge twenty-ton cube of basalt that no one would have thought of moving with a barrel of giant. It wasn't so much what the little rock did as the way it did it. The big block gave a sort of a quiver, much as a man awakening from a doze would stretch his arms and yawn, and when it quivered a lot of loose stuff slipped away from beneath and just let it go. It lumbered along at an easy roll for a bit, and then increased its speed and started jumping. Its first jump was no more than a nervous little hop that served to hurdle it clear of a length of flat ledge that reached out to stop its downward progress. A second later it had hit its stride, so that when it struck the water there had been nothing but rarefied air trying to stop it for two hundred feet. Down it went, pushing a column of compressed *aqua pura* ahead of it and sucking a big black hole along in its wake. It was when that column of compressed water spouted up again and tried to chase its tail down the hole it had come out of that things began to happen, for it found something like a dozen fat icebergs crowding in and trying to insinuate their translucent bulks into the same opening. And of course they made a tremendous fuss about it. When an iceberg found that

Courtesy of Byron Harmon, Banff

THE FACE OF THE HANGING GLACIER

Courtesy of Byron Harmon, Banff

WHERE MY PARTY FOREGATHERED WITH HARMON'S ON THE SHORE OF THE LAKE OF THE HANGING GLACIER

it couldn't get in standing up, it forthwith lay down on its side, or even rolled over on its back; which didn't help it in the least after all, for the very good reason that all the other icebergs were adopting the same tactics. And so Roos, who was cranking steadily all the time, got his "Birth of an Iceberg" picture after all.

When the bergs ceased butting their heads off against each other Roos shot me in the scenes where I registered "consternation," "relief" and "awed wonder," and our hard-striven-for Lake of the Hanging Glaciers picture was complete. There was just a bit of a hitch at the "awed wonder" fade-out, though, but that was Roos' fault in trying to introduce a "human touch" by trying to make Gordon's dog perch up beside me on the crest of a hatchet-edged rock. The pup sat quietly wagging his tail until the moment came for me to lift up mine eyes unto the hills and increase the tenseness of my "awed wonder" registration. Then the altitude began to affect his nerves and he started doing figure "8's" back and forth between my precariously planted feet. As a natural consequence, when Roos started in on his "fade-out" I was seesawing my arms wildly to maintain my balance, talking volubly, and registering—well, what would a temperamental movie star be registering while in the act of telling a dog and a man what he thought of them for their joint responsibility in all but pitching him off a twenty-foot-high rock into a vortex of tumbling icebergs? Again (unless this part of the film has been discreetly cut in the studio before exhibition) I beg the indulgence of lip-readers.

The lake was deeply shadowed before we were finally at liberty to take up again the sartorics of "Lohengrin"; but it was not that fact, nor yet the not entirely prohibitive difficulty of making shining armour out of tin cans, that nipped that classic conception in the bud. Rather it was the astonishing unstable-mindedness displayed by the bergs when impinged upon from without. Of the hundred or more hunks of floating ice within a five-hundred-yard radius of the point where our artificial berg had hit the water, only a half dozen or so of the broadest and flattest continued to expose the same profiles they had presented before the big splash. Most of the others had turned over and over repeatedly, and one, which seemed to "hang" in almost perfect balance, continued slowly revolving like a patent churn. "Lohengrin's Barge," half a mile distant from the heart of the "birth splash" and lapped by but the lightest of expiring waves, was rolling drunkenly to port and starboard as though in the trough of the seas of a typhoon. It looked ready to turn turtle at a touch, and there were too many angular projections on it—especially about the "swans"—to make even a man who aspired to grand opera care to court lightly the experience of tangling himself up in the wreck.

Descending to the timber-line meadow where the horses had been left, we found Harmon had brought up his outfit and pitched his tent midway of an enchanting vista framed in green-black pines and golden tamaracks, and with a wonderful background for "camp shots" both up and down the valley. There he was going to make his base, he said, until he found

just the light he wanted on the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers. Then he hoped to get at least a negative or two that would do something approaching justice to so inspiring a subject. And there, working and waiting patiently through an almost unbroken succession of storms that raged in the high Selkirks for many days, he held on until he got what he wanted. It was in that quiet persistent way that he had been photographing the mountains of the Canadian West for many years, and it will be in that way that he will continue until he shall have attained somewhere near to the high goal he has set for his life's work—a complete photographic record of the Rockies and Selkirks. It is a privilege to have met an artist who works with so fine a spirit, who has set himself so high an ideal. A number of Harmon's scenic pictures of the mountains where the Columbia takes its rise are so much better than the best of my own of the same subjects, that I am giving them place in a work which it was my original intention to illustrate entirely myself.

We returned to our camp at the head of Horse Thief Creek that night, and set out on our return to Windermere the following morning. Save for a rather sloppy passage of the main ford, the journey was without incident. With light packs, we pushed right through to the head of the wagon-road—something over thirty miles—the first day. The seventeen miles to Invermere we covered in a leisurely fashion, reaching the hotel at three in the afternoon of the following day, Sunday, the twentieth of September. Here I found a wire from Chester, stating that it had

finally proved impossible for him to get away from business, and asking me to go ahead and see the Big Bend trip through without him. In the event I decided to continue on down the river he would be glad to have his cameraman accompany me as long as the weather and light were favourable for his work. A letter with full instructions covering the two pictures he desired made had already been dispatched.

CHAPTER V

CANAL FLATS TO BEAVERMOUTH

CHESTER's instructions respecting the two new pictures he wanted us to work on came through to Roos the day following our return to Windermere. One of these was to be confined entirely to the Big Bend voyage. Essaying again my rôle of "gentleman-cum-sportsman," I was to get off the train at Beavermouth, meet my boatman, launch the boat and start off down the river. The various things seen and done *en voyage* were to make up the picture.

In the other picture I was to play the part of a young rancher who was farming his hard-won clearing on the banks of the Columbia near its source. With the last of his crops in, he is assailed one day with a great longing to see the ocean. Suddenly it occurs to him that the river flowing right by his door runs all the way to the sea, and the sight of a prospector friend, about to push off with a sack of samples for the smelter many hundreds of miles below, suggests a means of making the journey. And so the two of them start off down the Columbia. What happened to them on their way was to be told in the picture. The introductory scenes of this picture were to be made somewhere in the vicinity of Windermere, but the thread of the story was to be picked up below the Arrow Lakes after the Big Bend voyage was over.

Hunting "location" and rainy weather kept us four

or five days in Windermere and vicinity, giving an opportunity we otherwise would have missed to meet and become acquainted with the always kindly and hospitable and often highly distinguished people of this beautiful and interesting community. From the time of David Thompson, the great astronomer and explorer of the Northwest Company who wintered there in 1810, down to the present Windermere seems always to have attracted the right sort of people. The predominant class is what one might call the gentleman-farmer, with the stress perhaps on "gentleman." I mean to say, that is, that while a number of them have failed of outstanding achievement as farmers, there was none that I met who would not have qualified as a gentleman, and in the very best sense of the word. Sportsmen and lovers of the out-of-doors, there was this fine bond of fellowship between all of them. Nowhere have I encountered a fresher, more wholesome social atmosphere than that of this fine community of the upper Columbia.

That genial and big-hearted old Scot, Randolph Bruce, I recall with especial affection, as must every one of the many who has known the hospitality of his great log lodge on a bay of the lake below Invermere. An Edinburgh engineer, Bruce was one of the builders of the Canadian Pacific, and as such an associate and intimate of Van Horne, O'Shaughnessy and the rest of those sturdy pioneers who pushed to accomplishment the most notable piece of railway construction the world has ever known. In love with the West by the time the railway was finished, he built him a home in the most beautiful spot he knew—

such a spot as few even among the Scottish lochs could rival—and associated himself with various projects for the advancement of the country. At the present time he is the owner of the Paradise mine, one of the richest silver-lead properties in British Columbia, and the head of an enterprise which purposes to bring the Windermere region to its own among the grandest of the playgrounds of North America.

We made the preliminary scenes for the "farmer" picture at a gem of a little mountain ranch in a clearing to the west of Lake Windermere. Shooting through one of his favourite "sylvan frames," Roos picked me up violently shocking hay at the end of a long narrow field which the labour of a young Scotch immigrant had reclaimed from the encompassing forest. (As a matter of fact the hay was already in shocks when we arrived, and I had to unshock a few shocks so as to shock them up again before the camera and thus give the impression that this was the last of my season's crop.) Then I threw up a couple of shocks for him set up at closer range, with more attention to "technique." (This latter came easy for me, as I had been pitching hay for a fortnight on my California ranch earlier in the summer.) Finally I stopped work, leaned on my fork and gazed into the distance with visioning eyes. (I was supposed to be thinking of the sea, Roos explained, and in the finished picture there would be a "cut-in" of breakers at this point.) Then I registered "impatience" and "restlessness," hardening to "firm resolve." At this juncture I threw down my fork and strode purposefully out of the right side of the picture. (The cabin to

which I was supposed to be striding was really on my left, but Roos explained that some sort of a movie Median law made it imperative always to exit to right.) Then we went over to make the cabin shots.

The owner of the cabin was away at the moment, but his young Scotch wife—a bonnie bit of a lass who might have been the inspiration for "Annie Laurie"—was on hand and mightily interested. She asked if I was Bill Hart, and Roos made the tactical error of guffawing, as though the idea was absurd. She was a good deal disappointed at that, but still very ready to help with anything calculated to immortalize her wee home by emblazoning it on the imperishable celluloid. First I strode into the cabin, but almost immediately to emerge unfolding a map. Going over to a convenient stump, I sat down and disposed of a considerable footage of "intent study." Then we made a close-up of the map—the Pacific Northwest—with my index finger starting at Windermere and tracing the course of the Columbia on its long winding way to the sea. That proved that there was water transit all the way to that previous cut-in of breakers which my visioning eyes had conjured up just before I threw down my fork. I stood up and gazed at the nearby river (which was really Lake Windermere, a mile distant), and presently stiffened to my full height, registering "discovery." What I was supposed to see was a prospector tinkering with his boat. As this latter scene could not be made until we had bought a boat and signed up a "prospector," all that was left to do here was to shoot me striding away from the cabin on the way to discuss ways and means with

OLD HUDSON BAY CART AT BEAVERMOUTH (*above*)

MY FIRST PUSH-OFF AT THE HEAD OF CANOE NAVIGATION ON THE COLUMBIA (*below*)

OPENING SCENE OF THE "FARMER" PICTURE

OLD STERN WHEELERS AT GOLDEN (*above*)

A QUIET STRETCH OF THE COLUMBIA NEAR GOLDEN (*below*)

my mythical companion, and then striding back, getting my roll of blankets and exiting in a final fade-out. As we had neglected to provide a roll of blankets for this shot, we had to improvise one from such material as was available. I forget all that went to make up that fearful and wonderful package; but it is just as well the precariously-roped bundle didn't resolve into its component parts until the fade-out was pretty nearly complete.

Roos tried hard to introduce "human interest" and "heart appeal" by staging a farewell scene with "wife and child," both of which were ready to hand. I was adamant, however, even when he agreed to compromise by leaving out the child. He was rather stubborn about it, refusing to admit the validity of my argument to the effect that a would-be screen hero who deserted so fair a wife would alienate the sympathies of the crowd at the outset. Finally it was decided for us. "It's too late noo," cooed a wee voice in which I thought I detected both reproach and relief; "while ye're talkin', yon cooms Jock."

It *was* too late all right; even Roos was ready to grant that. Jock was about six-feet-three, and built in proportion. Also a wee bitty dour, I thought. At least he glowered redly under his bushy brows when he discovered that I had wrapped up his own and another *nicht-goon* in my hastily assembled blanket-roll. If that bothered him, I hate to think what might have happened had he surprised that farewell scene, especially as Roos—with his Mack Sennett training and D. W. Griffith ideals—would have tried to stage it.

Roos was young and experienced, and lacking in both finesse and subtlety. I granted that this wouldn't have cramped his style much in doing "old home town stuff;" but farther afield it was electric with dangerous possibilities. Driving back to the hotel I quoted to him what Kipling's hero in "The Man Who Would Be King" said on the subject, paraphrasing it slightly so he would understand. "A man has no business shooting farewell scenes with borrowed brides in foreign parts be he three times a crowned movie director," was the way I put it.

It was my original intention to start the boating part of my Columbia trip from Golden, at the head of the Big Bend, the point at which the calm open reaches of the upper river give way to really swift water. The decision to make the push-off from Beavermouth, twenty-nine miles farther down, was come to merely because it was much easier to get the boat into the water at the latter point. There was little swift-water boating worthy of the name above Beavermouth. Donald Canyon was about the only rough water, and even that, I was assured, was not to be mentioned in the same breath with scores of rapids farther down the Bend. In the ninety miles between the foot of Lake Windermere and Golden there were but twenty-five feet of fall, so that the winding river was hardly more than a series of lagoon-like reaches, with a current of from one to four miles an hour. Between Columbia Lake—practically the head of the main channel of the river—and Mud Lake, and between the latter and the head of Lake Windermere, there was a stream of fairly swift current, but at this

time of year not carrying enough water to permit the passage of even a canoe without much lining and portaging.

From the practical aspect, therefore, I was quite content with the plan to start my voyage from Beavermouth. For the sake of sentiment, however, I *did* want to make some kind of a push-off from the very highest point that offered sufficient water to float a boat at the end of September. This, I was assured in Invermere, would be Canal Flats, just above the head of Columbia Lake and immediately below the abandoned locks which at one time made navigation possible between the Kootenay and the Columbia. Although these crude log-built locks have never been restored since they were damaged by a great freshet in the nineties, and although the traffic they passed in the few years of their operation was almost negligible, it may be of interest to give a brief description of the remarkable terrain that made their construction possible by the simplest of engineering work, and to tell how the removal of a few shovelfuls of earth effected the practical insulation of the whole great range of the Selkirks.

As a consequence of recent geological study, it has been definitely established that the divide between the Columbia and Kootenay rivers, now at Canal Flats, was originally a hundred and fifty miles farther north, or approximately where Donald Canyon occurs. That is to say, a great wall of rock at the latter point backed up a long, narrow lake between the Rockies on the east and the Selkirks on the west. This lake, unable to find outlet to the north, had risen until its

waters were sufficiently above the lower southern barriers to give it drainage in that direction. At that time it was doubtless the main source of the Kootenay River, and its waters did not reach the Columbia until after a long and devious southerly course into what is now Montana, thence northward into Kootenay Lake, and finally, by a dizzy westerly plunge, into a much-extended Arrow Lake. An upheaval which carried away the dyke at Donald provided a northward drainage for the lake, and the divide was ultimately established at what is now called Canal Flats. It was a shifting and precarious division, however, for the Kootenay—which rises some distance to the northward in the Rockies and is here a sizable stream—discharged a considerable overflow to the Columbia basin at high water. It was this latter fact which called attention to the comparative ease with which navigation could be established between the two rivers by means of a canal. For an account of how this canal came to be built I am indebted to E. M. Sandilands, Esq., Mining Recorder for the British Columbia Government at Wilmer, who has the distinction of being, to use his own language, "the person who made the Selkirk Mts. an Island by connecting the Columbia and Kootenay rivers."

Mr. Sandilands, in a recent letter, tells how an ex-big-game hunter by the name of Baillie-Grohman obtained, in 1886, a concession from the Provincial Government of British Columbia for 35,000 acres of land along the Kootenay River. In return for this he was to construct at his own expense a canal connecting the Columbia and Kootenay. This cut

was for the ostensible purpose of opening up navigation between the two streams, but as nothing was stipulated in respect of dredging approaches the obligation of the concessionaire was limited to the construction of the canal and locks. "For this reason," writes Mr. Sandilands, who was working on the job at the time, "our 'Grand Canal' was practically useless. Nevertheless, in 1888, it was opened with due form and pomp, engineer, contractor and concessionaire paddling up to the lock in a canoe well laden with the 'good cheer' demanded by such an occasion. I was driving a team attached to a 'slush-scraper,' and together with a jovial Irish spirit who rejoiced in the name of Thomas Haggerty, was ordered by the foreman to scrape out the false dam holding the Kootenay back from the canal. This we did as long as we dared. Then I was deputed, with gum-boots and shovel, to dig a hole through what was left of the false dam, and allow the Kootenay into the canal and the Columbia. This being done, the fact was wired to the Provincial Government at Victoria . . ., and the promised concession of land was asked for and granted. I little thought at the time," Mr. Sandilands concludes, "how distinguished a part I was playing, that I was making the Selkirk Mountains an 'Island,' a fact which few people realize to this day."

Later a little dredging was done, so that finally, by dint of much "capstaning," a shallow-draught sternwheeler was worked up to and through the lock and canal, and on down the Kootenay to Jennings, Montana. It was Captain F. P. Armstrong who per-

formed this remarkable feat, only to lose the historic little craft later in one of the treacherous canyons of the Kootenay. His also was the distinction, after maintaining an intermittent service between the Columbia and Kootenay for a number of years, of being the captain and owner of the last boat to make that amazing passage.

We reached Canal Flats at the end of a forty-mile auto-ride from Invermere. Traces of the old dredged channel were still visible running up from the head of Columbia Lake and coming to an abrupt end against a caving wall of logs which must at one time have been a gate of the inter-river lock. Out of the tangle of maiden hair fern which draped the rotting logs came a clear trickle of water, seeping through from the other side of the divide. This was what was popularly called the source of the Columbia. I could just manage to scoop the river dry with a quick sweep of my cupped palm.

A hundred yards below the source the old channel opened out into a quiet currentless pool, and here I found a half-filled Peterboro belonging to a neighbouring farmer, which I had engaged for the first leg of my voyage down the Columbia. It leaked rather faster than I could bail, but even at that it floated as long as there was water to float it. Fifty yards farther down a broad mudbank blocked the channel all the way across, and in attempting to drag the old canoe out for the portage, I pulled it in two amidships. I had made my start from almost chock-a-block against the source, however. Sentiment was satisfied. I was now ready for the Bend. Groping

my way back to the car through an almost impenetrable pall of mosquitoes, I rejoined Roos and we returned to Invermere.

A wire from Blackmore stating that it would still be several days before his boat was ready for the Bend offered us a chance to make the journey to Golden by river if we so desired. There was nothing in it on the boating side, but Roos thought there might be a chance for some effective scenic shots. I, also, was rather inclined to favour the trip, for the chance it would give of hardening up my hands and pulling muscles before tackling the Bend. An unpropitious coincidence in the matter of an Indian name defeated the plan. Roos and I were trying out on Lake Windermere a sweet little skiff which Randolph Bruce had kindly volunteered to let us have for the quiet run down to Golden. "By hard pulling," I said, "we ought just about to make Spillimacheen at the end of the first day." "Spill a what?" ejaculated Roos anxiously; "you didn't say 'machine,' did you?" "Yes; Spillimacheen," I replied. "It's the name of a river that flows down to the Columbia from the Selkirks." "Then that settles it for me," he said decisively. "I don't want to spill my machine. It cost fifteen hundred dollars. I'm not superstitious; but, just the same, starting out for a place with a name like that is too much like asking for trouble to suit yours truly." And so we went down to Golden by train and put in the extra time outfitting for the Bend.

Golden, superbly situated where the Kicking Horse comes tumbling down to join the Columbia, is a typical Western mining and lumbering town. Save for

their penchant for dramatizing the perils of the Big Bend, the people are delightful. It is true that the hospitable spirit of one Goldenite *did* get me in rather bad; but perhaps the fault was more mine than his. Meeting him on the railway platform just as he was about to leave for Vancouver, he spoke with great enthusiasm of his garden, and said that he feared some of his fine strawberries might be going to waste in his absence for lack of some one to eat them. I gulped with eagerness at that, and then told him bluntly—and truthfully—that I would willingly steal to get strawberries and cream, provided, of course, that they couldn't be acquired in some more conventional way. He hastened to reassure me, saying that it wouldn't be necessary to go outside the law in this case. "The first chance you get," he said with a twinkle in his eye, "just slip over and make love to my housekeeper, and tell her I said to give you your fill of berries and cream, and I have no doubt she'll provide for you."

If his Vancouver-bound train had not started to pull out just then, perhaps he would have explained that that accursed "love stuff" formula was a figure of speech. Or perhaps he felt sure that I would understand it that way, if not at once, at least when the time came. And I would have, ordinarily. But my strawberry-and-cream appetite is so overpowering that, like the lions at feeding time, my finer psychological instincts are blunted where satiation is in sight. That was why I blurted out my hospitable friend's directions almost verbatim when I saw that the door of his home (to which I had rushed at my first opportunity) had been opened by a female. It was only

after I had spoken that I saw that she was lean, angular, gimlet-eyed, and had hatred of all malekind indelibly stamped upon her dour visage. She drew in her breath whistlingly; then controlled herself with an effort. "I suppose I must give you the berries and cream," she said slowly and deliberately, the clearly enunciated words falling icily like the drip from the glacial grottoes at the head of the Columbia; "but the —the other matter you would find a little difficult."

"Ye-es, ma'am," I quavered shiveringly, "I would. If you'll please send the strawberries and cream to the hotel I am quite content to have it a cash transaction."

Considering the way that rapier-thrust punctured me through and through, I felt that I deserved no little credit for sticking to my guns in the matter of the strawberries and cream. For the rest, I was floored. The next time any one tries to send me into the Hesperides after free fruit I am going to know who is guarding the apples; and I am *not* going to approach the delectable garden by the love-path.

I had taken especial pains to warn Roos what he would have to expect from Golden in the matter of warnings about the Big Bend, but in spite of all, that garrulous social centre, the town poolroom, did manage to slip one rather good one over on him before we got away. "How long does it take to go round the Bend?" he had asked of a circle of trappers and lumber-jacks who were busily engaged in their favourite winter indoor-sport of decorating the poolroom stove with a frieze of tobacco juice. "Figger it fer yerself, sonny," replied a corpulent woodsman

with a bandaged jaw. "If yer gets inter yer boat an' lets it go in that ten-twent'-thirt' mile current, it's a simpl' problum of 'rithmatick. If yer ain't dished in a souse-hole, yer *has* ter make Revelstoke insider one day. As yer has ter do sum linin' to keep right side up, it's sum slower. Best time any of us makes it in is two days. But we never rushes it even like that 'nless we're hurryin' the cor'ner down ter sit on sum drownded body."

As the whole court had nodded solemn acquiescence to this, and as none had cracked anything remotely resembling a smile, Roos was considerably impressed —not to say depressed. (So had I been the first time I heard that coroner yarn.) Nor did he find great comfort in the hotel proprietor's really well-meant attempt at reassurance. "Don't let that story bother you, my boy," the genial McConnell had said; "they *never* did take the coroner round the Big Bend. Fact is, there *never* was a coroner here that had the guts to tackle it!"

We met Blackmore at Beavermouth the afternoon of the twenty-eighth of September. He reported that his boat had been shipped from Revelstoke by that morning's way freight, and should arrive the following day. As I had been unable to engage a boatman in Golden, and as Blackmore had found only one in Revelstoke to suit him, it was decided to give me an oar and a pike-pole and make out the best we could without another man. I had brought provisions for a fortnight with me from Golden, and Blackmore had tents and canvases. Through the efforts of influential friends in Golden I had also been

able to secure two bottles of prime Demerara rum. Knowing that I was going to pick up at least one cask of Scotch on the way, and perhaps two or three, I had not been very keen about bothering with the rum. But on the assurance that it might well be two or three days before any whisky was found, and that getting wet in the Columbia without something to restore the circulation was as good as suicide, I allowed myself to be persuaded. It was wonderful stuff—thirty per cent. over-proof; which means that it could be diluted with four parts of water and still retain enough potency to make an ordinary man blink if he tried to bolt it. We did find one man—but he was not ordinary by any means; far from it. I will tell about "Wild Bill" in the proper place.

There was a wonderful *aurora borealis* that night—quite the finest display of the kind I recall ever having seen in either the northern or southern hemispheres. Blackmore—weather-wise from long experience—regarded the marvellous display of lambently licking light streamers with mixed feelings. "Yes, it's a fine show," he said, following the opalescent glimmer of the fluttering pennants with a dubious eye; "but I'm afraid we'll have to pay through the nose for it. It means that in a couple of days more the rain will be streaming down as fast as those lights are streaming up. Just about the time we get well into Surprise Rapids there will be about as much water in the air as in the river. However, it won't matter much," he concluded philosophically, "for we'll be soaked anyway, whether we're running or lining, and rain water's ten degrees warmer than river water."

CHAPTER VI

I. RUNNING THE BEND

Through Surprise Rapids

We pushed off from Beavermouth at three o'clock of the afternoon of September twenty-ninth. We had hoped for an early start, but the erratically running local freight, six or eight hours behind time, did not arrive with our boat until noon. The introductory shots had already been made. Made up momentarily as a gentleman—wearing an ankle length polished waterproof and a clean cap, that is,—I jumped the westbound Limited as it slowed down on entering the yard, dropping off presently at the platform with a "here-I-am" expression when Roos signalled that the focus was right. Then I shook hands with the waiting Blackmore, and together we strode to the door of the station and met the previously-rehearsed agent. (Roos had wanted me to shake hands with the agent as well as with Blackmore, but I overruled him by pointing out that I was a "gentleman-sportsman" not a "gentleman-politician," and served notice on him that pump-handling must henceforth be reduced to a minimum.) We tried to perfect the agent in a sweeping gesture that would say as plainly as words "The train with your boat is just around that next bend, sir," but somehow we couldn't prevent his trying to elevate his lowly part. His lips mumbled

the words we had put on them all right, but the gesture was a grandiose thing such as a Chesterfieldian footman might have employed in announcing "My Lord, the carriage waits."

Roos, in all innocence, narrowly missed provoking a fight with a hot-tempered half-breed while he was setting up to shoot the incoming freight. He had an ingenious method of determining, without bending over his finder, just what his lens was going to "pick-up." This consisted of holding his arms at full length, with his thumbs placed tip to tip and the forefingers standing straight up. The right-angling digits then framed for his eye an approximation of his picture. To one not used to it this esoteric performance looked distinctly queer, especially if he chanced to be standing somewhere near the arch priest's line of vision. And that, as it happened, was exactly the place from which it was revealed to the choleric near-Shuswap section hand. I didn't need the breed's subsequent contrite explanation to know that, from where he had been standing, those twiddling thumbs and fingers, through the great fore-shortening of the arms, looked to be right on the end of the nose of the grimacing little man by the camera. Not even a self-respecting white man would have stood for what that twiddling connoted, let alone a man in whose veins flowed blood that must have been something like fifteen-sixteenths of the proudest of Canadian strains. Luckily, both Blackmore and his burly boatman were men of action. Even so, it was a near squeeze for both camera and cameraman. Roos emerged unscarred in anything but temperament. And, of course, as every one even

on the fringes of the movies knows, the temperaments of both stars and directors are things that require frequent harrowing to keep them in good working order.

Roos' filming of the unloading of the boat was the best thing he did on the trip. Every available man in Beavermouth was requisitioned. This must have been something like twenty-five or thirty. A half dozen, with skids and rollers, could have taken the boat off without exerting themselves seriously, but could hardly have "made it snappy." And action was what the scene demanded. There was no time for a rehearsal. The agent simply told us where the car would be shunted to, Blackmore figured out the best line from there over the embankment and through the woods to the river, and Roos undertook to keep up with the procession with his camera. Blackmore was to superintend the technical operation and I was ordered to see that the men "acted natural." And thus we went to it. The big boat, which must have weighed close to half a ton, came off its flat car like a paper shallop, but the resounding thwack with which her bows hit a switch-frog awakened Blackmore's concern. "Easy! Easy! Don't bust her bottom," he began shouting; while I, on the other side, took up my refrain of "Don't look at the camera!—make it snappy." The consequence of these diametrically opposed orders was that the dozen or more men on my side did most of the work. But even so it was "snappy"—very.

Down the embankment we rushed like a speeding centipede, straight at the fine hog-proof wire fence of

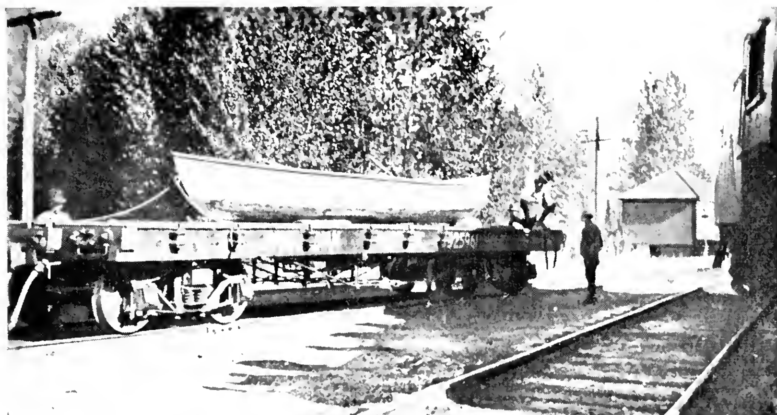
the C. P. R. right-of-way. That fence may have been hog-proof, but it was certainly not proof against the charge of a thirty-foot boat coming down a fifty per cent. grade pushed by twenty-five men. We had intended lifting over it, but our momentum was too great, especially after I had failed to desist from shouting "Make it snappy!" soon enough. The barrier gave way in two or three places, so that we were shedding trailing lengths of wire all the way to the river. On through the woods we juggernauted, Roos following in full cry. His city "news stuff" training was standing him in good stead, and he showed no less cleverness than agility in making successive "set-ups" without staying our progress. Only in the last fifty yards, where the going over the moss and pine needles was (comparatively speaking) lightning fast, did we distance him. Here, as there was plenty of time, he cut a hole in the trees and shot the launching through one of his favourite "sylvan frames." For the push-off shot he provided his customary heart throb by bringing down the station agent's three-year-old infant to wave farewell. That he didn't try to feature the mother prominently seemed to indicate that what I had said at Windermere on the subject had had some effect.

After the "farewell" had been filmed, we landed at the fire ranger's cabin to pick up Roos and his camera. The ranger told us that a couple of trappers who had been for some weeks engaged in portaging their winter supplies round Surprise Rapids would be waiting for us at the head of the first fall in the expectation of getting the job of packing our stuff down to the foot.

"Nothing doing," Blackmore replied decisively; "going straight through." The ranger grinned and shook his grizzled head. "You're the man to do it," he said; "but jest the same, I'm glad it's you and not me that has the job."

The station agent came down with Roos, evidently with the cheering purpose of showing us the place where his predecessor and a couple of other men had been drowned in attempting to cross the river some months previously. "Only man in the boat to be picked up alive was a one-armed chap," he concluded impressively. "Too late now for operations on any of this crew," laughed Blackmore, pushing off with a pike-pole. "Besides, every man jack of us is going to have a two-arm job all the way." To the parting cheers of the mackinawed mob on the bank, he eased out into the current and headed her down the Bend.

Roos stationed himself in the bow, with camera set up on its shortened tripod, waiting to surprise any scenery caught lurking along the way. Blackmore steered from the stern with his seven-feet-long birch paddle. Andy Kitson and I, pulling starboard and port oars respectively, rubbed shoulders on the broad 'midship's thwart. Our outfit—a comparatively light load for so large a boat—was stowed pretty well aft. I saw Blackmore lean out to "con ship" as we got under way. "Good trim," he pronounced finally, with an approving nod. "Just load enough to steady her, and yet leave plenty of freeboard for the sloppy water. This ought to be a dryer run than some the old girl's had. I chuckled to myself over that "dryer." I hadn't told Blackmore yet what was hidden down



ARRIVAL OF OUR BOAT AT BEAVERMOUTH (*above*)

OUR FIRST CAMP AT BEAVERMOUTH (*centre*)

THE REMAINS OF A SUNKEN FOREST (*below*)

TRAPPER'S CABIN WHERE WE FOUND SHELTER FOR THE NIGHT (*above*)

WHERE WE LANDED ABOVE SURPRISE RAPIDS (*centre*)

WHERE WE TIED UP AT "EIGHT MILE" (*below*)

Canoe River way. I had promised Captain Armstrong not to do so until I had ascertained that we had a teetotal crew—or one comparatively so.

Andy Kitson was a big husky North-of-Irelander, who had spent twenty years trapping, packing, hunting, lumbering and boating in western Canada. Like the best of his kind, he was deliberate and sparing of speech most of the time, but with a fine reserve vocabulary for emergency use. He was careful and cautious, as all good river boatmen should be, but decidedly "all there" in a pinch. He pulled a good round-armed thumping stroke with his big oar, and took to the water (as has to be done so frequently on a bad stretch of "lining down") like a beaver. Best of all, he had a temper which nothing from a leak in the tent dribbling down his neck to a half hour up to his waist in ice-cold water seemed equal to ruffling. I liked Andy the moment I set eyes on his shining red gill, and I liked him better and better every day I worked and camped with him.

As it was three-thirty when we finally pushed off, Blackmore announced that he would not try to make farther than "Eight-Mile" that afternoon. With comparatively good water all the way to the head of Surprise Rapids, we could have run right on through, he said; but that would force us to make camp after dark, and he disliked doing that unless he had to. In a current varying from three to eight miles an hour, we slid along down stream between banks golden-gay with the turning leaves of poplar, cottonwood and birch, the bright colours of which were strikingly accentuated by the sombre background of thick-growing

spruce, hemlock, balsam and fir. Yellow, in a score of shades, was the prevailing colour, but here and there was a splash of glowing crimson from a patch of *chin-chinick* or Indian tobacco, or a mass of dull maroon where a wild rose clambered over the thicket. Closely confined between the Rockies to the right and the Selkirks to the west, the river held undeviatingly to its general northwesterly course, with only the patchiest of flats on either side. And this was the openest part of the Bend, Blackmore volunteered; from the head of Surprise Rapids to the foot of Priest Rapids the Columbia was so steeply walled that we would not find room for a clearing large enough to support a single cow. "It's a dismal hole, and no mistake," he said.

We took about an hour to run to "Eight Mile," Andy and I pulling steadily all the way in the deep, smoothly-running current. We tied up in a quiet lagoon opening out to the west—evidently the mouth of a high-water channel. There was a magnificent stand of fir and spruce on a low bench running back from the river, not of great size on account of growing so thickly, but amazing lofty and straight. We camped in the shelter of the timber without pitching a tent, Andy and Blackmore sleeping in the open and Roos and I in a tumble-down trapper's cabin. Or rather we spread our blankets in the infernal hole. As the place was both damp and rat-infested, we did not sleep. Roos spent the night chopping wood and feeding the rust-eaten—and therefore smoky—sheet-iron stove. I divided my time between growling at Roos for enticing me into keeping him company in the

cabin against Blackmore's advice, and throwing things at the prowling rodents. It did not make for increased cheerfulness when I hit him on the ear with a hob-nailed boot that I had intended for a pair of eyes gleaming vitreously on a line about six inches back of his gloomily bowed head. He argued—and with some reason I must admit—that I had no call to draw so fine a bead until I was surer of my aim. Largely as a point of repartee, I told him not to be too certain I was not sure of my aim. But I really had been trying to hit the rat. . . .

I took the temperature of the air and the river water in the morning, finding the former to register thirty-eight degrees and the latter forty-one. There was a heavy mist resting on the river for a couple of hours after daybreak, but it was lifting by the time we were ready to push off. In running swift water good visibility is even more imperative than at sea, but as there was nothing immediately ahead to bother Blackmore did not wait for it to clear completely. The sun was shining brightly by nine-thirty, and Roos made several shots from the boat and one or two from the bank. One of the most remarkable sights unfolded to us was that of "Snag Town." Just what was responsible for this queer maze of up-ended trees it would be hard to say. It seems probable, however, that a series of heavy spring floods undermined a considerable flat at the bend of the river, carrying away the earth and leaving the trees still partially rooted. The broadening of the channel must have slowed down the current a good deal, and it appears never to have been strong enough to scour out below the te-

naciously clinging roots. The former lords of the forest are all dead, of course, but still they keep their places, inclining downstream perhaps twenty-degrees from their former proud perpendicular, and firmly anchored. It takes careful steering to thread the maze even in a small boat, but the current is hardly fast enough to make a collision of serious moment.

The current quickened for a while beyond "Snag Town" and then began slowing again, the river broadening and deepening meanwhile. I thought I read the signs aright and asked Blackmore. "Yes," he replied with a confirmatory nod; "it's the river backing up for its big jump. Stop pulling a minute and you can probably hear the rapid growling even here." Andy and I lay on our oars and listened. There it was surely enough, deep and distant but unmistakable—the old familiar drum-roll of a big river beating for the charge. It was tremendous music—heavy, air-quivering, earth-shaking; more the diapason of a great cataract than an ordinary rapid, it seemed to me. I was right. Surprise is anything but an ordinary rapid.

We pulled for a half hour or more down a broad stretch of slackening water that was more like a lake than a river. Out of the looming shadows of the banks for a space, mountain heights that had been cut off leaped boldly into view, and to left and right lifted a lofty sky-line notched with snowy peaks rising from corrugated fields of bottle-green glacier ice. Mt. Sanford, loftiest of the Selkirks, closed the end of the bosky perspective of Gold Creek, and the coldly chiselled pyramids of Lyell, Bryce and Columbia

pricked out the high points on the Continental Divide of the Rockies. We held the vivid double panorama—or quadruple, really, for both ranges were reflected in the quiet water—for as long as it took us to pull to a beach at the narrowing lower end of the long lake-like stretch above the rapids, finally to lose it as suddenly as it had been opened to us behind the imminently-rearing river walls.

The two trappers of whom the fire-ranger at Beavermouth had spoken were waiting for us on the bank. They had permits for trapping on a couple of the creeks below Kinbasket Lake, and were getting down early in order to lay out their lines by the time the season opened a month or so hence. They had been packing their stuff over the three-mile portage to the foot of the rapids during the last three weeks, and now, with nothing left to go but their canoes, were free to give us a hand if we wanted them. Blackmore replied that he could save time and labour by running and lining the rapids. "Besides," he added with a grin, "I take it these movie people have come out to get pictures of a river trip, not an overland journey." The trappers took the dig in good part, but one of them riposted neatly. Since he was out for furs, he said, and was not taking pictures or bootlegging, time was not much of an object. The main thing with him was to reach his destination with his winter's outfit. If all the river was like Surprise Rapids he would be quite content to go overland all the way. Neither of them made any comments on the stage of the water or offered any suggestions in connection with the job we had ahead. That was one

comfort of travelling with Blackmore. In all matters pertaining to river work his judgment appeared to be beyond criticism. If he was tackling a stunt with a considerable element of risk in it, that was his own business. No one else knew the dangers, and how to avoid them, so well as he.

Blackmore looked to the trim of the boat carefully before shoving off, putting her down a bit more by the stern it seemed to me. He cautioned me on only one point as we pulled across the quarter of mile to where the banks ran close together and the quiet water ended. "Don't never dip deep in the white water, and 'specially in the swirls," he said, stressing each word. "If you do, a whirlpool is more'n likely to carry your oar-blade under the boat and tear out half the side 'fore you can clear your oarlock. That's the way that patched gunnel next you came to get smashed." As we were about at the point where it is well to confine all the talking done in the boat to one man, I refrained from replying that I had been told the same thing in a dozen or so languages, on four different continents, and by "skippers" with black, yellow and copper as well as white skins, at fairly frequent intervals during the last fifteen years. There were enough slips I might make, but that of dipping deep in rough water was hardly likely to be one of them.

The rumble of the rapid grew heavier as we proceeded, but only a single flickering white "eyelash" revealed the imminent ambush lurking beyond the black rocks. The current accelerated rapidly as the walls closed in, but ran easily, effortlessly, unripplingly, and with an almost uncanny absence of swirls

and eddies. "Have plenty way on her 'fore she hits the suds," cautioned Blackmore, and Andy and I grunted in unison as we leaned a few more pounds of beef onto our bending spruces. That started our inside elbows to bumping, but without a word each of us sidled along an inch or two toward his gunwale to get well set while yet there was time.

With an easy bob—quick like a rowboat rides the bow wave of a steamer, but smoother, easier in its lift—we ran into the head of the rapid. There was a swift V-shaped chute of smooth jade-green water; then we slapped right into the "suds." High-headed waves slammed against the bows and threw spray all over the boat and far astern of it. But they lacked jolt. They had too much froth and not enough green water to make them really formidable. We were in rough but not really bad water. I tried to grin at Blackmore to show him I understood the situation and was enjoying it highly; but his eyes, pinpoints of concentration under bent brows, were directed over my head and far in advance. Plainly, he was thinking as well as looking well ahead.

Reassured by the smart way we were slashing through that first riffle, I ventured to steal a look over my shoulder. In the immediate foreground Roos, with his waterproof buttoned close around his neck, was shaking the spray out of his hair and watching for a chance to snap with his kodak. Ahead there was perhaps another hundred yards of about the same sort of water as that in which we were running; then a yeasty welter of white where the river disappeared round a black cliff into what seemed a narrow gorge.

Opposite the cliff the river wall sloped slightly and was thickly covered with a dense growth of evergreen. The heavy roar we had been hearing for hours was still muffled. Evidently the main disturbance was somewhere beyond the bend at the cliff.

The thunder of falling water grew louder as we headed down toward the white smother in the embrasure of the bend, and it was from Blackmore's lips rather than from any words I heard that I gathered that he was calling for "More way!" Still keeping fairly good stroke, Andy and I quickly had her going enough faster than the current to give the big paddle all the steerage "grip" Blackmore could ask for. Swinging her sharply to the right, he headed her past the out-reaching rock claws at the foot of the cliff, and, with a sudden blaze of light and an ear-shattering rush of sound we were into the first and worst fall of Surprise Rapids.

That dual onslaught of light and sound had something of the paralyzing suddenness of that which occurs when a furnace door is thrown wide and eye and ear are assailed at the same instant with the glare and the roar from within. One moment we were running in a shadowed gorge with a heavy but deadened and apparently distant rumble sounding somewhere ahead; the next we were in the heart of a roar that fairly scoured our ear-drums, and blinking in a fluttering white light that seemed to sear the eyeballs. The one hurried glance that I threw behind me as I began floundering on the end of my kicking oar photographed an intensely vivid picture on my memory.

What had been merely a swiftly-flowing river with a streak of silver riffles down the middle had changed to a tumultuous tumble of cascades that gleamed in solid white from bank to bank like the churned snow of a freshly descended avalanche. There was no green water whatever; not even a streak that was tinged with green. All that relieved the coruscating, sun-silvered tumble of whiteness were the black tips of jutting bed-rock, sticking up through the foam they had churned. The deeply shadowed western wall, hanging above the river like a dusky pall, served only to accentuate by contrast the intense white light that danced above the cascade. It was as though the golden yellow had been filtered out of the sunlight in the depths, and only the pure blue-white of calcium reflected back into the atmosphere.

Heavy as was the fall of the river over the stretch we had now entered, I could just make out a point perhaps a half mile farther down where it dropped out of sight entirely. That, I told myself, must be the place where there was an unbroken reef of bed-rock all the way across the stream, and where there was an abrupt drop of eight or ten feet. A great throbbing rumble cutting into the slightly higher-keyed roar that already engulfed us also seemed to indicate that the steepest pitch had not yet been reached. I had, of course, seen worse water than this, but certainly had never (as appeared to be the case now) been irretrievably committed to running it. I had heard that it was quite unrunnable in any kind of a boat, it certainly looked unrunnable, and I seemed to have the impression that Blackmore had said he

was not intending to run it. Yet here we were into it, and without (so far as I could see) anything to do but drive ahead. However, that was Blackmore's affair. . . .

The rather smart team-work which Andy and I had maintained for a while dissolved like the morning mists as we banged in among the walloping rollers at the head of the real cascade. Both of us were in difficulties, but his round-armed thumping stroke seemed rather more true to form than the shattered remnants of my fine straight-armed slide-and-recover, with its dainty surface-skimming "feather." Nothing but the sharpest of dabs with the tip of an oar can get any hold in a current of fifteen to twenty miles an hour, and the short, wristy pull (which is all there is time for) doesn't impart a lot of impulse to a thirty-foot boat. That, and the staggering buffets on the bows, for it was solid, lumpy water that was coming over us now, quickly reduced our headway. (Headway *through* the current, I mean; our headway floating *in* the current was terrific.) This was, of course, a serious handicap to Blackmore, as it deprived him of much of the steerage-way upon which he was dependent for quick handling of the boat. The difficulty of maintaining steerage-way in rough water with oars makes a bow as well as a stern paddle very desirable in running bad rapids. The bow paddler can keep a very sharp lookout for rocks immediately ahead, and, in a pinch, can jerk the boat bodily to one side or the other, where oarsmen have to *swing* it. However, Blackmore knew just what he was going up against,

and had made the best disposition possible of his available crew.

I was too busy keeping myself from being bucked off the thwart by my floundering oar to steal more than that first hurried look over my shoulder. It was not my concern what was ahead anyway. All I had to do was to take a slap at the top of a wave every time I saw a chance, and be ready to back, or throw my weight into a heavy stroke, when Blackmore needed help to turn her this way or that. My signal—a jerk of the steersman's head to the left—came sooner than I expected. It looked a sheer impossibility to drive through the maze of rocks to the bank, yet that—after a long, anxious look ahead—was evidently what he had decided to attempt. As it was my oar he called on, I knew it was the right or east bank, a sharply sloping reach of black bedrock littered with water-scoured boulders.

By the way Blackmore was leaning onto his paddle I knew that he needed all the pull I could give him to bring her round. Swinging back hard, I threw every pound I had onto my oar. For an instant the lack of resistance as the blade tore through foam nearly sent me reeling backwards; then it bit into solid water, and, under impulse of oar and paddle, the boat pivoted through more than half a quadrant and shot straight for the bank. Right in where the black rock tips were scattered like the raisins in a pudding he headed her. There was no room to use the oars now, but she still carried more than enough way to send her to the bank. Or rather, it would have carried

her through if the course had been clear. Missing two or three rocks by inches, she rasped half her length along another, and onto a fourth—lurking submerged by a foot—she jammed full tilt. It was her port bow that struck, and from the crash it seemed impossible that she could have escaped holing. Andy went over the side so suddenly that, until I saw him balancing on a rock and trying to keep the boat from backing off into the current, I thought he had been thrown overboard by the impact. Thumping her bow with his boot, he reported her leaking slightly but not much damaged. Then, swinging her round into an eddy, he jumped off into the waist-deep water and led her unresistingly up against the bank. It was astonishing to see so wild a creature so suddenly become tame.

We would have to "line down" from here to the foot of the first fall, Blackmore said. While Roos was setting up his camera the veteran explained that he could have run four or five hundred yards farther down, right to the brink of the "tip off," but that he preferred getting in out of the wet where he had a good landing. I agreed with him heartily—without putting it in words. But if that was his idea of a "good landing place," I hoped he would continue to avoid bad ones.

The basic principles of "lining down" are the same on all rivers. Where water is too rough to run, it is the last resort before portaging. As generally practised, one man, walking along the bank, lets the boat down with a line, while another—or as many others as are available—keeps it off the rocks with poles. "Lining" can be effected more rapidly and with much

less effort if one man remains in the boat and fends off with his pole from there. This is much the better method where the fall is not too great and the water comparatively warm. On the upper Columbia, where the breaking away of a boat from a line means its almost inevitable loss with all on board, it is resorted to only when absolutely necessary, and when a man of great experience is handling the line. It takes a natural aptitude and years of experience for a man to master all the intricacies of "lining." I shall not endeavour to enumerate even the few that I am familiar with; but the one thing beyond all others to avoid is letting the bow of the boat swing outwards when the stern is held up by a rock. This brings the full current of the river against its up-stream side, exerting a force that a dozen men could not hold against, let alone one or two. As Blackmore was noted for his mastery of the "lining" game, however, we had no apprehension of trouble in this department.

Nothing of the outfit save the moving picture camera was removed from the boat at this juncture. Coiling his line—something over a hundred feet of half-inch Manila hemp—over his left arm, Blackmore signalled Andy to shove off. Paying out the line through his right hand, he let the eddy carry the boat out into the drag of the current. Armed with long pike-poles, Andy and I ran on ahead to keep it clear of the banks as it swung in. This was easy enough as long as we had only the bank to contend with. But almost immediately the trouble which makes Surprise Rapids one of the nastiest stretches on any river in the world to line began to develop. This

came from the submerged rocks which crop up all along between the banks and the deeper water of mid-channel.

Pulling her up and releasing her with a hand that reminded me of that of a consummate natural horseman, Blackmore nursed the boat along and managed to avoid most of these obstructions. But every now and then she would wedge between a close-set pair of boulders and resist the force of the current to drive her on. At such times it was up to Andy and me to wade in and try to dislodge her with our poles. Failing this, we had to wade out still farther and lift her through. Andy always took the lead in this lifting business, claiming that it required a lot of experience to know just the instant to stop shoving at the boat as she began to move, and start bracing against the current to keep from getting carried away. I have no doubt he was right. In any event he would never let me come out until he had tugged and hauled for several minutes trying to budge her alone, and even then—notwithstanding his four or five inches less of height—he always took his station in the deepest hole. Two or three times, shaking himself like a Newfoundland, he came out wet to the armpits with the icy water. As the sun was beating hotly upon the rocks, however, neither of us felt the cold much that afternoon. A few days later it was another story.

We made something like eight or nine hundred yards before we stopped—right to the head of the roaring chute that ran down to the sheer drop-off. Roos—always at his best when there was plenty of unpremeditated action going on, so that "directorial"

worries sat lightly on him—followed us closely all the way. It was hard enough keeping one's footing on those ice-slippery boulders at all; how he managed it with something like a hundred pounds of camera and tripod over his shoulder and a bulky case in one hand is more than I can figure. But he did it, keeping close enough so that he got just about everything without having to ask us to do it over again. This latter was a good deal of a comfort, especially in those waist-deep-in-the-Columbia lifting stunts. I had always hated "lining down," even in the tropics, and I already saw that what we had ahead wasn't going to modify my feelings for the better.

At the head of that rough-and-tumble cascade leading to the fall, Blackmore decided that we would have to unload the boat completely before trying to let her down. It was always bad business there at the best, he said, and the present stage of water made the rocks quite a bit worse than when either higher or lower. If we hustled, there ought to be time to get through before dark, and then a half mile run would take us to a good camping place near the head of the second fall. Here Roos intervened to point out that the sun was already behind the western wall, and asking if it wouldn't be possible to camp where we were. He wanted to keep the "continuity" of this particular piece of "lining" unbroken, and would need good light to finish it in. Blackmore said he could manage the camp if we thought our ear-drums would stand the roar.

So we unloaded the boat, and Blackmore leading her into the quietest pool he could find, moored her

for the night. As there was a couple of feet of "lop" even there, this was rather a nice operation. With lines to stern and bow, and held off from the rocks on either side by lashed pike-poles, she looked for all the world like some fractious horse that had been secured to prevent its banging itself up against the sides of its stall. It was a beastly job, carrying the fifteen or twenty heavy parcels of the outfit a hundred yards over those huge polished boulders to the bit of sand-bar where camp was to be pitched. My old ankles—endlessly sprained during my football days—protested every step of my several round trips, and I congratulated myself that I had had the foresight to bring leather braces to stiffen them. Reeking with perspiration after I had thrown down my last load, I decided to use the river for a bath that I would have to take anyway on shifting from my wet clothes. The half-glacial water was not a lot above freezing, of course; but that is of small moment when one has plenty of animal heat stored up to react against it. My worst difficulty was from the bumpiness of my rocky bathing pool, which also had a rather troublesome undercurrent pulling out toward the racing chute of the main channel. Blackmore, pop-eyed with astonishment, came down to watch the show. It was the first time he had ever seen a man take a voluntary bath in Surprise Rapids, he said. And all the others—the involuntary bathers—they had picked up later in Kinbasket Lake.

That was about the most restricted space I can recall ever having camped in. The great boulders of the high-water channel extended right up to the

foot of the mountain wall and neither the one nor the other afforded enough level space to set a doll's house. A four-by-six patch of sand was the most extensive area that seemed to offer, and, doubling this in size by cutting away a rotting spruce stump and a section of fallen birch, there was just enough room for the little shed-tent. It was a snug and comfortable camp, though, and highly picturesque, perched as it was almost in the spray of the cascade. The noise was the worst thing, and we would have had to stay there even longer than we did to become quite used to it. All of us were shouting in each other's ears for days afterwards, and even trying to converse in signs in the idyllic quietude of Kinbasket Lake.

The storm which Blackmore's seer-like vision had descried in the blue-green auroral flutters of a couple of nights previously arrived quite on schedule. Although the western sky had glowed for half an hour after sunset with that supposedly optimistic tinge of primrose and terra-cotta, it was pouring before midnight, and the next morning there was truly almost as much water in the air as in the river. Pictures were out of the question, so there was nothing to do but hang on until the weather cleared. Leaving Roos whittling and Andy struggling to divert a swelling young river that was trying to sluice away the sand on which the tent was pitched, Blackmore and I pulled on our waterproofs and clambered a mile through the woods to a camp of C. P. R. engineers. Blackmore wanted to get an extra axe; I to get some further data on the fall of the river. We found a crude cable-ferry thrown across just below the foot of the big

fall, and a rough, boggy path from the eastern end of it took us to the camp of three or four comfortable cabins.

The Canadian Pacific, I learned—both on account of the high and increasing cost of its oil fuel and because of the trouble experienced in clearing their tunnels from smoke—was contemplating the electrification of all of its mountain divisions. There were numerous high falls along the line where power could be economically developed, but it was not considered desirable that the scenic beauty of these should be marred by diversion. Besides the Columbia, in a hundred miles of the Big Bend, offered the opportunity for developing more hydro-electric energy than all the west of Canada could use in the next twenty years. The Surprise Rapids project alone would provide far more power than the Canadian Pacific could use for traction, and it was expected that there would be a large surplus for municipal and industrial uses along the line. "All this, of course," the engineer at the camp explained, "in the event the company decides to go ahead with the development. Raising the money will probably be the greatest difficulty, and in the present state of the financial market it is hard to see how much can be done for two or three years. In the meantime we are measuring the flow of the river every day, and will have accurate data to go by when the time for construction comes."

I learned that the total length of Surprise Rapids was three and a third miles, in which distance there was a fall of nearly one hundred feet. The greatest drop was in that stretch which we were waiting to

"line," where there was a fall of twenty-one feet in seven hundred and fifty. At the second cascade there was a fall of fifteen feet in twelve hundred, and at the third, twenty-five feet in twenty-five hundred. It was planned to build the dam across the very narrow canyon near the foot of the lower fall, making it of such a height that a lake would be backed up as far as Beavermouth, incidentally, of course, wiping out the whole of Surprise Rapids. "They can't wipe it out any too soon to suit me," Blackmore commented on hearing this. "It'd have saved me a lot of work and many a wetting if they'd wiped it out twenty year ago. And that's saying nothing of the men drownded there. It was that big whirlpool down through the trees there that did for Walter Steinhoff."

We had left the camp now and were picking our way down the narrow trail to the foot of the second fall. I had been waiting to hear Blackmore speak of Steinhoff for two reasons: first, because I was curious to know how much truth there was in those dramatic versions of his death I had heard in Golden, and also because the subject would lead up naturally to that of the buried whisky. This latter was rather too delicate a matter to broach offhand, and I had therefore been carefully watching for a favourable opening. Now that it had come, I was quick to take advantage of it.

"Tell me about Steinhoff," I said. "He was on some kind of a boot-legging stunt, wasn't he?" I was just a bit diffident about bringing up that drink-running business, for although I had been told that

Blackmore was a smooth hand at the game himself, I had a sort of sneaking idea that it was the kind of a thing a man ought to be sensitive about, like having had smallpox or a sister in the movies. I need not have worried, however. "You bet he was boot-legging," Blackmore replied; "and so was I. Both outfits heading for *Tete Jaune Cache* on the Grand Trunk, and racing to get there first. That was what got him into trouble—trying to catch up with me after I had passed him by running and lining the first fall (the one we are doing the same way now) while he had portaged. I reckon it was his first intention to portage all the way to the foot of the second fall, but when he saw me slip by in the water he put in his canoes at the foot of the first fall and came after me."

We had come out above the river now, and I saw a savage stretch of foam-white water falling in a roaring cascade to a mighty whirlpool that filled all of the bottom of the steeply-walled amphitheatre formed by a right-angling bend of the Columbia. Thirty feet or more above the present level of the whirlpool were the marks of its swirling scour at mid-summer high-water. Awesome enough now (and it was not any the less so to me since we still had to take the boat through it), I could see at once that, with the power of the floods driving it round and round at turbine speed, it must indeed be a veritable thing of terror. It was into this whirlpool, as well as others at Revelstoke Canyon and Death Rapids, that whole uprooted pines were said to be sucked in flood-time, to reappear only as battered logs many miles below. There seemed hardly enough water there at the pres-

ent to make this possible; but the story was at least credible to me now, which was more than it had been previously.

"So this is your 'All Day Sucker,'" I remarked carelessly, in a studied attempt to keep Blackmore from noting how greatly the savage maelstrom had impressed me. Seeing through the bluff, he grinned indulgently and resumed his story of Steinhoff as soon as we had moved far enough round the whirlpool to make his voice comfortably heard above the roar of the cascade. A line had parted—sawed through in working round a rocky point a few hundred yards above—and Steinhoff's big Peterboro was swept out into the current. Striking a rock, it turned over and threw him into the water. He made a brave effort to swim out, keeping his head above water most of the way down the cascade. The whirlpool had been too much for him, however. He was fighting hard to keep up when he was carried into the vortex and sucked under. Blackmore took no stock in the story of the dramatic gesture of farewell. "A man don't pull that grand opry stuff with the cold of the Columbia biting into his spine," was the way he put it.

Then I told him about the whisky—spoke to him as a son to his father. And he, meeting me point for point in all seriousness of spirit, answered as father to son. He thought there was little chance of finding anything along the river. He had not done so himself for a number of years—and he hadn't been overlooking any bets, either. There was, of course, still much good stuff buried in the drift below Middle River, but it would be like looking for a needle in a

haystack trying to find it. But the cache above Canoe River—ah, that was another matter! Captain Armstrong could be absolutely depended upon in a matter of that kind, and the directions sounded right as rain. Yes, he quite understood that I should want to take it all to California with me. He would want to do the same thing if he were in my place. It would be easy as picking pippins getting it over the line. He could tell me three different ways, all of them dead sure. He would not think of taking any of it for himself. The rum we had would be ample for the trip, except in extreme emergency. That "thirty over-proof" went a long way. And I need not worry in the least about Andy. He wasn't a teetotaler exactly, but he never took too much under any provocation. Yes, I could depend upon the both of them to nose out that stuff at the old ferry. Put it there! We looked each other square in the eye, and shook hands solemnly there above the big whirlpool which was originally responsible for the good fortune that had come to us—or rather to me. Men have clasped hands and sworn to stand by each other in lesser things. At least that was the way it seemed to me at the moment. I could have embraced the fine old woodsman for his loyalty and generosity of spirit. I always called him Bob after that.

The rain thinned down and became a light Scotch mist as we picked our way back to camp. That struck me as being a good omen—it's being "Scotch," I mean. Later it cleared up entirely, and there was a glorious fairweather sunset of glowing saffron and flaming poppy red. To the northwest—Canoe

River-ward—there poured a wonderful light of pale liquescent amber. I had never seen such a light on land or sea, I told myself; or anywhere else, for that matter—except when holding a glass of Scotch up against the sun. That was another good omen. Funny thing, but I can still recall the date offhand, so indelibly had the promise of that day impressed itself on my mind. It was the first of October.

Although it snowed an inch or two during the night, the following morning fulfilled the promise of the sunset by breaking bright and cloudless. We were to line the boat down empty for a couple of hundred yards, and then load up again and line about an equal distance of slightly better water. This would take us to the brink of the abrupt fall, where both outfit and boat had to be portaged over the rocks for a short distance. That would leave us clear for the short, swift run to the head of the second fall.

Cutting himself a "sylvan frame" through the pines on a point a hundred yards below the camp, Roos set up to shoot the first piece of lining. It was a mean looking job, for the river was tumbling in a half-cataract all the way, turning and squirming like a wounded dragon. I could see Blackmore was a bit worried over it, and, as the sequel proved, with good reason. I never quite understood his explanation of the cause of what happened, but I believe he claimed it was due to his obeying (against his better judgment) Roos' signal to keep the boat in fairly close to the bank so that she would not pass "out of the picture"—beyond the range of his lens, that is. At any rate, the boat had hardly started before she swung

broadside to the current and, clapping like a limpet upon a big round boulder, hung there immovable. Heeled till her starboard side showed like the belly of a sharply sheering shark, her port gunwale dipped deep into the swirling current. In a wink she had taken all the water she would hold with the half-heel that was on her—enough, perhaps, to fill her half full when on an even keel.

It was a case for instant action—a case where the nearest available man had to follow his first hunch without thinking it over or counting the cost. A few seconds more on that rock, and one of two things must happen to the boat: either she would settle a few inches farther, fill completely and sink, or else the force of the current would tear her to pieces where she was. Blackmore was tugging at his line and shouting directions, but the roar stopped the words at his lips. Andy did not need to be told what was needed, however. For myself, I was not quite sure of what to do, and less so of how to do it. Also, I doubted my ability to keep my footing in the current. In short, I found myself thinking and weighing chances in one of those emergencies where a man to be worth his salt has no business to do either

There was only one place where a man could get at the boat, and Andy beat me to it by a mile. (I would have seen to that even had he moved a lot slower than he did.) He was rather more than waist deep, but quite safe as long as the boat stuck where she was. Unfortunately, getting her off was the very thing he was there for. It was a good deal like a man's having to saw off the branch on which he sat.

But Andy never hesitated—probably because there was not time to think and reckon the consequences. Setting his heavy shoulders under her bilge, he gave a mighty upward heave. She shuddered through her long red length, and then, as the kick of the current got under her submerged gunwale, shot up and off as though discharged from a catapult. The job had been well done, too, for she came off with her stern down stream, which made it comparatively easy for Blackmore to check her way with his line, even half-filled as she was.

Whether he failed to recover as the boat was swept away, or whether he lost his balance in avoiding entanglement in the line, Andy was not quite sure. His first recollection after releasing the boat, he said, was of floundering in the water and of finding that his first kick or two did not strike bottom. The thing that is always possible when a man has lifted off a boat in a swift current had happened: he had lost his footing, and in just about the one worst place in the whole Columbia.

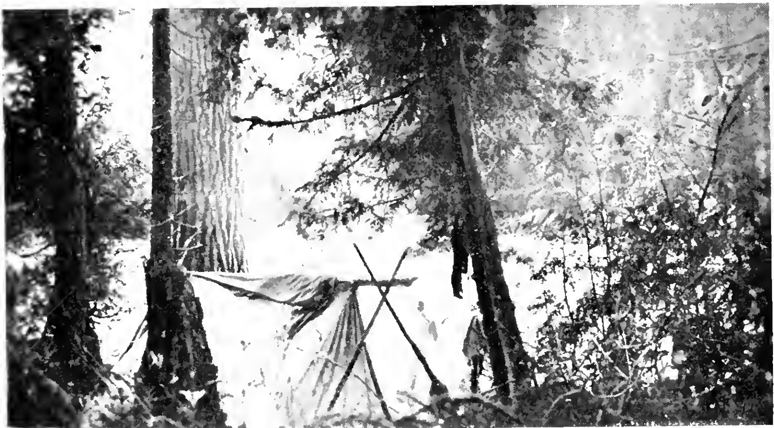
Blackmore, dragged down the bank after his floundering boat, was not in a position where he could throw the end of his line to any purpose. I waded in and reached out my pike-pole, but Andy's back was to it the only time he came within grabbing distance. The only thing that saved him was luck—the fact that the current at the point he lost his footing did not swirl directly into the main chute, but did a little double-shuffle of its own along the side of an eddy before taking the big leap. Hooking into the solid green water of that eddy, Andy found himself

a toehold, and presently clambered out. He had not swallowed any water, and did not seem much chilled or winded. A violent sickness of the stomach, where the cold had arrested digestive operations, was about the only ill effect. What seemed to annoy him most was the fact that all of his pockets were turned wrong-side-out, with all of their contents—save only his watch, which had been secured by a thong—missing. Blackmore nodded grimly to me as he came up after securing the boat. "*Now* perhaps you'll believe what I told you about the old Columbia picking pockets," he said dryly.

Roos came down complaining that he had been too far away to pick up any details of the show even with his "six-inch" lens and cursing his luck for not having been set up closer at hand. Considering what he had missed, I thought he showed unwonted delicacy in not asking Blackmore and Andy to stage it over again for him.

Bailing out the boat, we found one oar missing, but this we subsequently recovered from an eddy below. That left our net loss for the mishap only the contents of Andy's pockets and the picture Roos did not get. Some might have figured in the extra ration of rum Andy drew to straighten out the kinks of his outraged stomach; but that seemed hardly the sporting way to look at it, especially with our prospects in the drink line being what they were.

The portage at the fall proved a mighty stiff bit of hard labour. It was one thing to skid the boat along on the pine needles at Beavermouth with a couple of dozen men pushing it, and quite another for three



"SHOOTING" THE FIRST BIT OF LINING AT SURPRISE RAPIDS (*above*)

THE CAMP WHERE THE ROAR OF THE RAPIDS DEAFENED US (*centre*)

WHERE STEINHOF WAS DROWNED (*below*)

WHERE ANDY JUST MISSED DROWNING IN SURPRISE RAPIDS (*above*)

LOOKING THROUGH THE PINES AT SURPRISE RAPIDS (*centre*)

HEAD OF SECOND FALL OF SURPRISE RAPIDS (*below*)

men to take it out of the water, lift it over forty or fifty feet of boulders, and put it back into the river again. By the free use of rollers—cut from young firs—we managed, however, Roos cranking his camera through all of the operation and telling us to "Make it snappy!" and not to be "foot-hogs." Almost worse than portaging the boat was the unspeakably toilsome task of packing the outfit over the boulders for a couple of hundred yards to where there was a quiet spot to load again. Every step had to be balanced for, and even then one was down on his knees half the time. With my numerous bad joints—there are but three from shoulder to heel that had not been sprained or dislocated from two to a dozen times—this boulder clambering work was the only thing in connection with the whole voyage that I failed to enjoy.

A half mile run with an eight-mile current took us to the head of the second fall, all but the first hundred yards of which had to be lined. Landing this time on the west bank, we worked the boat down without much difficulty past the jutting point where the line of Steinhoff's boat had parted. Blackmore had hoped to line her all the way down without unloading, but the last fifty yards before the cascade tumbled into the big whirlpool were so thickly studded with rocks along the bank that he finally decided not to risk it. As there were thirty or forty feet of deep pools and eddies between the rocks on which she was stuck and the nearest stretch of unsubmerged boulders, unloading was a particularly awkward piece of work. Finally everything was shifted out onto a flat-topped rock, and Roos and I were left to get this ashore

while Andy and Blackmore completed lining down. It was an especially nice job, taking the boat down that last steep pitch into the big whirlpool and then working her round a huge square-faced rock to a quiet eddy, and I should greatly like to have seen it. Unluckily, what with stumbling over hidden boulders and being down with my nose in the water half of the time, and the thin blue mist that hovered round me the rest of the time from what I said as a consequence of stumbling, I could only guess at the finesse and highly technical skill with which the difficult operation was accomplished. The worst part appeared to be getting her down the fall. Once clear of the submerged rocks, Blackmore seemed to make the whirlpool do his work for him. Poised on a projecting log of the jam packed on top of the jutting rock, he paid out a hundred feet of line and let the racing swirl of the spinning pool carry the boat far out beyond all obstructions. Then, gently and delicately as if playing a salmon on a trout rod, he nursed her into an eddy and simply coiled his line and let the backsetting current carry her in to the bit of sandy beach where he wanted to tie her up for the night. It takes a lifetime of swift-water experience to master the intricacies of an operation like that.

It was still early in the afternoon, but with a thick mist falling Blackmore thought best to stop where we were. The next available camping place was below the half-mile-long third cascade, and no old river man likes to go into a rapid when the visibility is poor. We pitched the tent in a hole cut out of the thick-growing woods on a low bench at the inner angle of

the bend. Everything was soaking wet, but it was well back from the falls, and for the first time in two days we were able to talk to each other without shouting. Not that we did so, however; from sheer force of habit we continued roaring into each other's ears for a week or more yet.

The great pile of logs on top of the flat-topped rock above the whirlpool had fascinated me from the first. Over a hundred feet square, forty feet high, and packed as though by a titanic hydraulic press, it must have contained thousands and thousands of cords of wood. On Blackmore's positive assurance as a timberman that there was nothing in the pile of any value for lumber, even in the improbable contingency that a flood would ever carry it beyond the big drifts of Kinbasket Lake, I decided to make a bonfire of it. Never had I had such an opportunity, both on the score of the sheer quantity of combustible and the spectacular setting for illumination.

The whirlpool was *whouf-whoufing* greedily as it wolfed the whole cascade when I clambered up just before dark to touch off my beacon. It was fairly dry at the base, and a pile of crisp shavings off a slab from some distant up-river sawmill caught quickly. From a spark of red flickering dimly through the mist when we sat down to supper, this had grown to a roaring furnace by the time we had relaxed to pipes and cigarettes. An hour later the flames had eaten a clear chimney up through the jam and the red light from their leaping tips was beginning to drive back the encompassing darkness. Roos, who had read about India, thought it would have been fine if we

only had a few widows to cast themselves on the flaming pyre and commit *suttee.* Andy and Blackmore, both sentimental bachelors, were a unit in maintaining that it would be a shame to waste good widows that way, especially on the practically widowless Big Bend. All three were arguing the point rather heatedly when they crawled into their blankets. For myself, with a vision of the wonder about to unroll impinging on my brain, I could not think of turning in for hours yet.

By ten o'clock the pile was well alight underneath, but it was not until nearly midnight, when the mist had turned to snow and a strong wind had sprung up, that it was blazing full strength. I hardly know what would have been the direction of the wind in the upper air, but, cupped in the embrasure of the bend, it was sucking round and round, like the big whirlpool, only more fitfully and with an upward rather than a downward pull. Now it would drag the leaping flame-column a hundred feet in the air, twisting it into lambent coils and fining the tip down to a sharp point, like that of the Avenging Angel's Sword of Fire in the old Biblical prints, now sweep it out in a shivering sheet above the whirlpool, now swing it evenly round and round as though the flame, arrow-pointed and attenuated, were the radium-coated hand of a Gargantuan clock being swiftly revolved in the dark.

But the wonder of wonders was less the fire itself than the marvellous transformations wrought by the light it threw. And the staggering contrasts! The illuminated snow clouds drifting along the frosted-

pink curtain of the tree-clad mountain walls made a roseate fairyland; even the foam covered sweep of the cascade, its roar drowned in the sharp crackle of the flames, was softened and smoothened until it seemed to billow like the sunset-flushed canvas of a ship becalmed: but the whirlpool, its sinister character only accentuated by the conflict of cross-shadows and reflections, was a veritable Pit of Damnation, choking and coughing as it swirled and rolled in streaky coils of ox-blood, in fire-stabbed welters of fluid coal-tar.

Wrapped in my hooded duffle coat, I paced the snow-covered moss and exulted in the awesome spectacle until long after midnight. I have never envied Nero very poignantly since. Given a fiddle and a few Christians, I would have had all that was his on the greatest night of his life—and then some. Father Tiber never had a whirlpool like mine, even on the day Horatius swam it "heavy with his armour and spent with changing blows."

The next morning, though too heavily overcast for pictures, was still clear enough to travel. The head riffles of the third fall of Surprise Rapids began a little below our camp, so that we started lining almost immediately. Three or four times we pulled across the river, running short stretches and lining now down one side and now the other. There was not so great a rate of drop as at the first and second falls, but the whole stream was choked with barely submerged rocks and lining was difficult on account of the frequent cliffs.

It was about half way down that I all but messed things up by failing to get into action quickly enough

at a crossing. The fault, in a way, was Blackmore's, because of his failure to tell me in advance what was expected, and then—when the order had to be passed instantly—for standing rather too much on ceremony in the manner of passing it. We were about to pull to the opposite side to line down past a riffle which Blackmore reckoned too rough to risk running. There was about a ten-mile current, and it would have required the smartest kind of a get-away and the hardest kind of pulling to make the other bank without being carried down onto the riffle. The boat was headed up-stream, and, as Blackmore had not told me he intended to cross, I took it for granted he was going to run. So, when Roos shoved off and jumped in, I rested on my oar in order that Andy could bring the boat sharply round and head it down stream. Blackmore's excited yell was the first intimation I had that anything was wrong. "Pull like hell! You! . . . Mister Freeman!"

That "Mister," and his momentary pause before uttering it, defeated the purpose of the order. I pulled all right, and so hard that my oar-blade picked up a very sizable hunk of river and flung it in Blackmore's face. That upset my balance, and I could not recover quickly enough to keep the boat's head to the current. With characteristic presence of mind, Blackmore changed tactics instantly. "Got to chance it now!" he shouted, and threw such a pull onto his steering paddle that the handle bent to more than half a right angle where he laid it over the gunwale. There was one jutting rock at the head of the riffle that *had* to be missed; the rest was all a matter of

whether or not the next couple of hundred yards of submerged boulders were deeply enough covered to let us pass *over* them. There was no way of avoiding them, no chance to lay a course *between* them.

Blackmore was a bit wilder about the eyes than I had seen him before; but he had stopped swearing and his mouth was set in a hard, determined line. Andy, with chesty grunts, was fairly flailing the water with swift, short-arm strokes. I did not need to be told to refrain from pulling in order that the others could swing her head as far toward the west bank as possible before the rock was reached. Instead, I held ready for the one quick backing stroke that would be called for in the event a collision seemed imminent at the last moment. It was the wave thrown off by the rock itself that helped us most when the showdown came. Shooting by the jagged barrier so close that Andy could have fended with his hand, the boat plunged over a short, sharp pitch and hit the white water with a bang.

That was by long odds the roughest stuff we had been into so far. The waves were curling up well above our heads, and every one we hit left a foot or two of its top with us—solid green water, most of it, that began accumulating rather alarmingly in the bottom of the boat. There was no regularity in the way they ran, either. One would come mushrooming fairly over the bows, another would flop aboard over the beam, and every now and then a wild side-winder, missing its spring at the forward part of the boat, would dash a shower of spray over the quarter. From the bank she must have been pretty well out of sight

most of the time, for I often saw spray thrown ten or fifteen feet to either side and twice as far astern. All hands were drenched from the moment we struck the first comber, of course, which was doubtless why a wail from Roos that the water was going down his neck seemed to strike Blackmore as a bit superfluous. "Inside or outside your neck?" he roared back, adding that if it was the former the flow could be checked by the simple and natural expedient of keeping the mouth shut. Very properly, our "skipper" had the feeling that, in a really tight place, all the talking necessary for navigation should be done from the "bridge," and that "extraneous" comment should be held over to smooth water.

Before we had run a hundred yards the anxious look on Blackmore's face had given way to one of relief and exultation. "There's more water over the rocks than I reckoned," he shouted. "Going to run right through." And run we did, all of the last mile or more of Surprise Rapids and right on through the still swift but comparatively quiet water below. Here we drifted with the current for a ways, while all hands turned to and bailed. I took this, the first occasion that had offered, to assure Blackmore that he needn't go to the length of calling me "Mister" in the future when he had urgent orders to give, and incidentally apologized for getting off on the wrong foot at the head of the first rapid. "Since that worked out to save us half a mile of darn dirty lining and two or three hours of time," he replied with a grin, "I guess we won't worry about it this crack, Mister—I mean, Freeman. Mebbe I better get used to saying

it that way 'gainst when I'll need to spit it out quick."

It was a pleasant run from the foot of Surprise Rapids down to Kinbasket Lake, or at least it was pleasant until the rain set in again. There is a fall of sixty-four feet in the sixteen miles—most of it in the first ten. It was a fine swift current, with a number of riffles but no bad water at any point. It was good to be free for a while from the tension which is never absent when working in really rough water, and I have no doubt that Blackmore felt better about it than any of the rest of us. Surprise was his especial *bete noir,* and he assured me that he had never come safely through it without swearing never to tackle it again. Roos, drying out in the bow like a tabby licking her wet coat smooth after being rained on, sang "Green River" all the way, and I tried to train Andy to pull in time to the rhythm and join in the chorus. As the chorus had much about drink in it, it seemed only fitting—considering what was waiting for us at Canoe River—that we *should* sing it. And we did. "Floating Down the Old Green River" became the "official song" of that particular part of the voyage. Later . . . but why anticipate?

We landed for lunch about where the water began to slacken above the lake. The water of the little stream at the mouth of which we tied up the boat was of a bright transparent amber in colour. Andy, sapient of the woods, thought it must flow from a lake impounded behind a beaver-dam in the high mountains, and that the stain was that of rotting wood. Beaver signs were certainly much in evidence all over

the little bench where we lunched. Several large cottonwood trunks—one of them all of two feet in diameter—had been felled by the tireless little engineers, and we found a pile of tooth-torn chips large enough to kindle our fire with. While tea was boiling Blackmore pulled a couple of three-pound Dolly Varden out of the mouth of the creek, only to lose his hooks and line when a still larger one connected up with them. Roos, who was under orders to get an effective fishing picture, was unable to go into action with his camera on account of the poor light.

It had begun to rain hard by the time we had shoved back into the river after lunch. There were still five miles to go to reach the camping ground Blackmore had decided upon, half way down the east side of Kinbasket Lake, just below Middle River—slack water all the way. Andy and I pulled it in a slushy half-snow-half-rain that was a lot wetter and unpleasanter than the straight article of either variety. Of a lake which is one of the loveliest in all the world in the sunlight, nothing was to be seen save a stretch of grey-white, wind-whipped waters beating upon grey-brown rocky shores. That the wind and waves headed us did not make the pulling any lighter, for the boat's considerable freeboard gave both a lot of surface to play upon. The exertion of rowing kept Andy and me warm, however, which gave us at least that advantage over Roos and Blackmore. The latter had to face it out at his paddle, but Roos, a bedraggled lump of sodden despair, finally gave up and crawled under the tarpaulin with the bags of beans and bacon, remaining there until we reached port.

All in all, I think that was the most miserable camp I ever helped to pitch. The snow, refusing persistently either to harden or to soften, adhered clingingly to everything it touched. We were two hours clearing a space for the tent, setting it up and collecting enough boughs to cushion the floor. By that time pretty nearly everything not hermetically sealed was wet, including the blankets and the "dry" clothes. No one but Andy could have started a camp-fire under such conditions, and no one but Blackmore could have cooked a piping hot dinner on it. I forget whether it was Roos or myself who contributed further to save the day. Anyhow, it was one of the two of us that suggested cooking a can of plum-pudding in about its own bulk of "thirty per overproof" rum. That lent the saving touch. In spite of a leaking tent and wet blankets, the whole four of us turned in singing "End of a Perfect Day" and "Old Green River." The latter was prophetic. A miniature one—coming through the roof of the tent—had the range of the back of my neck for most of the night.

CHAPTER VII

II. RUNNING THE BEND

Kinbasket Lake and Rapids

It continued slushing all night and most of the next day, keeping us pretty close to camp. Andy, like the good housewife he was, kept snugging up every time he got a chance, so that things assumed a homelier and cheerier aspect as the day wore on. I clambered for a couple of miles down the rocky eastern bank of the lake in the forenoon. The low-hanging clouds still obscured the mountains, but underfoot I found unending interest in the astonishing variety of drift corralled by this remarkable catch-all of the upper Columbia. The main accumulation of flotsam and jetsam was above our camp, but even among the rocks I chanced onto almost everything one can imagine, from a steel rail—with the ties that had served to float it down still spiked to it—to a fragment of a vacuum-cleaner. What Roos called "the human touch" was furnished by an enormous uprooted spruce, on which some amorous lumber-jack had been pouring out his love through the blade of his axe. This had taken the form of a two-feet-in-diameter "bleeding heart" pierced by an arrow. Inside the roughly hewn "pericardium" were the initials "K. N." and "P. R.," with the date "July 4, 1910." One couldn't be quite sure whether the arrow stood for

a heart quake or a heart break. Andy, who was sentimental and inclined to put woman in the abstract on a pedestal, thought it was merely a heart quake; but Blackmore, who had been something of a gallant in his day, and therefore inclined to cynicism as he neared the sear and yellow leaf, was sure it was heart break—that the honest lumber-jack had hacked in the arrow and the drops of blood after he had been jilted by some jade. Roos wanted to make a movie of this simple fragment of rustic art, with me standing by and registering "pensive memories," or something of the kind; but I managed to discourage him by the highly technical argument that it would impair the "continuity" of the "sportsmanship" which was the prime *motif* of the present picture.

Blackmore piloted me up to the main area of drift in the afternoon. It occupied a hundred acres or more of sand and mud flats which constituted the lower part of the extensive delta deposited on the edge of the lake by the waters of the good-sized stream of Middle River. At a first glance it seemed nothing more than a great wilderness of tree trunks—prostrate, upended, woven and packed together—extending for hundreds of yards below high-water-mark. It was between these logs that the smaller things had lodged. There were a number of boats, not greatly damaged, and fragments enough to have reconstructed a dozen more. I am convinced that a half day's search would have discovered the material for building and furnishing a house, though carpets and wall paper would hardly have been all one could desire. I even found a curling iron—closely clasped by the bent nail upon

which it had been hung on the log of a cabin—and a corset. The latter seemed hardly worth salving, as it appeared—according to Blackmore—to be a "military model" of a decade or so back, and the steel-work was badly rusted.

However, it was not gewgaws or house-furnishing we were after. One could hardly be expected to slither about in soft slush for secondhand things of that kind. I gave a great glad whoop at my first sight of a silt-submerged cask, only to find the head missing and nothing but mud in it. So, too, my second and third. Then it was Blackmore who gave the "View Halloo," and my heart gave a mighty leap. *His* treasure trove had the head intact, and even the bung *in situ*. But alas! the latter had become slightly started, and although the contents had both smell and colour they were so heavily impregnated with river mud that they would hardly have been deemed fit for consumption except in New York and California, and not worth the risk of smuggling even there. That cask was the high-water-mark of our luck. Several others had the old familiar smell, and that was all. But there is no doubt in the world that there is whisky in that drift pile—hundreds of gallons of it, and some very old. Blackmore swears to that, and I never knew him to lie—about serious matters, I mean. In hunting and trapping yarns a man is expected to draw a long bead. I pass on this undeniably valuable information to any one that cares to profit by it. There are no strings attached. But of course . . . in the event of success . . . Pasadena always finds me! . . .

We did have one find, though, that was so remarkable as to be worth all the trouble and disappointment of our otherwise futile search. This was a road-bridge, with *instinct*. The manner in which this had been displayed was so astonishing as to be almost beyond belief; indeed, I would hesitate about setting down the facts had I not a photograph to prove them. This bridge was perhaps sixty feet in length, and had doubtless been carried away by a freshet from some tributary of the upper river which it had spanned. This was probably somewhere between Golden and Windermere, so that it had run a hundred miles or more of swift water, including the falls of Surprise Rapids, without losing more than a few planks. This in itself was remarkable enough, but nothing at all to the fact that, when it finally decided it had come far enough, the sagacious structure had gone and planked itself down squarely across another stream. It was still a bridge in fact as well as in form. It had actually saved my feet from getting wet when I rushed to Blackmore's aid in up-ending the cask of mud-diluted whisky. My photograph plainly shows Blackmore standing on the bridge, with the water flowing directly beneath him. It would have been a more comprehensive and convincing picture if there had been light enough for a snapshot. As it was, I had to set up on a stump, and in a position which showed less of both stream and bridge than I might have had from a better place. I swear (and so does Blackmore) that we didn't place the bridge where it was. It was much too large for that. Roos wanted to shoot the whole three of us standing on it and

registering "unbounded wonderment," but the light was never right for it up to the morning of our departure, and then there wasn't time.

It rained and snowed all that night and most of the following day. During the afternoon of the latter the clouds broke up twice or thrice, and through rifts in the drifting wracks we had transient glimpses of the peaks and glaciers of the Selkirks gleaming above the precipitous western walls of the lake. The most conspicuous feature of the sky-line was the three-peaked "Trident," rising almost perpendicularly from a glittering field of glacial ice and impaling great masses of pendant *cumulo-nimbi* on its splintered prongs. Strings of lofty glacier-set summits marked the line of the backbone of the Selkirks to southeast and northwest, each of them sending down rain-swollen torrents to tumble into the lake in cataracts and cascades. Behind, or east of us, we knew the Rockies reared a similar barrier of snow and ice, but this was cut off from our vision by the more imminent lake-wall under which we were camped. If Kinbasket Lake is ever made accessible to the tourist its fame will reach to the end of the earth. This is a consummation which may be effected in the event the Canadian Pacific wipes out Surprise Rapids with its hydro-electric project dam and backs up a lake to Beavermouth. The journey to this spot of incomparable beauty could then be made soft enough to suit all but the most effete.

A torrential rain, following a warm southerly breeze which sprang up in the middle of the afternoon, lowered the dense cloud-curtain again, and shortly,

from somewhere behind the scenes, came the raucous rumble and roar of a great avalanche. Blackmore's practised ear led him to pronounce it a slide of both earth and snow, and to locate it somewhere on Trident Creek, straight across the lake from our camp. He proved to be right on both counts. When the clouds lifted again at sunset, a long yellow scar gashed the shoulder of the mountain half way up Trident Creek to the glacier, and the clear stream from the latter had completely disappeared. Blackmore said it had been dammed up by the slide, and that there would be all hell popping when it broke through.

Scouting around for more boughs to soften his bed, Roos, just before supper, chanced upon Steinhoff's grave. It was under a small pine, not fifty feet from our tent, but so hidden by the dense undergrowth that it had escaped our notice for two days. It was marked only by a fragment split from the stern of a white-painted boat nailed horizontally on the pine trunk and with the single word "STEINHOFF" carved in rude capitals. At one corner, in pencil, was an inscription stating that the board had been put up in May, 1920, by Joe French and Leo Tennis. With the golden sunset light streaming through the trees, Roos, always strong for "pathetic human touches" to serve as a sombre background for his Mack Sennett stuff, could not resist the opportunity for a picture. Andy and Blackmore and I were to come climbing up to the grave from the lake, read the inscription, and then look at each other and shake our heads ominously, as though it was simply a matter of time until we, too, should fall prey to the implacable river.

I refused straightaway, on the ground that I had signed up to act the part of a light comedy sportsman and not a heavy mourner. Blackmore and Andy were more amenable. In rehearsal, however, the expressions on their honest faces were so wooden and embarrassed that Roos finally called me up to stand out of range and "say something to make 'em look natural." I refrain from recording what I said; but I still maintain that shot was an interruption of the "continuity" of my "gentleman-sportsman" picture. I have not yet heard if it survived the studio surgery.

Shortly before dark, Andy, going down to look at his set-line, found a three-foot ling or fresh-water cod floundering on the end of it. Roos persuaded him to keep it over night so that the elusive "fishing picture" might be made the following morning in case the light was good. As there were five or six inches of water in the bottom of the boat, Andy threw the ling in there for the night in preference to picketing him out on a line. There was plenty of water to have given the husky shovel-nose ample room to circulate with comfort if only he had been content to take it easy and not wax temperamental. Doubtless it was his imminent movie engagement that brought on his attack of flightiness. At any rate, he tried to burrow under a collapsible sheet-iron stove (which, preferring to do with a camp-fire, we had left in the boat) and got stuck. The forward five pounds of him had water enough to keep alive in, but in the night—when it cleared off and turned cold—his tail, which was bent up sharply under a thwart, froze stiff at almost right angles. But I am getting ahead of my story.

The next morning, the sixth of October, broke brilliantly clear, with the sun gilding the prongs of the "Trident" and throwing the whole snowy line of the Selkirks in dazzling relief against a deep turquoise sky. Blackmore, keen for an early start, so as not to be rushed in working down through the dreaded "Twenty-One-Mile" Rapids to Canoe River, rooted us out at daybreak and began breaking camp before breakfast. He had reckoned without the "fishing picture," however. Roos wanted bright sunlight for it, claiming he was under special instructions to make something sparkling and snappy. All through breakfast he coached me on the intricate details of the action. "Make him put up a stiff fight," he admonished through a mouthful of flapjack. "Of course he won't fight, 'cause he ain't that kind; but if you jerk and wiggle your pole just right it'll make it look like he was. That's what a real actor's for—making things look like they is when they ain't. Got me?" Then we went down and discovered that poor half-frozen fish with the eight-point alteration of the continuity of his back-bone.

The ling or fresh-water cod has an underhung, somewhat shark-like mouth, not unsuggestive of the new moon with its points turned downward. Roos' mouth took on a similarly dejected droop when he found the condition the principal animal actor in his fish picture was in. But it was too late to give up now. Never might we have so husky a fighting fish ready to hand, and with a bright sun shining on it. Roos tried osteopathy, applied chiropractics and Christian Science without much effect. Our "lead"

continued as rigid and unrelaxing as the bushman's boomerang, whose shape he so nearly approximated. Then Andy wrought the miracle with a simple "laying on of hands." What he really did was to thaw out the frozen rear end of the fish by holding it between his big, warm red Celtic paws; but the effect was as magical as a cure at Lourdes. The big ling was shortly flopping vigorously, and when Andy dropped him into a bit of a boulder-locked pool he went charging back and forth at the rocky barriers like a bull at a gate. Roos almost wept in his thankfulness, and forthwith promised the restorer an extra rum ration that night. Andy grinned his thanks, but reminded him that we ought to be at the old ferry by night, where something even better than "thirty per overproof" rum would be on tap. It was indeed the morning of our great day. Stimulated by that inspiring thought, I prepared to outdo myself in the "fish picture," the "set" for which was now ready.

Standing on the stern of the beached boat, I made a long cast, registering "concentrated eagerness." Then Roos stopped cranking, and Andy brought the ling out and fastened it to the end of my line with a snug but comfortable hitch through the gills. (We were careful not to hurt him, for Chester's directions had admonished especially against "showing brutality".) When I had nursed him out to about where my opening cast had landed, Roos called "Action!" and started cranking again. Back and forth in wide sweeps he dashed, while I registered blended "eagerness" and "determination," with frequent interpolations of "consternation" as carefully timed tugs (by

BLACKMORE AND THE LING THAT REFUSED TO "REGISTER"

THE WRITER, WITH PIKE-POLE JUST BEFORE LINING DEATH RAPIDS

ANDY AND I PULLING DOWN KINBASKET LAKE

myself) bent my shivering pole down to the water. When Roos had enough footage of "fighting," I brought my catch in close to the boat and leered down at him, registering "near triumph." Then I towed him ashore and Andy and Blackmore rushed in to help me land him. After much struggling (by ourselves) we brought him out on the beach. At this juncture I was supposed to grab the ling by the gills and hold him proudly aloft, registering "full triumph" the while. Andy and Blackmore were to crowd in, pat me on the back and beam congratulations. Blackmore was then to assume an expression intended to convey the impression that this was the hardest fighting ling he had ever seen caught. All three of us were action perfect in our parts; but that miserable turn-tail of a ling—who had nothing to do but flop and register "indignant protest"—spoiled it all at the last. As I flung my prize on high, a shrill scream of "Rotten!" from Roos froze the action where it was. Then I noticed that what was supposed to be a gamy denizen of the swift-flowing Columbia was hanging from my hand as rigid as a coupling-pin—a bent coupling-pin at that, for he had resumed his former cold-storage curl.

"Rotten!" shrieked Roos in a frenzy; "do it again!" But that was not to be. For the "chief actor" the curtain had rung down for good. "You must have played him too fierce," said Andy sympathetically. Blackmore was inclined to be frivolous. "P'raps he was trying to register 'Big Bend,' " said he.

Just after we had pushed off there came a heavy and increasing roar from across the lake. Presently

the cascade of Trident Creek sprang into life again, but now a squirt of yellow ochre where before it was a flutter of white satin. Rapidly augmenting, it spread from wall to wall of the rocky gorge, discharging to the bosky depths of the delta with a prodigious rumbling that reverberated up and down the lake like heavy thunder. A moment later the flood had reached the shore, and out across the lucent green waters of the lake spread a broadening fan of yellow-brown. "I told you hell would be popping after that big slide," said Blackmore, resting on his paddle. "That's the backed-up stream breaking through."

Kinbasket Lake is a broadening and slackening of the Columbia, backed up behind the obstructions which cause the long series of rapids between its outlet and the mouth of Canoe River. It is six or seven miles long, according to the stage of water, and from one to two miles wide. Its downward set of current is slight but perceptible. The outlet, as we approached it after a three-mile pull from our camp at Middle River, appeared strikingly similar to the head of Surprise Rapids. Here, however, the transition from quiet to swift water was even more abrupt.

The surface of the lake was a-dance with the ripples kicked up by the crisp morning breeze, and blindingly bright where the facets of the tiny wavelets reflected the sunlight like shaken diamonds. The shadowed depths of the narrow gorge ahead was Stygian by contrast. Blackmore called my attention to the way the crests of the pines rimming the river a few hundred yards inside the gorge appeared just about on the level with the surface of the lake. "When

you see the tree-tops fall away like that," he said, standing up to take his final bearings for the opening run, "look out. It means there's water running down hill right ahead faster'n any boat wants to put its nose in." The roar rolling up to us was not quite so deep-toned or thunderous as the challenging bellow of the first fall of Surprise; but it was more "permeative," as though the sources from which it came ran on without end. And that was just about the situation. We were sliding down to the intake of Kinbasket or "The Twenty-One-Mile" Rapids, one of the longest, if not *the* longest, succession of practically unbroken riffles on any of the great rivers of the world.

From the outlet of Kinbasket Lake to the mouth of Canoe River is twenty-one miles. For the sixteen miles the tail of one rapid generally runs right into the head of the next, and there is a fall of two hundred and sixty feet, or more than sixteen feet to the mile. For the last five miles there is less white water, but the current runs from eight to twelve miles an hour, with many swirls and whirlpools. The river is closely canyoned all the way. This compels one to make the whole run through in a single day, as there is no camping place at any point. Cliffs and sharply-sloping boulder banks greatly complicate lining down and compel frequent crossings at points where a failure to land just right is pretty likely to leave things in a good deal of a mess.

Blackmore ran us down through a couple of hundred yards of slap-banging white water, before coming to bank above a steep pitch where the river tore itself to rags and tatters across a patch of rocks that

seemed to block the whole channel. From Captain Armstrong's description, this was the exact point where the trouble with his tipsy bow-paddler had occurred, the little difficulty which had been the cause of his leaving the salvaged cask of Scotch at his next camp. Like pious pilgrims approaching the gateway of some long-laboured-toward shrine, therefore, we looked at the place with much interest, not to say reverence. Blackmore was perhaps the least sentimental of us. "I wouldn't try to run that next fall for all the whisky ever lost in the old Columbia," he said decisively, beginning to re-coil his long line. Then we turned to on lining down the most accursed stretch of river boulders I ever had to do with.

Barely submerged rocks crowding the bank compelled us to wade in and lift the boat ahead even oftener than in Surprise Rapids. Andy always took the lead in this, but time after time my help was necessary to throw her clear. For the first time since I had boated in Alaska a good many years previously, I began to know the numbing effects of icy water. The heavy exertion did a lot to keep the blood moving, but three or four minutes standing with the water up to mid-thigh sent the chill right in to the marrow of the bones, even when sweat was running off the face in streams. That started a sort of dull ache in the leg bones that kept creeping higher and higher the longer one remained in the water. That ache was the worst part of it; the flesh became dead to sensation very quickly, but that penetrating inward pain had more hurt in it every minute it was prolonged. It was bad enough in the legs, but when, submerged

to the waist, as happened every now and then, the chill began to penetrate to the back-bone and stab the digestive organs, it became pretty trying. One realized then what really short shrift a man would have trying to swim for more than four or five minutes even in calm water of this temperature. That was about the limit for heart action to continue with the cold striking in and numbing the veins and arteries, a doctor had told Blackmore, and this seemed reasonable. Andy was repeatedly sick at the stomach after he had been wet for long above the waist. My own qualms were rather less severe (doubtless because I was exposed rather less), but I found myself very weak and unsteady after every immersion. A liberal use of rum would undoubtedly have been of some help for a while, but Blackmore was adamant against starting in on it as long as there was any bad water ahead. And as there was nothing but bad water ahead, this meant that—in one sense at least—we were a "dry ship."

I shall not endeavour to trace in detail our painful progress down "Twenty-One-Mile." Indeed, I could not do so even if I wanted, for the very good reason that my hands were so full helping with the boat all the way that I had no time to make notes, and even my mental record—usually fairly dependable—is hopelessly jumbled. Even Blackmore became considerably mixed at times. At the first four or five riffles below the lake he called the turn correctly, landing, lining, crossing and running just where he should have done so. Then his mind-map became less clear. Twice he lined riffles which it presently

became plain we could have run, and then he all but failed to land above one where a well-masked "souse-hole" would have gulped the boat in one mouthful.

It was at this juncture that I asked him why he had never taken the trouble of making a rough chart of this portion of the river, so that he could be quite sure what was ahead. He said that the idea was a good one, and that it had often occurred to him. There were several reasons why he had never carried it out. One was, that he was always so mad when he was going down "Twenty-One-Mile" that he couldn't see straight, let alone write and draw straight. This meant that the chart would be of no use to him, even if some one else made it—unless, of course, he brought the maker along to interpret it. The main deterrent, however, had been the fact that he had always sworn each passage should be his last, so that (according to his frame of mind of the moment) there would be no use for the chart even if he could have seen straight enough to make it, and to read it after it had been made.

The scenery—so far as I recall it—was grand beyond words to describe. Cliff fronted cliff, with a jagged ribbon of violet-purple sky between. Every few hundred yards creeks broke through the mountain walls and came cascading into the river over their spreading boulder "fans." Framed in the narrow notches from which they sprang appeared transient visions of sun-dazzled peaks and glaciers towering above wedge-shaped valleys swimming full of lilac mist. I saw these things, floating by like double strips of movie film, only when we were running in

the current; when lining I was aware of little beyond the red line of the gunwale which I grasped, the imminent loom of Andy's grey-shirted shoulder next me, and the foam-flecked swirl of liquefied glacier enfolding my legs and swiftly converting them to stumpy icicles.

There was one comfort, though. The farther down river we worked away from the lake, the shorter became the stretches of lining and the longer the rapids that were runnable. That accelerated our progress materially, but even so Blackmore did not reckon that there was time to stop for pictures, or even for lunch. We were still well up to schedule, but he was anxious to work on a good margin in the event of the always-to-be-expected "unexpected." It was along toward three in the afternoon that, after completing a particularly nasty bit of lining a mile or two above the mouth of Yellow Creek, he came over and slapped me on the back. "That finishes it for the day, young man," he cried gaily. "We can turn loose and run the rest of it now, and we'll do it hell sizzling fast. It may also rejoice you to know that all the lining left for the whole trip is a couple of hundred yards at 'Rock Slide' and Death Rapids. All aboard for the Ferry!"

All of a sudden life had become a blessed thing again. For the first time I became aware that there were birds singing in the trees, flowers blooming in the protected shelves above high-water-mark, and maiden-hair ferns festooning the dripping grottoes of the cliffs. Dumping the water from our boots, Andy and I resumed our oars and swung the boat right out into the middle of the current. The first rapid we hit

was a vicious side-winder, shaped like a letter "S," with overhanging cliffs playing battledore-and-shuttlecock with the river at the bends. Blackmore said he would have lined it if the water had been two feet lower; as it was now we would get wetter trying to worry a boat round the cliffs than in slashing through. We got quite wet enough as it was. The rocks were not hard to avoid, but banging almost side-on into the great back-curving combers thrown off by the cliffs was just a bit terrifying. Slammed back and forth at express-train speed, with nothing but those roaring open-faced waves buffeting against the cliffs, was somewhat suggestive of the sensation you get from a quick double-bank in a big biplane. Only it was wetter—much wetter. It took Blackmore ten minutes of hard bailing to get rid of the splashage.

The succeeding rapids, though no less swift, were straighter, and easier—and dryer. Roos, perched up in the bow, announced that all was over but the digging, and started to sing "Old Green River." Andy and I joined in lustily, and even Blackmore (though a lip-reader would have sworn he was mumbling over a rosary) claimed to be singing. Exultant as we all were over the prize so nearly within our grasp, we must have put a world of feeling into that heart-stirring chorus.

> "I was drifting down the old Green River
> On the good ship *Rock-and-Rye*—
> I drifted too far;
> I got stuck on the bar;
> I was out there alone,
> Wishing that I were home—

The Captain was lost, with all of the crew,
So that there was no-thing left to do;
And I had to drink the whole Green River dry-igh
To get back ho-ohm to you-oo-ou!"

Smoother and smoother became the going, and then—rather unexpectedly, it seemed to me—the water began to slacken its dizzy speed. Blackmore appeared considerably puzzled over it, I thought. Roos, turning sentimental, had started singing a song that he had learned from a phonograph, and in which, therefore, appeared numerous hiati.

"Now I know da-da-da-da-da—
Now I know the reason why—
Da-da-da-da——da-da-da-daah—
Now I know, yes, now I know!
Da-da-da, my heart. . . ."

Blackmore frowned more deeply as the treble wail floated back to him, and then broke into the next "da-da" with a sudden growl. "I say, young feller," he roared, slapping sharply into the quieting water with his paddle blade; "if you know so *geesly* much, I'm wondering if you'd mind loosening up on one or two things that have got *me* buffaloed. First place, do I look like a man that had took a shot of hop?" "Not at all, sir," quavered Roos, who seemed rather fearful of an impending call-down. "I don't, huh?" went on the growl. "Then please tell me why what I knows is a ten-mile-an-hour current looks to me like slack water, and why I think I hear a roar coming round the next bend." "But the water *is* slack," pro-

tested Roos, "and I've heard that roar for five minutes *myself*. Just another rapid, isn't it? The water always . . ."

"Rot!" roared the veteran. "There ain't no fall with a rip-raring thunder like that 'tween Yellow Creek and Death Rapids. Rot, I tell you! I must ha' been doped after all."

Nevertheless, when that ground-shaking rumble assailed us in a raw, rough wave of savage sound as we pulled round the bend, Blackmore was not sufficiently confident of his "dope theory" to care to get any nearer to it without a preliminary reconnaissance. Landing a hundred yards above where a white "eyelash" of up-flipped water showed above a line of big rocks, we clambered down along the right bank on foot. Presently all that had occurred was written clear for one who knew the way of a slide with a river, and the way of a river with a slide, to read as on the page of a book.

"A new rapid, and a whale at that!" gasped Blackmore in astonishment; "the first one that's ever formed on the Columbia in my time!"

The amazing thing that had happened was this: Sometime in the spring, a landslide of enormous size, doubtless started by an avalanche of snow far up in the Selkirks, had ripped the whole side of a mountain out and come down all the way across the river. As the pines were hurled *backward* for a couple of hundred feet above the river on the right or Rocky Mountain bank, it seemed reasonable to believe that the dam formed had averaged considerably more than that in height. As this would have backed up the river for

at least ten or twelve miles, it is probable that the lake formed must have been rising for a number of days before it flowed over the top of the barrier and began to sluice it away. On an incalculably larger scale, it was just the sort of thing we had heard and seen happening on Trident Creek, opposite our Kinbasket Lake camp. Not the least remarkable thing in connection with the stupendous convulsion was the fact that a large creek was flowing directly down the great gash torn out by the slide and emptying right into the rapid which was left when the dam had been washed away. Blackmore was quite positive that there had been no creek at this point the last time he was there. It seemed reasonable to suppose, therefore, that the slide, in removing a considerable section of mountain wall, had opened a new line of drainage for some little valley in the high Selkirks.

It was the great, rough fragments of cliff and native rock left after the earth had been sluiced out of the dam that remained to form the unexpected rapid which now confronted us. They had not yet been worn smooth like the rest of the river boulders, and it was this fact, doubtless, that gave the cascade tumbling through and over them such a raw, raucous roar.

The solution of the mystery of the appearance of the rapid was only an incident compared with the problem of how to pass it. There was a comparatively straight channel, but there was no possibility that the boat could live in the huge rollers that billowed down the middle of it. Just to the right of the middle there was a smoother chute which looked bet-

ter—provided the boat could be kept to it. Blackmore said that it looked like too much of a risk, and decided to try to line down the right bank—the one on which we had landed. As the river walls were too steep and broken to allow any of the outfit to be portaged, the boat would have to go through loaded.

A big up-rooted pine tree, extending out fifty feet over the river and with its under limbs swept by the water, seemed likely to prove our worst difficulty, and I am inclined to believe it would have held us up in the end, even after we reached it. As things turned out, however, it troubled us not a whit, for the boat never got down that far. Right at the head of the rapid her bows jammed between two submerged boulders about ten feet from the bank, and there she stuck. As it was quickly evident that it was out of the question to lift her on through, it now became a problem of working her back up-stream out of the jaws that held her. But with the full force of the current driving her tighter between the rocks, she now refused to budge even in the direction from which she had come.

As I look back on it now, the fifteen minutes Andy and I, mid-waist deep in the icy water, spent trying to work that hulking red boat loose so that Blackmore could haul her back into quiet water for a fresh start takes pride of place as the most miserable interval of the whole trip. After Andy's experience in Surprise Rapids, neither of us was inclined to throw his whole weight into a lift that might leave him overbalanced when the boat was swept out of his reach. And so we pulled and hauled and cursed (I should hate to have

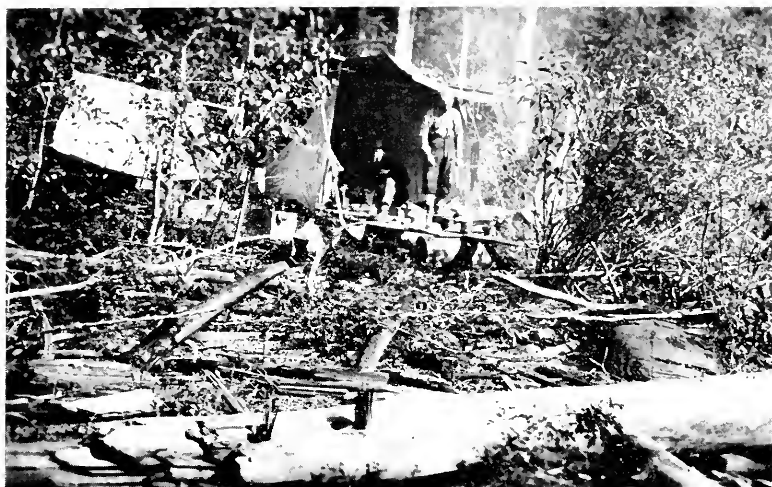
to record all we said about the ancestry of the river, the boat, and the two rocks that held the boat), while the tentacles of the cold clutched deeper with every passing minute. Roos, sitting on a pine stump and whittling, furnished no help but some slight diversion. When he started singing "Old Green River" just after I had slipped and soused my head in the current, I stopped tugging at the boat for long enough to wade out and shy a stone at him. "Green River" [1] was all right in its place, but its place was swirling against the *inside* of the ribs, not the *outside.* Roos had the cheek to pick the rock up out of his lap and heave it back at me—but with an aim less certain than my own. A few minutes later he called out to Blackmore to ask if this new rapid had a name, adding that if it had not, he would like to do his employer, Mr. Chester, the honour of naming it after him. Blackmore relaxed his strain on the line for a moment to roar back that no rapid was ever named after a man unless he had been "drownded" in it. "We'll name this one after you if you'll do the needful," he growled as an afterthought, throwing his weight again onto his line. That tickled Andy and me so mightily that we gave a prodigious heave in all recklessness of consequences, and off she came. Gaining the bank with little trouble, we joined Blackmore and helped him haul her up by line into slower water.

"No good lining," the "Skipper" announced decid-

[1] For the benefit of those who have forgotten, or may never have known, I will state that "Green River" was the name of a brand of whisky consumed by ancient Americans with considerable gusto. L. R. F.

edly, as we sat down to rest for a spell; "I'm going to drive her straight through." Chilled, weary and dead-beat generally, I was in a state of mind that would have welcomed jumping into the rapid with a stone tied to my neck rather than go back to the half-submerged wading and lifting. Roos said he hated to risk his camera, and so would try to crawl with it over the cliff and rejoin us below the rapid. Andy said he was quite game to pull his oar for a run if we had to, but that he would first like to try lining down the opposite bank. He thought we could make it *there,* and he had just a bit of a doubt about what might happen in mid-river. That was reasonable enough, and Blackmore readily consented to try the other side.

Almost at once it appeared that we had landed in the same trouble as on the right bank. Directly off the mouth of the stream that came down from the slide the bow of the boat was caught and held between two submerged rocks, defying our every attempt to lift it over. Blackmore was becoming impatient again, and was just ready to give up and run, when Andy, with the aid of a young tree-trunk used as a lever, rolled one of the boulders aside and cleared the way. Five minutes later we had completed lining down and were pushing off for the final run to the Ferry. No more "mystery rapids" cropped up to disturb our voyage, and, pulling in deep, swift water, we made the next five miles in twenty-five minutes. A part of the distance was through the rocky-walled Red Canyon, one of the grandest scenic bits of the Bend. At one point Blackmore showed us a sheer-



OUR WETTEST CAMP AT KINBASKET LAKE (*above*)

THE OLD FERRY TOWER ABOVE CANOE RIVER (*below*)

WHERE WE TIED UP AT KINBASKET LAKE (*above*)

THE BRIDGE WHICH THE COLUMBIA CARRIED A HUNDRED MILES AND PLACED ACROSS ANOTHER STREAM (*center*)

LINING DOWN TO THE HEAD OF DEATH RAPIDS (*below*)

sided rock island, on which he said he had once found the graves of two white men, with an inscription so worn as to be indecipherable. He thought they were probably those of miners lost during the Cariboo gold-field excitement of the middle of the last century, or perhaps even those of Hudson Bay *voyageurs* of a century or more back. There were many unidentified graves all the way round the Bend, he said.

The river walls fell back a bit on both sides as we neared our destination, and the low-hanging western sun had found a gap in the Selkirks through which it was pouring its level rays to flood with a rich amber light the low wooded benches at the abandoned crossing. The old Ferry-tower reared itself upward like the Statue of Liberty, bathing its head in the golden light of the expiring day. Steering for it as to a beacon, Blackmore beached the boat on a gravel bar flanking an eddy almost directly under the rusting cable. We would cross later to spend the night in a trapper's cabin on the opposite bank, he said; as there was sure to be a shovel or two in the old ferry shacks, he had come there at once so as to get down to business without delay.

Right then and there, before we left the boat, I did a thing which I have been greatly gratified that I did do—right then and there. I drew my companions close to me and assured them that I had made up my mind to divide the spoils with them. Blackmore and Andy should have a gallon apiece, and Roos a quart. (I scaled down the latter's share sharply, partly because he had thrown that stone back at me, and the nerve of it rankled, and partly—I must confess—out

of "professional jealousy." "Stars" and "Directors" never do hit off.) The rest I would retain and divide with Captain Armstrong as agreed. I did not tell them that I had high hopes that Armstrong would soften in the end and let me keep it all to take home. After all of them (including Roos) had wrung my hand with gratitude, we set to work, each in his own way.

The spot was readily located the moment we took the compass bearing. Pacing off was quite unnecessary. It was in the angle of a V-shaped outcrop of bedrock, where a man who knew about what was there could feel his way and claw up the treasure in the dark. It was an "inevitable" hiding place, just as Gibraltar is an inevitable fortress and Manhattan an inevitable metropolis. Yes, we each went to work in our own way. Blackmore and Andy found a couple of rusty shovels and went to digging; Roos climbed up into the old ferry basket to take a picture of them digging; I climbed up on the old shack to take a picture of Roos taking a picture of them digging. Nothing was omitted calculated to preserve historical accuracy. I had been in Baalbek just before the war when a German archæological mission had inaugurated excavation for Phœnician antiquities, and so was sapient in all that an occasion of the kind required.

The picture cycle complete, I strolled over to where Andy and Blackmore were making the dirt fly like a pair of Airedales digging out a badger. The ground was soft, they said, leaning on their shovels; it ought to be only the matter of minutes now. The "showings" were good. They had already unearthed a

glove, a tin cup and a fragment of barrel iron. "Gorgeous stroke of luck for us that chap, K——, hit the stuff so hard up at Kinbasket," I murmured ecstatically. Blackmore started and straightened up like a man hit with a steel bullet. "What was that name again?" he gasped. "K——," I replied wonderingly; "some kind of a Swede, I believe Armstrong said. But what difference does his name make as long as . . ."

Blackmore tossed his shovel out of the hole and climbed stiffly up after it before he replied. When he spoke it was in a voice thin and trailing, as though draggled by the Weariness of the Ages. "Difference, boy! All the difference between hell and happiness. About two years ago K—— dropped out of sight from Revelstoke, and it was only known he had gone somewhere on the Bend. A week after he returned he died in the hospital of the 'D. T's.' "

Roos (perhaps because he had the least to lose by the disaster) was the only one who had the strength to speak. It seemed that he had studied Latin in the high school. *"Sic transit gloria spiritum frumenti,"* was what he said. Never in all the voyage did he speak so much to the point.

Blackmore frowned at him gloomily as the mystic words were solemnly pronounced. "Young feller," he growled, "I don't savvy what the last part of that drug-store lingo you're spitting means; but you're dead right about the first part. *Sick* is sure the word."

We spent the night in an empty trapper's cabin across the river. Charity forbids that I lift the curtain of the house of mourning.

CHAPTER VIII

III. RUNNING THE BEND

Boat Encampment to Revelstoke

We were now close to the historic Boat Encampment, where at last our course would join with that followed by the early *voyageurs* and explorers. No point in the whole length of the Columbia, not even Astoria, has associations more calculated to stir the imagination than this tiny patch of silt-covered overflow flat which has been formed by the erosive action of three torrential rivers tearing at the hearts of three great mountain ranges. Sand and soil of the Rockies, Selkirks and the Gold Range, carried by the Columbia, Canoe and Wood rivers, meet and mingle to form the remarkable halting place, where the east and westbound pioneering traffic of a century stopped to gather breath for the next stage of its journey.

Before pushing off from the Ferry on the morning of October seventh I dug out from my luggage a copy of a report written in 1881 by Lientenant Thomas W. Symons, U. S. A., on the navigation of the Upper Columbia. This was chiefly concerned with that part of the river between the International Boundary and the mouth of the Snake, but Lieutenant Symons had made a long and exhaustive study of the whole Columbia Basin, and his geographical description of the three rivers which unite at Boat Encampment is so

succinct and yet so comprehensive that I am impelled to make a liberal quotation from it here. Of the great assistance I had from Lieutenant Symons' invaluable report when I came to the passage of that part of the river covered by his remarkable voyage of forty years ago I shall write later.

"Amid the universal gloom and midnight silence of the north, a little above the fifty-second parallel of latitude, seemingly surrounded on all sides by cloud-piercing snow-clad mountains, and nestled down among the lower and nearer cedar-mantled hills, there lies a narrow valley where three streams meet and blend their waters, one coming from the southeast, one from the northwest, and one from the east. The principal one of these streams is the one from the southeast . . . and is the headwater stream, and bears the name of the Columbia.

"The northwestern stream is the extreme northern branch of the Columbia, rising beyond the fifty-third parallel of latitude, and is known among the traders and *voyageurs* as Canoe River, from the excellence of the barks obtained on its banks for canoe building. This is a small river, forty yards wide at its mouth, flowing through a densely timbered valley in which the trees overhang the stream to such an extent as almost to shut it out from the light of heaven. . . .

"Portage River, the third of the trio of streams, the smallest and the most remarkable of them, is the one which enters from the east. It has its source in the very heart of the Rocky Mountains and flows through a tremendous cleft in the main range between two of its loftiest peaks, Mounts Brown and Hooker. Just underneath these giant mountains, on the divide known as 'The Height of Land,' lie two small lakes, each about thirty yards in diameter, and which are only a few yards from each other. One has its outlet to the

west, Portage River, flowing to the Columbia; the other has its outlet to the east, Whirlpool River, a branch of the Athabaska, which joins the Mackenzie and flows to the Arctic Ocean.

"The elevated valley in which these lakes are situated is called 'The Committee's Punchbowl,' and the nabobs of the fur trade always treated their companions to a bucket of punch when this point was reached, if they had the ingredients from which to make it, and they usually had.

"The pass across the mountains by the Portage River, 'The Committee's Punchbowl' and Whirlpool River, known as the Athabaska Pass, was for many years the route of the British fur traders in going from one side of the Rocky Mountains to the other. This route is far from being an easy one, and a description of the difficulties, dangers and discomforts of a trip over it will certainly deter any one from making the journey for pleasure. A great part of the way the traveller has to wade up to his middle in the icy waters of Portage River. The journey had to be made in the spring before the summer thaws and rains set in, or in the autumn after severe cold weather had locked up the mountain drainage. During the summer the stream becomes an impetuous impassable mountain torrent."

Considering that Lieutenant Symons had never traversed the Big Bend nor the Athabaska Pass, this description (which must have been written from his careful readings of the diaries of the old *voyageurs*) is a remarkable one. It is not only accurate topographically and geographically, but it has an "atmosphere" which one who *does* know this region at first hand will be quick to appreciate. How and when the stream which he and the men before him called Por-

tage River came to have its name changed to Wood, I have not been able to learn.

A mile below the Ferry Blackmore called my attention to a sharp wedge of brown-black mountain which appeared to form the left wall of the river a short way ahead. That lofty out-thrust of rock, he said, was the extreme northern end of the Selkirk Range. The Columbia, after receiving the waters of Wood and Canoe rivers, looped right round this cape and started flowing south, but with the *massif* of the Selkirks still forming its left bank. But the Rockies, which had formed its right bank all the way from its source, were now left behind, and their place was taken by the almost equally lofty Gold Range, which drained east to the Columbia and west to the Thompson.

The Columbia doubles back from north to south at an astonishingly sharp angle,—as river bends go, that is. Picture mentally Madison Square, New York. Now suppose the Columbia to flow north on Broadway, bend round the Flatiron Building (which represents the Selkirks), and then flow south down Fifth avenue. Then East Twenty-Third Street would represent Wood River, and North Broadway, Canoe River. Now forget all the other streets and imagine the buildings of Madison Square as ten to twelve thousand-feet-high mountains. And there you have a model of the apex of the Big Bend of the Columbia.

A milky grey-green flood—straight glacier water if there ever was such—staining the clear stream of the Columbia marked the mouth of Wood River, and we pulled in for a brief glimpse in passing of what had once been Boat Encampment. I had broken my ther-

mometer at Kinbasket Lake, so I could not take the temperatures here; but Wood River was beyond all doubt the coldest stream I had ever dabbled a finger-tip in. What the ascent to Athabaska Pass must have been may be judged from this description by Alexander Ross—one of the original Astoria party—written over a hundred years ago.

> "Picture in the mind a dark, narrow defile, skirted on one side by a chain of inaccessible mountains rising to a great height, covered with snow, and slippery with ice from their tops down to the water's edge; and on the other a beach comparatively low, but studded in an irregular manner with standing and fallen trees, rocks and ice, and full of drift-wood, over which the torrent everywhere rushes with such irresistible impetuosity that very few would dare to adventure themselves in the stream. Let him again imagine a rapid river descending from some great height, filling up the whole channel between the rocky precipices on the south, and the no less dangerous barrier on the north; and, lastly, let him suppose that we were obliged to make our way on foot against such a torrent, by crossing and recrossing it in all its turns and windings, from morning till night, up to the middle in water, and he will understand the difficulties to be overcome in crossing the Rocky Mountains."

I have been able to learn nothing of records which would indicate that any of the early explorers or *voyageurs* traversed that portion of the Columbia down which we had just come. David Thompson, who is credited with being the first man to travel the Columbia to the sea, although he spent one winter at the foot of Lake Windermere, appears to have made his down-

river push-off from Boat Encampment. Mr. Basil G. Hamilton, of Invermere, sends me an authoritative note on this point, based on Thompson's own journal. From this it appears that the great astronomer-explorer crossed the Rockies by Athabaska Pass and came down to what has since been known by the name of Boat Encampment in March, 1811. Having built himself a hut, he made preparation for a trip down the Columbia, by which he hoped to reach the mouth in advance of either of the Astor parties, and thus be able to lay claim to the whole region traversed in the name of the Northwest Company. He writes: "We first tried to get birch rind wherewith to make our trip to the Pacific Ocean, but without finding any even thick enough to make a dish. So we split out thin boards of cedar wood, about six inches in breadth, and built a canoe twenty-five feet in length and fifty inches in breadth, of the same form as a common canoe. As we had no nails we sewed the boards to each other round the timbers, making use of the fine roots of the pine which we split."

This ingeniously constructed but precarious craft was finished on the sixteenth of April, and Thompson's party embarked in it on the seventeenth. Mr. Hamilton doubts if this was the same craft in which they finally reached Astoria. From my own knowledge of what lies between I am very much inclined to agree with him. Certainly no boat of the construction described could have lasted even to the Arrow Lakes without much patching, and if a boat seeming on the lines of the original really reached the Pacific, it must have been many times renewed in the course of

the voyage. I shall hardly need to add that Thompson's remarkable journey, so far as its original object was concerned, was a failure. He reached the mouth of the Columbia well in advance of Astor's land party, but only to find the New Yorker fur-trader's expedition by way of Cape Horn and Hawaii already in occupation.

Boat Encampment of to-day is neither picturesque nor interesting; indeed, there are several camp-sites at the Bend that one would choose in preference to that rather damp patch of brush-covered, treeless clearing. All that I found in the way of relics of the past were some huge cedar stumps, almost covered with silt, and the remains of a demolished *batteau*. I salved a crude oar-lock from the latter to carry as a mascot for my down-river trip. As a mascot it served me very well, everything considered; though it *did* get me in rather bad once when I tried to use it for an oar-lock.

Before the sparkling jade-green stream of the Columbia had entirely quenched the milky flow of Wood River, the chocolate-brown torrent of Canoe River came pouring in to mess things up anew. The swift northern affluent, greatly swelled by the recent rains, was in flood, and at the moment appeared to be discharging a flow almost if not quite equal to that of the main river. For a considerable distance the waters of the right side of the augmented river retained their rich cinnamon tint, and it was not until a brisk stretch of rapid a mile below the Bend got in its cocktail-shaker action that the two streams became thoroughly blended. Then the former crys-

talline clearness of the Columbia was a thing of the past. It was still far from being a muddy river. There was still more of green than of brown in its waters, but they were dully translucent where they had been brilliantly transparent. Not until the hundred-mile-long settling-basin of the Arrow Lakes allowed the sediment to deposit did the old emerald-bright sparkle come back again.

A couple of quick rifle shots from the left bank set the echoes ringing just after we had passed Canoe River, and Blackmore turned in to where a man and dog were standing in front of an extremely picturesquely located log cabin. It proved to be a French-Canadian half-breed trapper called Alphonse Edmunds. His interest in us was purely social, and after a five minutes' yarn we pulled on. Blackmore said the chap lived in Golden, and that to avoid the dreaded run down through Surprise and Kinbasket rapids, he was in the habit of going a couple of hundred miles by the C. P. R. to Kamloops, thence north for a hundred miles or more by the Canadian Northern, thence by pack-train a considerable distance over the divide to the head of Canoe River, and finally down the latter by boat to the Bend, where he did his winter trapping. This was about four times the distance as by the direct route down the Columbia, and probably at least quadrupled time and expense. It threw an illuminative side-light on the way some of the natives regarded the upper half of the Big Bend.

The river was deeper now, but still plugged along at near to the ten-miles-an-hour it had averaged from the foot of Kinbasket Rapids. As the western slopes

of the Selkirks were considerably more extensive than the eastern, the drainage to the Columbia from that side was proportionately greater. Cascades and cataracts came tumbling in every few hundred yards, and every mile or two, from one side or the other, a considerable creek would pour down over its spreading boulder "fan." We landed at twelve-thirty and cooked our lunch on the stove of a perfect beauty of a trapper's cabin near the mouth of Mica Creek. The trapper had already begun getting in his winter grub, but was away at the moment. The whole place was as clean as a Dutch kitchen. A recent shift of channel by the fickle-minded Mica Creek had undermined almost to the door of this snug little home, and Andy reckoned it would go down river on the next spring rise.

We ran the next eighteen miles in less than two hours, tying up for the night at a well-built Government cabin three miles below Big Mouth Creek. It was occupied for the winter by a Swede trapper named Johnston. He was out running his trap-lines when we arrived, but came back in time to be our guest for dinner. He made one rather important contribution to the menu—a "mulligan," the *pièce de résistance* of which, so he claimed, was a mud-hen he had winged with his revolver that morning. There were six or seven ingredients in that confounded Irish stew already, and—much to the disgust of Roos and myself, who didn't fancy eating mud-hen—Andy dumped into it just about everything he had been cooking except the prunes. That's the proper caper with "mulligans," and they are very good, too, unless

TRAPPER'S CABIN BEING UNDERMINED BY STREAM

THE CAMP ABOVE TWELVE-MILE

LANDING AT SUNSET ABOVE CANOE RIVER (*above*)

ANDY AND BLACKMORE SWINGING THE BOAT INTO THE HEAD OF ROCK SLIDE RAPIDS (*centre*)

THE BIG ROLLERS, FROM 15 TO 20 FEET FROM HOLLOW TO CREST, AT HEAD OF DEATH RAPIDS (*below*)

some one of the makings chances to be out of your line. And such most decidedly was mud-hen—fish-eating mud-hen! As we were sort of company, Roos and I put on the best faces we could and filled up on prunes and marmalade. It was only after the other three had cleaned out the "mulligan" can that Andy chanced to mention that "mud-hen" was the popularly accepted euphemism for grouse shot out of season!

Andy and Blackmore and Johnston talked "trapper stuff" all evening—tricks for tempting marten, how to prevent the pesky wolverine from robbing traps, "stink-baits," prices, and the prospects for beaver when it again became lawful to take them. Johnston was a typical Swede, with little apparent regard for his physical strength if money could be made by drawing upon it. The previous season he had had to sleep out in his blankets many nights while covering his lines, and he counted himself lucky that this year he had two or three rough cabins for shelter. He was a terrific worker and ate sparingly of the grub that cost him twenty cents a pound to bring in. He was already looking a bit drawn, and Blackmore said the next morning that he would be more or less of a physical wreck by spring, just as he had been the previous season. The hardships these trappers endure is something quite beyond the comprehension of any one who has not been with them. A city man, a farmer, even a sailor, knows nothing to compare with it.

We were a mile down stream the next morning before Blackmore discovered that his rifle had been left in Johnston's cabin, and it took him an hour of

hard breaking through the wet underbrush to recover it. The river was still rising from the rains, and the current swift with occasional rapids. Blackmore approached the head of Gordon Rapids (named, of course, from a man of that name who had lost his life there) with considerable caution. He intended to run them, he said, but the convergence of currents threw a nasty cross-riffle that was not to be taken liberties with. He appeared considerably relieved when he found that the high water made it possible to avoid the main rapid by a swift but comparatively clear back-channel. We had a good view of the riffle from below when we swung back into the main channel. It was certainly a vicious tumble of wild white water, and even with our considerable free-board it would have been a sloppy run. I should have been very reluctant to go into it all with a smaller boat.

Still deeply canyoned between lofty mountains, the scenery in this part of the Bend was quite equal to the finest through which we had passed above Canoe River. The steady drizzle which had now set in, however, made pictures out of the question. This did not deter Roos from looking for "location." He was under special instructions to make some effective camp shots, and had been on the lookout for a suitable place ever since we started. This day he found what he wanted. Shooting down a swift, rough rapid shortly after noon, we rounded a sharp bend and shot past the mouth of a deep black gorge with the white shimmer of a big waterfall just discernible in its dusky depths. Almost immediately opposite a rocky

point jutted out into the eddy. It was thickly carpeted with moss and grass, and bright with the reds and yellows of patches of late flowers. At its base was an almost perfect circle of towering cedars and sugar pines, their dark green foliage standing out in fretwork against the pale purple mists filling the depths of a wedge-shaped bit of mountain valley behind. There were glaciers and peaks hanging giddily above, but these were obscured by the rain clouds.

In response to Roos' glad "Eureka!" Blackmore threw the boat's head sharply toward the left bank, and hard pulling just won us the edge of the eddy. Missing that, we would have run on into the rough-and-tumble of Twelve-Mile Rapids, where (as we found the next day) there was no landing for another half mile. The place looked even lovelier at close range than from the river, and Roos announced decisively that we were not going to stir from there until the sun came to give him light for his camp shots. Fortunately, this befell the next morning. After that, to the best of my recollection, we did not see the sun again until we crossed over to the U. S. A. many days later.

Roos took a lot of trouble with his camp picture, and I have since heard that it was most favourably reported upon from the studio. Setting up on the end of the point, he made his opening shot as the boat ran down the rapid (we had had to line back above for this, of course) and floundered through the swirls and whirlpools past the mouth of the gloomy gorge and its half-guessed waterfall. After landing and packing our outfit up the bank, trees were felled,

boughs cut and spread and the tent set up. Finally, we fried bacon, tossed flapjacks and baked bannocks. I could tell by his expression that Roos dearly wanted to lend a Mack Sennett "custard-pie" touch by having some one smear some one else in the face with a mushy half-baked bannock, but discretion prevailed. Qualified "smearers" there were in plenty—Andy and Blackmore were wood-choppers and I was an ex-pitcher and shot-putter,—but the designation of a "smear-ee" was quite another matter. Roos did well to stop where he did.

Pushing off about noon, we dropped down to near the head of "Twelve-Mile," and put Roos ashore on the right bank for a shot as we ran through. We had expected to land to pick him up at the foot of the rapid, but Blackmore, in order to make the picture as spectacular as possible, threw the boat right into the midst of the white stuff. There was a good deal of soft fluff flying in the air, but nothing with much weight in it. We ran through easily, but got so far over toward the left bank that it was impossible to pull into the eddy we had hoped to make. Andy and I pulled our heads off for five minutes before we could reach slack water near the left bank, and by then we were a quarter of a mile below the foot of the rapid. Andy had to go back to help Roos down over the boulders with his machine and tripod. Another mile in fast water brought us to the head of Rock Slide Rapids, and we landed on the right bank for our last stretch of lining on the Big Bend.

The Rock Slide is the narrowest point on the whole Columbia between Lake Windermere and the Pacific.

An almost perpendicular mountainside has been encroaching on the river here for many years, possibly damming it all the way across at times. From the Slide to the precipitous left bank there is an average channel seventy feet in width, through which the river rushes with tremendous velocity over and between enormous sharp-edged boulders. This pours into a cauldron-like eddy at a right-angled bend, and over the lower end of that swirling maelstrom the river spills into another narrow chute to form the *Dalles des Morts* of accursed memory. I know of no place on the upper half of the Bend where the river is less than a hundred feet wide. The Little Dalles, just below the American line, are about a hundred and forty feet across in their narrowest part, and the Great Dalles below Celilo Falls are slightly wider. Kettle Falls, Hell-Gate and Rock Island Rapids have side channels of less than a hundred feet, but the main channels are much broader. Save only the *Dalles des Morts* (which are really its continuation) the Rock Slide has no near rival anywhere on the river.

It has struck me as quite probable that the Rock Slide, and the consequent constriction of the river at that point, are of comparatively recent occurrence, almost certainly of the last hundred years. In the diaries of Ross, Cox and Franchiere, on which most of the earlier Columbian history is based, I can find no mention of anything of the kind at this point, a location readily identifiable because of its proximity to the *Dalles des Morts,* which they all mention. But in Ross' record I *do* find this significant passage:

"A little after starting (*from the Dalles des Morts*) we backed our paddles and stood still for some minutes admiring a striking curiosity. The water of a cataract creek, after shooting over the brink of a bold precipice, falls in a white sheet onto a broad, flat rock, smooth as glass, which forms the first step; then upon a second, some ten feet lower down, and lastly, on a third, somewhat lower. It then enters a subterranean vault, formed at the mouth like a funnel, and after passing through this funnel it again issues forth with a noise like distant thunder. After falling over another step it meets the front of a bold rock, which repulses back the water with such violence as to keep it whirling around in a large basin. Opposite to this rises the wing of a shelving cliff, which overhangs the basin and forces back the rising spray, refracting in the sunshine all the colours of the rainbow. The creek then enters the Columbia."

On the left bank, immediately above the *Dalles des Morts,* an extremely beautiful little waterfall leaps into the river from the cliffs, but neither this (as will readily be seen from my photograph of it) nor any other similar fall I saw in the whole length of the Columbia, bears the least suggestion of a resemblance to the remarkable cataract Ross so strikingly describes. But I *did* see a very sizable stream of water cascading right down the middle of the great rock slide, and at a point which might very well coincide with that at which Ross saw his "stairway-and-tunnel" phenomenon. Does it not seem quite possible that the latter should have undermined the cliff over and through which it was tumbling, precipitating it into the river and forming the Rock Slide of the present day?

The middle of the channel at Rock Slide was a rough, smashing cascade that looked quite capable of grinding a boat to kindling wood in a hundred feet; but to the right of it the water was considerably better. Blackmore said the chances would be all in favour of running it safely, *but,* if anything at all went wrong (such as the unshipping of an oar, for instance), it might make it hard to get into the eddy at the bend; and if we missed the eddy—Death Rapids! He didn't seem to think any further elucidation was necessary. It would be best to line the whole way down, he said.

On account of the considerable depth of water right up to the banks, the boat struck on the rocks rather less than usual; but the clamber over the jagged, fresh-fallen granite was the worst thing of the kind we encountered. I *did* get a bit of a duck here, though, but it was not near to being anything serious, and the sequel was rather amusing. Losing my footing for a moment on the only occasion I had to give Andy a lift with the boat, I floundered for a few strokes, kicked into an eddy and climbed out.

Ever since Andy had his souse and came out with empty pockets, I had taken the precaution of buttoning mine securely down before starting in to line. The buttons had resisted the best efforts of the kleptomaniacal river current, and I came out with the contents of my pocket wet but intact. But there *was* a trifling casualty even thus. A leg of my riding breeches was missing from the knee down. It was an ancient pair of East Indian *jodpurs* I was wearing (without leggings, of course), and age and rough

usage had opened a slit at the knee. Possibly I caught this somewhere on the boat without noting it in my excitement; or it is even possible the current *did* tear it off. There was nothing especially remarkable about it in any case. All the same, Blackmore and Andy always solemnly declared that the *geesly* river, baulked by my buttons of its designs on the contents of my pockets, had tried to get away with my whole pair of pants! If that was so, it had its way in the end. Before I set out on the second leg of my voyage from the foot of the Arrow Lakes, I threw the river god all that was left of that bedraggled pair of *jodpurs* as a propitiatory offering.

The deeper rumble of Death Rapids became audible above the higher-keyed grind of Rock Slide as we worked down toward the head of the intervening eddy. Of all the cataracts and cascades with sinister records on the Columbia this Dalles of the Dead has undoubtedly been the one to draw to itself the greatest share of execration. The terrific toll of lives they have claimed is unquestionably traceable to the fact that this swift, narrow chute of round-topped rollers is many times worse than it looks, especially to a comparatively inexperienced river man, and there have been many such numbered among its victims. There are two or three places in Surprise Rapids, and one or two even in Kinbasket, that the veriest greenhorn would know better than to try to run; Death Rapids it is conceivable that a novice might try, just as many of them have, and to their cost. However, it is probable that the greatest number that have died here were comparatively experienced men who were

sucked into the death-chute in spite of themselves. Of such was made up the party whose tragic fate gave the rapid its sinister name. Ross Cox, of the original Astorians, tells the story, and the account of it I am setting down here is slightly abridged from his original narrative.

On the sixteenth of April, 1817, Ross Cox's party of twenty-three left Fort George (originally and subsequently Astoria) to ascend the Columbia and cross the Rockies by the Athabaska Pass, en route Montreal. On the twenty-seventh of May they arrived at Boat Encampment after the most severe labours in dragging their boats up the rapids and making their way along the rocky shores. Seven men of the party were so weak, sick and worn out that they were unable to proceed across the mountains, so they were given the best of the canoes and provisions, and were to attempt to return down river to Spokane House, a Hudson Bay post near the mouth of the river of that name. They reached the place which has since borne the name of *Dalles des Morts* without trouble. There, in passing their canoe down over the rapids with a light cod line, it was caught in a whirlpool. The line snapped, and the canoe, with all the provisions and blankets, was lost.

The men found themselves utterly destitute, and at a time of year when it was impossible to procure any wild fruit or roots. The continual rising of the water completely inundated the beach, which compelled them to force their way through a dense forest, rendered almost impervious by a thick growth of prickly underbrush. Their only nourishment was water. On the third day a man named Macon died, and his surviving comrades, though unconscious of how soon they might be called on to follow him, divided his remains into equal parts, on which they subsisted for several days. From the

sore and swollen state of their feet, their daily progress did not exceed two or three miles. A tailor named Holmes was the next to die, and the others subsisted for some days on his emaciated remains. In a little while, of the seven men, only two remained alive—Dubois and La Pierre. La Pierre was subsequently found on the upper Arrow Lake by two Indians who were coasting it in a canoe. They took him to Kettle Falls, from where he was carried to Spokane House.

He stated that after the death of the fifth man of the party, Dubois and he remained for some days at the spot, living on the remains. When they felt strong enough to continue, they loaded themselves with as much of the flesh as they could carry; that with this they succeeded in reaching the Upper Lake, around the shores of which they wandered for some time in search of Indians; that their food at length became exhausted, and they were again reduced to the prospects of starvation. On the second night after their last meal La Pierre observed something suspicious in the conduct of Dubois, which induced him to be on his guard; and that shortly after they had lain down for the night, and while he feigned sleep, he observed Dubois cautiously opening his clasp-knife, with which he sprang at La Pierre, inflicting on the hand the blow evidently intended for the neck. A silent and desperate conflict followed, in which, after severe struggling, La Pierre succeeded in wresting the knife from his antagonist, and, having no other resource left, was finally obliged to cut Dubois' throat. It was several days after this that he was discovered by the Indians.

This was one of the earliest, and certainly the most terrible, of all the tragedies originating at the *Dalles des Morts*. There are a number of graves in the vicinity, but more numerous still are the inscriptions

on the cliffs in memory of the victims whose bodies were never recovered for burial.

Compared to what we had been having, lining down Death Rapids was comparatively simple. It was only when one got right down beside them that the terrible power of the great rolling waves became evident. From crest to trough they must have been from twelve to fifteen feet high, with the water—on account of the steep declivity and the lack of resistance from rocks—running at race-horse speed. We had become so used to expecting big boulders to underlie heavy waves that it was difficult to realize that there was all of a hundred feet of green water between these giant rollers and the great reefs of bedrock which were responsible for them.

For a quarter of a mile below where the rolling waves ceased to comb there was a green-white chaos of whirlpools and the great geyser-like up-boils where the sucked-down water was ejected again to the surface. This was another of the places where the river was said to "eat up" whole pine trees at high water, and it was not hard to believe. Even now the voracious vortices were wolfing very considerable pieces of driftwood, and one had to keep a very sharp lookout to see the spewed-forth fragments reappear at all. This was no water for a small boat or canoe. It would, for instance, have engulfed the sixteen-foot skiff which I used on the lower river as an elephant gulps a tossed peanut. But our big double-ended thirty-footer was more of a mouthful. Blackmore pushed off without hesitation as soon as we had

lined below the rollers, but *not* without reiterating the old warning about not dipping too deep, and being quick about throwing the oar free from its oar-lock if a whirlpool started to drag down the blade. We had a lively five minutes of it, what with the whirlpools trying to suck her stern under and the geysers trying to toss her bow on high; but they never had us in serious trouble. They did spin her all the way round, though, in spite of all the three of us could do to hold her, and as for our course—a chart of it would make the track cf an earthquake on a seismograph look as if drawn with a straight-edge!

Another mile took us to the head of Priest Rapids, so named because two French-Canadian priests had been drowned there. This was to be our great rapid-running picture. Bad light had prevented our getting anything of the kind in Surprise and Kinbasket rapids, and "Twelve-Mile," though white and fast, was hardly the real thing. But Priest Rapids was reputed the fastest on the whole river—certainly over twenty miles an hour, Blackmore reckoned. It had almost as much of a pitch as the upper part of the first drop of Surprise Rapids down to the abrupt fall. But, being straight as a city street and with plenty of water over the rocks, running it was simply a matter of having a large enough boat and being willing to take the soaking. Blackmore had the boat, and, for the sake of a real rip-snorting picture, he said he was willing to take the soaking. So were Andy and I.

We dropped Roos at the head of the rumbling "intake," and while Andy went down to help him set

LOOKING ACROSS TO BOAT ENCAMPMENT (*above*)
"WOOD SMOKE AT TWILIGHT" ABOVE TWELVE-MILE (*below*)

LINING DOWN ROCK SLIDE RAPIDS (*above*)

WHEN THE COLUMBIA TOOK HALF OF MY RIDING BREECHES (*below*)

up in a favourable position, Blackmore and I lined back up-stream a hundred yards so as to have a good jump on when we started. Andy joined us presently, to report that Roos appraised the "back-lighting" effect across the white caps as "cheap at a million dollars." He was going to make the shot of his life. Pushing off we laid on our oars, floating down until we caught Roos' signal to come on. Then Andy and I swung into it with all of the something like four hundred and fifty pounds of beef we scaled between us. Blackmore headed her straight down the "V" into the swiftest and roughest part of the rapid. It was a bit less tempestuous toward the right bank, but a quiet passage was not what he was looking for this trip.

The boat must have had half her length out of water when she hurdled off the top of that first wave. I couldn't see, of course, but I judged it must have been that way from the manner in which she slapped down and buried her nose under the next comber. That brought over the water in a solid green flood. Andy and I only caught it on our hunched backs, but Blackmore, on his feet and facing forward, had to withstand a full frontal attack. My one recollection of him during that mad run is that of a freshly emerged Neptune shaking his grizzly locks and trying to blink the water out of his eyes.

Our team-work, as usual, went to sixes-and-sevens the moment we hit the rough water, but neither Andy nor I stopped pulling on that account. Yelling like a couple of *locoed* Apaches, we kept slapping out with our oar-blades into every hump of water within reach,

and I have an idea that we managed to keep a considerable way even over the speeding current right to the finish. It was quite the wettest river run I ever made. A number of times during the war I was in a destroyer when something turned up to send it driving with all the speed it had—or all its plates would stand, rather—into a head sea. That meant that it made most of the run tunnelling under water. And that was the way it seemed going down Priest Rapids, only not so bad, of course. We were only about a quarter full of water when we finally pulled up to the bank in an eddy to wait for the movie man.

I could see that something had upset Roos by the droop of his shoulders, even when he was a long way off; the droop of his mouth confirmed the first impression on closer view. "You couldn't do that again, could you?" he asked Blackmore, with a furtive look in his eyes. The "Skipper" stopped bailing with a snort. "Sure I'll do it again," he growled sarcastically. "Just line the boat back where she was and I'll bring her down again—only not to-night. I'll want to get dried out first. But what's the matter anyhow? Didn't we run fast enough to suit you?"

"Guess *you* ran fast enough," was the reply; "but the film didn't. Buckled in camera. Oil-can! Washout! Out of luck!" Engulfed in a deep purple aura of gloom, Roos climbed back into the boat and asked how far it was to camp and dinner.

For a couple of miles we had a fast current with us, but by the time we reached the mouth of Downie Creek—the centre of a great gold rush half a century

ago—the river was broadening and deepening and slowing down. A half hour more of sharp pulling brought us to Keystone Creek and Boyd's Ranch, where we tied up for the night. This place had the distinction of being the only ranch on the Big Bend, but it was really little more than a clearing with a house and barn. Boyd had given his name to a rapid at the head of Revelstoke Canyon—drowned while trying to line by at high water, Blackmore said—and the present owner was an American Civil War Pensioner named Wilcox. He was wintering in California for his health, but Andy, being a friend of his, knew where to look for the key. Hardly had the frying bacon started its sizzling prelude than there came a joyous yowl at the door, and as it was opened an enormous tiger-striped tomcat bounded into the kitchen. Straight for Andy's shoulder he leaped, and the trapper's happy howl of recognition must have met him somewhere in the air. Andy hugged the ecstatically purring bundle to his breast as if it were a long-lost child, telling us between nuzzles into the arched furry back that this was "Tommy" (that was his name, of course), with whom he had spent two winters alone in his trapper's cabin. It was hard to tell which was the more delighted over this unexpected reunion, man or cat.

He had little difficulty in accounting for "Tommy's" presence at Boyd's. He had given the cat to Wilcox a season or two back, and Wilcox, when he left for California, had given him to "Wild Bill," who had a cabin ten miles farther down the river. "Bill" already had a brother of "Tommy," but a cat

of much less character. As "Bill" was much given to periodic sprees, Andy was satisfied that "Tommy," who was a great sizer-up of personality, had left him in disgust and returned to his former deserted home to shift for himself. As he would pull down rabbits as readily as an ordinary cat caught mice, this was an easy matter as long as the snow did not get too deep. Of what might happen after that Andy did not like to think. He would have to make some provision for his pet before full winter set in.

That evening we sat around the kitchen fire, telling all the cat stories we knew and quarrelling over whose turn it was to hold "Tommy" and put him through his tricks. The latter were of considerable variety. There was all the usual "sit-up," "jump-through" and "roll-over" stuff, but with such "variations" as only a trapper, snow-bound for days with nothing else to do, would have the time to conceive and perfect. For instance, if you only waved your hand in an airy spiral, "Tommy" would respond with no more than the conventional "once-over;" but a gentle tweak of the tail following the spiral, brought a roll to the left, while two tweaks directed him to the right. Similarly with his "front" and "back" somersaults, which took their inspiration from a slightly modified form of aerial spiral. Of course only Andy could get the fine work out of him, but the ordinary "jump-through" stuff he would do for any of us.

I am afraid the cat stories we told awakened, temporarily at least, a good deal of mutual distrust. Roos didn't figure greatly, but Andy and Blackmore and I were glowering back and forth at each other with

"I-suppose-you-don't-believe-*that*" expressions all evening. The two woodsmen, "hunting in couples" for the occasion, displayed considerable team-work. One of their best was of a trapper of their acquaintance—name and present address mentioned with scrupulous particularity—who had broken his leg one winter on Maloney Creek, just as he was at the end of his provisions. Dragging himself to his cabin, he lay down to die of starvation. The next morning his cat jumped in through the window with a rabbit in his mouth. Then the trapper had his great idea. Leaving the cat just enough to keep him alive, he took the rest for himself. That made the cat go on hunting, and each morning he came back with a rabbit. And so it went on until springtime brought in his partner and relief. I asked them why, if the cat was so hungry, he didn't eat the rabbit up in the woods; but they said that wasn't the way of a cat, or at least of this particular cat.

Then I told them of a night, not long before the war, that I spent with the German archæologists excavating at Babylon. Hearing a scratching on my door, I got up and found a tabby cat there. Entering the room, she nosed about under my mosquito netting for a few moments with ingratiating mewings and purrings, finally to trot out through the open door with an "I'll-see-you-again-in-a-moment" air. Presently she returned with a new-born kitten in her mouth. Nuzzling under the net and coverlets, she deposited the mewing atom in my bed, and then trotted off after another. When the whole litter of five was there, she crawled in herself and started nursing

them. I spent the night on the couch, and without a net.

According to the best of my judgment, that story of mine was the only true one told that night. And yet—confound them—they wouldn't believe it—any more than I would theirs!

Considerable feeling arose along toward bed-time as to who was going to have "Tommy" to sleep with. Roos—who hadn't cut much ice in the story-telling—came strong at this juncture by adopting cave-man tactics and simply picking "Tommy" up and walking off with him. Waiting until Roos was asleep, I crept over and, gently extricating the furry pillow from under his downy cheek, carried it off to snuggle against my own ear. Whether Andy adopted the same Sabine methods himself, I never quite made sure. Anyhow, it was out of his blankets that "Tommy" came crawling in the morning.

As we made ready to pack off, Andy was in considerable doubt as to whether it would be best to leave his pet where he was or to take him down to "Wild Bill" again. "Tommy" cut the Gordian Knot himself by following us down to the boat like a dog and leaping aboard. He was horribly upset for a while when he saw the bank slide away from him and felt the motion of the boat, but Roos, muffling the dismal yowls under his coat, kept him fairly quiet until "Wild Bill's" landing was reached. Here he became his old self again, following us with his quick little canine trot up to the cabin. Outside the door he met his twin brother, and the two, after a swift sniff of

identification, slipped away across the clearing to stalk rabbits.

"Wild Bill," as Andy had anticipated, was still in bed, but got up and welcomed us warmly as soon as he found who it was. He was a small man—much to my surprise, and looked more like a French-Canadian gentleman in reduced circumstances than the most tumultuous booze-fighter on the upper Columbia. I had heard scores of stories of his escapades in the days when Golden and Revelstoke were wide-open frontier towns and life was really worth living. But most of them just miss being "drawing-room," however, and I refrain from setting them down. There was one comparatively polite one, though, of the time he started the biggest free-for-all fight Revelstoke ever knew by using the white, woolly, cheek-cuddling poodle of a dance-hall girl to wipe the mud off his boots with. And another—but no, that one wouldn't quite pass censor.

"Bill" had shot a number of bear in the spring, and now asked Andy to take the unusually fine skins to Revelstoke and sell them for him. He also asked if we could let him have any spare provisions, as he was running very short. He was jubilant when I told him he could take everything we had left for what it had cost in Golden. That was like finding money, he said, for packing in his stuff cost him close to ten cents a pound. But it wasn't the few dollars he saved on the grub that etched a silver—nay, a roseate—lining on the sodden rain clouds for "Wild Bill" that day; rather it was the sequel to the conse-

quences of a kindly thought I had when he came down to the boat to see us off.

" 'Bill,' " I said, as he started to wring our hands in parting, "they tell me you've become a comparative teetotaler these last few years. But we have a little 'thirty per over-proof' left—just a swallow. Perhaps—for the sake of the old days . . ."

That quick, chesty cough, rumbling right from the diaphragm, was the one deepest sound of emotion I ever heard—and I've heard a fair amount of "emoting," too. "Don't mind—if I do," he mumbled brokenly, with a long intake of breath that was almost a sob. I handed him a mug—a hulking big half-pint coffee mug, it was—and uncorked the bottle. "Say when . . ."

"Thanks—won't trouble you," he muttered, snatching the bottle from me with a hand whose fingers crooked like claws. Then he inhaled another deep breath, took out his handkerchief, brushed off a place on one of the thwarts, sat down, and, pouring very deliberately, emptied the contents of the bottle to the last drop into the big mug. The bottle—a British Imperial quart—had been a little less than a quarter full; the mug was just short of brimming. "Earzow!" he mumbled, with a sweepingly comprehensive gesture with the mug. Then, crooking his elbow, he dumped the whole half pint down his throat. Diluted four-to-one, that liquid fire would have made an ordinary man wince; and "Wild Bill" downed it without a blink. Then he wiped his lips with his sleeve, set mug and bottle carefully down on the thwart, bowed low to each of us, and stepped ashore

with dignified tread. Blackmore, checking Roos' hysterical giggle with a prod of his paddle handle, pushed off into the current. "Wait!" he admonished, eyeing the still figure on the bank with the fascinated glance of a man watching a short length of fuse sputter down toward the end of a stick of dynamite.

We had not long to wait. The detonation of the dynamite was almost instantaneous. The mounting fumes of that "thirty per" fired the slumbering volcano of the old trapper as a dash of kerosene fires a bed of dormant coals. And so "Wild Bill" went wild. Dancing and whooping like an Indian, he shouted for us to come back—that he would give us his furs, his cabin, the Columbia, the Selkirks, Canada. . . . What he was going to offer next we never learned, for just then a very sobering thing occurred—"Tommy" and his twin brother, attracted by the noise, came trotting down the path from the cabin to learn what it was all about.

Andy swore that he had told "Bill" that we had brought "Tommy" back, and that "Bill" had heard him, and replied that he hoped the cat would stay this time. But even if this was true, it no longer signified. "Bill" had forgotten all about it, and *knew* that there ought to be only one tiger-striped tomcat about the place, whereas his eyes told him there were two. So he kept counting them, and stopping every now and then to hold up two fingers at us in pathetic puzzlement. Finally he began to chase them—or rather "it"—now one of "it" and now the other. The last we saw of him, as the current swept the boat round a point, he had caught "Tommy's" twin brother and

was still trying to enumerate "Tommy." Very likely by that time there were two of him in fancy as well as in fact—possibly mauve and pink ones.

Blackmore took a last whiff at the neck of the rum bottle and then tossed it gloomily into the river. "The next time you ask a man to take a 'swallow,' " he said, "probably you'll know enough to find out how big his 'swallow' is in advance."

We pulled hard against a head wind all morning, and with not much help from the current. The latter began to speed up at Rocky Point Rapids, and from there the going was lively right on through Revelstoke Canyon. Sand Slide Rapid, a fast-rolling serpentine cascade near the head of the Canyon, gave us a good wetting as Blackmore slashed down the middle of it, and he was still bailing when we ran in between the sides of the great red-and-black-walled gorge. Between cliffs not over a hundred feet apart for a considerable distance, the river rushes with great velocity, throwing itself in a roaring wave now against one side, now against the other. As the depth is very great (Blackmore said he had failed to get bottom with a hundred-and-fifty-foot line), the only things to watch out for were the cliffs and the whirlpools. Neither was a serious menace to a boat of our size at that stage of water, but the swirls would have made the run very dangerous for a skiff or canoe at any time. Unfortunately, the drizzling rain and lowering clouds made pictures of what is one of the very finest scenic stretches of the Big Bend quite out of the question. If it had been the matter of a day or two, we would gladly have gone into camp and waited for the

light; but Blackmore was inclined to think the spell of bad weather that had now set in was the beginning of an early winter, in which event we might stand-by for weeks without seeing the sky. It was just as well we did not wait. As I have already mentioned, we did not feel the touch of sunlight again until we were on the American side of the border.

From the foot of the Canyon to Blackmore's boat-house was four miles. Pulling down a broadening and slackening river flanked by ever receding mountains, we passed under the big C. P. R. bridge and tied up at four o'clock. In spite of taking it easy all the time, the last twenty miles had been run in quite a bit under two hours.

CHAPTER IX

REVELSTOKE TO THE SPOKANE

The voyage round the Big Bend, in spite of the atrocious weather, had gone so well that I had just about made up my mind to continue on down river by the time we reached Revelstoke. A letter which awaited me at the hotel there from Captain Armstrong, stating that he would be free to join me for my first week or ten days south from the foot of the lakes, was all that was needed to bring me to a decision. I wired him that I would pick him up in Nelson as soon as I had cleaned up a pile of correspondence which had pursued me in spite of all directions to the contrary, and in the meantime for him to endeavour to find a suitable boat. Nelson, as the metropolis of western British Columbia, appeared to be the only place where we would have a chance of finding what was needed in the boat line on short notice. While I wrote letters, Roos got his exposed film off to Los Angeles, laid in a new stock, and received additional instructions from Chester in connection with the new picture—the one for which the opening shots had already been made at Windermere, and which we called "The Farmer Who Would See the Sea."

As there was no swift water whatever between Revelstoke and Kootenay Rapids, I had no hesitation in

deciding to make the voyage down the Arrow Lakes by steamer. Both on the score of water-stage and weather, it was now a good month to six weeks later than the most favourable time for a through down-river voyage. Any time saved now, therefore, might be the means of avoiding so many days of winter further along. I was hoping that, with decreasing altitude and a less humid region ahead, I would at least be keeping ahead of the snows nearly if not quite all the way to Portland. I may mention here that, all in all, I played in very good luck on the score of weather. There were to be, however, a few *geesly* cold days on the river along about Wenatchee, and two or three mighty blustery blows in the Cascades.

The Arrow Lakes are merely enlargements of the Columbia, keeping throughout their lengths the same general north-to-south direction of this part of the river. The upper lake is thirty-three miles in length, and has an average width of about three miles. Sixteen miles of comparatively swift river runs from the upper to the lower lake. The latter, which is forty-two miles long and two and a half wide, is somewhat less precipitously walled than the upper lake, and there are considerable patches of cultivation here and there along its banks—mostly apple orchards. There is a steamer channel all the way up the Columbia to Revelstoke, but the present service, maintained by the Canadian Pacific at its usual high standard, starts at the head of the upper lake and finishes at West Robson, some miles down the Columbia from the foot of the lower lake. This is one of the very finest lake trips anywhere in the world; I found it an unending

source of delight, even after a fortnight of the superlative scenery of the Big Bend.

There is a stock story they tell of the Arrow Lakes, and which appears intended to convey to the simple tourist a graphic idea of the precipitousness of their rocky walls. The skipper of my steamer told it while we were ploughing down the upper lake. Seeing a man struggling in the water near the bank one day, he ran some distance off his course to throw the chap a line. Disdaining all aid, the fellow kept right on swimming toward the shore. "Don't worry about me," he shouted back; "this is only the third time I've fallen off my ranch to-day."

I told the Captain that the story sounded all right to me except in one particular—that even my glass failed to reveal any ranches for a man to fall off of. "Oh, that's all right," was the unperturbed reply; "there *was* one when that yarn was started, but I guess it fell into the lake too. But mebbe I *had* ought to keep it for the lower lake, though," he added; "there is still some un-slid ranches down there."

Nelson is a fine little city that hangs to a rocky mountainside right at the point where Kootenay Lake spills over and discharges its surplus water into a wild, white torrent that seems to be trying to atone at the last for its long delay in making up its mind to join the Columbia. Nelson was made by the rich silver-lead mines of the Kootenay district, but it was so well made that, even now with the first fine frenzy of the mining excitement over, it is still able to carry on strongly as a commercial distributing and fruit shipping centre. It is peopled by the same fine, out-

door loving folk that one finds through all of western Canada, and is especially noted for its aquatic sports. I am only sorry that I was not able to see more of both Nelson and its people.

As soon as I saw Captain Armstrong I made a clean breast to him about my failure to unearth the treasure at the Bend. He was a good sport and bore up better than one would expect a man to under the circumstances. "I wish that matter of K—— and his D. T.'s had come up before you left," was his only comment.

"Why?" I asked. "I can't see what difference that would have made. We didn't waste a lot of time digging."

"That's just it," said the Captain with a wry grin. "Wouldn't you have gone right on digging if you had known that the spell of jim-jams that finished K—— came from some stuff he got from a section-hand at Beavermouth? Now I suppose I'll have to watch my chance and run down and salvage that keg of old Scotch myself." It shows the stuff that Armstrong was made of when I say that, even after the way I had betrayed the trust he had reposed in me, he was still game to go on with the Columbia trip. That's the sort of man he was.

Boats of anywhere near the design we would need for the river were scarce, the Captain reported, but there was one which he thought might do. This proved to be a sixteen-foot, clinker-built skiff that had been constructed especially to carry an out-board motor. She had ample beam, a fair freeboard and a considerable sheer. The principal thing against her

was the square stern, and that was of less moment running down river than if we had been working up. It *did* seem just a bit like asking for trouble, tackling the Columbia in a boat built entirely for lake use; but Captain Armstrong's approval of her was quite good enough for me. Save for her amiable weakness of yielding somewhat overreadily to the seductive embraces of whirlpools—a trait common to all square-sterned craft of inconsiderable length—she proved more than equal to the task set for her. We paid fifty-five dollars for her—about half what she had cost—and there was a charge of ten dollars for expressing her to West Robson, on the Columbia.

We left Nelson by train for Castlegar, on the Columbia just below West Robson, the afternoon of October nineteenth. The track runs in sight of the Kootenay practically all of the way. There is a drop of three hundred and fifty feet in the twenty-eight miles of river between the outlet of the lake and the Columbia, with no considerable stretch that it would be safe to run with a boat. A large part of the drop occurs in two fine cataracts called Bonnington Falls, where there is an important hydro-electric plant, serving Nelson and Trail with power; but most of the rest of the way the river is one continuous series of foam-white cascades with short quiet stretches between. The last two or three miles to the river the railway runs through the remarkable colony of Russian Doukobours, with a station at Brilliant, where their big co-operative jam factory and administrative offices are located. We had a more intimate glimpse

of this interesting colony from the river the following day.

We found the express car with the boat on the siding at West Robson, and the three of us—Armstrong, Roos and myself—had little difficulty in sliding her down the quay and launching her in the Columbia. Pulling a mile down the quiet current, we tied her up for the night at the Castlegar Ferry. Then we cut across the bend through the woods for a look at Kootenay Rapids, the first stretch of fast water we were to encounter. After the rough-and-rowdy rapids of the Big Bend, this quarter-mile of white riffle looked like comparatively easy running. It was a very different sort of a craft we had now, however, and Armstrong took the occasion to give the channel a careful study. There were a lot of big black rocks cropping up all the way across, but he thought that, by keeping well in toward the right bank, we could make it without much trouble.

On the way back to the hotel at Castlegar, the Captain was hailed from the doorway of a cabin set in the midst of a fresh bit of clearing. It turned out to be a boatman who had accompanied him and Mr. Forde, of the Canadian Department of Public Works, on a part of their voyage down the Columbia in 1915. They reminisced for half an hour in the gathering twilight, talking mostly of the occasion when a whirlpool had stood their Peterboro on end in the Little Dalles. I found this just a bit disturbing, for Armstrong had already confided to me that he intended running the Little Dalles.

The boat trimmed well when we came to stow the load the next morning, but when the three of us took our places she was rather lower in the water than we had expected she was going to be. She seemed very small after Blackmore's big thirty-footer, and the water uncomfortably close at hand. She was buoyant enough out in the current, however, and responded very smartly to paddle and oars when Armstrong and I tried a few practice manœuvres. The Captain sat on his bedding roll in the stern, plying his long paddle, and I pulled a pair of oars from the forward thwart. Roos sat on the after thwart, facing Armstrong, with his tripod, camera and most of the luggage stowed between them. She was loaded to ride high by the head, as it was white water rather than whirlpools that was in immediate prospect. With a small boat and a consequent comparatively small margin of safety, one has to make his trim a sort of a compromise. For rough, sloppy rapids it is well to have the bows just about as high in the air as you can get them. On the other hand, it is likely to be fatal to get into a bad whirlpool with her too much down by the stern. As the one succeeds the other as a general rule, about the best you can do is to strike a comfortable mean based on what you know of the water ahead.

I found it very awkward for a while pulling with two oars after having worked for so long with one, and this difficulty—especially in bad water—I never quite overcame. In a really rough rapid one oar is all a man can handle properly, and he does well if he manages that. Your stroke is largely determined by

BONNINGTON FALLS OF THE KOOTENAY (*above*)

PLASTERED LOG CABIN IN THE DOUKHOBOR VILLAGE (*below*)

TRUCKING THE SKIFF THROUGH KETTLE FALLS

TWILIGHT IN THE GORGE AT KETTLE FALLS

the sort of stuff the blade is going into, and—as on the verge of an eddy—with the water to port running in one direction, and that to starboard running another, it is obviously impossible for a man handling two oars to do full justice to the situation. He simply has to do the best he can and leave the rest to the man with the paddle in the stern. When the latter is an expert with the experience of Captain Armstrong there is little likelihood of serious trouble.

The matter of keeping a lookout is also much more difficult in a small boat. In a craft with only a few inches of freeboard it is obviously out of the question for a steersman to keep his feet through a rapid, as he may do without risk in a *batteau* or canoe large enough to give him a chance to brace his knees against the sides. Armstrong effected the best compromise possible by standing and getting a good "look-see" while he could, and then settling back into a securer position when the boat struck the rough water. The three or four feet less of vantage from which to con the channel imposes a good deal of a handicap, but there is no help for it.

We ran both pitches of Kootenay Rapids easily and smartly. Her bows slapped down pretty hard when she tumbled off the tops of some of the bigger rollers, but into not the softest of the souse-holes would she put her high-held head. We took in plenty of spray, but nothing green—nothing that couldn't be bailed without stopping. It was a lot better performance than one was entitled to expect of a lake boat running her maiden rapid.

"She'll do!" chuckled the Captain with a satisfied

grin, resting on his paddle as we slid easily out of the final run of swirls; "you ought to take her right through without a lot of trouble." *"Imshallah!"* I interjected piously, anxious not to offend the River God with a display of overmuch confidence. I began to call her *"Imshallah"* in my mind from that time on, and *"Imshallah"*—"God willing"—she remained until I tied her up for her well-earned rest in a Portland boat-house. It was in the course of the next day or two that I made a propitiatory offering to the River God in the form of the remnants of the *jodpurs* he had tried so hard to snatch from me at Rock Slide Rapids. I've always had a sneaking feeling offerings of that kind are "good medicine;" that the old Greeks knew what they were doing when they squared things with the Gods in advance on venturing forth into unknown waters.

Big and Little Tin Cup Rapids, which are due to the obstruction caused by boulders washed down by the torrential Kootenay River, gave us little trouble. There is a channel of good depth right down the middle of both, and we splashed through this without getting into much besides flying foam. Just below we pulled up to the left bank and landed for a look at one of the Doukobour villages.

The Doukobours are a strange Russian religious sect, with beliefs and observances quite at variance with those of the Greek Church. Indeed, it was the persecutions of the Orthodox Russians that were responsible for driving considerable numbers of them to Canada. They are best known in America, not for their indefatigable industry and many other good

traits, but for their highly original form of protesting when they have fancied that certain of their rights were being restricted by Canadian law. On repeated occasions of this kind whole colonies of them—men, women and children—have thrown aside their every rag of clothing and started off marching about the country. Perhaps it is not strange that more has been written about these strange pilgrimages than of the fact that the Doukobours have cleared and brought to a high state of productivity many square miles of land that, but for their unflagging energy, would still be worthless. In spite of their somewhat unconventional habits, these simple people have been an incalculably valuable economic asset to western Canada.

On the off chance that there might be an incipient "protest" brewing, Roos took his movie outfit ashore with him. He met with no luck. Indeed, we found the women of the astonishingly clean little village of plastered and whitewashed cabins extremely shy of even our hand cameras. The Captain thought that this was probably due to the fact that they had been a good deal pestered by kodak fiends while Godivaing round the country on some of their protest marches. "The people were very indignant about it," he said; "but I never heard of any one pulling down their blinds." Coventry was really very "Victorian" in its attitude toward Lady Godiva's "protest."

There was good swift water all the way from Castlegar to Trail, and we averaged close to nine miles an hour during the time we were on the river. At China

Bar the river was a good deal spread out, running in channels between low gravel islands. Any one of these was runnable for a small boat, and we did not need to keep to the main channel that had once been maintained for steamers. Sixteen miles below Castlegar, and about half a mile below the mouth of Sullivan Creek, there was a long black reef of basaltic rock stretching a third of the way across the river. We shot past it without difficulty by keeping near the left bank. The sulphurous fumes of the big smelter blotching the southern sky with saffron and coppery red clouds indicated that we were nearing Trail. The stacks, with the town below and beyond, came into view just as we hit the head of a fast-running riffle. We ran the last half mile at a swift clip, pulling up into about the only place that looked like an eddy on the Trail side of the river. That this proved to be the slack water behind the crumbling city dump could not be helped. He who rides the running road cannot be too particular about his landing places.

We reached Trail before noon, and, so far as time was concerned, could just as well have run right on across the American line to Northport that afternoon. However, October twenty-first turned out to be a date of considerable importance to British Columbians, for it was the day of the election to determine whether that province should continue dry or, as the proponents of wetness euphemized it, return to "moderation." As there was a special provision by which voters absent from their place of registration could cast their ballots wherever they chanced to be, Captain Armstrong was anxious to stop over and do

his bit for "moderation." Indeed, I was a bit worried at first for fear, by way of compensating in a measure for the injury we had done him in failing to come through with the treasure from the Big Bend, he would expect Roos and me to put in a few absentee ballots for "moderation." There was a rumour about that a vote for "moderation" would be later redeemable—in case "moderation" carried, of course—in the voter's weight of the old familiar juice. I never got further than a pencilled computation on the "temperance" bar of the Crown Point Hotel that two hundred and thirty-five pounds (I was down to that by now) would work out to something like one hundred seventeen and a half quarts. This on the rule that "A pint's a pound, the world round." That was as far as I got, I say, for there seemed rather too much of a chance of international complications sooner or later. But I am still wondering just what *is* the law covering the case of a man who sells his vote in a foreign country—and for his weight in whisky that he would probably never have delivered to him. I doubt very much if there is any precedent to go by.

Between votes—or rather before Captain Armstrong voted—we took the occasion to go over the smelter of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company. It is one of the most modern plants of its kind in the world, and treats ore from all over western Canada. We were greatly interested in the recently installed zinc-leaching plant for the handling of an especially refractory ore from the company's own mine in the Kootenays. This ore had resisted for years every attempt to extract its zinc at a profit,

and the perfection of the intricate process through which it is now put at Trail has made a mine, which would otherwise have remained practically valueless, worth untold millions. The two thousand and more employés of the smelter are the main factor in the prosperity of this live and by no means unattractive little town.

We had two very emphatic warnings before leaving Trail the next morning—one was on no account to attempt to take any drinkables across the line by the river, and the other was to keep a weather eye lifting in running the rapids at the Rock Islands, two miles below town. As we reached the latter before we did the International Boundary Line, we started 'wareing the rapids first. This was by no means as empty a warning as many I was to have later. The islands proved to be two enormous granite rocks, between which the river rushed with great velocity. The Captain headed the boat into the deep, swift channel to the right, avoiding by a couple of yards a walloping whale of a whirlpool that came spinning right past the bow. I didn't see it, of course, until it passed astern; but it looked to me then as though its whirling centre was depressed a good three feet below the surface of the river, and with a black, bottomless funnel opening out of that. I was just about to register "nonchalance" by getting off my "all-day-sucker" joke, when I suddenly felt the thwart beneath me begin to push upwards like the floor of a jerkily-started elevator, only with a rotary action. Fanning empty air with both oars, I was saved from falling backwards by the forty-five degree up-tilt of the boat.

Way beneath me—down below the surface of the river —Armstrong, pop-eyed, was leaning sharply forward to keep from being dumped out over the stern. Roos, with a death-grip on either gunwale, was trying to keep from falling into the Captain's lap. Round we went like a prancing horse, and just as the boat had completed the hundred and eighty degrees that headed her momentarily up-river, something seemed to drop away beneath her bottom, and as she sunk into the hole there came a great snorting "ku-whouf!" and about a barrel of water came pouring its solid green flood over the stern and, incidentally, the Captain. A couple of seconds later the boat had completed her round and settled back on a comparatively even keel as hard-plied oars and paddle wrenched her out of the grip of the Thing that had held her in its clutch. I saw it plainly as it did its dervish dance of disappointment as we drew away. It looked to me not over half as large as that first one which the Captain had so cleverly avoided.

"That was about the way we got caught in the Little Dalles," observed Armstrong when we were in quieter water again. "Only it was a worse whirlpool than that one that did it. This square stern gives the water more of a grip than it can get on a canoe. We'll have to watch out for it."

Save over a broad, shallow bar across the current at the mouth of the Salmon, there was deep, swift water all the way to Waneta, the Canadian Customs station. Here we landed Roos to await the morning train from Nelson to Spokane and go through to Northport to arrange the American Customs formal-

ities. At a final conference we decided to heed the warning about not attempting to carry any drinkables openly into the United States. Stowing what little there was left where not the most lynx-eyed or ferret-nosed Customs Officer could ever get at it, we pushed off.

There is a fairly fast current all the way to Northport, but from the fact that we made the eleven miles in about three-quarters of an hour, it seems likely that, between paddle and oars, the boat was driven somewhat faster than the Columbia. Just below Waneta and immediately above the International Boundary Line, the Pend d'Oreille or Clark's Fork flows, or rather falls into the Columbia. This really magnificent stream comes tumbling down a sheer-walled gorge in fall after fall, several of which can be seen in narrowing perspective from the Columbia itself. Its final leap is over a ten-feet-high ledge which extends all the way across its two-hundred-feet-wide mouth. Above this fine cataract it is the Pend d'Oreille, below it, the Columbia. I know of no place where two such rivers come together with such fine spectacular effect, in a way so fitting to the character of each.

The Pend d'Oreille is generally rated as the principal tributary of the upper Columbia. Although the Kootenay—because it flows through a region of considerably greater annual rainfall—carries rather the more water of the two, the Pend d'Oreille is longer and drains a far more extensive watershed—that lying between the main chain of the Rockies and the Bitter Root and Cœur d'Alene ranges. Great as is the

combined discharge of these two fine rivers, their effect on the Columbia is not apparent to the eye. If anything, the latter looks a bigger stream where it flows out of the lower Arrow Lake, above the Kootenay, than it does where it crosses the American Line below the Pend d'Oreille. As a matter of fact, its flow must be nearly doubled at the latter point, but the swifter current reduces its apparent volume. Nothing but the most careful computations, based on speed of current and area of cross-section, will give anything approximating the real discharge of a river.

I was a good deal interested in the Pend d'Oreille, because it was on one of its upper tributaries, the Flathead in Montana, that I had made my first timid effort at rapid-running a good many years previously. It hadn't been a brilliant success—for two logs tied together with ropes hardly make the ideal of a raft; but the glamour of the hare-brained stunt had survived the wetting. I should dearly have loved to explore that wonderful black-walled canyon, with its unending succession of cataracts and cascades, but lack of time forbade. The drizzling rain made it impossible even to get a good photograph of the fine frenzy of that final mad leap into the Columbia.

It was funny the way that rain acted. For something like a month now there had been only two or three days of reasonably fair weather, and for the last fortnight the sun had hardly been glimpsed at all. Pulling up to Waneta in a clammy drizzle, Captain Armstrong remarked, as he drew the collar of his water-proof closer to decrease the drainage down the back of his neck, that he reckoned they wouldn't stand

for weather of that kind over in "God's Country." As there was nothing but sodden clouds to the southward, I didn't feel like giving him any definite assurance on the point at the moment. However, when we crossed the Line an hour later the rain had ceased. A couple of miles farther down the clouds were breaking up, and at Northport the sun was shining. I did not have another rainy day, nor even one more than slightly overcast, until I was almost at the Cascades. I trust my good Canadian friend was as deeply impressed as he claimed to be.

Beyond a sharp riffle between jagged rock islands above Deadman's Eddy, and one or two shallow boulder bars where the channels were a bit obscure, it was good open-and-above-board water all the way to Northport. The "Eddy" is a whirling back-sweep of water at a bend of the river, and is supposed to hold up for inspection everything floatable that the Columbia brings down from Canada. "Funny they never thought of calling it 'Customs Eddy,'" Armstrong said. From the condition of its littered banks, it looked to be almost as prolific of "pickings" as the great drift pile of Kinbasket Lake. Being near a town, however, it is doubtless much more thoroughly gone over.

We tied up below the Ferry at Northport, which was the rendezvous to which Roos was to bring the Customs Inspector. The ferry-man, who had once seen Captain Armstrong run the rapids of the upper Kootenay with one of his steamers, was greatly elated over having such a notable walking the quarterdeck of his own humble craft. Armstrong, in turn, was

scarcely less excited over an automatic pumping contrivance which the ferry-man had rigged up to keep his pontoons dry. After waiting for an hour, we took our bags and walked up to the hotel on the main street at the top of the bluff. We found Roos in the office reading a last year's haberdashery catalogue. He said he had not expected us for a couple of hours yet, and that he had arranged for inspection at three o'clock. That gave us time for a bath and lunch ourselves. As our bags were now well beyond the tentacles of the Customs, we did a little figuring on the table-cloth between courses. By this we proved that, had we had the nerve to disregard the warnings of well-meaning friends in Trail and filled our handbags with Scotch instead of personal effects, Armstrong would now have had fourteen quarts up in his room, and I eighteen quarts. Then the waitress gave us current local quotations, and we started to figure values. I shall never know whether or not there would have been room on the corner of that gravy and egg broidered napery for my stupendous total. Just as I was beginning to run over the edge, the Inspector came in and asked if we would mind letting him see those two suit-cases we had brought to the hotel with us! Many and various are the joys of virtue, but none of the others comparable to that one which sets you aglow as you say "Search me!" when, by the special intervention of the providence which watches over fools and drunks, you haven't got goods.

The inspection, both at the hotel and at the ferry, was *fairly* perfunctory, though I did notice that the Customs man assumed a rather springy step when he

trod the light inner bottom of the skiff. Roos filmed the operation as a part of the picture, I acting as much as I could like I thought a farmer would act at his first Customs inspection. Roos, complaining that I didn't "do it natural," wanted to shoot over again. The Customs man was willing, but Armstrong and I, trudging purposefully off up the road, refused to return. Roos followed us to the hotel in considerable dudgeon. "Why wouldn't you let me make that shot over?" he asked. "It was an 'oil-can'—rotten!" "Because," I replied evenly, looking him straight in the eye, "I was afraid the Inspector might try that jig-a-jig step of his on the false bottom in the bow if we put him through the show a second time. I don't believe in tempting providence. We can get a street-car conductor and make that Inspection shot again in Portland. This isn't . . ." "You're right," cut in Roos, with a dawning grin of comprehension. "I beg your pardon. You're a deeper bird than I gave you credit for. Or perhaps it was the Captain. . . ."

A heavy fog filled the river gorge from bank to bank when we pushed off the following morning, and we had to nose down carefully to avoid the piers of the bridge of the Great Northern branch line to Rossland. A quarter of a mile farther down the river began shoaling over gravel bars, and out of the mist ahead came the rumble of water tumbling over boulders. This was an inconsiderable riffle called Bishop's Rapid, but the Captain was too old a river man to care to go into it without light to choose his channel. A half hour's wait on a gravel bar in midstream brought a lifting of the fog, and we ran through by

WAITING FOR THE FOG TO LIFT ABOVE BISHOP'S RAPIDS

ROSS AND ARMSTRONG REGISTERING "GLOOM"

THE "INTAKE" AT THE LITTLE DALLES *(above)*

WHERE WE STARTED TO LINE THE LITTLE DALLES *(below)*

the right hand of the two shallow channels without difficulty. In brilliant sunshine we pulled down a broad stretch of deep and rapidly slackening water to the gleaming white lime-stone barrier at the head of the Little Dalles.

All of Northport had been a unit in warning us not to attempt to run the Little Dalles. Nearly every one, as far as I could judge, had lost some relative there, and one man gave a very circumstantial description of how he had seen a big *batteau,* with six Swede lumbermen, sucked out of sight there, never to reappear. On cross-questioning, he admitted that this was at high water, and that there was nothing like so much "suck" in the whirlpools at the present stage. The Captain, however, having just received telephonic word from Nelson that "moderation" had carried in B. C. by a decisive majority, felt that nothing short of running the Little Dalles would be adequate celebration. He had managed to come through right-side-up in a Peterboro once, and he thought our skiff ought to be equal to the stunt. He held that opinion just long enough for him to climb to the top of the cliff that forms the left wall of river at the gorge and take one good, long, comprehensive look into the depths.

"Nothing doing," he said, with a decisive shake of his broad-brimmed Stetson. "The river's four or five feet higher than when we ran through here in 'fifteen, and that makes all the difference. It was touch-and-go for a minute then, and now it's out of the question for a small boat. If we can't line, we'll have to find some way to portage."

The Little Dalles are formed by a great reef of limestone which, at one time, probably made a dam all the way across the river. The narrow channel which the Columbia has worn through the stone is less than two hundred feet in width for a considerable distance, and has lofty perpendicular walls. The river is divided by a small rock island into two channels at the head, the main one, to the right, being about two hundred feet in width, and the narrow left-hand one not over forty feet. The depth of the main channel is very great—probably much greater than its narrowest width; so that here, as also at Tumwater and "Five-Mile" in the Great Dalles, it may be truly said that the Columbia "has to turn on its side to wriggle through."

It is that little rock island at the head of the gorge, extending, as it does, almost longitudinally *across* the current that makes all the trouble. It starts one set of whirlpools running down the right-hand channel and another set down the left-hand. Every one of the vortices in this dual series of spinning "suckers" is more than one would care to take any liberties with if it could be avoided; and either line of whirlpools, taken alone, probably *could* be avoided. The impassable barrage comes a hundred feet below the point where the left-hand torrent precipitates itself at right-angles into the current of the right-hand one, and the two lines of whirlpools converge in a "V" and form one big walloping sockdolager. Him there would still be room to run by if he were "whouf-ing" there alone; but his satellites won't have it. Their accursed team-work is such that the spreading "V"

above catches everything that comes down stream and feeds it into the maw of the big whirlpool as into a hopper. Logs, ties, shingle-bolts, fence-posts—all the refuse of sawmills and the flotsam and jetsam of farms and towns—are gulped with a "whouf!" and when they reappear again, a mile or two down river, they are all scoured smooth and round-cornered by their passage through the monster's alimentary canal.

"I'm sorry not to celebrate the victory of 'moderation,'" said the Captain finally, with another regretful shake of his head; "but 'moderation' begins at home. It would be immoderately foolish to put the skiff into that line of whirlpools, the way they're running now." Roos was the only one who was inclined to dispute that decision, and as his part would have been to stand out on the brink of the cliff and turn the crank, it was only natural that he should take the "artistic" rather than the "humanitarian" view.

As a last resort before portaging, we tried lining down, starting at the head of the narrow left-hand channel. We gave it up at the end of a hundred feet. A monkey at one end of the line and a log of wood at the other would have made the only combination calculated to get by that way. It was no job for a shaky-kneed man and a sinkable boat. There was nothing to do but look up a team or truck. What appeared to be the remains of the ancient portage road ran down from an abandoned farm to the river, and it seemed likely some kind of vehicle could be brought over it.

As the highway ran along the bench, four or five hundred feet above the river, I set off by the railroad

track, which was comparatively close at hand. At the end of a couple of miles I reached a small station called Marble, the shipping point for a large apple orchard project financed by the J. G. White Company of New York. Mr. Reed, the resident manager, immediately ordered a powerful team and wagon placed at my disposal, and with that I returned northward over the highway. We had a rough time getting down through brush and deadfalls to the river, but finally made it without an upset. Roos having finished what pictures he wanted—including one of the Captain standing on the brink of the cliff and registering "surprise-cum-disappointment-cum-disgust,"—we loaded the skiff and our outfit onto the wagon and started the long climb up to the top of the bench. The discovery of an overgrown but still passable road offered a better route than that followed in coming down, and we made the highway, and on to the village, in good time. Mr. Reed dangled the bait of a French *chef* and rooms in the company's hotel as an inducement to spend the night with him, but we had not the time to accept the kind invitation. His ready courtesy was of the kind which I learned later I could expect as a matter of course all along the river. Never did I have trouble in getting help when I needed it, and when it was charged for, it was almost invariably an under rather than an over-charge. The running road is the one place left where the people have not been spoiled as have those on the highways frequented by motor tourists.

Launching the boat from the Marble Ferry at four o'clock, we pulled off in a good current in the hope

of reaching Bossburg before dark. Between the windings of the river and several considerable stretches of slack water, however, our progress was less than anticipated. Shut in by high hills on both sides, night descended early upon the river, and at five-thirty I found myself pulling in Stygian blackness. Knowing there was no really bad water ahead, the Captain let her slide through a couple of easy riffles, the white-topped waves barely guessed as they flagged us with ghostly signals. But a deepening growl, borne on the wings of the slight up-river night-breeze, demanded more consideration. No one but a lunatic goes into a strange rapid in a poor light, to say nothing of complete darkness. Pulling into an eddy by the left bank, we stopped and listened. The roar, though distant, was unmistakable. Water was tumbling among rocks at a fairly good rate, certainly too fast to warrant going into it in the dark.

While we were debating what to do, a black figure silhouetted itself against the star-gleams at the top of the low bank. "Hello, there!" hailed the Captain. "Can you tell us how far it is to Bossburg?" "*This* is Bossburg," was the surprising but gratifying response. "You're there—that is, you're here." It proved to be the local ferryman, and Columbia ferrymen are always obliging and always intelligent, at least in matters relating to the river. Tying up the boat, we left our stuff in his nearby house and sought the hotel with our hand-bags. It was not a promising looking hotel when we found it, for Bossburg was that saddest of living things, an all-but-extinguished boom-town; but the very kindly old couple who lived

there and catered to the occasional wayfarer bustled about and got us a corking good meal—fried chicken and biscuits as light as the whipped cream we had on the candied peaches—and our beds were clean and comfortable.

As we were now but a few miles above Kettle Falls, the most complete obstruction in the whole length of the Columbia, I took the occasion to telephone ahead for a truck with which to make the very considerable portage. There would be two or three miles at the falls in any case, Captain Armstrong said, and he was also inclined to think it would be advisable to extend the portage to the foot of Grand Rapids, and thus save a day's hard lining. It was arranged that the truck should meet us at the ruins of the old Hudson Bay post, on the east bank some distance above the upper fall.

We pushed off from Bossburg at eight o'clock on the morning of October twenty-third. The water was slack for several hundred yards, which was found to be due to a reef extending all of the way across the river and forming the rapid which we had heard growling in the dark. This was called "Six Mile," and while it would have been an uncomfortable place to tangle up with in the night, it was simple running with the light of day. "Five Mile," a bit farther down, was studded with big black rocks, but none of them hard to avoid. As we were running rather ahead of the time of our rendezvous with the truck, we stretched our legs the length and back of the main street of Marcus, a growing little town which is the junction point for the Boundary Branch of the Great

Northern. We passed the mouth of the Kettle River shortly after running under the railway bridge, and a pull across a big eddy carried us to the lake-like stretch of water backed up by the rocky obstructions responsible for Kettle Falls. The roar of the latter filled the air as we headed into a shallow, mud-bottomed lagoon widening riverward from the mouth of a small creek and beached the skiff under a yellowing fringe of willows. The site of the historic post was in an extremely aged apple orchard immediately above. It was one of those "inevitable" spots, where the *voyageurs* of all time passing up or down the river must have begun or ended their portages. I was trying to conjure up pictures of a few of these in my mind, when the chug-chugging of an engine somewhere among the pines of the distant hillside recalled me to a realization of the fact that it was time to get ready for my own portage. Before we had our stuff out of the boat the truck had come to a throbbing standstill beyond the fringe of the willows. It promised to be an easier portage than some of our predecessors had had, in any event.

To maintain his "continuity," Roos filmed the skiff being taken out of the water and loaded upon the truck, the truck passing down the main street of the town of Kettle Falls, and a final launching in the river seven miles below. Half way into town we passed an old Indian mission that must have been about contemporaneous with Hudson Bay operations. Although no nails had been used in its construction, the ancient building, with its high-pitched roof, still survived in a comparatively good state of preserva-

tion. The town is some little distance below the Falls, and quite out of sight of the river, which flows here between very high banks. We stopped at the hotel for lunch before completing the portage.

After talking the situation over with Captain Armstrong, I decided to fall in with his suggestion to pass Grand Rapids as well as Kettle Falls in the portage. There were only about five miles of boatable water between the foot of the latter and the head of the former, and then an arduous three-quarters of a mile of lining that would have entailed the loss of another day. There is a drop of twelve feet in about twelve hundred yards in Grand Rapids, with nothing approaching a clear channel among the huge black basaltic rocks that have been scattered about through them as from a big pepper shaker. As far as I could learn, there is no record of any kind of a man-propelled craft of whatever size ever having run through and survived, but a small stern-wheeler, the *Shoshone,* was run down several years ago at high water. She reached the foot a good deal of a hulk, but still right side up. This is rated as one of the maddest things ever done with a steamer on the Columbia, and the fact that it did not end in complete disaster is reckoned by old river men as having been due in about equal parts to the inflexible nerve of her skipper and the intervention of the special providence that makes a point of watching over mortals who do things like that. I met Captain McDermid a fortnight later in Potaris. He told me then, what I hadn't heard before, that he took his wife and children with him. "Nellie thought a lot of both me and the little old

Shoshone," he said with a wistful smile, "and she reckoned that, if we went, she wouldn't exactly like to be left here alone. And so—I never could refuse Nellie anything—I took her along. And now she and the *Shoshone* are both gone." He was a wonderful chap—McDermid. All old Columbia River skippers are. They wouldn't have survived if they hadn't been.

There was a low bench on the left bank, about a mile below the foot of Grand Rapids, which could be reached by a rough road, and from which the boat could be slid down over the rocks to the river. Running to this point with the truck, we left our heavier outfit at a road camp and dropped the boat at the water's edge, ready for launching the following morning. Returning to the town, we were driven up to the Falls by Dr. Baldwin, a prominent member of this live and attractive little community, where Roos made a number of shots. The upper or main fall has a vertical drop of fifteen feet at low water, while the lower fall is really a rough tumbling cascade with a drop of ten feet in a quarter of a mile. The river is divided at the head of the Falls by an arrow-shaped rock island, the main channel being the one to the right. The left-hand channel loops in a broad "V" around the island and, running between precipitous walls, accomplishes in a beautiful rapid the same drop that the main channel does by the upper fall. A rocky peninsula, extending squarely across the course of the left-hand channel, forces the rolling current of the latter practically to turn a somersault before accepting the dictum that it must double back

northward for five or six hundred feet before uniting with the main river. It was the savage swirling of water in that rock-walled elbow where the "somersault" takes place that prompted the imaginative French-Canadian *voyageurs* to apply the appropriately descriptive name of *Chaudière* to the boiling maelstrom.

Up to the present the development of the enormous power running to waste over Kettle Falls has gone little further than the dreams of the brave community of optimists who have been attracted there in the belief that a material asset of such incalculable value cannot always be ignored in a growing country like our own. And they are right, of course, but a few years ahead of time. It is only the children and grandchildren of the living pioneers of the Columbia who will see more than the beginning of its untold millions of horse-power broken to harness. And in the meantime the optimists of Kettle Falls are turning their attention to agriculture and horticulture. Never have I seen finer apple orchards than those through which we drove on the way to resume our down-river voyage.

The point from which we pushed off at ten o'clock on the morning of October twenty-fourth must have been only a little below that at which Lieutenant Symons launched the *batteau* for his historic voyage to the mouth of the Snake in 1881. Forty years have gone by since that memorable undertaking, yet Symons' report is to-day not only the most accurate description of an upper Columbia voyage that has ever been written, but also the most readable. During

the time I was running the three hundred and fifty miles of river surveyed by Lieutenant Symons, I found his admirable report only less fascinating on the human side than it was of material assistance on the practical.

Of his preparations for the voyage Lieutenant Symons writes:

"I was fortunate enough to procure from John Rickey, a settler and trader, who lives at the Grand Rapids, a strongly built *batteau*, and had his assistance in selecting a crew of Indians for the journey. The *batteau* was about thirty feet long, four feet wide at the gunwales, and two feet deep, and is as small a boat as the voyage should ever be attempted in, if it is contemplated to go through all the rapids. My first lookout had been to secure the services of 'Old Pierre Agare' as steersman, and I had to carry on negotiations with him for several days before he finally consented to go. Old Pierre is the only one of the old Hudson Bay *voyageurs* now left who knows the river thoroughly at all stages of water, from Colville to its mouth. . . . The old man is seventy years of age, and hale and hearty, although his eyesight is somewhat defective. . . . The other Indians engaged were Pen-waw, Big Pierre, Little Pierre, and Joseph. They had never made the trip all the way down the river, and their minds were full of the dangers and terrors of the great rapids below, and it was a long time before we could prevail upon them to go, by promising them a high price and stipulating for their return by rail and stage. Old Pierre and John Rickey laboured and talked with them long and faithfully, to gain their consent, and I am sure that they started off with as many misgivings about getting safely through as we did who had to trust our lives to their skill, confidence and obedience."

Lieutenant Symons does not state whether any confusion ever arose as a consequence of the fact that three of his five Indians bore the inevitable French-Canadian name of "Pierre." Of the method of work followed by himself and his topographical assistant, Downing, throughout the voyage, he writes:

"Mr. Downing and myself worked independently in getting as thorough knowledge of the river as possible, he taking the courses with a prismatic compass, and estimating distances by the eye, and sketching in the topographical features of the surrounding country, while I estimated also the distances to marked points, and paid particular attention to the bed of the river, sounding wherever there were any indications of shallowness. Each evening we compared notes as to distances, and we found them to come out very well together, the greatest difference being six and three-fourths miles in a day's run of sixty-four miles. Some days they were identical. The total distance from our starting point . . . to the mouth of the Snake River was estimated by Mr. Downing to be three hundred and sixty-three miles, and by myself to be three hundred and fifty. His distances were obtained by estimating how far it was to some marked point ahead, and correcting it when the point was reached; mine by the time required to pass over the distances, in which the elements considered were the swiftness of the current and the labour of the oarsmen."

I may state that it was only rarely that we found the distances arrived at by Lieutenant Symons and Mr. Downing to be greatly at variance with those established by later surveys. In the matter of bars, rapids, currents, channels and similar things, there appeared to have been astonishingly little change in

the four decades that had elapsed since he had made his observations. Where he advised, for instance, taking the right-hand in preference to the middle or left-hand channels, it was not often that we went far wrong in heeding the direction. Bars of gravel, of course, shift from season to season, but reefs and projections of the native rock are rarely altered by more than a negligible erosion. The prominent topographical features—cliffs, headlands, *coulees,* mountains—are immutable, and for mile after mile, bend after bend, we picked them up just as Symons reported them.

The river is broad and slow for a few miles below Grand Rapids (they are called Rickey's Rapids locally), with steep-sided benches rising on either hand, and the green of apple orchards showing in bright fringes along their brinks. There had been the usual warnings in Kettle Falls of a bad rapid to be encountered "somewhere below," but the data available on this part of the river made us practically certain that nothing worse than minor riffles existed until the swift run of Spokane Rapids was reached. Seven miles below Grand Rapids several islands of black basalt contracted the river considerably, but any one of two or three channels offered an easy way through them. The highest of them had a driftwood crown that was not less than fifty feet above the present stage of the river, showing graphically the great rise and fall at this point.

At the shallow San Poil bar we saw some Indians from the Colville Reservation fishing for salmon—the crooked-nosed "dogs" of the final run. If they

were of the tribe from which the bar must have been named, civilization had brought them its blessing in the form of hair-restorer. They were as hirsute a lot of ruffians as one could expect to find out of Bolshevia—and as dirty.

Turtle Rapid was the worst looking place we found during the day, but the menace was more apparent than real. The riffle took its name from a number of turtle-backed outcroppings of bedrock pushing up all the way across the river. The current was swift and deep, making it just the sort of place one would have expected to encounter bad swirls. These were, indeed, making a good deal of a stir at the foot of several of the narrow side runs, but by the broader middle channel which we followed the going was comparatively smooth. We finished an easy day by tying up at four o'clock where the road to the Colville Reservation comes down to the boulder-bordered bank at Hunter's Ferry.

Columbia River ferry-men are always kindly and hospitable, and this one invited us to sleep on his hay and cook our meals in his kitchen. He was an amiable "cracker" from Kentucky, with a delectable drawl, a tired-looking wife and a houseful of children. Ferry-men's wives always have many children. This one was still pretty, though, and her droop—for a few years yet—would be rather appealing than otherwise. I couldn't be quite sure—from a remark she made—whether she had a sense of humor, or whether she had not. Seeing her sitting by the kitchen stove with a baby crooked into her left arm, a two-year-old on her lap, and a three-year-old riding her

foot, the while she was trying to fry eggs, bake biscuit and boil potatoes, I observed, by way of bringing a brighter atmosphere with my presence, that it was a pity that the human race hadn't been crossed with octopi, so that young mothers would have enough arms to do their work with. She nodded approvingly at first, brightening visibly at the emancipative vision conjured up in her tired brain, but after five minutes of serious cogitation relapsed into gloom. "I reckon it wouldn't be any use, mistah," she said finally; "them octupusses would only give the young 'uns mo' ahms to find troubl' with." Now *did* she have a sense of humour, or did she not?

We had a distinctly bad night of it hitting the hay. The mow was built with a horseshoe-shaped manger running round three sides of it, into which the hay was supposed to descend by gravity as the cows devoured what was below. As a labour-saving device it had a good deal to recommend it, but as a place to sleep—well, it might not have been so bad if each of the dozen cows had not been belled, and if the weight of our tired bodies on the hay had not kept pressing it into the manger all night, and so made a continuous performance of feeding and that bovine bell-chorus. I dozed off for a spell along toward morning, awakening from a Chinese-gong nightmare to find my bed tilted down at an angle of forty-five degrees and a rough tongue lapping my face. With most of my mattress eaten up, I was all but in the manger myself. Turning out at daybreak, we pushed off at an early hour.

A run of nine miles, made in about an hour, took

us to Gerome, where another ferry crossed to the west or Colville Reservation bank. A couple of swift, shallow rapids above and below Roger's Bar was the only rough water encountered. We were looking for a point from which Spokane could be reached by car, as Captain Armstrong, who had originally planned to go with us only to Kettle Falls, was now quite at the end of the time he was free to remain away from Nelson and business. There were two reasons for our making a temporary halt at Gerome Ferry. One was the fact that Spokane could be reached as readily from there as from any point lower down, and the other was Ike Emerson. I shall have so much to say of Ike a bit further along that I shall no more than introduce him for the moment.

As much of the worst water on the American course of the Columbia occurs in the two hundred and thirty miles between the head of Spokane Rapids and the foot of Priest Rapids,[1] I was considerably concerned about finding a good river man to take Captain Armstrong's place and help me with the boat. Roos made no pretensions to river usefulness, and I was reluctant to go into some of the rapids that I knew were ahead of us without a dependable man to handle the steering paddle and to help with lining. Men of this kind were scarce, it appeared—even more so than on the Big Bend, in Canada, where there was a certain amount of logging and trapping going on. Two or three ferry-men had shaken their heads when I

[1] Not be confused with the rapids of the same name we had run on the Big Bend in Canada.

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brought the matter up. There was nothing they would like better if they were free, they said, but, as ferries couldn't be expected to run by themselves, that was out of the question on such short notice.

It was that genial "cracker" at Hunter's Ferry who was the first to mention Ike Emerson. Ike would be just my man, he said, with that unmistakable grin that a man grins when the person he speaks of is some kind of a "character." Or, leastways, Ike would be just my man—*if I could find him*. "And where shall I be likely to find him?" I asked. He wasn't quite sure about that, but probably "daun rivah sumwhah." There was no telling about Ike, it appeared. Once he had been seen to sink when his raft had gone to pieces in Hell Gate, and he had been mourned as dead for a fortnight. At the end of that time he had turned up in Kettle Falls, but quite unable—or else unwilling—to tell why the river had carried him eighty-five miles *up* stream instead of down to the Pacific. A keg of moonshine which had been Ike's fellow passenger on the ill-fated raft *may* have had something to do both with the wreck and that long up-stream swim after the wreck. At any rate, it had never been explained. However, Gerome was Ike's headquarters—if any place might be called that for a man who lived on or in the river most of the time—and that would be the place to inquire for him.

When I asked the ferry-man at Gerome if Ike Emerson had been seen thereabouts recently, he grinned the same sort of grin his colleague at Hunter's had grinned when the same subject was under discussion. Yes, he had seen Ike only the night be-

fore. He was a real old river rat; just the man I wanted—*if I could find him.* He was as hard as a flea to put your hand on when you *did* want him, though. Well, it took us four hours to run our man down, but luck was with us in the end. Every lumberjack, farmer and Indian that we asked about Ike, grinned that same grin, dropped whatever he was doing and joined in the search. There were a score of us when the "View Halloo" was finally sounded, and we looked more like a lynching party on vengeance bent than anything else I can think of. Ike, who was digging potatoes (of all the things in the world for a river rat to be doing), glowered suspiciously as we debouched from a *coulee* and streamed down toward him, but his brow cleared instantly when I hastily told him what we had come for.

You bet, he would go with us. But, wait a moment! Why should we not go with him? He was overdue with a raft of logs and cordwood he had contracted to take down below Hell Gate, and was just about to get to work building it. We could just throw our boat aboard, and off we would go together. If he could get enough help, he could have the raft ready in two or three days, and, once started, it would not be a lot slower than the skiff, especially if we took a fast motor-boat he knew of for towing purposes and to "put her into the rapids right." It would make a lot more of a show for the movies, and he had always dreamed of having himself filmed on a big raft running Hell Gate and Box Canyon. Just let us leave it to him, and he would turn out something that would be the real thing.

All of this sounded distinctly good to me, but I turned to Roos and Captain Armstrong for confirmation before venturing a decision. Roos said it would be "the cat's ears" (late slang meaning *au fait,* or something like that, in English); that a raft would photograph like a million dollars. Armstrong's face was beaming. "It will be the chance of a lifetime," he said warmly. "Go by all means. I'm only sorry I can't be with you." So we gave Ike *carte blanche* and told him to go ahead; we would arrange the financial end when he knew more about what he would be spending. I was glad of the wait for one reason; it would give us a chance to speed the Captain on his way as far as Spokane.

Running over a Spokane paper in the post office and general store at Gerome, the program of the Chamber of Commerce luncheon for the morrow, October the twenty-sixth, recalled to me that I had a conditional engagement to perform at that function. Major Laird, the Publicity Secretary of the Chamber, had phoned me before we left Nelson, asking if I would run up to Spokane from some convenient point on the river and give them a bit of a yarn about our voyage at the next Tuesday luncheon. I had replied that, as it was quite out of the question keeping to any definite schedule in river travel, I could give him no positive assurance of turning up in time, but suggested that if he would sign up some one else for *pièce de résistance,* he could be free to use me for soup or nuts in the event I put in an appearance. As it now appeared that we had arrived within a few hours of Spokane, I phoned Major Laird, and he

said he would start a car off at once to take us there.

We spent the afternoon helping Roos patch up the continuity of his "farmer" picture. Although Captain Armstrong had appeared in all the scenes shot since we started with the skiff, he had never made his official entry into the picture. Properly, this should have been done in one of the introductory scenes shot at the source of the river, near Lake Windermere. It will be remembered that, when I leaned on my hayfork and gazed pensively off toward the river, I was supposed to see a prospector tinkering with his boat. I had walked out of two scenes on my way to join that prospector: the first time to ask if he would take me with him, and the second time, with a blanket-roll on my shoulder (the improvised one with the two "nicht-goons" and other foreign knickknacks in it), to jump into the boat and push off. Obviously, as we had neither prospector nor boat at the time, these shots could not be made until later. Now, with the "prospector" about to leave us, it was imperative to continuity that we should get him into the picture before we could go ahead getting him out of it.

"Location" was our first care, and in this fortune favoured us. The mouth of a small creek flowing in just below Gerome furnished a "source of the Columbia" background that would have defied an expert to tell from an original. In fact, it looked more like the popular idea of a "source" than did the real one; and that is an important point with the movies. Here we made the "tinkering" and the "first push-off" shots. Of course, I had a different blanket-roll on my shoul-

der this time, but I took great care to make it as close an imitation as possible of the one I had so hastily flung together out of "Jock's" bedding. A close imitation externally, I mean—there were no "frou-frous" in it.

Now that we had the "prospector" properly into the picture, we were ready for the "farewell" shot—the getting him out of it. For this the Captain and I were "picked up" on a picturesque rocky point, regarding with interest something far off down-river. Presently he registers "dawning comprehension," and tells me in fluent French-Canadian pantomime that it is a raft—a whale of a big one. That will offer a way for me to continue my voyage now that he has to leave me. Then we go down to the boat, which he presents to me with a comprehensive "it-is-all-yours" gesture, before shouldering his sack of ore (one of our bags of canned stuff answered very well for this) and climbing off up the bank toward the "smelter." (We had intended to make a real smelter scene at Trail or Northport, but the light was poor at both places.) Finally I pushed off alone, pulling down and across the current to throw in my fortunes with the "raft." That left the thread of "continuity" dangling free, to be spliced up as soon as Ike had the raft completed. That worthy was losing no time. All afternoon we heard the rumble of logs rolling over boulders, and every now and then a fan-shaped splash of spray would flash up with a spangle of iridescence in the light of the declining sun.

The car arrived for us at seven-thirty that evening. It was driven by Commissioner Howard, of the Spo-

kane County Board, who had courteously volunteered to come for us when it appeared there would be some delay in getting a hired car off for the hundred and sixty-mile round trip. He was accompanied by his son, a high-school youngster. As they had eaten lunch on the way, they announced themselves ready to start on the return trip at once. The road turned out to be a rough mountain track, and rather muddy. Ten miles out from Gerome a suspicious clicking set in somewhere under the rear seat, and at twenty miles the differential had gone. Mr. Howard finally induced an empty truck to take us in tow, and behind that lumbering vehicle we did the last sixty miles. The tow-chain parted on an average of once a mile while we were still in the mountains, but did better as the roads improved. The temperature fell as the altitude increased, and it must have been well under twenty before daylight—and a mean, marrow-searching cold at that. Mr. Howard, refusing every offer of relief, stuck it out at the wheel all the way in—a remarkable example of nerve and endurance, considering that he had only recently come out of a hospital. Armstrong, as always, was indomitable, singing French-Canadian boating songs of blood-stirring *tempo* most of the way. I shall ever associate his

> *"Rouli, roulant, ma boule roulant,*
> *En roulant, ma boule roulant!"*

rather with the chug-chugging of a motor truck than with the creak of oars from which it derived its inspiration.

We struck the paved state highway at Davenport about four o'clock, and in the very grey dawn of the morning after came rumbling into Spokane. Somewhere in the dim shadowy outskirts we stopped rumbling. The truck driver reported he had run out of gas. Assiduous milking of the Cole's tank yielded just enough to carry us on to the hotel. The Davenport of Spokane is one of the very finest hotels in all the world, but if it had been just a cabin with a stove, it would still have seemed a rose-sweet paradise after those last two nights we had put in—one on the hay with belled cows eating up the beds beneath our backs, and the other jerked over a frosty road in the wake of a skidding truck. Soaking for an hour in a steaming bath, I rolled in between soft sheets, leaving orders not to be called until noon.

Spokane is one of the finest, cleanest and most beautiful cities of the West, and I have never left it after a visit without regret. This time, brief as our stay had to be, was no exception. It was an unusually keen looking lot of business and professional men that turned out for the Chamber luncheon, among whom I found not a few old college friends and others I had not seen for a number of years. Notable of these were Herbert Moore and Samuel Stern, with whom I had spent six weeks on a commercial mission in China in 1910. I was also greatly interested to meet Mr. Turner, the field engineer of the great project for reclaiming a million and three-quarters acres of land in the Columbia Basin of eastern Washington by diverting to it water from the Pend d'Oreille. The incalculable possibilities, as well as the great need

of this daring project I was to see much of at first-hand during that part of my voyage on which I was about to embark.

Captain Armstrong left by train for Nelson the evening of the 27th, and the following morning Major Laird drove Roos and me back to Gerome. For a considerable part of the distance we followed the highly picturesque route along the Spokane River, stopping for lunch at the hydro-electric plant of the Washington Power Company at Long Lake. This enterprising corporation has power installations already in operation on the Spokane which must make that stream pretty nearly the most completely harnessed river of its size in America. The lofty concrete barrier which backs up Long Lake has the distinction of being the highest spillway dam in the world. The "Spokane interval" proved a highly enjoyable spell of relaxation before tackling the rough stretch of river ahead. I knew I was going to miss greatly the guiding hand and mind of Captain Armstrong, but had high hopes of Ike Emerson. I was not to be disappointed.

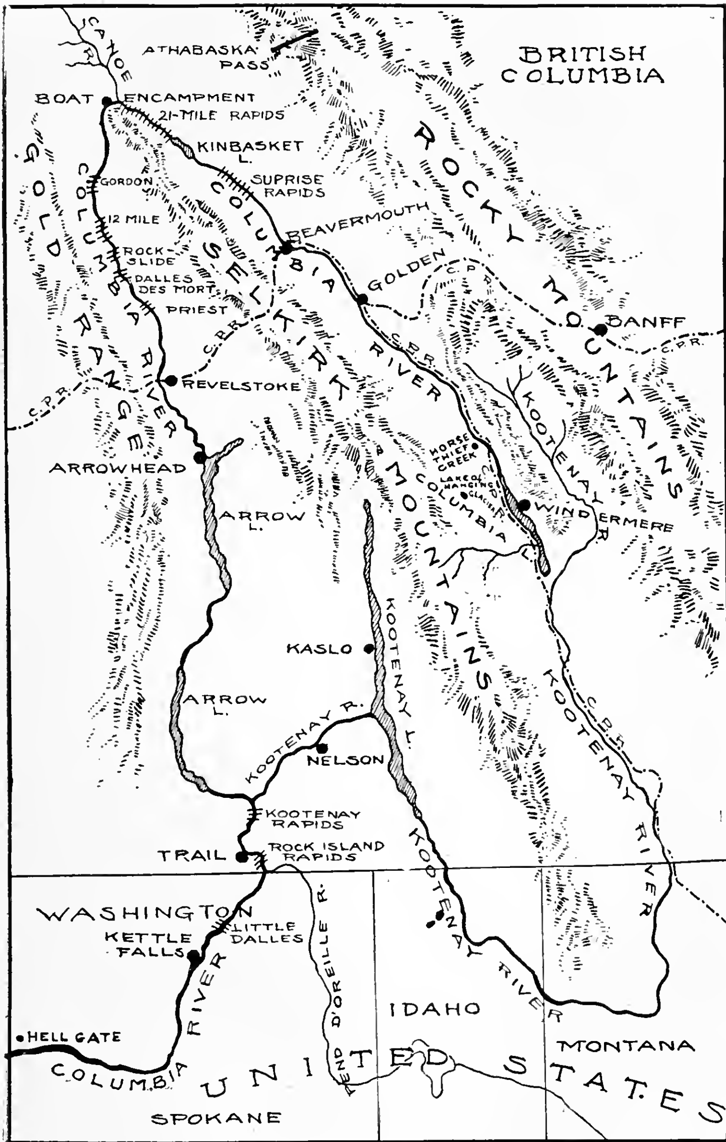
CHAPTER X

RAFTING THROUGH HELL GATE

IKE had been working at high speed during our absence, but his imagination appeared rather to have run ahead of his powers of execution. The hundred-feet-long, thirty-feet-wide raft he had set himself to construct (so as to have something that would "stack up big in the movie") took another two days to complete, and even then was not quite all that critical artist wanted to make it. After filling in the raft proper with solid logs of spruce and cedar, he began heaping cordwood upon it. He was trying to make something that would loom up above the water, he explained; "somethin' tu make a showin' in the pictur'." He had three or four teams hauling, and as many men piling, for two days. We stopped him at fifty cords in order to get under way the second day after our return. There was some division of opinion among the 'long shore loafers as to whether or not this was the *largest* raft that had ever started down this part of the Columbia, but they were a unit in agreeing that it was the *highest*. Never was there a raft with so much "freeboard." The trouble was that every foot of that "freeboard" was cordwood, and then some; for the huge stacks of four-foot firewood had weighted down the logs under them until those great lengths of spruce and cedar were completely submerged. When you walked about "on

deck" you saw the river flowing right along through the loosely stacked cordwood beneath. Roos was exultant over the way that mighty mass of rough wood charging down a rock-walled canyon was going to photograph, and Ike was proud as a peacock over the Thing he had brought into being. But Roos was going to be cranking on the cliff when we went through Hell Gate, and Ike didn't care a fig what happened to him anyhow. And I *did* care. There were a lot of things that could happen to a crazy contraption of that kind, *if ever it hit anything solid;* and I knew that the walls of Hell Gate and Box Canyon must be solid or they wouldn't have stood as long as they had. And as for hitting . . . that raft must be pretty nearly as long as Hell Gate was wide, and if ever it got to swinging. . . . It's funny the things a man will think of the night before he is going to try out a fool stunt that he doesn't know much about.

A fine motherly old girl called Mrs. Miller had put us up in her big, comfortable farmhouse during our wait while Ike completed his ship-building operations. She must have known all of seven different ways of frying chicken, and maybe twice that number of putting up apple preserves. We had just about all of them for breakfast the morning we started. Jess, the ferry-man, treated us to vanilla extract cordials and told us the story of a raft that had struck and broken up just above his father's ranch near Hawk Creek. Only guy they fished out was always nutty afterward. Cracked on the head with a length of cordwood while swimming. Good swimmer, too; but a guy had no chance in a swish-swashing bunch of



MAP OF THE UPPER COLUMBIA

A "CLOSE-UP" OF IKE BUILDING HIS RAFT

MY FIFTY POUND SALMON

broke-loose logs. Thus Jess, and thus—or in similar vein—about a dozen others who came down to see us off from the ferry landing. They all told stories of *raft* disasters, just as they would have enlarged on *boat* disasters if it had been a boat in which we were starting to run Hell Gate and Box Canyon.

I pulled across and landed Roos at the raft to make an introductory shot or two of Ike before picking up the thread of his "continuity" with my (pictorial) advent. A corner of the raft had been left unfinished for this purpose. Ike was discovered boring a log with a huge auger, after which he notched and laid a stringer, finishing the operation by pegging the latter down with a twisted hazel withe. The old river rat seemed to know instinctively just what was wanted of him, going through the action so snappily that Roos clapped him on the back and pronounced him "the cat's ears" as an actor.

Ike showed real quality in the next scene; also the single-minded concentration that marks the true artist. Looking up from his boring, he sees a boat paddling toward him from up-river. The nearing craft was *Imshallah,* with the "farmer" at the oars, just as he had started (for the still unbuilt raft) when the "prospector" gave him the boat before disappearing up the bank to the "smelter" with his sack of "ore" over his shoulder. Thus "continuity" was served.

The "farmer" pulls smartly alongside, tosses Ike the painter and clambers aboard the raft. An animated colloquy ensues, in which the "farmer" asks about the river ahead, and Ike tells him, with dramatic gestures, that it will be death to tackle it in so frail

a skiff. A raft is the only safe way to make the passage and—here Ike spreads out his hands with the manner of a butler announcing that "dinner is served!"—the raft is at the "farmer's" disposal. That suits the "farmer" to a "T;" so the skiff is lifted aboard and they are ready to cast off.

Where Ike displayed the concentration of a true artist was in the skiff-lifting shot. Just as the green bow of *Imshallah* came over the side, a boy who had been stacking cordwood, in rushing forward to clear the fouled painter, stepped on an unsecured log and went through into the river. By this time, of course, I knew better than to spoil a shot by suspending or changing action in the middle of it, but that Ike should be thus esoterically sapient was rather too much to expect. Yet the sequel proved how much more consummate an artist of the two of us that untutored (even by Roos) old river rat was. When we had finished "Yo-heave-ho-ing" as the skiff settled into place, I (dropping my histrionics like a wet bathing suit) shouted to Ike to come and help me fish that kid out. "What kid?" he drawled in a sort of languid surprise. Then, after a kind of dazed once-over of the raft, fore-and-aft: "By cripes, the kid *is* gone!" Now has that ever been beaten for artistic concentration?

The lad, after bumping down along the bottom to the lower end of the raft, had come to the surface no whit the worse for his ducking. He was clambering up over the logs like a wet cat before either Ike or I, teetering across the crooked, wobbly cordwood, had stumbled half the distance to the "stern." "It must

be a right sma't betta goin' daun unda than up heah," was Ike's only comment.

The motor-boat which Ike had engaged to tow the raft was already on hand. It had been built by a Spokane mining magnate for use at his summer home on Lake Cœur d'Alene, and was one of the prettiest little craft of the kind I ever saw. With its lines streaming gracefully back from its sharp, beautifully-flared bow, it showed speed from every angle. Hard-wood and brass were in bad shape, but the engines were resplendent; and the engines were the finest thing about it. They had been built to drive it twenty-five miles an hour when she was new, the chap running it said, and were probably good for all of twenty-two yet when he opened up. Except that its hull wasn't rugged enough to stand the banging, it was an ideal river boat, though not necessarily for towing rafts. However, it was mighty handy even at that ignominious work.

I couldn't quite make up my mind about the engineer of the motor boat—not until he settled down to work, that is. His eye was quite satisfactory, but his habit of hesitating before answering a question, and then usually saying "I dunno," conveyed rather the impression of torpid mentality if not actual dulness. Nothing could have been further from the truth, as I realized instantly the moment he started swinging the raft into the current. He merely said "I dunno" because he really didn't know, where an ordinary man would have felt impelled to make half an answer, or at least to say something about the weather or the stage of the river. Earl (I never learned his last

name) was sparing with his tongue because he was unsparing with his brain. His mind was always ready to act—and to react. There were to arise several situations well calculated to test the mettle of him, and he was always "there." I have never known so thoroughly useful and dependable a man for working a launch in swift water.

While Ike was completing his final "snugging down" operations, I chanced to observe a long steel-blue and slightly reddish-tinged body working up the bottom toward the stern of the raft. It looked like a salmon, except that it was larger than any member of that family I had ever seen. A blunt-pointed pike-pole is about the last thing one would use for a fish-spear, but, with nothing better ready to hand, I tried it. My first thrust was a bad miss, but, rather strangely, I thought—failed to deflect the loggily nosing monster more than a foot or two from his course. The next thrust went home, but where I was half expecting to have the pole torn from my hands by a wild rush, there was only a sluggish, unresentful sort of a wriggle. As there was no hook or barb to the pike, the best I could do was to worry my prize along the bottom to the bank, where a couple of Indians lifted it out for me. It was a salmon after all—a vicious looking "dog," with a wicked mouthful of curving teeth—but of extraordinary size. It must have weighed between fifty and sixty pounds, for the pike-pole all but snapped when I tried to lift the monster with it. Indeed, its great bulk was undoubtedly responsible for the fact that it was already half-dead from battering on the rocks before I speared it.

As the flesh was too soft even for the Indians, I gave it to a German farmer from a near-by clearing to feed to his hogs. Or rather, I traded it. The German had a dog which, for the sake of "human interest," Roos very much wanted to borrow. (Why, seeing it was a dog, he should not have called it "canine interest," I never quite understood; but it was the "heart touch" he wanted, at any rate). So Ike proposed to the "Dutchman" that we give him fifty pounds of dead "dog" for half that weight of live dog, the latter to be returned when we were through with him. That was Ike's *proposition*. As soon as we were under way, however, he confided to me that he never was going to give that good collie back to a Dutchman. A people that had done what the "Dutchmen" did to Belgium had no right to have a collie anyhow. If they must have dogs, let them keep dachshunds—or pigs. And he forthwith began to alienate that particular collie's affection by feeding him milk chocolate. Poor old Ike! Being only a fresh-water sailor, I fear he did not have a wife in every port, so that there was an empty place in his heart that craved affection.

We cast off at ten o'clock, Earl swung the raft's head out by a steady pull with the launch, and the current completed the operation of turning. Once in mid-stream she made good time, the motor-boat maintaining just enough of a tug to keep the towing-line taut and give her a mile an hour or so of way over the current. That gave Earl a margin to work with, and, pulling sharply now to one side, now to the other, he kept the great pile of logs headed where the current was swiftest and the channel clearest. It was all

in using his power at the right time and in the right way. A hundred-ton tugboat would have been helpless in stopping the raft once it started to go in the wrong direction. The trick was to start it right and not let it go wrong, Ike explained—just like raising pups or kids. It was certainly no job for a novice, and I found constant reassurance in the consummate "raftsmanship" our taciturn engineer was displaying.

The hills on both sides of the river grew loftier and more rugged as we ran to the south, and the trees became patchier and scrubbier. The bunch grass on the diminishing benches at the bends was withered and brown. It was evident from every sign that we were nearing the arid belt of eastern Washington, the great semi-desert plateau that is looped in the bend of the Columbia between the mouth of the Spokane and the mouth of the Snake. The towering split crest of Mitre Rock marked the approach to the slack stretch of water backed up by the boulder barrage over which tumbles Spokane Rapids. The run through the latter was to be our real baptism; a short rapid passed a few miles above proving only rough enough to set the raft rolling in fluent undulations and throw a few light gobs of spray over her "bows." We were now going up against something pretty closely approximating the real thing. It wasn't Hell Gate or Box Canyon by a long way, Ike said, but at the same time it wasn't any place to risk any slip-up.

Save for two or three of the major riffles on the Big Bend of Canada, Spokane Rapids has a stretch of water that must go down hill just about as fast as any on all the Columbia. The channel—although running

between boulders—was narrow in the first place, and the deepest part of it was still further restricted by an attempt to clear a way through for steamer navigation in the years when a through service up and down the Columbia was still dreamed of. The channel was deepened considerably, but the effect of this was to divert a still greater flow into it and form a sort of a chute down which the water rushed as through a flume. Being straight, this channel is not very risky to run, even with a small boat—provided one keeps to it. A wild tumble of rollers just to the left of the head must be avoided, however, even by a raft. That was why we had the motor-boat—to be sure of "hitting the intake right," as Ike put it. And the motor-boat ought to be able to handle the job without help. He had been working hard ever since we started on a gigantic stern-sweep, but that was for Hell Gate and Box Canyon. Here, with her nose once in right, she should do it on her own.

Mooring the raft against the right bank in the quiet water a couple of hundred yards above the "intake," Earl ran us down to the mouth of the Spokane River in the launch. We were purchasing gasoline and provisions in the little village of Lincoln, just below the Spokane, and Ike thought that the lower end of the rapid would be the best place for Roos to set up to command the raft coming through. It was indeed terrifically fast water, but—because the launch had the power to pick the very best of the channel—the run down just missed the thrill that would have accompanied it had it been up to one's oars to keep his boat out of trouble. Earl shut off almost com-

pletely as he slipped into the "V," keeping a bare steerage-way over the current. Twenty miles an hour was quite fast enough to be going in the event she *did* swerve from the channel and hit a rock; there was no point in adding to the potential force of the impact with the engine. As there was a heavy wash from the rapids in even the quietest eddy he could find opposite the town, Earl stayed with the launch, keeping her off the rocks with a pole while Ike, Roos and myself went foraging. Ike spilled gasoline over his back in packing a leaking can down over the boulders, causing burns from which he suffered considerable pain and annoyance when he came to man the sweep the following day.

After dropping Roos on the right bank to set up for the picture, Earl drove the launch back up the rapid to the raft. I hardly know which was the more impressive, the power of the wildly racing rapid or the power of the engine of the launch. It was a ding-dong fight all the way. Although he nosed at times to within a few inches of the overhanging rocks of the bank in seeking the quietest water, the launch was brought repeatedly to a standstill. There she would hang quivering, until the accelerating engine would impart just the few added revolutions to the propellers that would give her the upper hand again. The final struggle at the "intake" was the bitterest of all, and Earl only won out there by sheering to the right across the "V"—at imminent risk of being swung round, it seemed to me—and reaching less impetuous water.

Throwing off her mooring lines, Earl towed the

raft out into the sluggish current. There was plenty of time and plenty of room to manœuvre her into the proper position. All he had to do was to bring her into the "intake" well clear of the rocks and rollers to the left, and then keep towing hard enough to hold her head down-stream. It was a simple operation—compared, for instance, with what he would have on the morrow at Hell Gate—but still one that had to be carried out just so if an awful mess-up was to be avoided. Novice as I was with that sort of a raft, I could readily see what would happen if she once got to swinging and turned broadside to the rapid.

That was about the first major rapid I ever recall running when I didn't have something to do, and it was rather a relief to be able to watch the wheels go round and feel that there was nothing to stand-by for. Even Ike, with no sweep to swing, was foot-loose, or rather hand-free. Knowing Earl's complete capability, he prepared to cast aside navigational worries for the nonce. He had picked up his axe and was about to turn to hewing at the blade of his big steering-oar, when I reminded him that he was still an actor and that he had been ordered to run up and down the raft and register "great anxiety" while within range of the camera.

Perhaps the outstanding sensation of that wild run was the feeling of surprise that swept over me at the almost uncanny speed with which that huge unwieldy mass of half submerged wood gathered way. In still water it would have taken a powerful tug many minutes to start it moving; here it picked up and leapt ahead like a motor-boat. One moment it was drifting

along at three miles an hour; five seconds later, having slid over the "intake," it was doing more than twenty. The actual slope of that first short pitch must have been all of one-in-ten, so that I found myself bracing against the incline of the raft, as when standing in a wagon that starts over the brow of a hill. Then the pitch eased and she hit the rollers, grinding right through them like a floating Juggernaut. The very worst of them—haughty-headed combers that would have sent the skiff sky-rocketing—simply dissolved against the logs and died in hissing anguish in the tangle of cordwood. The motion had nothing of the jerkiness of even so large a craft as the launch, and one noticed it less under his feet than when he looked back and saw the wallowing undulations of the "deck."

But best of all was the contemptuous might with which the raft stamped out, obliterated, abolished the accursed whirlpools. Spokane was not deep and steep-sided enough to be a dangerous whirlpool rapid, like the Dalles or Hell Gate, but there were still a lot of mighty mean-mouthed "suckers" lying in ambush where the rollers began to flatten. There was no question of their arrogance and courage. The raft might have been the dainty *Imshallah,* with her annoying feminine weakness for clinging embraces, for all the hesitancy they displayed in attacking it. But, oh, what a difference! Where the susceptible *Imshallah* had edged off in coy dalliance and ended by all but surrendering, the raft simply thundered ahead. The siren "whouf!" of the lurking brigand was forced back down its black throat as it was lit-

erally effaced, smeared from the face of the water. Gad, how I loved to see them die, after all *Imshallah* and I had had to endure at their foul hands! *Imshallah,* perched safely aloft on a stack of cordwood, took it all with the rather languid interest one would expect from a lady of her quality; but I—well, I fear very much that I was leaning out over the "bows," at an angle not wholly safe under the circumstances, and registering "ghoulish glee" at the exact point where Roos had told me three times that I must be running up and down in the wake of Ike and registering "great anxiety."

As there was no stopping the raft within a mile or two of the foot of the rapid, it had been arranged that we should launch the skiff as soon as we were through the worst water, and pull in to the first favourable eddy to await Roos and his camera. It was Ike bellowing to me to come and lend him a hand with the skiff that compelled me to relinquish my position at the "bow," where, "thumbs down" at every clash, I had been egging on the raft to slaughter whirlpools. The current was still very swift, so that Ike was carried down a considerable distance before making a landing. As it was slow going for Roos, laden with camera and tripod, over the boulders, ten or fifteen minutes elapsed before they pushed off in pursuit of the raft. The latter, in the meantime, had run a couple of miles farther down river before Earl found a stretch sufficiently quiet to swing her round and check her way by towing up against the current.

In running down to this point the raft had splashed through a slashing bit of riffle, which I afterwards

learned was called Middle Rapid locally. There was a short stretch of good rough white water. Offhand, it looked to me rather sloppier than anything we had put the skiff into so far; but, as it appeared there would be no difficulty in steering a course in fairly smooth water to the left of the rollers, I was not greatly concerned over it. Presently Ike came pulling round the bend at a great rate, and the next thing I knew *Imshallah* was floundering right down the middle of the frosty-headed combers. Twice or thrice I saw the "V" of her bow shoot skyward, silhouetting like a black wedge against a fan of sun-shot spray. Then she began riding more evenly, and shortly was in smoother water. It was distinctly the kind of thing she did best, and she had come through with flying colours. Roos was grinning when he climbed aboard, but still showed a tinge of green about the gills. "Why didn't you head her into that smooth stretch on the left?" I asked. "*You* had the steering paddle." "I tried to hard enough," he replied, still grinning, "but Ike wouldn't have it. Said he kinda suspected she'd go through that white stuff all right, and wanted to see if his suspicions were correct." And that was old Ike Emerson to a "T."

We wallowed on through French Rapids and Hawk Creek Rapids in the next hour, and past the little village of Peach, nestling on a broad bench in the autumnal red and gold of its clustering orchards. Ike, pacing the "bridge" with me, said that they used to make prime peach brandy at Peach, and reckoned that p'raps . . . "No," I cut in decisively; "*I* have

no desire to return to Kettle Falls." I had jumped at the chance to draw Ike on that remarkable up-river journey of his after the disaster in Hell Gate, but he sheered off at once. I have grave doubts as to whether that strange phenomenon ever will be explained.

We were now threading a great canyon, the rocky walls of which reared higher and higher in fantastic pinnacles, spires and weird castellations the deeper we penetrated its glooming depths. There had been painters at work, too, and with colourings brighter and more varied than any I had believed to exist outside of the canyons of the Colorado and the Yellowstone. Saffron melting to fawn and dun was there, and vivid streaks that were almost scarlet where fractures were fresh, but had changed to maroon and terra cotta under the action of the weather. A fluted cliff-face, touched by the air-brush of the declining sun, flushed a pink so delicate that one seemed to be looking at it through a rosy mist. There were intenser blocks and masses of colours showing in vivid lumps on a buttressed cliff ahead, but they were quenched before we reached them in a flood of indigo and mauve shadows that drenched the chasm as the sun dropped out of sight. From the heights it must have been a brilliant sunset, flaming with intense reds and yellows as desert sunsets always are; but looking out through the purple mists of the great gorge there was only a flutter of bright pennons—crimson, gold, polished bronze and dusky olive green—streaming across an ever widening and narrowing notch of jagged rock, black and opaque like splintered ebony. For a quarter

of an hour we seemed to be steering for those shimmering pennons as for a harbor beacon; then a sudden up-thrust of black wall cut them off like a sliding door. By the time we were headed west again the dark pall of fallen night had smothered all life out of the flame-drenched sky, leaving it a pure transparent black, pricked with the twinkle of kindling stars. Only by the absence of stars below could one trace the blank opacity of the blacker black of the towering cliffs.

No one had said anything to me about an all-day-and-all-night schedule for the raft, and, as a matter of fact, running in the night had not entered into the original itinerary at all. The reason we were bumping along in the dark now was that Ike, who had no more idea of time than an Oriental, had pushed off from Gerome an hour late, wasted another unnecessary hour in Lincoln yarning across the sugar barrel at the general store, and, as a consequence, had been overtaken by night ten miles above the point he wanted to make. As there was no fast water intervening, and as Earl had shown no signs of dissent, Ike had simply gone right on ahead regardless. When I asked him if it wasn't a bit risky, he said he thought not very; adding comfortingly that he had floated down on rafts a lot of times before, and hadn't "allus bumped." If he could see to tighten up stringer pegs, he reckoned Earl ought to be able to see rocks, " 'cose rocks was a sight bigger'n pegs."

It was not long after Ike had nullified the effect of his reassuring philosophy by smearing the end of his thumb with a mallet that Earl's night-owl eyes

played him false to the extent of overlooking a rock. It may well have been a very small rock, and it was doubtless submerged a foot or more; so there was no use expecting a man to see the ripple above it when there wasn't light enough to indicate the passage of his hand before his eyes. It was no fault of Earl's at all, and even the optimistic Ike had claimed no more than that he hadn't "allus bumped." Nor was it a very serious matter at the worst. The raft merely hesitated a few seconds, swung part way round, slipped free again and, her head brought back at the pull of the launch, resumed her way. The jar of striking was not enough to throw a well-braced man off his feet. (The only reason Roos fell and pulped his ear was because he had failed to set himself at the right angle when the shock came.) The worst thing that happened was the loss of a dozen or so cords of wood which, being unsecurely stacked, toppled over when she struck. Luckily, the boat was parked on the opposite side, as was also Roos. It would have been hard to pick up either before morning, and Roos would hardly have lasted. The wood was a total loss to Ike, of course; but he was less concerned about that than he was over the fact that it reduced her "freeboard" on that quarter by three feet, so that she wouldn't make so much of a "showin' in the picters." He *did* raise a howl the next morning, though. That was when he found that his old denim jacket had gone over with the cordwood. It wasn't the "wamus" itself he minded so much, he said, but the fact that in one of that garment's pockets had been stored the milk chocolate which he was using to alien-

ate the affections of the Dutchman's collie. "It's all in gettin' a jump on a pup's feelin's at the fust offsta't," he philosophied bitterly; "an' naow I'll be losin' mah jump." Rather keen on the psychology of alienation, that observation of old Ike, it struck me.

It was along toward nine o'clock, and shortly after the abrupt walls of the canyon began to fall away somewhat, that a light appeared on the left bank. Making a wide circle just above what had now become a glowing window-square, Earl brought the raft's head up-stream and swung her in against the bank. The place was marked Creston on the maps, but appeared to be spoken of locally as Halberson's Ferry. We spent the night with the hospitable Halbersons, who ran the ferry across to the Colville Reservation side and operated a small sawmill when logs were available. Earl slept at his ranch, a few miles away on the *mesa.*

The night was intensely cold, and I was not surprised to find icicles over a foot long on the flume behind the house in the morning. The frozen ground returned a metallic clank to the tread of my hobnailed boots as I stepped outside the door. Then I gave a gasp of amazement, for what did I see but Ike running—with a light, springing step—right along the surface of the river? At my exclamation one of the Halbersons left off toweling and came over to join me. "What's wrong?" he asked, swinging his arms to keep warm. "Wrong!" I ejaculated; "look at that! I know this isn't Galilee; but you don't mean to tell me the Columbia has frozen over during

the night!" "Hardly that," was the laughing answer. "Ike's not running on either the ice or the water; he's just riding a water-soaked log to save walking. It's an old trick of his. Not many can do it like he can." And that was all there was to it. Ike had spotted a drift-log stranded a short distance up-river, and was simply bringing it down the easiest way so as to lash it to the raft and take it to market. But I should have hated to have seen a thing like that "water-walking" effect in those long ago days on the Canadian Big Bend, when we used to prime our breakfast coffee with a couple of fingers of "thirty per overproof."

We cast off at nine-thirty, after Ike had laid in some more "component parts" of his mighty sweep at the little sawmill. Although less deeply encanyoned than through the stretch down which we passed the previous night, there were still enormously high cliffs on both sides of the river. Trees and brush were scarcer and scrubbier than above, and the general aspect was becoming more and more like the semi-arid parts of the Colorado Desert. The colouring was somewhat less vivid than the riot in the canyon above, but was almost equally varied. The colour-effect was diversified along this part of the river by the appearance of great patches of rock-growing lichen, shading through half a dozen reds and browns to the most delicate amethyst and sage-green. At places it was impossible to tell from the river where the mineral pigments left off and the vegetable coating began.

The river was broad and widening, with a compar-

atively slow current and only occasional stretches of white water. I took the occasion to launch the skiff and paddle about for an hour, trying to get some line on the speed at which the raft was towing. In smooth water I found I had the legs of her about three-to-one, and in rapids of about two-to-one. From this I figured that she did not derive more than from a mile and a half to two miles an hour of her speed from the launch. I only raced her through one bit of rapid, and she was such a poor sport about the course that I refused to repeat the stunt. Just as I began to spurt past her down through the jumping white caps she did a sort of a side-slip and crowded me out of the channel and into a rather messy souse-hole. The outraged *Imshallah* gulped a big mouthful, but floundered through right-side up, as she always seemed able to do in that sort of stuff. But I pulled into an eddy and let the hulking old woodpile have the right-of-way, declining Earl's tooted challenge for a brush in the riffle immediately following. A monster that could eat whirlpools alive wasn't anything for a skiff to monkey with the business end of. I boarded her respectfully by the stern and pulled *Imshallah* up after me.

The great bald dome of White Rock, towering a thousand feet above the left bank of the river, signalled our approach to Hell Gate. Towing across a broad reach of quiet water, Earl laid the raft against the left bank about half a mile above where a pair of black rock jaws, froth-flecked and savage, seemed closing together in an attempt to bite the river in two.

That was as close as it was safe to stop the raft, Earl explained as we made fast the mooring lines, for the current began to accelerate rapidly almost immediately below. There were some shacks and an ancient apple orchard on the bench above, and Ike came over to whisper that they used to make some mighty kicky cider there once upon a time, and perhaps. . . . I did not need the prompting of Earl's admonitory head-shake. "Get a jump on you with the sweep," I said, "while Earl and I go down and help Roos set up. There'll be time enough to talk about cider below Hell Gate." I saw a somewhat (to judge from a distance) Bacchantic ciderette picking her way down the bench bank to the raft as the launch sped off down stream, but if Ike realized dividends from the visit there was never anything to indicate it.

Although Hell Gate is a long ways from being the worst rapid on the Columbia, it comes pretty near to qualifying as the *worst looking* rapid. A long black reef, jutting out from the left bank, chokes the river into a narrow channel and forces it over against the rocky wall on the right. It shoots between these obstructions with great velocity, only to split itself in two against a big rock island a hundred yards farther down. The more direct channel is to the right, but it is too narrow to be of use. The main river, writhing like a wounded snake after being bounced off the sheer wall of the island, zigzags on through the black basaltic barrier in a course shaped a good deal like an elongated letter "Z." Hell Gate is very much like either the Great or Little Dalles

would be if a jog were put into it by an earthquake—a rapid shaped like a flash of lightning, and with just as much kick in it.

After much climbing and scrambling over rocks, Roos found a place about half way down the left side of the jagged gorge from which he could command the raft rounding the first leg of the "Z" and running part of the second leg. It would have taken a half dozen machines to cover the whole run through, but the place he had chosen was the one which would show the most one camera could be expected to get. It would miss entirely the main thing—the fight to keep the raft from bumping the rock island and splitting in two like the river did. That could not be helped, however. A set up in a place to catch that would have caught very little else, and we desired to show something of the general character of the gorge and rapid. Roos, solacing himself with the remark to the effect that, if the raft *did* break up, probably the biggest part of the wreck would come down his side, was cutting himself a "sylvan frame" through the branches of a gnarled old screw pine as we left him to go to the launch.

Ike was sitting on the bank talking with a couple of men from the farm-house when we got back to the raft. He had completed the sweep, he said, but as he had forgotten to provide any "pin" to hang it on he didn't quite know what to do. Perhaps we had better go up to the farm-house and have dinner first, and then maybe he would think of something. The thought of keeping Roos—whom I had seen on the verge of apoplexy over a half minute delay once

IKE RIDING A LOG

IKE ON THE MOORING LINE OF THE RAFT

RAFT IN TOW OF LAUNCH NEAR MOUTH OF SAN POIL (*above*)

IKE AT THE SWEEP BELOW HELL GATE (*below*)

he was ready for action—standing with crooked elbow at his crank, waiting an hour or more for the raft to shoot round the bend the next second, struck me as so ludicrous that I had to sit down myself to laugh without risk of rolling into the river. When I finally got my breath and sight back, I found Earl's ready mind had hit upon the idea of using the hickory adze handle as a pivot for the sweep and that he and Ike were already rigging it. Ten minutes later the launch had swung the raft out into the current and we were headed for Hell Gate.

The sweep, clumsy as it looked, was most ingeniously constructed. Its handle was a four-inch-in-diameter fir trunk, about twenty feet in length. One end of it had been hewn down to give hand-grip on it, and the other split to receive the blade. The latter was a twelve-foot plank, a foot and a half in width and three inches in thickness, roughly rounded and hewn to the shape of the flat of an oar. It was set at a slight upward tilt from the fir-trunk handle. Ike had contrived to centre the weight of the whole sweep so nicely that you could swing it on its adze-handle pivot with one hand. Swing it in the air, I mean; submerged, five or six men would have been none too few to force that colossal blade through the water. Ike admitted that himself, but reckoned that the two of us ought to be 'better'n nothin' 'tall.' "

As we swung out into the quickening current, I mentioned to Ike that, as I had never even seen a sweep of that kind in operation, much less worked at it myself, it might now be in order for him to give me some idea of what he hoped to do with it, and how.

"Ye're right," he assented, after ejecting the inevitable squirt of tobacco and parking the residuary quid out of the way of his tongue as a squirrel stows a nut; "ye're right; five minutes fer eloosidashun an' r'h'rsal." As usual, Ike overestimated the time at his disposal; nevertheless, his intensive method of training was so much to the point that I picked up a "right smart bit o' sweep dope" before we began to cram into the crooked craw of Hell Gate.

This was the biggest raft he had ever tried to take through, Ike explained, but he'd never had so powerful a motor launch; and Earl was the best man in his line on the Columbia. He reckoned that the launch would be able to swing the head of the raft clear of the rock island where the river split "agin" it; but swinging *out* the head would have the effect of swinging in the stern. We were to man the sweep for the purpose of keeping the raft from striking amidships. We would only have to stroke one way, but we'd sure have to "jump into it billy hell!" "That being so," I suggested, "perhaps we better try a practice stroke or two to perfect our teamwork." That struck Ike as reasonable, and so we went at it, he on the extreme end of the handle, I one "grip" farther along.

Pressing the handle almost to our feet in order to elevate the blade, we dipped the latter with a swinging upward lift and jumped into the stroke. In order to keep the blade well submerged, it was necessary to exert almost as much force upward as forward. The compression on the spine was rather awful—especially as I was two or three inches taller than Ike, and on top of that, had the "inside" berth,

where the handle was somewhat nearer the deck. But the blade moved through the water when we both straightened into it; slowly at first, and more rapidly toward the end of the stroke. Then we lifted the blade out of the water, and Ike swung it back through the air alone. I had only to "crab-step" back along the runway—a couple of planks laid over the cord-wood—and be ready for the next stroke. Twice we went through that operation, without—so far as I could see—having any effect whatever upon the raft; but that was only because I was expecting "skiff-action" from a hundred tons of logs. We really must have altered the course considerably, for presently a howl came back from Earl to "do it t'other way," as we were throwing her out of the channel. By the time we had "corrected" with a couple of strokes in the opposite direction the launch was dipping over the crest of the "intake." Straightening up but not relinquishing the handle, Ike said to "let 'er ride fer a minnit," but to stand-by ready.

That swift opening run through the outer portal of Hell Gate offered about the only chance I had for a "look-see." My recollections of the interval that followed at the sweep are a good deal blurred. I noted that the water of the black-walled chasm down which we were racing was swift and deep, but not—right there at least—too rough for the skiff to ride. I noted how the sharp point of the rock island ahead threw off two unequal back-curving waves, as a battleship will do when turning at full speed. I remember thinking that, if I were in the skiff, I would try to avoid the island by sheering over to the right-hand

channel. It looked too hard a pull to make the main one to the left; and the latter would have the worst whirlpools, too. I noted how confoundedly in the way of the river that sharp-nosed island was; and not only of the river, but of anything coming down the river. With that up-stabbing point out of the stream, how easy it would be! But since . . .

"Stan'-by!" came in a growl from Ike. "'Memba naow—'billy hell' when I says 'jump!'" By the fact that he spat forth the whole of his freshly-bitten quid I had a feeling that the emergency was considerably beyond the ordinary. My last clear recollection was of Earl's sharply altering his course just before he nosed into the roaring back-curving wave thrown off by the island and beginning to tow to the left with his line at half of a right-angle to the raft. The staccato of his accelerating engine cut like the rattle of a machine-gun through the heavy rumble of the rapid, and I knew that he had thrown it wide open even before the foam-geyser kicked up by the propellers began to tumble over onto the stern of the launch. On a reduced scale, it was the same sort of in-tumbling jet that a destroyer throws up when, at the appearance of an ominous blur in the fog, she goes from quarter-speed-ahead to full-speed-astern. A jet like that means that the spinning screws are meeting almost solid resistance in the water.

Ike's shoulder cut off my view ahead now, and I knew that the bow was swinging out only from the way the stern was swinging in. At his grunted "Now!" we did our curtsey-and-bow to the sweep-handle, just as we had practised it, then dipped the

blade and drove it hard to the right. Four or five times we repeated that stroke, and right smartly, too, it seemed to me. The stern stopped swinging just at the right time, shooting by the foam-whitened fang of the black point by a good ten feet. The back-curving wave crashed down in solid green on the starboard quarter—but harmlessly. There was water enough to have swamped a *batteau,* but against a raft the comber had knocked its head off for nothing.

Under Ike's assurance that the battle would all be over but the shouting in half a minute, I had put about everything I had into those half dozen mighty pushes with the sweep. I started to back off leisurely and resume my survey of the scenery as we cleared the point, but Ike's mumbled "Nother one!" brought me back to the sweep again. Evidently there had been some kind of a slip-up. "Wha' 'smatter?" I gurgled, as we swayed onto the kicking handle, and "Engin's on blink," rumbled the chesty reply. "Gotta keep'er off wi' sweep."

It had been the motor-boat's rôle, after keeping the head of the raft clear of the point of the island by a strong side pull, to tow out straight ahead again as soon as the menace of collision was past. Earl was trying to do this now (I glimpsed as I crab-stepped back), but with two or three cylinders missing was not able to do much more than straighten out the tow-line. As the raft was already angling to the channel, the fact the current was swifter against the side of the island had the tendency to throw her stern in that direction. It was up to the sweep to keep her from striking, just as it had been at the point. What made

it worse now was that the possible points of impact were scattered all the way along for two or three hundred yards, while the launch was giving very little help.

A man ought to be able to lean onto a sweep all day long without getting more than a good comfortable weariness, and so I *could* have done had I been properly broken in. But I was in the wrong place on the sweep, and, on top of that, had allowed my infantile enthusiasm to lead me into trying to scoop half the Columbia out of its channel at every stroke. And so it was that when we came to a real showdown, I found myself pretty hard put to come through with what was needed. Ike's relentless "'Nother one!" at the end of each soul-and-body wracking stroke was all that was said, but the 'tween-teethed grimness of its utterance was more potent as a verbal scourge than a steady stream of sulphurous curses. Ike was saving his breath, and I didn't have any left to pour out my feelings with.

We were close to the ragged black wall all the way, and I have an idea that the back-waves thrown off by the projecting points had about as much to do with keeping us from striking as had the sweep. Such waves will often buffer off a canoe or *batteau*, and they must have helped some with the raft. There is no doubt, however, that, if the raft had once been allowed to swing broadside, either she or the rock island would have had to change shape or else hold up the million or so horse-power driving the Columbia. That could have only resulted in a one-two-three climax, with the island, Columbia and raft finishing

in the order named. Or, to express it in more accurate race-track vernacular; "Island," first; "Columbia," second; "Raft," nowhere!

My spine was a bar of red-hot iron rasping up and down along the exposed ends of all its connecting nerves, when a throaty "Aw right!" from Ike signalled that the worst was past. Hanging over the end of the trailing sweep-handle, I saw that the raft had swung into a big eddy at the foot of the island, and that the launch, with its engine still spraying scattered pops, was trying to help the back-current carry her in to the right bank. Middle and Lower Rapids of Hell Gate were still below us, but Earl had evidently determined not to run them until his engine was hitting on all fours again. It was characteristic of him that he didn't offer any explanation as to what had gone wrong, or why; but the trouble must have been a consequence of the terrific strain put on the engine in towing the head of the raft clear of the upper point of the island. At the end of a quarter hour's tinkering Earl reckoned that the engine would go "purty good" now; leastways, he hoped so, for there was nothing more he could do outside of a machine-shop. To save tying up again below, he ran across and picked up Roos and the camera before casting off.

Middle and Lower Rapids were just straight, fast, white water, and we ran them without trouble. Roos set up on the raft and shot a panorama of the reeling rollers and the flying black curtains of the rocky walls as they slid past. Then he made a close-up of the weird, undulating Chinese-Dragon-wiggle of the

"deck" of the raft, and finally, when we had recovered a bit of breath, of Ike and me toiling at the sweep. To save time, we had lunch on the raft, taking Earl's portion up to him in the skiff.

Ike, announcing that he would need a crew of four or five men to handle the raft in Box Canyon, was scouting for hands all afternoon. Whenever a farm or a ferry appeared in the distance, we would pull ahead in the skiff and he would dash ashore and pursue intensive recruiting until the raft had come up and gone on down river. Then we would push off and chase it, repeating the performance as soon as another apple orchard or ferry tower crept out beyond a bend. For all our zeal, there was not a man to show when we finally pulled the skiff aboard as darkness was falling on the river. Most of the men Ike talked to took one look at the nearing raft and cut him off with a "Good-night" gesture, the significance of which was not lost on me even in the distant skiff. The nearest we came to landing any one was at Plum, where the half-breed ferry-man said he would have gone if it hadn't been for the fact that his wife was about to become a mother. It wasn't that he was worried on the woman's account (she did that sort of thing quite regularly without trouble), but he had bet a horse with the blacksmith that it was going to be a boy, and he kind of wanted to be on hand to be sure they didn't put anything over on him.

At Clark's Ferry an old pal of Ike's, whom he had confidently counted on getting, not only refused to go when he saw the raft, but even took the old river rat aside and talked to him long and earnestly, after

the manner of a brother. Ike was rather depressed after that, and spent the next hour slouching back and forth across the stern runway, nursing the handle of the gently-swung sweep against his cheek like a pet kitten. He was deeply introspective, and seemed to be brooding over something. It was not until the next morning that he admitted that the raft had not proved quite as handy as he had calculated.

Again we ran well into the dark, but this time in a somewhat opener canyon than the black gorge we had threaded the night before. It was Spring Canyon we were making for, where Ike had left his last raft. No one was living there, he said, but it was a convenient place for the ranchers from up on the plateau to come and get the wood. Earl found the place and made the landing with not even a window-light to guide. We moored to the lower logs of the cedar raft, most of which was now lying high and dry on the rocks, left by the falling river. We cooked supper on the bank and—after Roos had deftly picked the lock with a bent wire—slept on the floor of an abandoned farmhouse on the bench above.

Ike had complained a good deal of his gasoline-burned back during the day, and was evidently suffering not a little discomfort from the chafing of his woollen undershirt. He was restless during the night, and when he got up at daybreak I saw him pick up and shake out an old white table-cloth that had been thrown in one corner. When I went down to the raft a little later, I found the old rat stripped to the waist and Earl engaged in swathing the burned back in the folds of the white table-cloth. As the resultant bundle

was rather too bulky to allow a shirt to be drawn over it, Ike went around for a couple of hours just as he was, for all the world like "the noblest Roman of them all"—from neck to the waist, that is. The long, drooping, tobacco-stained moustaches, no less than the sagging overalls, would have had rather a "foreign" look on the *Forum Romanum.*

CHAPTER XI

BY LAUNCH THROUGH BOX CANYON

THERE was plainly something on Ike's mind all through breakfast, but what it was didn't transpire until I asked him what time he would be ready to push off. Then, like a man who blurts out an unpalatable truth, he gave the free end of his "toga" a fling back over his shoulder and announced that he had come to the conclusion that the raft was too big and too loosely constructed to run Box Canyon; in fact, we could count ourselves lucky that we got through Hell Gate without smashing up. What he proposed to do was to take the biggest and straightest logs from both the rafts and make a small, solid one that would stand any amount of banging from the rocks. He never gave a thought to his life when working on the river, he declared, but it would be a shame to run an almost certain risk of losing so big a lot of logs and cord-wood. The wreckage would be sure to be salvaged by farmers who would otherwise have to buy wood from him, so he would be a double loser in case the raft went to pieces. I told him that I quite appreciated his feelings (about the wood and logs, I mean), and asked how long he figured it would take to get the logs out of the old rafts and build a new one. He reckoned it could be done in two or three days, if we hustled. As I had already learned that any of Ike's

estimates of time had to be multiplied by at least two to approximate accuracy, I realized at once that our rafting voyage was at an end. We already had some very good raft pictures, and as a few hundred yards of the run through Box Canyon would be all that could be added to these, it did not seem worth anything like the delay building the new raft would impose. As far as the sale of the wood and logs was concerned, Ike said he would rather have the stuff where it was than in Bridgeport.

So, quite unexpectedly but in all good feeling, we prepared to abandon the raft and have the motorboat take the skiff in tow as far as Chelan. This would make up a part of the time we had lost in waiting for the raft in the first place, and also save the portage round Box Canyon. It was quite out of the question venturing into that gorge in our small boat, Earl said, but he had made it before with his launch, and reckoned he could do it again. We settled with Ike on a basis of twenty dollars a day for his time, out of which he would pay for the launch. As his big raft of logs and firewood was brought to its destination for nothing by this arrangement, he was that much ahead. For the further use of the launch, we were to pay Earl ten dollars a day and buy the gasoline.

We helped Ike get the raft securely moored, had an early lunch on the rocks, and pushed off at a little after noon, the skiff in tow of the launch on a short painter. A few miles along Ike pointed out a depression, high above the river on the left side, which he said was the mouth of the Grand Coulee, the ancient bed of the Columbia. I have already mentioned a

project which contemplates bringing water from the Pend d'Oreille to irrigate nearly two million acres of semi-arid land of the Columbia basin. A project that some engineers consider will bring water to the same land more directly and at a much less cost per acre is to build a dam all the way across the Columbia below the mouth of the Grand Coulee, and use the power thus available to pump sixteen thousand second-feet into the old channel of that river. Mr. James O'Sullivan, a contractor of Port Huron, Michigan, who has made an exhaustive study of this latter project, writes me as follows:

"A dam at this point could be built 300 feet high above low water, and it would form a lake 150 miles long all the way to the Canadian boundary. It is estimated that one million dollars would pay all the flooding damages. A dam 300 feet high would be 4,300 feet long on the crest, and would require about 5,000,000 cubic yards of concrete. It would cost, assuming bedrock not to exceed 100 feet below water, about forty million dollars. It is estimated that the power-house, direct connected pumps, turbines and discharge pipes would cost fifteen million dollars. . . . From the Columbia River to the arid lands, a distance of less than forty miles, there is a natural channel less than one mile wide, flanked by rock walls on both sides, so that the cost of getting water to the land would be primarily confined to the dam and power. Such a dam would require about five years to build, and it would create out of a worthless desert a national estate of four hundred and fifty million dollars, and the land would produce annually in crops two hundred and seventy-five million. . . . An irrigation district is now being formed in Central Washington, and it is proposed to proceed at once with the core drilling of the dam-site, to

determine the nature and depth of bedrock, which seems to be the only question left unsettled which affects the feasibility of the project. The Northwestern states are all in a league for securing the reclamation of this vast area, and there is no doubt that, if bedrock conditions prove to be favourable, that in the near future the money will be raised to construct this great project, which will reclaim an area equal to the combined irrigation projects undertaken by the U. S. Government to-day. . . . It is considered now that where power is free, a pumping lift as high as 300 feet is perfectly feasible."

Which of these two great projects for the reclamation of the desert of the Columbia Basin has the most to recommend is not a question upon which a mere river *voyageur,* who is not an engineer, can offer an intelligent opinion. That the possibilities of such reclamation, if it can be economically effected, are incalculably immense, however, has been amply demonstrated. From source to mouth, the Columbia to-day is almost useless for power, irrigation and even transportation. The experience of those who, lured on by abnormal rainfalls of a decade or more ago, tried dry farming in this region border closely on the tragic. And the tragedy has been all the more poignant from the fact that the disaster of drought has overtaken them year after year with the Columbia running half a million second-feet of water to waste right before their eyes. I subsequently met a rancher in Wenatchee who said the only good the Columbia ever was to a man who tried to farm along it in the dry belt was as a place to drown himself in when he went broke.

THE SUSPENSION BRIDGE AT CHELAN FALLS (*above*)

OLD RIVER VETERANS ON THE LANDING AT POTARIS. (CAPT. McDERMID ON LEFT, IKE EMERSON ON RIGHT) (*below*)

NIGHT WAS FALLING AS WE HEADED INTO BOX CANYON (*above*)

THE COLUMBIA ABOVE BOX CANYON (*below*)

The rock-littered channel of Moneghan's or Buckley's Rapids was easily threaded by the launch, and Equilibrium or "Jumbo" Rapids, three miles lower down, did not prove a serious obstruction. The official name is the former, and was given the riffle by Symons on account of a round-topped rock which rolled back and forth in the current because of its unstable equilibrium. The local name of "Jumbo" derives from the fact that this same rolling rock has something of the appearance of an elephant, when viewed from a certain angle. Ten miles more of deep, evenly-flowing water brought us to Mah-kin Rapids and the head of Nespilem Canyon. The next twenty-four miles, terminating at the foot of what is officially called Kalichen Falls and Whirlpool (Box Canyon in local nomenclature), is the fastest stretch of equal length on the Columbia except on the Big Bend in Canada. It is one continuous succession of rapids, eddies and whirlpools all the way, and the much feared Box Canyon is a fitting finale. I was distinctly glad to be running through in a motor-boat rather than the skiff. As to the raft, I never have been able to make up my mind as to just how she would have fared.

The roar of the savage half-mile tumble of Mah-kin Rapids was a fitting overture to the main performance. The river narrows down sharply between precipitous banks, and most of the rocks from the surrounding hills seem to have rolled into the middle of the channel. There was an awful mess of churned water even where the river was deepest, and I wouldn't have been quite comfortable heading into it

even in the launch. Earl seemed rather of the same mind, too, for he kept edging out to the right every time one of the big combers lurched over at him. With the engine running like a top, he kept her in comparatively good water all the way through. It was a striking lesson in the value of power in running a rapid—as long as the power doesn't fail you.

Rock-peppered rapids followed each other every mile or two from the foot of Mah-kin, but—thanks to Earl's nose for the best channel—we were not taking more than an occasional shower of spray over the bows where the water was whitest. It was not too rough for reading, and, anxious to prepare Roos for what he was about to experience at Kalichen Falls and Collision Rock, I dug out Symons' report and ran rapidly through the dramatic description of how his party fared in running the sinister gorge ahead. It seems to me rather a classic of its kind, and I am setting it down in full, just as I read it to Roos and Ike that afternoon in the cockpit of the launch. I only wish I could complete the effect with the diorama of the flying canyon walls, the swirling waters of the river, and the obligato in duet by the roaring rapids and the sharply hitting engine.

"The shores of Nespilem Canyon are strewn with huge masses of black basaltic rock of all sizes and shapes, and this continues for several miles, forming a characteristic picture of Columbia River scenery. The complete . . . lifelessness of the scene makes it seem exceedingly wild, almost unearthly. And so we plunge along swiftly through the rolling water, with huge rocks looming up, now on one side and now on the other. Every stroke of the oar is bearing

us onward, nearer and nearer, to that portion of our voyage most dreaded, the terrible Kalichen Falls and Whirlpool Rapids. We hear the low rumbling of the water, and see the tops of the huge half-sunken rocks and the white foam of the tumbling waters. For a few moments the rowing ceases, while brave old Pierre gives his orders to the Indians in their own tongue. He knows that everything depends upon his steering and their rowing or backing at the right moment, with all the strength they possess. Years ago he was in a Hudson Bay Company *batteau* which capsized in these very rapids, and out of a crew of sixteen men eight perished in the water or on the rocks.

"The Indians make their preparations for the struggle by stripping off all their superfluous clothing, removing their gloves, and each ties a bright-coloured handkerchief tightly about his head; poles and extra oars are laid ready in convenient places to reach should they become necessary, and then with a shout the Indians seize their oars and commence laying to them with all their strength. We are rushing forward at a fearful rate, owing to the combined exertions of the Indians and the racing current, and we shudder at the thought of striking any of the huge black rocks near which we glide. Now we are fairly in the rapids, and our boat is rushing madly through the foam and billows; the Indians are shouting at every stroke in their wild, savage glee; it is infectious; we shout too, and feel the wild exultation which comes to men in moments of great excitement and danger. Ugly masses of rocks show their heads above the troubled waters on every side, and sunken rocks are discernible by the action of the surf. Great billows strike us fore and aft, some falling squarely over the bows and drenching us to the waist. This is bad enough, but the worst is yet to come as we draw near with great velocity to a huge rock which appears dead ahead.

"Has old Pierre seen it? The water looks terribly cold as we think of his failing eyesight. Then an order, a shout, backing on one side and pulling on the other, and a quick stroke of the steering oar, and the rock appears on our right hand. Another command, and answering shout, and the oars bend like willows as the Indians struggle to get the boat out of the strong eddy into which Pierre had thrown her. Finally she shoots ahead and passes the rock like a flash, within less than an oar's length of it, and we shout for joy and breathe freely again. . . .

"For half a mile the river is comparatively good, and our staunch crew rest on their oars preparatory to the next struggle, which soon comes, as some more rocky, foamy rapids are reached. Here the swells are very high and grand, and our boat at one time seems to stand almost perpendicularly." ("Them's Eagle Rapids," Ike interrupted; "sloppier 'n 'ell, but straight.")

"For about nine miles further the river continues studded with rocks and swift, with ripples every mile or so, until we reach Foster Creek Rapids. Here the rocks become thicker . . . and the water fierce and wild. For a mile more we plunge and toss through the foaming, roaring water, amid wild yells from our Indian friends, and we emerge from Foster Creek Rapids, which appear to be as rough and dangerous a place as any we have yet encountered. We are now out of Nespilem Canyon and through all the Nespilem Rapids, and we certainly feel greatly relieved. . . ."

Ike, renewing his quid, observed that they didn't call it Nespilem Canyon any more, for the reason that that sounded too much like "Let's spill 'em!" and there was enough chance of that without asking for it. Roos, in bravado, asked Ike if he was going to

strip down like Symons' Indians did. The old Roman replied by pulling on a heavy mackinaw over his "toga," saying that he'd rather have warmth than action once he was out in the "Columby." That led me to ask him—with a touch of bravado on my own account—how long it would take him to "submarine" from Box Canyon to Kettle Falls. He grinned a bit sourly at that, and started slacking the lashings on the sweeps and pike-poles. Roos was just tying a red handkerchief round his head when Earl beckoned him forward to take the wheel while he gave the engine a final hurried tuning. Ike, saying that we would be hitting "White Cap" just round the next bend, gave me brief but pointed instructions in the use of sweep and pike-pole in case the engine went wrong. He had spat forth his quid again, just as at Hell Gate, and his unmuffled voice had a strange and penetrating *timbre.*

White Cap Rapids are well named. Two rocky points converge at the head and force all the conflicting currents of the river into a straight, steep channel, heavily littered with boulders and fanged with outcropping bedrock. In that currents from opposite sides of the river are thrown together in one mad tumble of wallowing waters, it is much like Gordon Rapids, on the Big Bend. If anything, it is the rougher of the two, making up in volume what it lacks in drop. It is a rapid that would be particularly mean for a small boat, from the fact that there would be no way of keeping out of the middle of it, and that is a wet place—very. The launch had the power to hold a course just on the outer right edge of the rough

water, and so made a fairly comfortable passage of it.

With the "intake" above Kalichen Falls full in view a half mile distant, Earl went back to his engine as we shot out at the foot of "White Cap" and gave it a few little "jiggering" caresses—much as a rider pats the neck of his hunter as he comes to a jump—before the final test. Then he covered it carefully with a double canvas and went back to the wheel. Roos he kept forward, standing-by to take the wheel or tinker the engine in case of emergency. The lad, though quite without "river sense," was a first-class mechanic and fairly dependable at the steering wheel providing he was told what to do.

The sounding board of the rocky walls gave a deep pulsating resonance to the heavy roar ahead, but it was not until we dipped over the "intake" that the full volume of it assailed us. Then it came with a rush, a palpable avalanche of sound that impacted on the ear-drums with the raw, grinding roar of a passing freight train. It was not from the huge rollers the launch was skirting so smartly that this tearing, rending roar came, but from an enormous black rock almost dead ahead. It was trying to do the same thing that big island in the middle of Hell Gate had tried to do, and was succeeding rather better. The latter had been able to do no more than split the river down the middle; this one was forcing the whole stream to do a side-step, and pretty nearly a somersault—hence Kalichen Falls and Whirlpool. Collision Rock was distinctly impressive, even from a launch.

The sun was just dipping behind the southern wall

of Box Canyon (how funky I became later, when I was alone, about going into a rapid in that slanting, deceptive evening light!) as the launch hit the rough water. There was dancing iridescence in the flung foam-spurts above the combers, and at the right of Collision Rock the beginning of a rainbow which I knew would grow almost to a full circle when we looked back from below the fall. I snapped once with my kodak into the reeling tops of the waves that raced beside us, and then started to wind up to have a fresh film for the rock and the crowning rainbow. That highly artistic exposure was never made.

Earl, instead of shutting off his engine as he did in running Spokane Rapids, opened up all the wider as he neared the barrier and its refluent wave. This was because the danger of striking submerged rocks was less than that of butting into that one outcrop of ragged reef that was coming so near to throwing the river over on its back. If the launch was to avoid telescoping on Collision Rock as the Columbia was doing, it must get enough way on to shoot across the current into the eddy on the left. That was what Earl was preparing for when he opened up the engine. With both boat and current doing well over twenty miles an hour, we were literally rushing down at the rocky barrier with the speed of an express train when Earl spun the wheel hard over and drove her sharply to the left. That was when I stopped kodaking.

In spite of the rough water, the launch had been remarkably dry until her course was altered. Then she made up for lost time. The next ten or fifteen seconds was an unbroken deluge. With a great up-toss

of wake, she heeled all of forty-five degrees to starboard at the turn, seeing which, the river forthwith began piling over her port or up-stream side and making an astonishingly single-minded attempt to push her on the rest of the way under. Failing in that (for her draught was too great and her engine set too low to make her easily capsizable), the river tried to accomplish the same end by swamping her. Fore and aft the water came pouring over in a solid green flood, and kept right on pouring until Earl, having driven through to the point he wanted, turned her head down stream again and let her right herself.

The water was swishing about my knees for a few moments in the cockpit, and it must have been worse than that forward. Then it drained down into the bilge without, apparently, greatly affecting her buoyancy. The higher-keyed staccato of the engine cut sharply through the heavier roar of the falls. It was still popping like a machine-gun, without a break. Reassured by that welcome sound, Earl orientated quickly as he shook the water from his eyes, and then put her full at the head of the falls. Just how much of a pitch there was at this stage of water I couldn't quite make out. Nothing in comparison with the cataract there at high water (when the river rushes right over the top of Collision Rock) certainly; and yet it was a dizzy bit of a drop, with rather too deliberate a recovery to leave one quite comfortable. For a few seconds the launch's head was deeply buried in the soft stuff of the souse-hole into which she took her header; the next her bows were high in the air as the up-boil caught her. Then her propellers began strik-

ing into something solider than air-charged suds, and she shot jerkily away in a current so torn with swirls that it looked like a great length of twisted green-and-white rope. We had missed Collision Rock by thirty feet, and given the dreaded whirlpool behind it an even wider berth.

The next thirteen miles we did at a rate that Ike figured must have been about the fastest travelling ever done on the Columbia. The current runs at from ten to twenty miles an hour all the way from the head of Box Canyon to Bridgeport, and Earl, racing to reach Foster Creek Rapids before it was dark, ran just about wide open nearly the whole distance. It was real train speed at which we sped down the darkening gorge—possibly over forty miles an hour at times. Earl knew the channel like a book, and said there was nothing to bother about in the way of rocks as long as he could see. We were out of the closely-walled part of the canyon at Eagle Rapids, and the sunset glow was bright upon the water ahead. There is a series of short, steep riffles here, extending for a mile and a half, and Earl slammed right down the lot of them on the high. Ike was right about their being sloppy, but the beacon of the afterglow gave the bearing straight through. Two miles further on the river appeared suddenly to be filled with swimming hippos—round-topped black rocks just showing above the water; but each one was silhouetted against a surface that glinted rose and gold, and so was as easy to miss as in broad daylight.

It was all but full night as the roar of Foster Creek Rapids began to drown the rattle of the engine, with

only a luminous lilac mist floating above the southwestern mountains to mark where the sun had set; but it was enough—just enough—to throw a glow of pale amethyst on the frothy tops of the white-caps, leaving the untorn water to roll on in fluid anthracite. Earl barely eased her at the head, and then plunged her down a path of polished ebony, with the blank blur of rocks looming close on the right and an apparitional line of half-guessed rollers booming boisterously to the left. For three-quarters of a mile we raced that ghostly Ku-Klux-Klan procession, and Roos, who was timing with his radium-faced watch, announced that we had made the distance in something like seventy seconds. Then there was quieter water, and presently the lights of Bridgeport. Earl put us off opposite the town, and ran down a quarter of a mile farther to get out of the still swiftly-running current and berth the launch in a quiet eddy below the sawmill.

Bridgeport, for a town a score of miles from the railway, proved unexpectedly metropolitan, with electric lights, banks, movie theatres, and a sign at the main crossing prohibiting "Left Hand Turns." The people, for a country town, showed very diverting evidences of sophistication. At the movies that night (where we went to get the election returns), they continually laughed at the villain and snickered at the heroine's platitudinous sub-titles; and finally, when word came that it was Harding beyond all doubt, they forgot the picture completely and gave their undivided attention to joshing the town's only avowed Democrat. The victim bore up fairly well as

long as his baiters stuck to "straight politics," but when they accused him of wearing an imitation leather coat made of brown oil-cloth, the shaft got under his armour. With a ruddy blush that was the plainest kind of a confession of guilt, he pushed out to the aisle and beat a disorderly retreat.

A prosperous apple farmer sitting next me (he had been telling me what his crop would bring the while the naturally vamp-faced heroine was trying to register pup-innocence and "gold-cannot-buy-me" as the villain was choking her) sniffed contemptuously as the discomfited Democrat disappeared through the swinging doors. "Seems to feel worse about being caught with an imitation coat than about being an imitation politician. Better send him to Congress!" Now *wasn't* that good for a small town that didn't even have a railroad? I've known men of cities of all of a hundred thousand, with street cars, municipal baths, Carnegie libraries and women's clubs, who hadn't the measure of Congress as accurately as that. I wish there had been time to see more of Bridgeport.

It was down to twelve above when we turned out in the morning, with the clear air tingling with frost particles and incipient ice-fringes around the eddies. Fortunately, Earl had bailed both boats the night before and drained his engine. Just below Bridgeport the river, which had been running almost due west from the mouth of the Spokane River, turned off to the north. In a slackening current we approached the small patch of open country at the mouth of the Okinagan. The latter, which heads above the lake of the same name in British Columbia, appears an

insignificant stream as viewed from the Columbia, and one would never suspect that it is navigable for good-sized stern-wheelers for a considerable distance above its mouth. On the right bank of the Columbia, just above the mouth of the Okinagan, is the site of what was perhaps the most important of the original Astor posts of the interior. As a sequel to the war of 1812 it was turned over to the Northwest Company, and ultimately passed under the control of Hudson Bay. I could see nothing but a barren flat at this point where so much history was made, but a splendid apple orchard occupies most of the fertile bench in the loop of the bend on the opposite bank.

The mouth of the Okinagan marks the most northerly point of the Washington Big Bend of the Columbia. From there it flows southwesterly for a few miles to the mouth of the Methow, before turning almost directly south. We passed Brewster without landing, but pulled up alongside a big stern-wheeler moored against the bank at Potaris, just above the swift-running Methow Rapids. It was the *Bridgeport,* and Ike had spoken of her skipper, whom he called "Old Cap," many times and with the greatest affection. "Old Cap" proved to be the Captain McDermid, who had run the *Shoshone* down through Grand Rapids, and who was rated as the nerviest steamer skipper left on the Columbia.

Captain McDermid was waiting on the bow of his steamer to give us a hand aboard. He had read of our voyage in the Spokane papers, he said, and had been on the lookout for several days. At first he had watched for a skiff, but later, when he had heard that

we had pushed off with Ike on a raft, it was logs he had been keeping a weather eye lifting for. When Ike described the raft to him, he wagged his head significantly, and said he reckoned it was just as well we had changed to the launch for Box Canyon. "It isn't everybody that can navigate under water like this old rat here," he added, giving Ike a playful prod in the ribs.

As we were planning to go on through to the mouth of the Chelan River, in the hope of getting up to the lake that afternoon, an hour was the most I could stop over on the *Bridgeport* for a yarn with Captain McDermid, where I would have been glad of a week. He told me, very simply but graphically, of the run down Grand Rapids, and a little of his work with stern or side-wheelers in other parts of the world, which included a year on the upper Amazon and about the same time as skipper of a ferry running from the Battery to Staten Island. Then he spoke, with a shade of sadness, of the *Bridgeport* and his plans for the future. In all the thousand miles of the Columbia between the Dalles and its source, she had been the last steamer to maintain a regular service. (This was not reckoning the Arrow Lakes, of course). But the close of the present apple season had marked the end. Between the increasing competition of railways and trucks, the game was no longer worth the candle. He, and his partners in the *Bridgeport*, had decided to try to take her to Portland and offer her for sale. She was very powerfully engined and would undoubtedly bring a good price—once they got her there. But getting her to Portland was the

rub. There were locks at the Cascades and the Dalles, but Rock Island, Cabinet, Priest and Umatilla, to say nothing of a number of lesser rapids would have to be run. It was a big gamble, insurance, of course, being out of the question on any terms. The *Douglas,* half the size of the *Bridgeport,* had tried it a couple of months ago, and—well, we would see the consequences on the rocks below Cabinet Rapids. Got through Rock Island all right, and then went wrong in Cabinet, which wasn't half as bad. Overconfidence, probably, "Old Cap" thought. But he felt sure that *he* would have better luck, especially if he went down first and made a good study of Rock Island and Priest; and that was one of the things that he had wanted to see me about. If there was room for him in the skiff, he would like to run through with us as far as Pasco, and brush up on the channel as we went along. If things were so he could get away, he would join us at Wenatchee on our return from Chelan. I jumped at the chance without hesitation, for it would give us the benefit of the experience and help of the very best man on that part of the Columbia in getting through the worst of the rapids that remained to be run. I had been a good deal concerned about how the sinister cascade of Rock Island was to be negotiated, to say nothing of the long series of riffles called Priest Rapids, which had even a worse record. I parted with Captain McDermid with the understanding that we would get in touch by phone a day or two later, when I knew definitely when we would return to the river from Chelan, and make the final arrangements.

Leaving Ike on the *Bridgeport* for a yarn with his old friend, we pushed off in the launch for Chelan. Methow Rapids, just below the river of that name, was the only fast water encountered, and that was a good, straight run in a fairly clear channel. We landed half a mile below the mouth of the Chelan River, where the remains of a road led down through the boulders to the tower of an abandoned ferry. Earl put about at once and headed back up-stream, expecting to pick up Ike at Potaris and push on through to Bridgeport that evening.

We parted from both Earl and Ike in all good feeling and with much regret. Each in his line was one of the best men I have ever had to do with. Ike—in spite of the extent to which his movements were dominated by the maxim that "time is made for slaves," or, more likely, for that very reason—was a most priceless character. I only hope I shall be able to recruit him for another river voyage in the not-too-distant future.

CHAPTER XII

CHELAN TO PASCO

For two reasons I am writing but briefly of our visit to Lake Chelan: first, because it was entirely incidental to the Columbia voyage, and, second, because one who has only made the run up and down this loveliest of mountain lakes has no call to write of it. Chelan is well named "Beautiful Water." Sixty miles long and from one to four miles wide, cliff-walled and backed by snowy mountains and glaciers, it has much in common with the Arrow Lakes of the upper Columbia, and, by the same tokens, Kootenay Lake. Among the large mountain lakes of the world it has few peers.

The Chelan River falls three hundred and eighty-five feet in the four miles from the outlet of the lake to where it tumbles into the Columbia. It is a foam-white torrent all the way, with a wonderful "Horseshoe" gorge near the lower end which has few rivals for savage grandeur. One may reach the lake from the Columbia by roads starting either north or south of the draining river. We went by the latter, as it was the more conveniently reached from the ferryman's house where we had left our outfit after landing. The town of Chelan, at the lower end of the lake, is a lovely little village, with clean streets, bright shops, and a very comfortable hotel. I have forgotten the name of the hotel, but not the fact that it serves a big pitcher of thick, yellow cream with every

breakfast. So far as my own experience goes, it is the only hotel in America or Europe which has perpetuated that now all but extinct ante-bellum custom. In case there may be any interested to know—even actually to enjoy—what our forefathers had with their coffee and mush, I will state that three transcontinental railways pass within a hundred miles to the southward of Chelan. It will prove well worth the stop-over; and there is the lake besides.

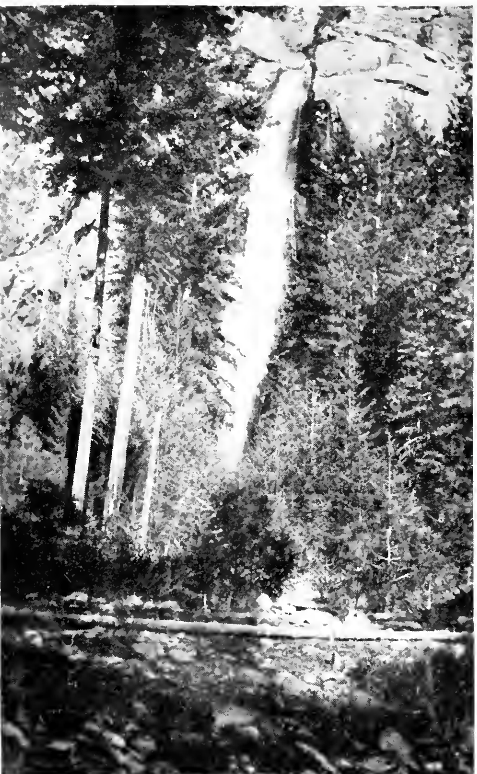
The lower end of Lake Chelan is surrounded by rolling hills, whose fertile soil is admirably adapted to apples, now an important industry in that region; the upper end is closely walled with mountains and high cliffs—really an extremely deep gorge half filled with water. Indeed, the distinction of being the "deepest furrow Time has wrought on the face of the Western Hemisphere" is claimed for upper Chelan Lake—this because there are cliffs which rise almost vertically for six thousand feet from the water's edge, and at a point where the sounding lead has needed nearly a third of that length of line to bring it back from a rocky bottom which is indented far below the level of the sea.

The head of Chelan is far back in the heart of the Cascades, in the glaciers of which its feeding streams take their rise. The main tributaries are Railroad Creek, which flows in from the south about two-thirds of the way up, and Stehekin River, which comes in at the head. These two streams are credited with some of the finest waterfalls, gorges and cliff and glacier-begirt mountain valleys to be found in North America, and it is possible to see the best of both in

the course of a single "circular" trip by packtrain. To my great regret, it was not practicable to get an outfit together in the limited time at our disposal. The best we could do so late in the season was a hurried run up to Rainbow Falls, a most striking cataract, three hundred and fifty feet in height, descending over the cliffs of the Stehekin River four miles above the head of the lake. Roos made a number of scenic shots here, but on a roll which—whether in the camera or the laboratory it was impossible to determine—was badly light-struck. Similar misfortune attended a number of other shots he made (through the courtesy of the Captain of the mail launch in running near the cliffs) of waterfalls tumbling directly into the lake. There are many slips between the cup and the lip—the camera and the screen, I should say —in scenic movie work.

We arrived back at the town of Chelan in time for lunch on the sixth of November, and a couple of hours later were down at the Columbia ready to push off again. I had been unable to get in touch with Captain McDermid by phone, but was confident that he would turn up in good time at Wenatchee. As there was nothing between that point and the mouth of the Chelan in the way of really bad water, I had no hesitation in making the run without a "pilot." Launching *Imshallah* below the old ferry-tower at two o'clock, we reached the little town of Entiat, just above the river and rapids of that name, at five. The skiff rode higher with Captain Armstrong and his luggage out, her increased buoyancy compensating in a measure for the less intelligent handling she had.

A ROCKY CLIFF NEAR HEAD OF LAKE CHELAN



RAINBOW FALLS, 350 FEET HIGH, ABOVE HEAD OF LAKE CHELAN

WENATCHEE UNDER THE DUST CLOUD OF ITS SPEEDING AUTOS (*above*)

HEAD OF ROCK ISLAND RAPIDS (*below*)

Roos took the steering paddle in the stern, and I continued rowing from the forward thwart. All of the luggage was shifted well aft. The current was fairly swift all the way, but the two or three rapids encountered were not difficult to pass. Ribbon Cliff, two thousand feet high and streaked with strata of yellow, grey and black clays, was the most striking physical feature seen in the course of this easy afternoon's run.

Entiat is a prosperous little apple-growing centre, and, with the packing season at its height, was jammed to the roof with workers. Rooms at the hotel were out of the question. Roos slept on a couch in the parlour, which room was also occupied by three drummers and two truck drivers. I had a shakedown on a canvased-in porch, on which were six beds and four cots. My room-mates kept me awake a good part of the night growling because their wages had just been cut to seven dollars a day, now that the rush was over. I would have been the more surprised that any one should complain about a wage like that had not a trio of farmettes—or rather packettes—at the big family dinner table been comparing notes of their takings. One twinkling-fingered blonde confessed to having averaged thirteen dollars a day for the last week packing apples, while a brown-bloomered brunette had done a bit better than twelve. The third one—attenuated, stoop-shouldered and spectacled—was in the dumps because sore fingers had scaled her average down to ten-fifty—"hardly worth coming out from Spokane for," she sniffed. Roos tried to engage them in conversation, and started out auspi-

ciously with a description of running Box Canyon. But the gimlet-eyed thin one asked him what he got for doing a thing like that, and promptly their interest faded. And why *should* they have cared to waste time over a mere seventy-five-dollar-a-week cameraman? But it was something even to have eaten pumpkin pie with the plutocracy.

The swift-flowing Entiat River has dumped a good many thousand tons of boulders into the Columbia, and most of these have lodged to form a broad, shallow bar a short distance below the mouth of the former. The Columbia hasn't been able quite to make up its mind the best way to go here, and so has hit on a sort of a compromise by using three or four channels. Roos found himself in a good deal the same sort of dilemma when we came rolling along there on the morning of the seventh, but as a boat—if it is going to preserve its entity as such—cannot run down more than one channel at a time, *Imshallah* found the attempt at a compromise to which she was committed only ended in butting her head against a low gravel island. It was impossible to make the main middle channel from there, but we poled off without much difficulty and went bumping off down a shallow channel to the extreme right. She kissed off a boulder once or twice before winning through to deeper water, but not hard enough to do her much harm. It was a distinctly messy piece of work, though, and I was glad that Ike or Captain Armstrong was not there to see their teachings put into practice.

The river cliffs became lower as we ran south, and after passing a commanding point on the right bank

we came suddenly upon the open valley of the Wenatchee, the nearest thing to a plain we had seen in all the hundreds of miles from the source of the Columbia. There are not over twenty to thirty square miles of land that is even comparatively level here, but to eyes which had been wont for two months to seek sky-line with a forty-five degree upward slant of gaze it was like coming out of an Andean pass upon the boundless Pampas of Argentina. Wenatchee was in sight for several miles before we reached it, an impressive water-front of mills, warehouses and tall buildings. Over all floated a dark pall, such as one sees above Pittsburgh, Birmingham, Essen or any other great factory city, but we looked in vain for the forest of chimneys it would have taken to produce that bituminous blanket. As we drew nearer we discovered that what we had taken to be smoke was a mighty dust-cloud. It was a Sunday at the height of the apple-packing season, and all the plutocratic packettes were joy-riding. There were, it is true, more Fords than Rolls-Royces in the solid double procession of cars that jammed the main street for a mile, but that was doubtless because the supply of the former had held out better. I can't believe that the consideration of price had anything to do with it.

The hotel, of course, was full, even with the dining-room set thick with cots, but by admiring a haberdashery drummer's line of neck-ties for an hour, I managed to get him to "will" me his room and bath when he departed that afternoon. Roos employed similar strategy with a jazz movie orchestra fiddler, but *his* train didn't pull out until four-thirty in the

morning. A young reporter from the local paper called for an interview in the afternoon, and told us the story of the *Douglas,* the steamer which Captain McDermid had mentioned as having been lost in trying to take her to Portland. Selig had gone along to write the story of the run through Rock Island Rapids, the first to be reached and the place which was reckoned as the most dangerous she would have to pass. When she had come out of that sinister gorge without mishap, he had them land him at the first convenient place in the quiet water below, from where he made his way to the railway and hurried back to Wenatchee with his story. That he had seen all the best of the excitement, he had no doubt. A quarter of an hour after Selig left her, the *Douglas* was a total wreck on the rocks below Cabinet Rapids. He didn't know just how it had happened, but said we would find what was left of her still where she had struck.

Wenatchee is the liveliest kind of a town, and claims to be the largest apple-shipping point in the United States. It also has a daily paper which claims to be the largest in the world in a city of under ten thousand population. I can easily believe this is true. I have seen many papers in cities of fifty or a hundred thousand that were not to be compared with it for both telegraphic and local news. Banks are on almost every corner for a half dozen blocks of the main street of Wenatchee, and every one seems to have a bank account. I saw stacks of check-books by the cashiers' desks in restaurants and shops, and

in one of the ice cream parlours I saw a young packette paying for her nut sundae with a check.

No word came from Captain McDermid during the day, and after endeavouring to reach him by phone all of the following forenoon, I reluctantly decided to push on without him. This was a good deal of a disappointment, not only because I felt that I was going to need his help mighty badly, but also because I was anxious to see more of him personally. A man who will take a steamer containing his wife and children down Rickey's Rapids of the Columbia isn't to be met with every day. Roos was anxious to get a picture of the "Farmer Who Would See the Sea" working his way down Rock Island Rapids, and as his machine was about the most valuable thing there was to lose in getting down there, it seemed up to me to do what I could. But for the first time since we pushed off to run the Big Bend, I unpacked and kept out my inflatable "Gieve" life-preserver waistcoat, which I had worn in the North Sea during the war, and which I had brought along on the "off chance." Selig came down with his Graflex to get a photo of our departure for the *World,* but declined an invitation for another run through Rock Island Rapids.

There is a long and lofty highway bridge spanning the Columbia half a mile below Wenatchee, which fine structure also appears to be used on occasion as a city dump. That it was functioning in this capacity at the very moment we were about to pass under it between the two mid-stream piers did not become apparent until the swift current had carried us so

close that it was not safe to try to alter course either to left or right. There was nothing to do but run the gauntlet of the swervily swooping dust-tailed comets whose heads appeared to run the whole gamut of discard of a rather extravagant town of eight thousand people, all disdainful of "used" things. It would have been a rare chance to renew our outfit, only most of the contributions were speeding too rapidly at the end of their hundred-foot drop to make them entirely acceptable. "Low bridge!" I shouted to Roos, and swung hard onto my oars, yelling a lung-full at every stroke in the hope that the busy dumpers might stay their murderous hands at the last moment. Vain hope! My final frightened upward glance told me that the nauseous cataclysm was augmenting rather than lessening.

I put *Imshallah* into some mighty nasty looking rapids with a lot less apprehension than I drove her into that reeking second-hand barrage, that Niagara of things that people didn't want. Doubtless it was the fact that *I* wanted the stuff still less than they did that lent power to my arms and gave me a strength far transcending that of ordinary endeavour. Roos swore afterward that I lifted her right out of the water, just as a speeding hydroplane lifts at the top of its jump. This may have been so; but if it was, Roos sensed it rather than saw it, for his humped shoulders were folded tightly over his ducked head, like the wings of a newly hatched chicken. Anyhow, the little lady drove through safely, just as she always had. But where she had always emerged dewy-fresh and dancing jauntily on the tips of her toes from the

roughest of rapids, here she oozed out upon an oil-slicked stream with the "Mark of the Beast" on her fore and aft. I mean that literally. That accursed little "White Wings" that sat up aloft to take toll of the life of poor Jack, must have had some kind of a slaughter-house dumping contract — and *Imshallah* got a smothering smear of the proceeds. Also a trailing length of burlap and a bag of cinders. As the latter burst when it kissed off my shoulder, Roos' joke about my wearing sack-cloth-and-ashes was not entirely without point. The only article of value accruing was the shaving-brush which fell in Roos' lap. He felt sure it must have been thrown away by mistake, for it had real camel's-hair bristles, and he liked it better than his own—after the ashes had worked out of it. And yet it might have been a lot worse. I only *heard* the splash of the wash-boiler that must have hit just ahead of her, but the sewing machine that grazed her stern jazzed right across my line of vision.

Up to that time Surprise Rapids of the Big Bend of Canada had stood as the superlative in the way of a really nasty hole to go through; from then on "Surprise Rapids of Wenatchee Bridge" claimed pride of place in this respect.

Swabbing down decks as best we could without landing, we pushed ahead. I was anxious to get down to Rock Island Rapids in time to look over the channels, if not to start through, before dark. We should have known better than to treat a dainty lady like *Imshallah* in that way. It was bad enough to have subjected her to the indignity of running the garbage barrage; not to give her a proper bath after it was un-

pardonable. At least that was the way she seemed to look at it, and so I never felt inclined to blame her for taking matters into her own hands. Wallowing through a sharp bit of rapid a mile below the bridge washed the outside of her bright and clean as ever, but it was the stain of that slaughter-house stuff on the inside that rankled. She was restive and cranky in the swirls and eddies all down a long stretch of slack water running between black basalt islands, and as the river narrowed and began to tumble over a boisterous rapid above the Great Northern Railway bridge, she began jumping about nervously, like a spirited horse watching his chance for a bolt.

It was Roos' business, of course, to watch where she was going, but he made no claim of being a qualified steersman; so that there was really no excuse for my failing to watch our capricious lady's symptoms and keep a steadying hand on her. Probably I *should* have done so had not a freight train run out on the bridge just as we neared the head of the rapid, throwing out so striking a smoke-smudge against a background of sun-silvered clouds that I needs must try for a hurried snapshot. That done, we were close to the "V" of the drop-off, and I had just time to see that there were three or four rather terrifying rollers tumbling right in the heart of the riffle, evidently thrown up by a jagged outcrop of bed-rock very close to the surface. I would never have chanced putting even a big *batteau* directly into so wild a welter, but, with fairly good water to the left, there was no need of our passing within ten feet of the centre of disturbance. The course was so plain that I do not re-

call even calling any warning to Roos as I sat down and resumed my oars. Each of us claimed the other was responsible for what followed, but I think the real truth of it was that *Imshallah* had made up her mind to have a bath without further delay, and couldn't have been stopped anyhow.

I never did see just what hit us, nor how we were hit; for it all came with the suddenness of a sand-bagging. Roos was stroking away confidently, and appeared to be singing, from the movement of his lips. The words, if any, were drowned in the roar. All at once his eyes became wild and he lashed out with a frenzied paddle-pull that was evidently intended to throw her head to the left. The next instant the crash came—sudden, shattering, savage. I remember distinctly wondering why Roos' eyes were shifted apprehensively upward, like those of a man who fancies he is backing away from a bombing airplane. And I think I recall spray dashing two or three lengths astern of us, before the solid battering ram of the water hit me on the back, and Roos in the face. And all *Imshallah* did was to stand straight up on her hind legs and let little demi-semi-quivers run up and down her back like a real lady exulting in the tickle of a shower-bath. Then she lay down and let the river run over her; then reared up on her hind legs again. Twice or thrice she repeated that routine, when, apparently satisfied that her ablutions were complete, she settled down and ran the rest of the rapid sedately and soberly, and, I am afraid, without much help from either oars or paddle. I have always thought Roos was particularly happy in his

description of how it looked for'ard just after that first big wave hit us. "The top of that comber was ten feet above your head," he said, "and it came curving over you just like the 'canopy' of a 'Jack-in-the-Pulpit.' "

With *Imshallah* rather more than half full of water, and consequently not a lot more freeboard for the moment than a good thick plank, it was just as well that no more rapids appeared before we found a patch of bank flat enough to allow us to land and dump her. Fresh as a daisy inside and out, she was as sweet and reasonable when we launched her again as any other lady of quality after she has had her own way. Not far below the bridge we tied up near the supply-pipe of a railway pumping station on the left bank. With the black gorge of Rock Island Rapids three-quarters of a mile below sending up an ominous growl, this appeared to be the proper place to stop and ask the way.

The engineer of the pumping-station said that he knew very little about the big rapid, as he had only been on his present job for a week. He had only seen the left-hand channel, and, as an old sailor, he was dead certain no open boat ever launched could live to run the lower end of it. He said he thought the safest way would be to put the skiff on his push-car, run it down the tracks a couple of miles, and launch it below the worst of the rapids. I told him we might be very glad to do this as a last resort, but, as it would involve a lot of time and labour, I would like to look at the rapid first. He told us to make free of his bunk-house in case we spent the night there, and sug-

gested we call in at a farm house a couple of hundred yards down the track and talk with an old man there, who would probably know all about the rapid.

That proved to be a good tip. The farmer turned out to be an old-time stern-wheeler captain, who had navigated the upper Columbia for many years in the early days. He was greatly interested in our trip, and said that we ought to have no great trouble with the rapids ahead, that is, as long as we didn't try to take undue liberties with them. The safest way to get through would be to land at the head of the big island that divided the channels and line right down the left side of it. It would be pretty hard work, but we ought not to get in wrong if we took our time. He was sorry he couldn't go down and look the place over with us, but it happened that his youngest daughter was being married that evening, and things were sort of crowding for the rest of the day. *That* explained why the yard was full of flivvers, and the numerous dressed-up men lounging around the porches. We decided that the groom was the lad, with an aggressively fresh-shaven gill, who was being made the butt of a joke every time he sauntered up to a new group, and that the bride was the buxom miss having her chestnut hair combed at a window, with at least half a dozen other girls looking on.

Roos was very keen to have the wedding postponed to the following morning, and changed to an *al fresco* affair which he could shoot with good light. With a little study, he said, he was sure he could work it into his "continuity." Perhaps, for instance, the "Farmer-Who-Would-See-the-Sea" might start them off on

their honeymoon by taking them a few miles down river in his boat. That would lend "heart interest and . . ." I throttled that scheme in the bud before my impetuous companion could broach it to the principals. I wasn't going to tempt the providence that had saved me whole from the wrath of Jock o' Windermere by taking a chance with any more "bride stuff."

The black-walled gorge of Rock Island is one of the grimmest-looking holes on the Columbia, and of all hours of the day sunset, when the deep shadows are banking thick above the roaring waters, is the least cheery time to pay it a visit. Somewhat as at Hell Gate, the river spilts upon a long, rocky island, the broader, shallower channel being to the right, and the narrower, deeper one to the left. The upper end of the right-hand channel was quiet and straight; indeed, it was the one I would have been prompted to take had not the old river captain at the farm-house inclined to the opinion that the lining on the other would be easier. The former had been the course Symons had taken, and he mentioned that the lower end was very crooked and rocky. I decided, therefore, to brave the difficulties that I could see something of in advance rather than to blunder into those I knew not of. Although the left channel began to speed up right from the head, I saw enough of it to be sure that we could run at least the upper two-thirds of it without much risk, and that there was then a good eddy from which to land on the side next to the railroad. This was the head of the main fall—an extremely rough cascade having a drop of ten feet in four hundred yards. Down that we would have to

line. I was quite in agreement with the pump-station man that no open boat would live in those wildly rolling waters. Fearful of complications, I restrained Roos from accepting an invitation to the wedding, and we turned in early for a good night's sleep at the pump-station bunk-house.

The game old octogenarian had asked me especially to hail him from the river in the morning, so that he could go down and help us through the rapids. I should have been glad indeed of his advice in what I knew would be a mighty awkward operation, but had not the heart to disturb him when I saw there was no curl of smoke from the kitchen chimney when we drifted by at eight o'clock. The roar of fast and furious revelry had vied with the roar of the rapids pretty well all night, culminating with a crescendo leading up to the old shoe barrage at about daybreak. It didn't seem quite human to keep the old boy lining down river all morning after lining up against that big barrel of "sweet cider" all night. . . . (No, I hadn't missed that little detail; that was one of the reasons I had kept Roos away). So we drifted on down toward the big noise alone. The pump-man promised he would come down to help as soon as his tank was filled, but that wouldn't be for an hour or more.

Rock Island Rapids are in a gorge within a gorge. The black water-scoured canyon with the foam-white river at the bottom of it is not over fifty feet deep in the sheer. Back of high-water mark there is a narrow strip of bench on either side, above which rises a thousand feet or more of brown bluff. The eastern wall still cast its shadow on the river, but the

reflection of the straw-yellow band of broadening light creeping down the western bluff filled the gorge with a diffused golden glow that threw every rock and riffle into sharp relief. It was a dozen times better to see by than the blinding brilliance of direct light, and, knowing just what to expect for the next quarter-mile, I ran confidently into the head of the rapid. Early morning is the hour of confidence and optimism on the flowing road; evening the hour of doubt, indecision and apprehension.

A submerged rock at the entrance to the left channel, which I had marked mentally from the high bank the night before as an obstacle to be avoided, proved rather harder to locate from water level; but Roos spotted it in time to give it a comfortable berth in shooting by. Then the abrupt black walls closed in, and we ran for three hundred yards in fast but not dangerous water. The current took us straight into the eddy I had picked for a landing place, and the skiff slid quietly into a gentle swirling loop of backwater, with nothing but a huge jutting rock intervening between that secure haven and the brink of the fall. So far all had gone exactly as planned. Now we were to see how it looked for lining.

Roos set up on a shelf and cranked while I lined round the projecting rock, an operation which proved unexpectedly simple once it was started right. At my first attempt I failed to swing the boat out of the eddy, and as a consequence she was brought back against the rock and given rather a stiff bump. The next time I launched her higher up, and paying out plenty of scope, let her go right out into the main

current and over the "intake" of the fall. It took brisk following up to keep the line from fouling, and after that was cleared I didn't have quite as much time as I needed to take in slack and brace myself for the coming jerk. The result was *Imshallah* got such a way on in her hundred feet of run that, like a *locoed* broncho pulling up and galloping off with its picket-pin, she took me right along over and off the big rock and into the water below. To my great surprise, where I was expecting to go straight into the whirlpool one usually finds behind a projecting rock, I landed in water that was both slack and comparatively shallow. Recovering quickly from my stumble, I braced against the easy current and checked the runaway with little trouble. Roos, who had missed the last part of the action, wanted me to do that jump and stumble over again, but the ten foot flop down onto the not very deeply submerged boulders was a bit too much a shake-up to sustain for art's sake.

Now that it was too late to line back, I saw why it was the old captain had advised working down the side of the island. The left bank of the cascade (which latter was tumbling close beside me now), was all but sheer. Only here and there were there footings close to the water, so that the man with the line would have to make his way for the most part along the top of the rocky wall. *He* could get along all right, but there was no place where a man could follow the boat and keep it off with a pole. It might have been managed with a man poling-off from the boat itself, but I hardly felt like urging Roos to take the chance. It was out of the question trying to line

back up the "intake" of the fall, but there *was* one loop-hole which looked worth exploring before risking an almost certain mess-up in trying to work down the side of the cascade.

I have mentioned that I had expected to find a whirlpool under the big jutting rock. The only reason there wasn't one was because what at high water must have been a very considerable back channel took out at this point and acted as a sort of safety-valve. There was still a stream a few inches deep flowing out here, running off to the left into a dark cavernous-looking crack in the bedrock. That water had to come back to the river somewhere below, and there was just a chance that the boat could be squeezed through the same way. At any rate, there was not enough of a weight of water to do any harm, and it ought not to be hard to "back up" in the event it proved impossible to push on through. Leaving Roos to set up and shoot a particularly villainous whirlpool he had discovered, I dragged the skiff through the shallow opening and launched it into a deep black pool beyond.

Poling from pool to pool, I entered a miniature gorge where I was presently so walled in by the rock that the raw roar of the cascade was muffled to a heavy, earth-shaking rumble. This tiny canyonette opened up at the end of a hundred yards to a sheer-walled rock-bound pool, evidently scoured out by the action of a high-water whirlpool. This turned out to be an enormous "pot-hole," for I had to avoid the water-spun boulder, which had been the tool of the sculpturing River God, in pushing into the outlet

crack. The latter was so narrow and over-hanging that I had to lie down and work the skiff along with my up-raised hands. Twenty yards of that brought me out to a winding little lake, less steeply walled than the gorge above, but apparently closed all the way round, even at the lower end. I was in a complete *cul de sac*. A gurgling whirlpool showed where the water escaped by a subterranean passage, but that was plainly no place to take a lady, especially a lady of quality like *Imshallah*.

Tying *Imshallah* up to a boulder to prevent her amiable weakness for rushing to the embraces of whirlpools getting the better of her, I climbed up a steeply-sloping pitch of bedrock and looked down to the head of a long narrow arm of quiet water. The gay little waterfall breaking forth from the rock beneath my feet was leaping directly into the main stream of the Columbia—and below the cascade. A stiff thirty or forty-foot portage, and we were through. We might have to wait for the pump-man to help us lift the boat up that first pitch, but he ought to be along almost any time now.

Taking a short-cut back across the water-washed rock, I found Roos just completing his shots of the cascade. The sun was on the latter now, and its dazzling whiteness threw it into striking relief against the sinister walls between which it tumbled. Save the first two falls of Surprise Rapids, there is not a savager rush of water on the upper Columbia than this final three hundred yards of the left-hand channel of Rock Island. Roos was delighted with the way it showed up in his finder, and even more pleased when

he learned that we were not going to have to line the boat down it. Then he had one of his confounded inspirations. That portage over the reef of bedrock, with the little waterfall in the background, would photograph like a million dollars, he declared; but to get the full effect of it, and to preserve "continuity," the "farmer" ought to do it alone. It wouldn't do to include the pump-man in the picture, now that the "farmer" was supposed to be travelling alone. If I *had* to have his help, all right; only it wouldn't do to shoot while the other man was in the picture. But it *would* really be the "Cat's ears" if the "farmer" could make it on his own. He wouldn't have to make that big pull-up without stopping; he could jerk the boat along a foot or two at a time, and then get his breath like the pursued villain did in the processional finales of knockabout comedies. Then he showed me how, by resuming the same grip on the boat and the same facial expression at each renewed attack, the action could be made to appear practically continuous.

Well, I fell for it. Tom Sawyer was not more adroit in getting out of white-washing his fence than was Roos in getting out of that portage job. He wanted to preserve "continuity" by starting back at the head of the cascade, but we compromised by making it the "pot-hole." Emerging to the lakelet, I registered "extreme dejection" at finding my progress blocked, and "dull gloom" as I landed and climbed up for a look-see. But when I reached the top of the reef and discovered the quiet water below, like sunlight breaking through a cloud, I assumed as nearly as

I knew how an exact imitation of an expression I had seen on the face of Balboa in a picture called "First Sight of the Pacific." "That's the 'Cat's ears,'" encouraged Roos; "now snake the boat over—and make it snappy!"

I made it snappy, all right; but it was my spine that did most of the snapping. And it wasn't a foot at a time that I snaked the boat over. (Roos had been too optimistic on that score); it was by inches. Roos took infinite pains in coaching me as to "resuming grip and expression;" but even so, I am afraid the finished film will display considerable jerkiness in its "continuous action." I gained some solace by calling Roos names all the time, and so must again beg "lip-readers" who see the picture to consider the provocation and not judge too harshly. Once tilted over the crest of the reef, the boat took more holding than hauling. Being pretty well gone in the back and knees, she got away from me and slid the last ten feet, giving her bottom a bumping that it never did entirely recover from. I was caulking incipient leaks all the way to Portland as a consequence of that confounded "one man" portage.

Just as we had loaded up and were ready to push off, the pump-man breezed along and asked us to give him a passage as far as Columbia River station, two or three miles below. He wanted to take an oar, but as the distance was short and the current swift, I told him it was not worth bothering with. So he laid the oar he had taken out along the starboard gunwale, and knelt just aft the after thwart, facing forward. Roos always claimed that it was the loom of

the pump-man's back cutting off his view ahead that was responsible for the little diversion that followed. A good part of the blame was doubtless my own for not keeping a sharper watch over my shoulder, as I certainly should have done had I been alone. In any event, *Imshallah's alibi* was complete. She behaved through it all like a real thoroughbred.

There was a sinuous tangle of swirls where the right-hand and left-hand cascades flew at each other's throats at the lower end of the rock island, and then a gay stretch of sun-dazzled froth where the teeth of a long reef menaced all the way across the channel; then a stretch of lazily-coiling green-black water, flowing between lofty brown cliffs and broken here and there with the loom of house-like rocks of shattered basalt. The roar of Rock Island died down in muffled *diminuendo,* and it seemed mighty good to have that diapason muttering in bafflement astern rather than growling in anticipation ahead. There was only one little rapid between here and the siding, the pump-man said, and it wouldn't bother us much as there was plenty of room to get by. He was right—for the most part.

I took a good look at the riffle as we headed down to it. It was a short stretch of rough, noisy water, but nothing that would have had to be avoided except for a single big roller in the middle of it. As this was throwing a great dash of spray high in the air every now and then, I felt sure the rock responsible for it was very slightly submerged—perhaps not more than a few inches. As this was so obviously an obstacle to steer well clear of, it never occurred to me to give

Roos any especial warning about it, especially as he continued standing and sizing up the situation for half a minute after I had resumed my oars. The main current ran straight across the riffle, but with fifty feet of clear water to the left there was no need of getting into any of the worst of it, let alone trying to hurdle that foam-throwing rock.

Leaning hard on my oars, I had good steerage-way on the skiff by the time she dipped over into the fast-running water. Roos was cuffing jauntily at the wave crests, and singing. Because of the sequel, I remember particularly it was "Dardanella" that was claiming his attention. Two or three times he had maintained that he was a "lucky fella" before I saw what seemed to me to be mingled dissent and perturbation gathering in the pump-man's steel-grey eyes. Then, all of a sudden, he gave vocal expression to his doubts. "You won't think you're a 'lucky fella' if you put her onta that rock," he yelled over his shoulder. Turning at the finish of my stroke, I saw that big spray-flipping comber about two lengths away, and *dead ahead,* looking savager than ever. Trailing my right oar, I pulled every ounce I could bring to bear upon my left, trying to throw her head toward the better water. The next instant I was all but falling over backwards as the oar snapped cleanly off in the oar-lock. I recall perfectly the gleam of the long copper nails which had weakened it, and the fresh fracture of the broken spruce.

The weight I put onto my right oar in saving myself from tumbling backward had the effect of throwing her head in just the opposite direction I had in-

tended. Since she could hardly have avoided hitting the big roller anyhow, once she was so near, it is probably better that she hit it squarely than sidling. The crash was solid, almost shattering in its intensity, and yet I am not sure that she hit the rock at all. If she did, it was a glancing blow, for she could not possibly have survived anything heavier.

The pump-man, true to his sailor instincts, kept his head perfectly in the face of the deluge that had engulfed him. The spare oar was lying ready to hand, and he had it waiting for me in the oar-lock by the time I was on an even keel again. The second wave, which she rode on her own, threw *Imshallah's* head off a bit, but by the time she was rising to the third I was helping her again with the oars. Seeing how well she was taking it, I did not try to pull out of the riffle now, but let her run right down through it to the end. Only the first wave put much green water into her, but even that had not filled her anywhere nearly so deep as she had been the evening before. When we beached her below Columbia River station we found her starboard bow heavily dented, but even that did not convince me that we had hit the big rock. I am rather inclined to think that denting was done when I did my lone-hand portage at Rock Island. I was dead sorry I couldn't persuade that pump-man to throw up his job and come along with us. He had the real stuff in him.

After having lunch in the railway men's eating house at Columbia River, we went down to push off again. Finding the local ferry-man examining the skiff, I asked him if he thought she would do to run

THE PICTURE THAT COST ME A WETTING (*above*)

THE WRECK OF THE "DOUGLAS" (*below*)

WE COOKED OUR BREAKFAST IN THE GALLEY OF THE WRECK OF THE "DOUGLAS"

A ROCKY CLIFF ABOVE BEVERLY

Cabinet Rapids, which we could hear rumbling a mile below. "Not if you try to push them out of the river the way you did that riffle above here a while ago," he replied with a grin. He said he had been watching us through his glass, and that the boat had disappeared from sight for three or four seconds when she hit the big roller. He offered to bet his ferry-boat against the skiff that we couldn't do it again and come through right-side-up. No takers. Speaking seriously, he said that, by keeping well to the left, we could run Cabinet all right—if nothing went wrong. "But better not make a practice of breaking an oar just where you're going to need it most," he added with another grin; "there's nothing on the river that would live through the big riffle over against the right bank. You'll see what she did to the *Douglas.*"

Landing from the slack water above a rocky point which juts out into the river at the head of Cabinet Rapids, we climbed a couple of hundred yards over water-scoured boulders to the brink of the gorge. It was a decidedly rough-looking rapid, but by no means so hopeless for running with a small boat as Rock Island. In that the main riffle was thrown against a sheer bank of the river, it reminded me a good deal of Death Rapids on the Big Bend. But this riffle, while appearing fully as rough as that of the dreaded *Dalles des Morts,* was not, like the latter, unavoidable. The chance of passing it in only fairly broken water to the left looked quite good enough to try. The wreck of the *Douglas,* standing out white and stark against the black boulders a mile below, was a good warning against taking any unnecessary chances. I

looked well to the oars and the trim of the boat before shoving off.

Once out into the river, I could see that the rapid was white from bank to bank, but still nothing that ought to trouble us seriously. I stood for a minute or two looking ahead from the vantage of one of the thwarts, and it was just as I was taking up my oars again in the quickening current that the corner of my eye glimpsed the narrow opening of a deep back-channel winding off between splintered walls of columnar basalt to the left. I wasn't looking for any more one-man portages, but this opening looked good enough to explore. It might lead through by an easy way, and there was hardly enough water to do much harm if it didn't. It took hard pulling to sheer off from the "intake" now we had drifted so close, but we finally made it and entered the dark back-channel. Narrowing and broadening, just as the other had done, it led on for a couple of hundred yards, finally to discharge over a six-foot fall into a deeply indented pool that opened out to the river about half way down the rapid. The wedge-shaped crack at the head of the little fall was narrower than the skiff at water-line, but by dint of a little lifting and tugging we worked her through and lowered her into the pool below. Pulling out through the opening, we headed her confidently into the current. There was a quarter-mile of white water yet, but we were far enough down now so that the loss of an oar or any other mishap wouldn't leave the skiff to run into those wallowing rollers over against the further cliff. A sharp, slashing run carried us through to the foot of Cabinet Rapids, and a

few minutes later we had hauled up into an eddy under the left bank opposite the wreck of the *Douglas.*

The little stern-wheeler had come to grief at high-water, so that we had to clamber all of three hundred yards over big, smooth, round boulders to reach the point where the wreck was lying. The latter was by no means in so bad a shape as I had expected to find it. The principal damage appeared to have been done to the wheel, which was clamped down tight over a huge boulder, and to the starboard bow, which was stove in. The rest of her hull and her upper works were intact; also the engines, though terribly rusty. There was not much from which one could reconstruct the story of the disaster; in fact, I have not learned to this day any authentic details. The chances are, however, that the wheel struck a rock somewhere in Cabinet Rapids, and, after that, drifting out of control, she had come in for the rest of the mauling. If her captain is like the rest of the Columbia River skippers I met, I have no doubt that she will be patched up again before next high-water and started off for Portland.

With towering cliffs on both sides and the great black boulders scattered all around, Roos felt that both subject and setting were highly favourable for an effective movie, and started to think out a way to work the wreck of the *Douglas* into his "continuity." After some minutes of brown study, he declared that the best way to work it would be for the "farmer" to land, come clambering across the boulders registering "puzzled wonderment," and then to stand in silent contemplation of the wreck, registering "thankful-

ness." "Thankfulness for what?" I demanded; "it doesn't strike me as Christian to gloat over the wreck of a ship." "You don't get me at all," he expostulated. "I don't mean for him to show thankfulness because of the wreck of the steamer, but because his own boat has so far escaped a similar fate. He just stands here with his arms folded, casts his eyes upward, moves his lips as if . . ."

"Nothing doing," I cut in decisively. "If you'd been raising beans and hay and apricots as long as I have, you'd know that a farmer never registers thankfulness about anything but a rise in the market, and there ain't no such thing any more." While we were arguing that moot point, the sun dipped behind the loftily looming wall of brown-black cliff across the river and the trouble settled itself automatically. Because there was no longer light, Roos thought it would be a good stunt to camp where we were until morning, and as a camp was always "continuity"—there we were!

There was plenty of cordwood left, and the galley stove was in good condition. As we had no candles, dinner was cooked by the mingled red and green gleams of the port and starboard lights, transferred to the galley for that purpose. I slept in the cook's cabin and Roos—with his bed made up on the wire springs from the Captain's cabin—on the deck of the galley. With water freezing half an inch thick in the coffee-pot on the galley stove, we had an insufferably cold night of it—one of the worst we spent on the river. In the morning Roos made his "camp shots," which consisted principally of the farmer chopping cord-

wood on the main deck, building a fire in the galley stove and cooking breakfast. Out of deference to my esoteric knowledge of the way farmers feel about things, he consented to omit the "thankfulness stuff."

Shoving off into a steady six-mile current at nine-thirty, a few minutes brought us in sight of a striking basaltic island, which Symons had characterized as "one of the most perfect profile rocks in existence." "Approaching it from the north," he wrote, "it presents a striking likeness to the profile of Queen Victoria. . . . Coming nearer to it and passing it on the west, the profile changes and merges into a more Grecian and Sphinx-like face, whose placid immobility takes one's mind involuntarily to far-off Egypt. It rises from the surface of the water about a hundred feet, and a pair of eagles have selected it as their home, and upon its extreme top have built a nest, giving, as it were, a crown to this goddes of the Columbia."

Roos declared himself strong for that "Sphinx stuff," and had his camera set up in the bow ready for a close-up of every change of expression. He was doomed to disappointment. The first thing we discovered missing was the crowning eagles' nest, and then Victoria's nose, mouth and chin. Her brow and hair were there, but both considerably eroded and inroad-ed by the weather. The "Grecian-and-Sphinx-like face" we never did locate, although I pulled around the island twice in search of them. Roos declared her an "oil can," and packed up his camera in supreme disgust. That was, I believe, the last time he had it set up on the Columbia.

As Lieutenant Symons had proved so invariably

accurate in all of his topographical descriptions, I am strongly inclined to the belief that floods and the elements had conspired to wreak much havoc with "Victoria's" features in the forty years that had elapsed since he limned them so strikingly with pen and pencil. I have known fairly stonily-featured ladies to change almost as much in a good deal less than forty years.

Cabinet Rapids is the beginning of a somewhat irregular series of columnar basaltic cliffs which wall in the Columbia closely for the next thirty miles. They range in height from fifteen hundred to three thousand feet, and in colour from a rich blend of saffron-cinnamon, through all the shades of brown, to a dull black. The prevailing formation is that of upended cordwood, but there are endless weird stratifications and lamiations, with here and there queer nuclei that suggest sulphur crystallizations. Imbedded in the face of one of these cliffs not far from the tumultuous run of Gualquil Rapids, is a landmark that has been famous among Columbia *voyageurs* for over a hundred years. This is huge log, barkless and weather-whitened, standing on end in the native basalt. Over a thousand feet above the river and almost an equal distance from the brink of the sheer wall of rock, there is no possible question of its having been set there by man. The descriptions written of it a hundred years ago might have been written to-day. Whether it is petrified or not, there is no way of knowing. The only possible explanation of its presence is that it was lodged where it is at a time when the Columbia flowed a thousand feet

higher than it does to-day, probably before it tore its great gorge through the Cascades and much of what is now eastern Washington was a vast lake.

On the suggestion of the ferry-man at Trinidad, we avoided the upper half of Gualquil Rapids by taking a straight, narrow channel to the right, which would probably have been dry in another week. There is a half mile of fast, white water here, ending with some heavy swirls against a sheer cliff, but nothing seriously to menace any well-handled open boat. The water was slack for a number of miles from the foot of Gualquil, but began quickening where the river spread out between long gravel bars below Vantage Ferry. They were shunting sheep across at the latter point, and the Portuguese herders crowded eagerly round our boat, making strange "high signs" and voicing cryptic utterances, evidently having something to do with a local bootleggers' code. At our failure to respond in kind, they became suspicious (doubtless the fact that Roos was wearing a second-hand Canadian officer's uniform he had bought in Revelstoke had something to do with it) that we were prohibition enforcement officials, and they were muttering darkly to each other and shaking their heads as we pushed off again.

The cliffs ran out not long after we left Vantage Ferry, and as we neared the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Bridge at Beverly rough patches of sandy desert began opening up on either side. Deprived of the shelter of the high river walls, we were at once exposed to a heavy easterly wind that had evidently been blowing all day on the desert. The sun dulled

to a luminous blur behind the pall of the sand-filled air, and the wind, which headed us every now and then, about neutralized the impulse of the accelerating current. There was a forty-miles-an-hour sand-storm blowing when we beached the boat under the railway bridge at four-thirty. The brilliantly golden-yellow cars of the C. M. & St. P. Limited rumbling across above behind their electric locomotive seemed strangely out-of-place in the desolate landscape.

The one sidewalk of the town's fragment of street was ankle-deep in sand as we buffetted our way to the hotel. "Have you ever been in Beverly before?" asked the sandy-haired (literally) girl who responded to the jangle of the cowbell on the counter. "But I should know better than that," she apologized with a blush as she blew off the grit on the register; " 'cause if you had been here once, you'd sure never be here again. What's the game, anyhow? You haven't . . .?" A knowing twitch of a dusty eyelash finished the question.

"No, we haven't," growled Roos irritably. Somehow he was never able to extract half the amusement that I did over being taken for a boot-legger.

It was the sand-storm that broke Roos' heart, I think. He was non-committal at supper that night when I started to talk about Priest Rapids, and the next morning, after describing his shave as like rubbing his face with a brick, he announced that he was through with the Columbia for good. As there was a good deal to be said for his contention that, between the shortening days and the high cliffs walling in the

river, there were only two or three hours of good shooting light even when the sun was out, I did not feel justified in urging him to go on unless he wanted to. In any event, light for filming the running and lining of Priest Rapids, now that the sand-storm was at its height, was out of the question for a day or two at least. And below Priest Rapids there would be nothing worth filming until the mouth of the Snake was passed. I suggested, therefore, that he should go on to Pasco by train and await me there, finding out in the meantime by wire whether Chester cared to have him continue the "farmer" picture in the face of the adverse light conditions.

By this time I had fairly complete data on Priest Rapids. These, beginning at the end of a stretch of slack water several miles below Beverly, continue for eleven miles. In this distance there are seven major riffles, with considerable intervals of fairly quiet water between. It seemed probable that all of these, with the exception of the second and seventh, and possibly the sixth, could be run. The lining of the others, while not difficult, would require the help of another man. All that morning I inhaled sand as I went over Beverly with a fine-toothed comb in a very earnest effort to find some one willing to give me a hand through Priest Rapids. The nearest I came to success was an ex-brakeman, who said he would go with me after the storm was over, provided a job hadn't turned up in the meantime. The only real river-man I found was an old chap who opined that the middle of November was too late in the year to be getting his feet—if nothing else—wet in the "Co-

lumby." He offered to haul the boat to the foot of the rapids by the road for twenty dollars, but as the down-river branch of the Milwaukee presented an opportunity to accomplish the same end in less time and discomfort, I decided to portage by the latter. As there was an auto-stage service from Hanford to Pasco, Roos accompanied me to the former point by train, and helped get the boat down to the river and into the water in the morning. Hanford was not the point on the line closest to the foot of Priest Rapids, but I took the boat through to there because the station was nearer the river than at White Bluffs, and launching, therefore, a simpler matter.

The stretch of seventy miles between the foot of Priest Rapids and the mouth of the Snake has the slowest current of any part of the Columbia above the Dalles. Mindful of the time we had been losing by stops for lunch, I now began putting into practice a plan which I followed right on to the end of my voyage. Taking a package of biscuit and a couple of bars of milk chocolate in my pocket, I kept the river right staight on through to my destination. Munching and resting for an hour at noon, I at least had the benefit of the current for this period. Eating a much lighter lunch, I also gained the advantage of no longer being troubled with that comfortable *siesta*-time drowsiness that inevitably follows a hearty meal and disinclines one strongly to heavy exertion for an hour or more.

For a dozen miles or more below Hanford the river, flanked on either side by rolling desert sand-dunes, winds in broad shallow reaches through a region des-

olate in the extreme. The only signs of life I saw for many miles were coyotes slinking through the hungry sage-brush and occasional flocks of geese, the latter forerunners of the countless myriads that were to keep me company below the Snake. At Richfield the results of irrigation became evident in young apple orchards and green fields of alfalfa, and these multiplied all the way down to Pasco. The country seemed very flat and monotonous after so many weeks among cliffs and mountains, but there was no question of its richness and productivity once water was brought to it. The low overflow flats about the mouth of the Yakima, which flows into the Columbia from the west a few miles above Pasco, gave little indication of the beauty of the famous apple country which owes so much to the waters diverted from that little river.

After pulling for an hour with the long Northern Pacific bridge in view, I landed just below the Pasco-Kennewick ferry at three o'clock. As I was beaching the boat and getting out the luggage to leave in the ferry-man's house-boat, a hail from the river attracted my attention. It was from Roos, in the front seat of an auto, on the approaching ferry-boat. His stage had been behind time in leaving Hanford, and as a consequence I had beaten him to the Pasco landing by ten minutes. After the speed with which we had moved on the upper river, however, mine had been rather a slow run. In spite of my steady pulling, it had taken me just under six hours to do the thirty-five miles.

After the exchange of a wire or two, Roos obtained permission from Chester to suspend the "farmer"

picture, and was ordered on to New York to report. We were both a good deal disappointed not to have a pictorial record of the "farmer" actually seeing the sea; in fact, we did some hours of "location" scouting in the hope of finding a substitute Pacific in the vicinity of Pasco. If that Beverly sand-storm had only made itself felt seventy-five miles farther down river I honestly believe we would have accomplished our worthy end. There was a pretty bit of white beach below the N. P. bridge. *If* the sand had been blowing thick enough to obscure the farther shore, and *if* the wind had blown in the right direction to throw up a line or two of surf, I could have stood with one foot on that beach, the other on *Imshallah's* bow, elbow on knee, chin in hand, and registered "fulfilment," and none could have told it from the real Pacific. Indeed, that bit of backwash from Pasco's outfall sewer, with the sand-barrage and surf I have postulated, would have "shot" *more* like the Pacific than many spots I can think of looking off to the Columbia bar.

CHAPTER XIII

PASCO TO THE DALLES

THE only lone-hand river voyage I had ever taken previous to the one on which I was about to embark was down the lower Colorado River, from Needles to the head of the Gulf of California. This had been in comparatively quiet water all the way, with nothing much to look out for save the tidal bore at the lower end. As I had never been above the Dalles on the lower Columbia, I had very little idea of what I would encounter in the way of rapids. I knew that there were locks by which the Dalles and Cascades could be passed, but as the combined fall at these points accounted for only about a quarter of that between the Snake and tide-water, it was certain there must still be some very swift rapids to run. That there had at times been a steamer service maintained from the Snake down meant that there must be some sort of a rock-free channel through all of the riffles; but it did not necessarily mean that these were runnable in a small boat. A properly handled stern-wheeler can be drifted down and (by means of line and capstan) hauled up rapids where not even a high-powered launch can live. I had a list of about a score of the principal rapids between the Snake and Celilo Falls, with their distances from the Canadian Boundary by river. This would enable me to know approximately *where* I was going to find them. That was all.

Information on fall, channel and the best means of running them I would have to pick up as I went along.

I shoved off from Pasco Ferry at nine o'clock in the morning of Sunday, November fourteenth. With Roos and his blanket-roll, camera and tripod out of the stern, I found that the skiff trimmed better when I rowed from the after thwart. She pulled easier and handled a lot more smartly now. It was evident, however, that her increased freeboard was going to make her harder to hold to her course with head winds, but these I hoped to have little trouble with until I reached the gorge of the Cascades. The ferry-man assured me that I would encounter no really bad water until I came to the last pitch of Umatilla Rapids, about thirty-five miles below. He advised me to take a good look at that before putting into it, as an unbroken reef ran almost directly across the current and the channel was not easy to locate. It was the most troublesome bar to navigation on the lower Columbia, and steamers were repeatedly getting in trouble there. I would see the latest wreck a couple of miles below the foot of the rapids.

I passed the mouth of the Snake about three miles below the ferry. Here was no such spectacular meeting of waters as occurs when the Pend d'Oreille and Columbia spring together, for the country is low and level, and the mouth of the Snake broad and shallow. The discharge was through two channels, and the water greenish-grey in colour; but where that blend in the swift tributaries of the upper river suggests the intense coldness of glacial origin, here the picture conjured up was of desert and alkali plains. Its

mouth is the least interesting part of the Snake. It has some magnificent canyons in its upper and middle waters—as have also its two fine tributaries, the Salmon and Clearwater,—and its Shoshone Falls are second only to Niagara on the North American continent.

Lieutenant Symons, who concluded his exploration of the upper Columbia at the Snake, characterizes the region as a "bleak, dreary waste, in which for many miles around sage-brush and sand predominate . . . one of the most abominable places in the country to live in." Alexander Ross, on the other hand, writing seventy years earlier, describes it as one of the loveliest lands imaginable. The fact that the one reached the Snake in the fall and the other in the spring may have had something to do with these diametrically opposed impressions. Irrigation and cultivation have gone far to redeem this land from the desert Symons found it, but it is still far from being quite the Paradise Ross seemed to think it was. As the only considerable plain touching the Columbia at any point in its course, this region of the Snake can never make the scenic appeal of the hundreds of miles of cliff-walled gorges above and below; but it is a land of great potential richness. With water and power available from the two greatest rivers of the West, there can be no question of its future, both agriculturally and industrially. Pasco will yet more than fulfil the promises made for that mushroom town in its early boom days. "KEEP YOUR EYE ON PASCO!" was a byword from one end of the country to the other in the nineties, and this hustling rail and agricultural

centre at the junction of the Columbia and the Snake should not be lost sight of even to-day.

The lighter-hued water of the Snake was pretty well churned into the flood of the Columbia at the end of a mile, leaving a faint suggestion of cloudiness in the transparent green that the latter had preserved all the way from the Arrow Lakes. The long bridge of the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway spanned the Columbia just below the Snake, and from there on paralleled the river closely right down to the Willamette. After the Oregon-Washington Railway and Navigation Company tracks appeared on the south bank below the Walla Walla, it was only at rare intervals that I was out of sight of a grade, or out of sound of a train, for the remainder of my voyage. In a day or two the trainmen, running back and forth between divisional points, came to recognize the bright green skiff plugging on down the dark green river (mighty small she must have looked to them from the banks) and never failed to give her a hail or a wave in passing. On a certain memorable occasion one of them (doubtless in direct defiance of rules) ventured even further in the way of a warning . . . but I will tell of that in its place.

Homley Rapids, seven miles below Pasco ferry, are formed by a rough reef of bedrock running half way across the river from the right bank. Approached from the right side of the long gravel island that divides the river just above them, one might get badly tangled up before he got through; by the left-hand channel the going is easy if one keeps an eye on the shallowing water at the bars. A sky-line of brown

mountains, with a double-turreted butte as their most conspicuous feature, marks the point where the Columbia finally turns west for its assault on the Cascades and its plunge to the Pacific. That bend is the boundary of the fertile plains extending from the Yakima to the Walla Walla, and the beginning of a new series of gorges, in some respects the grandest of all. The matchless panorama of the Cascade gorges is a fitting finale to the stupendous scenic pageant that has been staged all the way from the glacial sources of the Columbia.

A low sandy beach just above the mouth of the rather insignificant Walla Walla comes pretty near to being the most historically important point on the Columbia. Here Lewis and Clark first came to the waters of the long-struggled-toward Oregon; here came Frémont, the "Pathfinder;" here Thompson planted his pious proclamation claiming all of the valley of the Columbia for the Northwest Company; and by here, sooner or later, passed and repassed practically every one of the trappers, missionaries, settlers and other pioneers who were finally to bring Oregon permanently under the Stars and Stripes.

The double-topped butte, an outstanding landmark for *voyageurs* for a hundred years, has long been called "The Two Virgins." The story is told locally of a Catholic priest who saved his life by taking refuge in a cave between the castellated turrets during an Indian massacre, but who got in rather serious trouble with the Church afterwards as a consequence of sending words of his deliverance by a French-Canadian half-breed *voyageur*. The latter got the

salient details of the story straight, but neglected to explain that the two virgins were mountains. The result was that the unlucky priest narrowly missed excommunication for saving his life at the expense of breaking his vows. I got no affidavit with the story; but local "stock" yarns are always worth preserving on account of their colour.

There were a number of big black rocks where the river began its bend to the west, but the channel to the right was not hard to follow. Neither did Bull Run Rapids, a few miles farther down, offer any difficulties. I followed the steamer channel as having the swiftest current, but could have passed without trouble on either side of it in much quieter water. Brown and terra-cotta-tinged cliffs reared higher and higher to left and right, encroaching closely on the river. There was little room for cultivation at any point, and often the railways had had to resort to heavy cutting and tunnelling to find a way through some jutting rock buttress. There were no trees, and the general aspect of the country was desolate in the extreme.

It was toward the end of a grey afternoon that I headed *Imshallah* into the first pitch of Umatilla Rapids. The sun had dissolved into a slowly thickening mist about three o'clock, and from then on the whole landscape had been gradually neutralizing itself by taking on shade after shade of dull, inconspicuous grey. From the grey-white mistiness of the sky to the grey-green murkiness of the river there was nothing that contrasted with anything else; every object was blended, dissolved, all but quenched. The foam-

ruffles above even the sharpest of the riffles blurred like the streaking of clouded marble at a hundred feet, and it took the livest kind of a lookout to avoid the ones with teeth in them. Neither the first nor the second riffle had any very bad water, but my neck was stiff from watching over my shoulder even as they were. I had rather intended avoiding this trouble by drifting down anything that looked very threatening stern first, but that would have involved retrimming the boat and greatly reducing her speed. If I was going to make Umatilla by dark, there was no time to lose.

From the head of the first riffle of Umatilla Rapids to the head of the third or main one is a mile and a half. There was a slight up-river breeze blowing in the mist, and the heavy rumble of the big fall came to my ears some distance above the opening riffle. The distant roar augmented steadily after that, and the sharper grind of the more imminent riffles was never loud enough to drown it out entirely. The fact that it had a certain "all pervasive" quality, seeming to fill the whole of the gorge with its heavy beat, told me that it was an unusually long rapid, as well as an unusually rough one. That, it seemed, was about all I was going to be able to find out. No one was in sight on the left bank, which I was skirting, and the right bank was masked with mist. With none to seek information from, and with not enough light to see for myself, the alternatives were very simple: I could either land, line as far as I could while light lasted and then seek Umatilla on foot for the night, or I could take my chance at running through. It

was the delay and uncertainty sure to be attendant upon lining that was the principal factor in deciding me to try the latter course. Also, I knew that there was an open channel all the way through, and that the rapid was a comparatively broad and shallow one, rather than constricted and deep. This meant that it would be straight white water—a succession of broken waves—I was going into, rather than heavy swirls and whirlpools; just the water in which the skiff had already proved she was at her best. These points seemed to minimize the risk of going wrong to a point where the chance of running was worth taking for the time and trouble it would save. If I had not known these things in advance, I should never, of course, have risked going into so strong a rapid under such conditions of light.

I shall always have a very grateful feeling toward that Pasco ferry-man for those few words he dropped about the run of the reef and the set of the current at Umatilla Rapid. This is one of the few great rapids I have ever known on any river where the main drift of the current will not carry a boat to the deepest channel. This is due to the fact that the great reef of native rock which causes the rapid is sufficiently submerged even at middle water to permit a considerable flow directly across it. The consequence of this is that a boat, large or small, which follows the current and does not start soon enough working over toward the point where a channel has been blasted through the reef, is almost certain to be carried directly upon the latter. This has happened to a good many steam-

ers, the latest having been wrecked not long before my voyage.

With a rough idea of the lay of things in my mind, I had edged a good deal farther out across the current than would have been the case had I been trusting to my own judgment of the way the rapid *ought* to develop in the light of my past experience. The smooth but swiftly-flowing water to the left looked almost empty of threat, and it was not until I was within a hundred feet of the barrier that I saw it was flowing directly over the latter and went tumbling down the farther side in an almost straight fall. At the same instant I saw that I was still heading forty or fifty feet to the left of where the "intake" dipped through the break in the reef. Realizing that I could never make it by heading straight, I swung the skiff round and pulled quartering to the current with her head up-stream. Even then it was a nearer squeak than I like to think of. I missed the middle of the "V" by ten feet as I swung her head down-stream again, and as the racing current carried her up against the back-wave thrown off the end of the break in the reef she heeled heavily to starboard, like an auto turning on a steeply-banked track. Then she shot out into the big white combers in mid-channel and started slap-banging down through them. It looked beastly rough ahead, but in any event it was better than hanging up on the reef at the outset. We were going to have run for our money whatever happened.

The only precautions there had been time to take were slipping into my "Gieve" and throwing all my

luggage aft. Half-inflated, the rubber-lined jacket was no handicap in rowing, and the tube hung ready to receive more air if necessity arose. As for the trim, it had been my snap judgment at the last moment that it would be better to give the skiff her head in the rollers that I *knew* were coming, and let her take her chance in being down by the stern in whirlpools that might never materialize. I still think that was the best thing to have done under the circumstances.

Not until I was right down into that wild wallow of rock-churned foam was there a chance to get an idea of the rather remarkable bedrock formation which is responsible for making Umatilla Rapids the worrisome problem they have always been for river skippers. After piercing the black basaltic barrier of the reef, the channel shoots to the left and runs for a quarter of a mile or more (I was too busy to judge distances accurately) right along the foot of it. With a considerable stream of water cascading over the reef at almost right angles to the channel, a queer sort of side-kick is thrown into the waves of the latter which make it one of the most "unrhythmic" rapids I ever ran. *Imshallah* pounded horribly, but gave not the savagest of the twisting combers a chance to put anything solid over her high held head. My erratic pecking strokes did not find green water often enough to give her much way over the current, but she responded instantly every time I dug deep to throw her head back after she had been buffeted sideways by an arrogant ruffian of a roller.

As soon as I saw the way she was riding the roughest of the water, I realized that the only chance of a

bad mess-up would come through my failure to keep her head to the enemy. Knowing this wasn't likely to happen unless I broke an oar, I eased a bit on my pulling and gave just a quick short-arm jerk now and then to hold her steady. She was never near to broaching-to, and I'm mighty glad she wasn't. Umatilla is the sort of a rapid that hasn't quite the teeth to get the best of a carefully handled boat that is running in good luck, but which has the power, with a mile to spare, to grind to match-wood any craft that gets into trouble on its own account. It was an eerie run that—with the snarling cascade of the reef on one side, the ghostly dance of the rollers on the other, and the impenetrable grey curtain of the mist blanking everything beyond a radius of a hundred feet; but *Imshallah* went through it with her head in the air and came waltzing out into the swirls below as cocky as a partridge. Indeed, that was just the trouble. The pair of us were just a bit *too* cocky over the way we had gone it blind and come through so smartly. It remained for a couple of lesser rapids to reduce both of us to a proper humility of spirit.

I had been prepared to make a quick shift to the forward thwart in case there was a bad run of whirlpools following the rapid, and so bring her up by the stern. This did not prove necessary, however, as the rapidly broadening river was too shallow for dangerous under-currents. A short run in slackening water brought me to the town of Umatilla just as the lights were beginning to twinkle in the windows. Landing in the quiet water below a short stone jetty, I left my stuff in a near-by shack and sought the hotel. The

pool-room "stove-decorators" refused to believe I had come through the rapid until I described it to them. Then they said it was better to be a lucky darnfool on the Columbia than an unlucky school-teacher. "School-teacher," it appeared, was the local apotheosis of Wisdom, and stood at the opposite pole from "darnfool." It seems that there had been two male school-teachers drowned in Umatilla that summer and only one darnfool, and they were rather put out at me for having failed to even up the score. Then they tried to spoil my evening by telling me all the things that had happened to people in Devil's Run Rapids, which I would go into just below the mouth of the river the first thing in the morning. They had me rather fussed for a while, too—until they told one about a farmer who, after having had his launch upset on his way home from his wedding, swam out with his bride in his arms. I told them I'd try to get that lusty swimmer to tow me through Devil's Run in the morning, and turned in for a good sleep.

Umatilla is a decrepit little old town that knew its best days away back in the last century, when it was the head of steamer navigation on the Columbia and the terminus of the freighting route to Idaho and eastern Washington. There are rich irrigated lands farther up the Umatilla River, but the development of these seems to have done little for the stagnating old settlement by the Columbia, which has little left but its historic memories. It was by the Umatilla that the rugged Hunt and the remnants of the Astor overland party came to the Columbia, after what was perhaps the most terrible journey ever made across

the continent. And all through the time of the *voyageurs,* the trappers and the pioneers, Umatilla was only less important as a halting and portage point than the Cascades and the Dalles.

I pulled away from the jetty of Umatilla at eight o'clock in the morning of November fifteenth. The sky was clear and there was no trace of the mist of the previous evening. There was brilliant, diamond-bright visibility on the river, with the usual early morning mirage effects, due to the chill stratum of air lying close to the water. This exaggerated considerably the height of distant riffles, lifting them up into eye-scope much sooner than they would have been picked up ordinarily. I put on my "Gieve" and blew it up in anticipation of a stiff fight at Devil's Run, only to find just enough rocks and riffles there to make me certain of locating them. I could see, however, that the formation was such that there might have been very troublesome water there at higher, and possibly lower, stages. Out of charity for the tellers of a good many awesome tales I had to listen to in respect of rapids I subsequently found to be comparatively innocuous, I am inclined to believe that a number of them were substantially straight accounts of disasters which had actually occurred in flood season, or at times when other water levels than those I encountered made the riffles in question much more troublesome.

I had an easy day of it for rapids, but, as a consequence of the comparatively slow water, rather a hard one for pulling. Canoe Encampment Rapids, twenty miles below Devil's Run, gave me a good lift for a

mile or more, but not enough to make much of a respite from the oars if I was going to make the fifty miles I had set for my day's run. I was still ten miles short of that at four o'clock when a drizzling rain setting in from the south-west decided me to land for shelter at Hepburn Junction, on the left bank. That was the first rain I had encountered since passing the Canadian Boundary, after a month of practically continuous storms. There was nothing but a railway station at the Junction, but a nearby road-camp offered the chance of food and shelter. The young contractor—he was doing the concrete work on a State Highway bridge at that point—eyed my bedraggled figure somewhat disapprovingly at first, at a loss, apparently, as to whether I was a straight hobo or merely a disguised boot-legger. An instant later we had recognized each other as football opponents of Los Angeles-Pasadena school-days. His name was Walter Rees, of a family prominent among early Southern California pioneers. With the rain pattering on the tent roof, we talked each other to sleep lamenting the good old days of the "flying wedge" and massed play in football.

It was clear again the following morning, but with a mistiness to the west masking Mount Hood and the Cascades, to which I was now coming very near. The cliffs had been rearing up higher and higher at every mile, great walls of red-brown and black rock strongly suggestive, in their rugged barrenness, of the buttressed, turreted and columned formation through which the river runs below the mouth of the Spokane. Owyhee, Blalock and Four O'clock rapids were easy

running, but the sustained roar which the slight up-river breeze brought to my ears as the black, right-angling gorge of Rock Creek came in sight was fair warning that there was really rough water ahead. Although I had been able to gather very little information along the way, the fact that I had so far descended but a small part of the two hundred feet of drop between Umatilla and Celilo Falls meant that the several rapids immediately ahead would have to make up for the loafing the Columbia had been guilty of for the last sixty miles.

Taking advantage of the quiet stretch of water below Four O'clock Rapids, I went all over the skiff as she drifted in the easy current, tuning her up for the slap-banging she could not fail to receive in the long succession of sharp riffles which began at Rock Creek. In tightening up the brass screws along the gunwale, I removed and threw into the bottom of the boat both of my oar-locks. When I started to restore them to place as the roar of the nearing rapid grew louder, I found that one of them—the left—had been kicked out of reach under the bottom-boards. Rather than go to the trouble of tearing up the latter just then, I replaced the missing lock with one from my duffle-bag, a roughly-smithed piece of iron that I had carried away as a mascot from an old *batteau* at Boat Encampment. It proved quite a bit too snug for its socket, besides being a deal wider than it should have been for the shaft of my light oar. There was a spoon oar, with a ring lock, under the thwarts, but I was somewhat chary of using it since its mate had snapped with me below Rock Island Rapids.

The river narrowed sharply above Rock Creek, and, standing on a thwart as the skiff drifted down, I saw that the rapid dropped away in a solid stretch of white foam tumbling between black basaltic walls. There was a good, stiff fall, but it was reassuring that I could see right away to the end of the white water, which did not appear to continue around the ninety-degree bend at the foot. It was just the sort of water *Imshallah* was at her best in running, so I decided it was simply a matter of choosing the clearest channel and letting her go. A white cross-barred post on the mountainside at the angle of the bend gave me the bearing for the channel a minute or two before I made out the dip of the "intake." Stowing everything well aft, as I had done at Umatilla, I took up my oars and put her straight over the jade-green tip of the "V."

That was rough-and-rowdy water, and no mistake. Every roller meant a slam, and every slam meant a shower-bath; but withal, it was mostly spray that came over her bows—nothing really to bother about. And so *Imshallah* would have run it right through—had not a sharp dig I gave with my left oar jerked the latter out of that "open-faced" Boat Encampment mascot lock and sent me keeling over backwards. The next moment she was wallowing, beam-on, into the troughs and over the crests of the combers, dipping green water at every roll.

Recovering my seat as quickly as possible, I tried to bring her head up again by backing with the right oar. She swung obediently enough, but I could not hold her bow down-stream once she was headed right.

Rather than chance that "mascot" oar-lock again, I tumbled aft and did what I could with the paddle. Down as she was by the stern, that brought her head right out of the water and made it rather hopeless getting any way on her. She tumbled on through to the foot of the rapid without putting a gunwale under again, however, a circumstance for which I was highly thankful. She already had five or six inches of water in her, as I found as soon as I began to bail. It is just as well the trouble didn't occur at the head of the rapid. We were half way down when I ceased to function, and *Imshallah* had about all she wanted to navigate the remainder. I was also duly thankful that there was nothing more than a few bad swirls at the foot of the rapid. Standing on her tail as she was after I plumped down in the stern with the paddle, a good strong whirlpool, such as must form at that sharp bend at high-water, would have made not more than one comfortable mouthful of her.

From the foot of Rock Creek Rapids to the head of Squally Hook Rapids is something less than four miles of not very swift water. It took me about all the time the boat was drifting that distance to get her bailed out enough to retrieve my lost oar-lock from under the bottom-boards. Squally Hook, I could see, was much the same sort of a short, sharp, savage rapid as Rock Creek. There was the same restricted "in-take," and the same abrupt bend just beyond the foot; only below Squally Hook the river turned to the left, where at Rock Creek it had turned to the right.

The sheer two-thousand-foot cliff on the inside of the bend that gives its name to the rapid is well called

Squally Hook. What had been a gentle ten-miles-an-hour breeze on the river above began resolving itself into a succession of fitful gusts of twenty or thirty as I approached the rock-walled bend. Even a steady head-wind makes steering awkward in going into a rapid; a gusty one is a distinct nuisance. To avoid the necessity of any sharp change of course after I was once among the white-caps, I resolved to use every care in heading into the rapid at exactly the right place. That was why, when I became aware that two girls from a farm-house on a bench above the right bank were motioning me imperiously in that direction, I swerved sharply from the course I had decided upon in an endeavour to locate the channel into which I was sure they were trying to tell me to head. Just what those confounded half-breed Loreli were *really* driving at I never did learn. Perhaps they had apples to sell, or some sweet cider; or perhaps they thought I had some cider that was not sweet. Perhaps it was pure sociability—the desire of a bit of a "talky-talk" with the green-boated *voyageur*. At any rate, they were certainly *not* trying to pilot me into a clear channel. That fact walloped me right between the eyes the instant I discovered that I had pulled beyond the entrance of a perfectly straight channel and that there was a barely submerged barrier of rock blocking the river all the way on to the right bank.

That, of course, left me no alternative but to pull back for all that was in me to wait the "intake." It was a very similar predicament to the one in which the mist had tricked me at the head of Umatilla; only

there I had room to make the channel and here I didn't. The current, running now like a mill-race, carried me onto the reef sixty feet to the right of the smooth green chute of the "fairway."

If it had taken half an hour instead of half a second to shoot out across the shoaling shelf of that froth-hidden reef there might have been time for a goodly bit of worrying anent the outcome. As it was, there was just the sudden thrill of seeing the bottom of the river leaping up to hit the bottom of the boat, the instant of suspense as she touched and dragged at the brink, and then the dizzy nose-dive of two or three feet down into deeper water. It was done so quickly that a stroke checked by the rock of the reef was finished in the up-boil below the little cascade. With an inch or two less of water she might have hung at the brink and swung beam-on to the current, which, of course, would have meant an instant capsize. The way it was, she made a straight clean jump of it, and only buried her nose in the souse-hole for the briefest part of a second when she struck. The rest was merely the matter of three hundred yards of rough running down a rock-clear channel.

The authors of my near-mess-up came capering down the bank in pursuit as I swung out into the smoothening swirls, but I only shook my fist at them and resumed my oars. Darn women, anyway!—when a man's running rapids, I mean.

Now one would have thought that those two performances were enough for one afternoon, especially as both were very largely due to my own carelessness; but I suppose the "trilogy of trouble" had to be

rounded out complete. From the foot of Squally Hook Rapids to the head of Indian Rapids is about three miles. The water became ominously slack as I neared what appeared to be a number of great rock islands almost completely barring the river. It was not until I was almost even with the first of them that a channel, very narrow and very straight, opened up along the left bank. Various other channels led off among the islands, but with nothing to indicate how or where they emerged. That flume-like chute down the left bank was plainly the way the steamers went, and certainly the quickest and most direct course on down the river. Peering through the rocky vista, I could see a rain storm racing up the Columbia, with the grey face of it just blotting out a wedge-shaped gorge through the southern cliffs which I knew must be the mouth of the John Day. That storm was another reason why I should choose the shortest and swiftest channel. There ought to be some kind of shelter where this important southern tributary met the Columbia.

Of course, I knew all about still water running deep (which was of no concern to me) and "twisty" (which was of considerable concern). I should certainly have given more thought to the matter of trimming for what was sure to be waiting to snap up *Imshallah* at the foot of that speeding chute of green-black water had not an old friend of mine breezed along just then. He was the engineer of the way freight on the "South-bank" line. We had been exchanging signals in passing for three days now—twice on his down run and

once on his up. This was the first opportunity I had had to show him how a rapid should be run, and I noted with gratification that he appeared to be slowing down so as to miss none of the fine points. On my part, dispensing with my wonted preliminary "look-see," I swung hard on the oars in an effort to get into the swiftest water before the spectators were out of sight.

As the engine drew up even with me, I balanced my oars with my right hand for a moment and waved the engineer greetings with my left; he, in turn, ran the locomotive with his left hand and waved with his right. Then I saw that the fireman was also waving, and, farther back, the brakeman, from the top of a car, and the conductor from the "lookout" of the caboose. The occupants of the "dirigible grandstand" at the Poughkeepsie regattas had nothing on the crew of that way freight. And the latter, moreover, were treated to a burst of speed such as no man-propelled boat in still water ever came close to. I was not pulling over four or five miles an hour myself, but that smooth, steep, unobstructed chute must have been spilling through its current at close to twenty. In a couple of hundred yards I pulled up three or four car-lengths on the comparatively slow-moving train, and I was still gaining when a sudden *"toot-a-too-toot!"* made me stop rowing and look around. I had recognized instantly the familiar danger signal, and was rather expecting to see a cow grazing with true bovine nonchalance on the weeds between the ties. Instead, it was the engineer's wildly gesticulat-

ing arm that caught my back-cast eye. He was pointing just ahead of me, and down—evidently at something in the water.

Then I saw it too—a big black funnel-shaped hole down which a wide ribbon of river seemed to be taking a sort of a spiral tumble. It was that entirely well-meant *toot-a-toot,* which was intended to prod me, not a cow, into activity, that was primarily responsible for what followed. Had I not ceased rowing on hearing it, it is probable that the skiff would have had enough way when she did strike that whirlpool to carry her right on through. As it was *Imshallah* simply did an undulant glide into the watery tentacles of the lurking octopus, snuggled into his breast and prepared to spend the night reeling in a dervish dance with him. I must do the jade the justice of admitting that she had no intention of outraging the proprieties by going any further than a nocturnal terpsichorean revel. Going home for the night with him never entered her mind; so that when he tried to pull the "Cave-Man stuff" and drag her down to his under-water grottoes, she put up the most virtuous kind of resistance. The trouble was that I didn't want to go even as far as she did. Dancing was the last thing I cared for, with that rain-storm and night coming on. Yet—at least as far as my friends on the way freight ever knew—an all-night *Danse d'Apache* looked very much like what we were up against; for I recall distinctly that when the train was disappearing round the next bend *Imshallah,* her head thrown ecstatically skyward, was still spinning in circles, while I

continued to fan the air with my oars like an animated Dutch windmill.

It was a mighty sizeable whirlpool, that black-mouthed maelstrom into which *Imshallah's* susceptibility had betrayed both of us. I should say that it was twice the diameter of the one which had given us such a severe shaking just above the Canadian Boundary, and with a "suck" in proportion. What helped the situation now, however, was the fact that the skiff carried rather less than half the weight she did then. At the rate she was taking water over the stern during that first attack, she could not have survived for more than half a minute; now she was riding so much more buoyantly that she was only dipping half a bucket or so once in every two or three rounds. When I saw that she could probably go on dancing for an hour or two without taking in enough water to put her under, something of the ludicrousness of the situation began to dawn on me. Missing the water completely with half of my strokes, and only dealing it futile slaps with the rest, I was making no more linear progress than if I had been riding a merry-go-round. I didn't dare to put the stern any lower by sliding down there and trying to paddle where there was water to be reached. Crowding her head down by working my weight forward finally struck me as the only thing to do.

With the forward thwart almost above my head this was not an easy consummation to effect, especially with an oar in either hand. Luckily, I was now using the "ring" oar-locks, so that they came along on the oars when I unshipped the latter. Standing up was,

of course, out of the question. I simply slid off backwards on to the bottom and wriggled forward in a sitting position until I felt my spine against the thwart. That brought her nose out of the clouds, and she settled down still farther when, after getting my elbows over the seat behind me, I worked up into a rowing position.

The whirlpool was spinning from right to left, and one quick stroke with my left oar—against the current of the "spin," that is—was enough to shoot her clear. Bad swirls and two or three smaller "twisters" made her course a devious one for the next hundred yards, but she never swung in a complete revolution again. I pulled into smooth water just as the first drops of the storm began to patter on the back of my neck.

The first riffle of John Day Rapids sent its warning growl on the up-river wind before I was a quarter of a mile below the whirlpool, and ahead loomed a barrier of rock islands, rising out of the white foam churned up as the Columbia raced between them. I had to run the first riffle—an easy one—to make the mouth of the John Day, but that was as far as I went. I reckoned there had been quite enough excitement for one afternoon without poking into any more rough water against a rain and head wind. Dropping below the gravel bar off the mouth of the Day, I pulled fifty yards up-stream in a quiet current and moored *Imshallah* under the railway bridge. I camped for the night with a couple of motor tourists in a shack near the upper end of the bridge. My hosts were two genial souls, father and son, enjoying an indefinite

spell of fishing, hunting and trapping on a stake the former had made in the sale of one of his "prospects" in southern Oregon. They were bluff, big-hearted, genuine chaps, both of them, and we had a highly delightful evening of yarning.

It was clear again the next morning, but with the barometer of my confidence jolted down several notches by what had occurred the previous afternoon. I pulled across the river and sought a quieter way through the second riffle of John Day Rapids than that promised by the boisterous steamer channel. By devious ways and sinuous, I wound this way and that among the black rock islands, until a shallow channel along the right bank let me out of the maze at the lower end. This waste of time and effort was largely due to funkiness on my part, and there was no necessity for it. The steamer channel is white and rough, with something of a whirlpool on the left side at the lower end, but nothing that there is any real excuse for avoiding. The third riffle was nothing to bother about; nor did Schofield's Rapids, two miles below, offer any difficulties. As a matter of fact, Adventure, having had its innings, was taking a day off, leaving me to follow the Golden Trail of Romance. To-day was "Ladies' Day" on the Columbia.

Romance first showed her bright eyes at a little farm on the right bank, three miles below Schofield's Rapids. Landing here to ask about the channel through a rather noisy rapid beginning to boom ahead, I found a delectable apple-cheeked miss of about twelve in charge, her father and mother having gone across to Biggs for the day. She was in sore trouble

at the moment of my advent because her newly-born brindle bull calf—her really-truly very own—wouldn't take nourishment properly. Now as luck would have it, teaching a calf table-manners chanced to be one of the few things I knew about stock-farming. So I showed her how to start in by letting *Cultus* (that was merely a temporary name, she said, because he was so bad) munch her own finger for a spell, from which, by slow degrees, the lacteal liaison with "Old Mooley" was established. It took us half an hour to get *Cultus* functioning on all fours, and rather longer than that to teach her collie, tabby cat, and the latter's three kittens to sit in a row and have their mouths milked into. It didn't take us long to exhaust "Old Mooley's" milk supply at that game, and when I finally climbed over the barnyard fence on the way down to my boat, poor *Cultus* was left butting captiously at an empty udder. "Apple Cheek" rather wanted me to stay until her father came back, saying that he had gone to Biggs to get a 'breed for a hired man, and that, if he didn't get the 'breed, maybe I would do. She almost burst into tears with shame when I told her I was a moving picture actor seeking rest and local colour on the Columbia. "You a actor, and I made you milk 'Old Mooley!' " she sobbed; and it took all my lunch ration of milk chocolate to bring back her smile. Then, like the Scotch bride at Windermere, she asked me if I was Bill Hart. Somehow, I wasn't quite base enough to tell her a concrete lie like that; so I compromised with a comparative abstraction. I was a rising star in the movie firmament, I said; an eclectic, taking the best

of all the risen stars, of whom much would be heard later. She was still pondering *"eclectic"* when I pushed off into the current. Bless your heart, little "Apple Cheek," I hope you didn't get a spanking for wasting all of *Cultus'* dinner on the dogs and cats and the side of the barn! You were about the first person I met on the Columbia who didn't accuse me of being a boot-legger, and the only one who believed me hot off the bat when I said I was a movie star.

The rapid ahead became noisier as I drew nearer, and when I saw it came from a reef which reached four-fifths of the way across the river from the left bank, I pulled in and landed at Biggs to inquire about the channel. The first man I spoke to called a second, and the latter a third, and so on *ad infinitum.* Pretty near to half the town must have been gathered at the railway station giving me advice at the end of a quarter of an hour. Each of them had a different suggestion to make, ranging from dragging through a half-empty back channel just below the town to taking the boat out and running it down the track on a push-cart. As they all were agreed that the steamers used to go down the opposite side, I finally decided that would be the best way through. Not to run too much risk of being carried down onto the reef in pulling across, I lined and poled a half mile up-stream before pushing off. Once over near the right bank, I found a channel broad and deep enough to have run at night.

A couple of miles below Biggs the Columbia is divided by a long narrow rocky island. The deep, direct channel is that to the right, and is called Hell

Gate—the third gorge of that hackneyed name I had encountered since pushing off from Beavermouth. Possibly it was because I was fed-up with the name and all it connoted that I avoided this channel; more likely it was because Romance was at the tow-line. At any rate, I headed into the broad shallow channel that flows by the mouth of the River Des Chutes. It was up this tumultuous stream that Frémont, after camping at the Dalles and making a short boat voyage below, started south over the mountains in search of the mythical river that was supposed to drain from the Utah basin to the Pacific in the vicinity of San Francisco—one of the indomitable "Pathfinder's" hardest journeys.

Just beyond where the River of the Falls, true to name to the last, came cascading into the Columbia, Romance again raised her golden head—this time out of the steam rising above an Indian "Turkish-bath." The first time I had found her in the guise of a twelve-year-old; this time it was more like a hundred and twelve. One can't make certain within a year or two about a lady in a Turkish-bath; it wouldn't be seemly even to *try* to do so. Pulling in close to the left bank to look at some queer mud-plastered Indian wickiups, a rush of steam suddenly burst from the side of the nearest one, and out of that spreading white cloud, rising like Aphrodite from the sea-foam, emerged the head and shoulders of an ancient squaw. She was horribly old—literally at the sans eyes, sans hair, sans teeth, sans everything (including clothes) stage. Cackling and gesticulating in the rolling steam, she

was the *belle ideal* of the witch of one's fancy, muttering incantations above her boiling cauldron.

Frémont, in somewhat humorous vein, tells of visiting an Indian camp in this vicinity on the Columbia, and of how one of the squaws who had rushed forth in complete *déshabille* on hearing the voices of strangers, "properized" herself at the last moment by using her papoose—as far as it would go—as a shield. But this old "Aphrodite" I had flushed from cover was so old that, if her youngest child had been ready to hand, and that latter had had one of her own children within reach, and this third one had had a child available, I am certain that still another generation or two would have had to be descended before a papoose sufficiently young enough to make "properization" proper would have been found. I trust I make that clear. And when you *have* visualized it, isn't it a funny pyramid?

With two or three more "Aphrodites" beginning to bubble up through the steam, it is just possible that some such an ocular barrage actually was in process of formation; but I think not. My hard-plied oars had hardly lengthened my interval to much over fifty yards, when the whole lot of them trooped down to the river—steaming amazingly they were at the touch of the sharp early winter air—and plunged into the icy water. I learned later that this "sweat-bath" treatment is the favourite cure-all with the Indians of that part of the Columbia Basin.

Where the left-hand channel returned to the main Columbia a mile or more below the mouth of the River Des Chutes I encountered an extensive series

of rock-reefs which, until I drew near them, seemed to block the way completely. It was a sinuous course I wound in threading my way through the ugly basaltic out-croppings, but the comparatively slow water robbed it of any menace. Once clear of the rocks, I found myself at the head of the long, lake-like stretch of water backed up above Celilo Falls. The low rumble of the greatest cataract of the lower Columbia was already pulsing in the air, while a floating cloud of "water-smoke," white against the encroaching cliffs, marked its approximate location. I was at last approaching the famous "long portage" of the old *voyageurs,* a place noted (in those days) for the worst water and the most treacherous Indians on the river. Now, however, the Indians no longer blocked the way and exacted toll, while the portage had been bridged by a Government canal. I caught the loom of the head-gate of the latter about the same time that the bridge of the "North-Bank" branch line, which spans the gorge below the falls, began rearing its blurred fret-work above the mists. Then, once again, Romance. "Ladies' Day" was not yet over. As I pulled in toward the entrance to the canal, at the left of the head of the falls, I observed a very gaily-blanketed dame dancing up and down on the bank and gesticulating toward the opposite side of the river. As I landed and started to pull the skiff up on the gravelly beach, she came trotting down to entreat, in her best "Anglo-Chinook," that I ferry her to the opposite bank, where her home was, and, where, apparently, she was long overdue. She wasn't a beggar, she assured me, but—jingling her beaded bag under

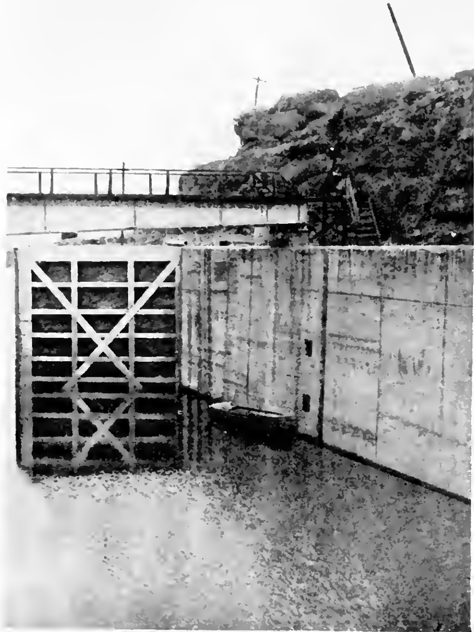
my nose—was quite willing to pay me *"hiyu chickamon"* for my services. Nor was she unduly persistent. No sooner had I told her that I was in a *"hiyu rush"* and hadn't the time just then to be a squire of dames, than she bowed her head in stoical acquiescence and went back to her waving and croaking. It was that futile old croak (with not enough power behind it to send it a hundred yards across a mile-wide river) that caved my resolution. Shoving *Imshallah* back into the water, I told her to pile in.

And so Romance drew near to me again, this time perched up in the long-empty stern-sheets of my boat. This one was neither an infant nor a centurienne, but rather a fair compromise between the two. Nor was she especially fair nor especially compromising (one couldn't expect that of a sixty-year-old squaw); but she was the most trusting soul I ever met, and that's something. The falls were thundering not fifty yards below—near enough to wet us with their up-blown spray,—and yet not one word of warning did she utter about giving the brink a wide birth in pulling across. Not that I needed such a warning, for the first thing I did was to start pulling upstream in the slack water; but, all the same, it was a distinct compliment to have it omitted. As it turned out, there was nothing to bother about, for the current was scarcely swifter in mid-stream than along the banks. It was an easy pull. Romance beamed on me all the way, and once, when one of her stubby old toes came afoul of my hob-nailed boot, she bent over and gave a few propitiary rubs to—the boot . . . as if *that* had lost any cuticle. And at parting,

when I waved her money-bag aside and told her to keep her *chickamon* to spend on the movies, she came and patted me affectionately on the shoulder, repeating over and over *"Close tum-tum mika!"* And that, in Chinook, means: "You're very much all right!" As far as I can remember, that is the only unqualified praise I ever had from a lady—one of that age, I mean. Squiring squaws—especially dear old souls like that one—is a lot better fun than a man would think.

It was four o'clock when I turned up at the lock-master's house at Celilo, and then to find that that worthy had just taken his gun and gone off up on the cliffs to try and bag a goose. As it would probably be dark before he returned, his wife reckoned I had better put up with them for the night and make an early start through the Canal the following morning. The lock-master, a genial Texan, came down with his goose too late it get it ready for supper, but not to get it picked that night. Indeed, we made rather a gala occasion of it. "Mistah" Sides got out his fiddle and played "The Arkansaw Traveller" and "Turkey in the Straw," the while his very comely young wife accompanied on the piano and their two children, the village school-marm and myself collaborated on the goose. It was a large bird, but many hands make light work; that is, as far as getting the feathers off the goose was concerned. Cleaning up the kitchen was another matter. As it was the giddy young school-teacher who *started* the trouble by putting feathers down my neck, I hope "Missus" Sides made that demure-eyed minx swab down decks in the morn-

LIFTED DRAWBRIDGE ON CELILO CANAL (*above*)
TUMWATER GORGE OF THE GRAND DALLES (*below*)



"IMSHALLAH" IN THE LOCK AT FIVE-MILE

"IMSHALLAH" HALF WAY THROUGH THE CELILO CANAL

ing before she went to teach the young idea how to shoot.

There is no lock at the head of the Celilo Canal, but a gate is maintained for the purpose of regulating flow and keeping out drift. Sides, silhouetted against the early morning clouds, worked the gates and let me through into the narrow, concrete-walled canal, down which I pulled with the thunder of the falls on one side and on the other the roar of a passing freight. The earth-shaking rumbles died down presently, and beyond the bend below the railway bridge I found myself rowing quietly through the shadow of the great wall of red-black cliffs that dominate the Dalles from the south.

Celilo Falls is a replica on a reduced scale of the Horse-shoe cataract at Niagara. At middle and low-water there is a drop of twenty feet here, but at the flood-stage of early summer the fall is almost wiped out in the lake backed up from the head of the Tumwater gorge of the Dalles. The Dalles then form one practically continuous rapid, eight or nine miles in length, with many terrific swirls and whirlpools, but with all rocks so deeply submerged that it is *possible* for a well-handled steamer to run through in safety—provided she is lucky. With the completion of the Canal this wildest of all steamer runs was no longer necessary, but in the old days it was attempted a number of times when it was desired to take some craft that had been constructed on the upper river down to Portland. The first steamer was run through successfully in May, 1866, by Captain T. J. Stump, but the man who became famous for his suc-

cess in getting away with this dare-devil stunt was Captain James Troup, perhaps the greatest of all Columbia skippers. Professor W. D. Lyman gives the following graphic account of a run through the Dalles with Captain Troup, on the *D. S. Baker,* in 1888.

"At that strange point in the river, the whole vast volume is compressed into a channel but one hundred and sixty feet wide at low water and much deeper than wide. Like a huge mill-race the current continues nearly straight for two miles, when it is hurled with frightful force against a massive bluff. Deflected from the bluff, it turns at a sharp angle to be split asunder by a low reef of rock. When the *Baker* was drawn into the suck of the current at the head of the 'chute' she swept down the channel, which was almost black, with streaks of foam, to the bluff, two miles in four minutes. There feeling the tremendous refluent wave, she went careening over toward the sunken reef. The skilled captain had her perfectly in hand, and precisely at the right moment rang the signal bell, 'Ahead, full speed,' and ahead she went, just barely scratching her side on the rock. Thus close was it necessary to calculate distance. If the steamer had struck the tooth-like point of the reef broadside on, she would have been broken in two and carried in fragments on either side. Having passed this danger point, she glided into the beautiful calm bay below and the feat was accomplished."

There is a fall of eighty-one feet in the twelve miles from the head of Celilo Falls to the foot of the Dalles. This is the most considerable rate of descent in the whole course of the Columbia in the United States, though hardly more than a third of that over stretches

of the Big Bend in Canada. It appeared to be customary for the old *voyageurs* to make an eight or ten miles portage here, whether going up or down stream, though there were doubtless times when their big *batteaux* were equal to running the Dalles below Celilo. I climbed out and took hurried surveys of both Tumwater and Five-Mile (sometimes called "The Big Chute") in passing, and while they appeared to be such that I would never have considered taking a chance with a skiff in either of them, it did look as though a big double-ender, with an experienced crew of oarsmen and paddlers, would have been able to make the run. That was a snap judgment, formed after the briefest kind of a "look-see," and it may well be that I was over optimistic.

The Celilo Canal, which was completed by the Government about five years ago, is eight and a half miles long, has a bottom width of sixty-five feet, and a depth of eight feet. It has a total lift of eighty feet, of which seventy are taken by two locks in flight at the lower end. That this canal has failed of its object—that of opening up through navigation between tide-water and the upper Columbia—is due to no defect of its own from an engineering standpoint, but rather to the fact that, first the railway, and now the truck, have made it impossible for river steamers to pay adequate returns in the face of costly operation and the almost prohibitive risks of running day after day through rock-beset rapids. There is not a steamer running regularly on the Columbia above the Dalles to-day. The best service, perhaps, which the Celilo Canal rendered was the indirect one of

forcing a very considerable reduction of railway freight rates. That alone is said to have saved the shippers of eastern Oregon and Washington many times the cost of this highly expensive undertaking.

I pulled at a leisurely gait down the Canal, stopping, as I have said, at Tumwater and Five-Mile, and at the latter giving the lock-master a hand in dropping *Imshallah* down a step to the next level. Rowing past a weird "fleet" of laid-up salmon-wheels in the Big Eddy Basin, I sheered over to the left bank in response to a jovial hail, and found myself shaking hands with Captain Stewart Winslow, in command of the Government dredge, *Umatilla,* and one of the most experienced skippers on the upper river. He said that he had been following the progress of my voyage by the papers with a good deal of interest, and had been on the lookout to hold me over for a yarn. As I was anxious to make the Dalles that night, so as to get away for an early start on the following morning, he readily agreed to join me for the run and dinner at the hotel.

While Captain Winslow was making a hurried shift of togs for the river, I had a brief but highly interesting visit with Captain and Mrs. Saunders. Captain Saunders, who is of the engineering branch of the army, has been in charge of the Celilo Canal for a number of years. Mrs. Saunders has a very large and valuable collection of Indian relics and curios, and at the moment of my arrival was following with great interest the progress of a State Highway cut immediately in front of her door, which was uncovering, evidently in an old graveyard, some stone

mortars of unusual size and considerable antiquity. When Captain Winslow was ready, we went down to the skiff, and pulled along to the first lock. With Captain Saunders and a single helper working the machinery, passing us down to the second lock and on out into the river was but the matter of a few minutes.

Big Eddy must be rather a fearsome hole at high water, but below middle stage there is not enough power behind its slow-heaving swirls to make them troublesome. It was a great relief to have a competent river-man at the paddle again, and my rather over-craned neck was not the least beneficiary by the change. The narrows at Two-Mile were interesting rather for what they might be than what they were. Beyond a lively snaking about in the conflicting currents, it was an easy passage through to the smooth water of the broadening river below. One or two late salmon-wheels plashed eerily in the twilight as we ran past the black cliffs, but fishing for the season was practically over weeks before. We landed just above the steamer dock well before dark, beached the skiff, stowed my outfit in the warehouse, and reached the hotel in time to avoid an early evening shower. Captain Winslow had to dine early in order to catch his train back to Big Eddy, but we had a mighty good yarn withal.

CHAPTER XIV

THE HOME STRETCH

THE DALLES was the largest town I touched on the Columbia, and one of the most attractive. Long one of the largest wool-shipping centres of the United States, it has recently attained to considerable importance as a fruit market. It will not, however, enter into anything approaching the full enjoyment of its birthright until the incalculably enormous power possibilities of Celilo Falls and the Dalles have been developed. So far, as at every other point along the Columbia with the exception of a small plant at Priest Rapids, nothing has been done along this line. When it is, The Dalles will be in the way of becoming one of the most important industrial centres of the West.

In the days of the *voyageurs* The Dalles was notorious for the unspeakably treacherous Indians who congregated there to intimidate and plunder all who passed that unavoidable portage. They were lying, thieving scoundrels for the most part, easily intimidated by a show of force and far less prone to stage a real fight than their more warlike brethren who disputed the passage at the Cascades. That this "plunderbund" tradition is one which the present-day Dalles is making a great point of living down, I had conclusive evidence of through an incident that arose in connection with my hotel bill. I had

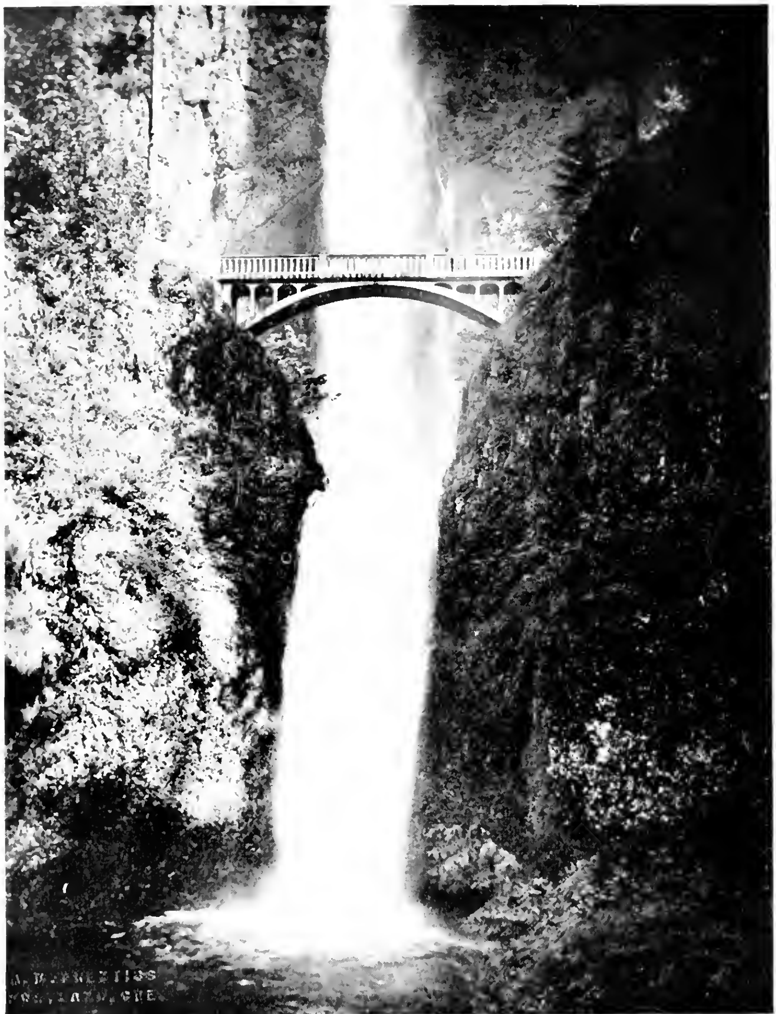
found my room extremely comfortable and well appointed, so that the bill presented for it at my departure, far from striking me as unduly high, seemed extremely reasonable. I think I may even have said something to that effect; yet, two days later in Portland, I received a letter containing an express order for one dollar, and a note saying that this was the amount of an unintentional overcharge for my room. That was characteristic of the treatment I received from first to last in connection with my small financial transactions along the way. I never dreamed that there were still so many people in the world above profiteering at the expense of the passing tourist until I made my Columbia voyage.

I had intended, by making an early start from The Dalles, to endeavour to cover the forty odd miles to the head of the Cascades before dark of the same day. Two things conspired to defeat this ambitious plan: first, some unexpected mail which had to be answered, and, second, my equally unexpected booking of a passenger—a way passenger who had to be landed well short of the Cascades. Just as I was cleaning up the last of my letters, the hotel clerk introduced me to the "Society Editor" of The Dalles *Chronicle,* who wanted an interview. I told her that I was already two hours behind schedule, but that if she cared to ride the running road with me for a while, she could have the interview, with lunch thrown in, on the river. She accepted with alacrity, but begged for half an hour to clean up her desk at the *Chronicle* office and change to outdoor togs. Well within that limit, she was back again at the hotel, flushed, pant-

ing and pant-ed, and announced that she was ready. Picking up a few odds and ends of food at the nearest grocery, we went down to the dock, where I launched and loaded up *Imshallah* in time to push off at ten o'clock. I had, of course, given up all idea of making the Cascades that day, and reckoned that Hood River, about twenty-five miles, would be a comfortable and convenient halting place for the night. And so it would have been. . . .

I don't remember whether or not we ever got very far with the "interview," but I do recall that Miss S—— talked very interestingly of Johan Bojer and his work, and that she was in the midst of a keenly analytical review of "The Great Hunger" when a sudden darkening of what up to then had been only a slightly overcast sky reminded me that I had been extremely remiss in the matter of keeping an eye on the weather. Indeed, up to that moment the menace of storms on the river had been of such small moment as compared to that of rapids that I had come to rate it as no more than negligible. Now, however, heading into the heart of the Cascades, I was approaching a series of gorges long notorious among river *voyageurs* as a veritable "wind factory"—a "storm-breeder" of the worst description. After all that I had read of the way in which the early pioneers had been held up for weeks by head winds between the Dalles and the Cascades, there was no excuse for my failure to keep a weather eye lifting at so treacherous a point. The only *alibi* I can think of is Adam's: "The woman did it." Nor is there any ungallantry in that plea. Quite the contrary, in fact; for I am

PALISADE ROCK, LOWER COLUMBIA RIVER



MULTNOMAH FALLS, COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY, NEAR PORTLAND

quite ready to confess that I should probably fail to watch the clouds again under similar circumstances.

There were a few stray mavericks of sunshine shafts trying to struggle down to the inky pit of the river as I turned to give the weather a once-over, but they were quenched by the sinister cloud-pall even as I looked. The whole gorge of the river-riven Cascades was heaped full of wallowing nimbus which, driven by a fierce wind, was rolling up over the water like an advancing smoke-barrage. The forefront of the wind was marked by a wild welter of foam-white water, while a half mile behind a streaming curtain of gray-black indicated the position of the advancing wall of the rain. It would have been a vile-looking squall even in the open sea; here the sinister threat of it was considerably accentuated by the towering cliffs and the imminent outcrops of black rock studding the surface of the river. I had no serious doubt that *Imshallah,* after all the experience she had had in rough water, would find any great difficulty in riding out the blow where she was, but since it hardly seemed hospitable to subject my lady guest to any more of a wetting than could be avoided, I turned and headed for the lee shore. Miss S—— was only about half muffled in the rubber saddle *poncho* and the light "shed" tent I tossed to her before resuming my oars when the wall of the wind—hard and solid as the side of a flying barn—struck us full on the starboard beam. It was rather careless of me, not heading up to meet that squall before it struck; but the fact was that I simply couldn't take seriously anything that it seemed possible *could* happen on such a deep, quiet stretch of

river. The consequence of taking that buffet on the beam was quite a merry bit of a mix-up. The shower-bath of blown spray and the dipping under of the lee rail were rather the least of my troubles. What did have me guessing for a minute, though, was the result of the fact that that confounded fifty-miles-an-hour zephyr got under the corners of the tent and, billowing it monstrously, carried about half of it over-board; also a somewhat lesser amount of Miss S——, who was just wrapping herself in it. I had to drop my oars to effect adequate salvage operations, and so leave the skiff with her port gunwale pretty nearly hove under. As soon as I got around to swing her head up into the teeth of the wind things eased off a bit.

The river was about a mile wide at this point—ten miles below The Dalles and about opposite the station of Rowena—and, save for occasional outcroppings of black bedrock, fairly deep. The north shore was rocky all the way along, but that to the south (which was also the more protected on account of a jutting point ahead) was a broad sandy beach. That beach seemed to offer a comparatively good landing, and, as it extended up-stream for half a mile, it appeared that I ought to have no great difficulty in fetching it. The first intimation I had that this might not be as easy as I had reckoned came when, in spite of the fact that I was pulling down-stream in a three or four-mile current, the wind backed the skiff up-stream past a long rock island at a rate of five or six miles an hour. That was one of the queerest sensations I experienced on the whole voyage—having to avoid

bumping the *lower* end of a rock the while I could see the riffle where a strong current was flowing around the *upper* end.

I settled down to pulling in good earnest after that rather startling revelation, trying to hold the head of the skiff just enough to the left of the eye of the wind to give her a good shoot across the current. Luckily, I had been pretty well over toward the south bank when the wind struck. There was only about a quarter of a mile to go, but I was blown back just about the whole length of that half mile of sandy beach in making it. The last hundred yards I was rowing "all out," and it was touch-and-go as to whether the skiff was going to nose into soft sand or the lower end of a long stretch of half-submerged rocks. I was a good deal relieved when it proved to be the beach—by about twenty feet. We would have made some kind of a landing on the rocks without doubt, but hardly without giving the bottom of the boat an awful banging.

The sand proved unexpectedly soft when I jumped out upon it, but I struck firm bottom before I had sunk more than an inch or two above my boot tops and managed to drag the skiff up far enough to escape the heaviest of the wash of the waves. It was rather a sodden bundle of wet canvas that I carried out and deposited under a pine tree beyond high-water mark, but the core of it displayed considerable life after it had been extracted and set up to dry before the fire of pitchy cones that I finally succeeded in teasing into a blaze. To show Miss S—— that the storm hadn't affected my equanimity, I asked her

to go on with her review of "The Great Hunger;" but she replied her own was more insistent, and reminded me that I hadn't served lunch yet. Well, rain-soaked biscuit and milk chocolate are rather difficult to take without a spoon; but a pound of California seedless raisins, if munched slowly, go quite a way with two people.

The worst of the squall was over in half an hour, and, anxious to make hay while the sun shone, I pushed off again in an endeavor to get on as far as I could before the next broadside opened up. Miss S—— I landed at the Rowena Ferry, to catch the afternoon train back to The Dalles. She was a good ship-mate, and I greatly regret she had the bad luck to be my passenger on the only day I encountered a really hard blow in all of my voyage.

There was another threatening turret of black cloud beginning to train its guns as I pulled out into the stream beyond Rowena, and it opened with all the big stuff it had before I had gone a mile. While it lasted, the bombardment was as fierce as the first one. Fortunately, its ammunition ran out sooner. I kept the middle of the current this time, pulling as hard as I could against the wind. I got a thorough raking, fore-and-aft, for my temerity, but, except at the height of the wind, I managed to avoid the ignominy of being forced back against the stream.

The third squall, which opened up about three-thirty, was a better organized assault, and gave me a pretty splashy session of it. When that blow got the range of me I was just pulling along to the left of a desolate tongue of black basalt called Memaloose

Island. For many centuries this rocky isle was used by the Klickatats as a burial place, which fact induced a certain Indian-loving pioneer of The Dalles, Victor Trevett by name, to order his own grave dug there. A tall marble shaft near the lower end of the island marks the spot. Now I have no objection to marble shafts in general, nor even to this one in particular—as a shaft. I just got tired of seeing it, that was all. If any skipper on the Columbia ever passed Vic Trevett's monument as many times in a year as I did in an hour, I should like to know what run he was on.

Swathed in oilskins, my potential speed was cut down both by the resistance my augmented bulk offered to the wind and the increased difficulty of pulling with so much on. Down past the monument I would go in the lulls, and up past the monument I would go before the gusts. There, relentless as the *Flying Dutchman,* that white shaft hung for the best part of an hour. I only hope what I said to the wind didn't disturb old Vic Trevett's sleep. Finally, a quarter of an hour's easing of the blow let me double the next point; and then it turned loose with all its guns again. Quite gone in the back and legs, I gave up the unequal fight and started to shoot off quartering toward the shore. Glancing over my shoulder in an endeavour to get some kind of an idea of where, and against what, I might count on striking, an astounding sight met my eyes, a picture so weird and infernal that I had to pause (mentally) and assure myself that those raisins I had for lunch had not been "processed."

Of all the sinister landscapes I ever saw—including the lava fields of a good many volcanoes and a number of the world's most repulsive "bad lands"—that which opened up to me as I tried to head in beyond that hard-striven-for point stands alone in my memory for sheer awesomeness. The early winter twilight had already begun to settle upon the gloomy gorge, the duskiness greatly accentuating the all-pervading murk cast upon the river by the pall of the sooty clouds. All round loomed walls of black basalt, reflecting darkly in water whose green had been completely quenched by the brooding purple shadows. The very pines on the cliffs merged in the solid opacity behind their scraggly forms, and even the fringe of willows above high-water-mark looped round the crescent of beach below like a fragment of mourning band. And that stretch of silver sand—the one thing in the whole infernal landscape whose whiteness the gloom alone could not drown: how shall I describe the jolt it gave me when I discovered that six or seven black devils were engaged in systematically spraying it with an inky liquid that left it as dark and dead to the eye as a Stygian strand of anthracite? It was a lucky thing those raisins had *not* been "processed;" else I might not have remembered readily what I had heard of the way the "South-Bank" railway had been keeping the sand from drifting over its tracks by spraying with crude oil the bars uncovered at low water.

With that infernal mystery cleared up, my mind was free to note and take advantage of a rather remarkable incidental phenomenon. The effect of oil

on troubled waters was no new thing to me, for on a number of occasions I had helped to rig a bag of kerosene-soaked oakum over the bows of a schooner hove-to in a gale; but to find a stretch of water already oiled for me at just the time and place I was in the sorest need of it—well, I couldn't see where those manna-fed Children of Israel wandering in the desert found their advance arrangements looked to any better than that. The savage wind-whipped white-caps that were buffeting me in mid-stream dissolved into foam-streaked ripples the moment they impinged upon the broadening oil-sleeked belt where the petroleum had seeped riverward from the sprayed beach. A solid jetty of stone could not have broken the rollers more effectually. On one side was a wild wallow of tossing water; on the other—as far as the surface of the river was concerned—an almost complete calm.

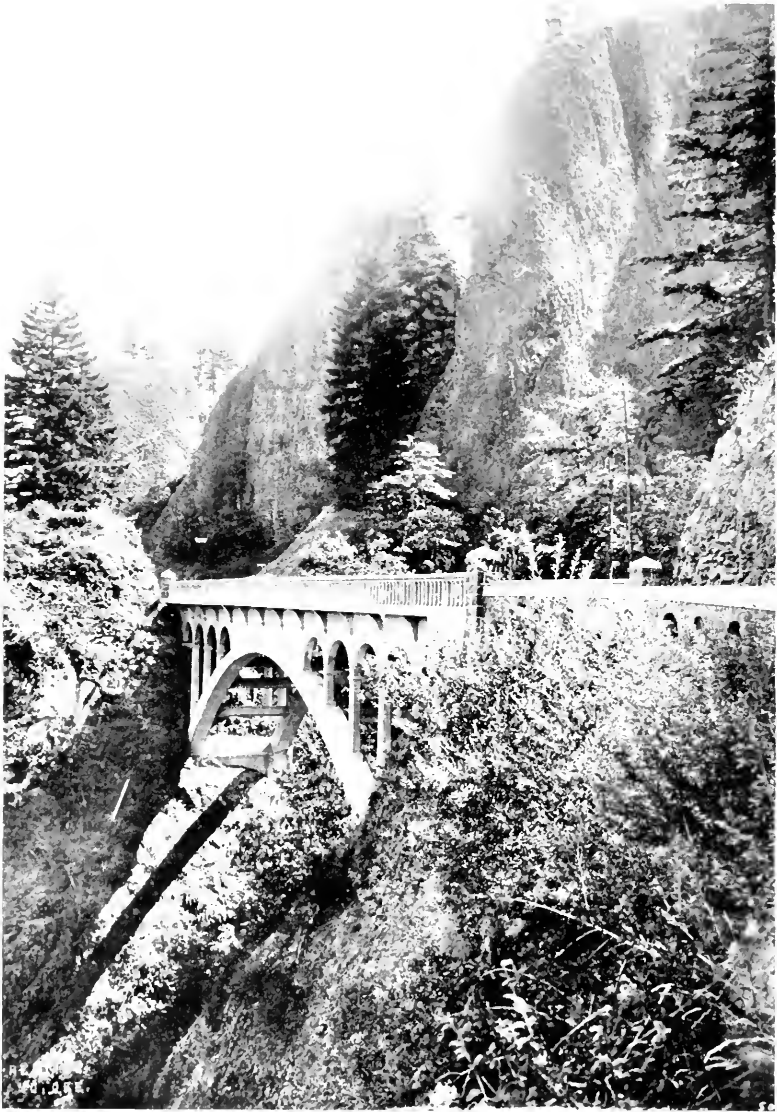
It was a horrible indignity to heap upon *Imshallah* (and, after the way she had displayed her resentment following her garbage shower under the Wenatchee bridge, I knew that spirited lady would make me pay dear for it if ever she had the chance) ; still—dead beat as I was—there was nothing else to do but to head into that oleaginous belt of calm and make the best of it. The wind still took a deal of bucking, but with the banging of the waves at an end my progress was greatly accelerated. Hailing the black devils on the bank, I asked where the nearest village was concealed, to learn that Moosier was a couple of miles below, but well back from the river. They rather doubted that I could find my way to the town across

the mudflats, but thought it might be worth trying in preference to pushing on in the dark to Hood River.

Those imps of darkness were right about the difficulty of reaching Moosier after nightfall. A small river coming in at that point seemed to have deposited a huge bar of quicksand all along the left bank, and I would never have been able to make a landing at all had not a belated duck-hunter given me a hand. After tying up to an oar, he very courteously undertook to pilot me to the town through the half-overflowed willow and alder flats. As a consequence of taking the lead, it was the native rather than the visitor who went off the caving path into the waist-deep little river. Coming out of the woods, a hundred-yards of slushing across a flooded potato-patch brought us to the railway embankment, and from there it was comparatively good going to the hotel. Luckily, the latter had a new porcelain tub and running hot water, luxuries one cannot always be sure of in the smaller Columbia River towns.

It was just at the close of the local apple season, and I found the hotel brimming over with departing packers. Most of the latter were girls from Southern California orange-packing houses, imported for the season. Several of them came from Anaheim, and assured me that they had packed Valencias from a small grove of mine in that district. They were a good deal puzzled to account for the fact that a man with a Valencia grove should be "hobo-ing" round the country like I was, and seemed hardly to take me seriously when I assured them it was only a matter of a year or two before all farmers would be hobos.

CITY OF PORTLAND WITH MT. HOOD IN THE DISTANCE



BRIDGE ON COLUMBIA HIGHWAY NEAR PORTLAND, OREGON

It's funny how apple-packing seems to bring out all the innate snobbery in a lady engaging in that lucrative calling; they didn't seem to think tramping was quite respectable. I slept on the parlour couch until three in the morning, when I "inherited" the room occupied by a couple of packettes departing by the Portland train. As they seem to have been addicted to *"attar of edelweiss,"* or something of the kind, and there hadn't been time for fumigation, I rather regretted making the shift.

When I had splashed back to the river in the morning, I found that *Imshallah* anxious to hide the shame of that oil-bath, had spent the night trying to bury herself in the quicksand. Dumping her was out of the question, and I sank mid-thigh deep two or three times myself before I could persuade the sulking minx even to take the water. I knew she would take the first chance that offered to rid herself of the filth, just as she had before; but, with no swift water above the Cascades, there seemed small likelihood of her getting out-of-hand. Knowing that she was quite equal to making a bolt over the top of that terrible cataract if she hadn't managed to effect some sort of purification before reaching there, I made an honest attempt at conciliation by landing at the first solid beach I came to and giving her oily sides a good swabbing down with a piece of carpet. That seemed to mollify the temperamental lady a good deal, but just the same I knew her too well to take any chances.

Of all the great rivers in the world, there are only two that have had the audacity to gouge a course straight through a major range of mountains. These

are the Brahmaputra, which clove a way through the Himalaya in reaching the Bay of Bengal from Tibet, and the Columbia, which tore the Cascades asunder in making its way to the Pacific. But the slow process of the ages by which the great Asian river won its way to the sea broke its heart and left it a lifeless thing. It emerges from the mountains with barely strength enough to crawl across the most dismal of deltas to lose its identity in the brackish estuaries at its many insignificant mouths. The swift stroke by which the Cascades were parted for the Columbia left "The Achilles of Rivers" unimpaired in vigour. It rolls out of the mountains with a force which endless æons have not weakened to a point where it was incapable of carrying the silt torn down by its erosive actions far out into the sea. It is the one great river that does not run for scores, perhaps hundreds, of miles through a flat, monotonous delta; the one great stream that meets the ocean strength for strength. The Nile, the Niger, the Amazon, the Yangtse, the Mississippi—all of the other great rivers—find their way to the sea through miasmic swamps; only the Columbia finishes in a setting worthy of that in which it takes its rise. Nay, more than that. Superlative to the last degree as is the scenery along the Columbia, from its highest glacial sources in the Rockies and Selkirks right down to the Cascades, there is not a gorge, a vista, a panorama, a cascade of which I cannot truthfully say: "That reminds me of something I have seen before." The list would include the names of most of the scenic wonders that the world has come to know as the ultimate expression

of the grand and the sublime; but in time my record of comparisons would be complete. But for the distinctive grandeur of that fifty miles of cliff-walled gorge where the Columbia rolls through its Titan-torn rift in the Cascades, I fail completely to find a comparison. It is unique; without a near-rival of its kind.

Because so many attempts—all of them more or less futile—have been made to describe the Cascade Gorge of the Columbia, I shall not rush in here with word pictures where even railway pamphleteers have failed. The fact that several of the points I attained in the high Selkirks are scarcely more than explored, and that many stretches I traversed of the upper river are very rarely visited, must be the excuse for such essays at descriptions as I have now and then been tempted into in the foregoing chapters. That excuse is not valid in connection with the Cascade Gorge, and, frankly, I am mighty glad of the chance to side-step the job. I must beg leave, however, to make brief record of an interesting "scenic coincidence" that was impressed on my mind the afternoon that I pulled through the great chasm of the Cascades.

It was a day of sunshine and showers, with the clouds now revealing, now concealing the towering mountain walls on either hand. The almost continuous rains of the last four days had greatly augmented the flow of the streams, and there was one time, along toward evening, that I counted seven distinct waterfalls tumbling over a stretch of tapestried cliff on the Oregon side not over two miles in length. And while these shimmering ribbons of fluttering satin were still

within eye-scope, a sudden shifting of the clouds uncovered in quick succession three wonderful old volcanic cones—Hood, to the south, Adams, to the north, and a peak which I think must have been St. Helens to the west. Instantly the lines of Tennyson's *Lotos Eaters* came to my mind.

> "A land of streams! some, like a downward smoke,
> Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go;
> And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke,
> Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
> They saw the gleaming river seaward flow
> From the inner land: far off, three mountain-tops,
> Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
> Stood sunset-flushed; and, dew'd with showery drops,
> Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse."

Tennyson, of course, was writing of some tropic land thirty or forty degrees south of Oregon, for in the next verse he speaks of palms and brings the "mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters" swimming about the keel; and yet there is his description, perfect to the last, least word, of what any one may see in a not-too-cloudy day from the right point on the lower Columbia.

The Hood and the White Salmon flow into the Columbia almost opposite each other, the former from Mount Hood, to the south, and the latter from Mount Adams, to the north. White Salmon, perched on the mountains of the Washington side, is, so far as I can recall, the "Swiss-iest" looking village in America. At close range it would doubtless lose much of its picturesqueness, but from the river it is a perfect bit

of the Tyrol or the Bernese-Oberland. The Hood River Valley is one of the very richest in all the West, running neck-and-neck with Yakima and Wenatchee for the Blue Ribbon honours of North-western apple production. It is also becoming a dairying centre of considerable importance. I was genuinely sorry that my "through" schedule made it impossible to visit a valley of which I had heard so much and so favourably.

Nearing the Cascades, I headed over close to the Oregon bank for a glimpse of the famous "sunken forest." This is one of the strangest sights on the lower river. For a considerable distance I pulled along the stumps of what had once been large forest trees, the stubby boles showing plainly through the clear water to a very considerable depth. There is some division of opinion as to whether these trees were submerged following the damming up of the river by the slide which formed the Cascades, or whether they have slid in from the mountainside at a later date. As there is still enough of a riverward earth-movement to necessitate a realignment of the rails on the south bank of the Cascades, it is probable that the latter is the correct theory. The self-preservative character of Oregon pine is proverbial, but it hardly seems reasonable to believe that it would last through the very considerable geologic epoch that must have elapsed since the Cascades were formed.

Hugging the Oregon shore closely, I pulled down toward the head of the Cascades canal. The water continued almost lake-like in its slackness even after the heavy rumble of the fall began to beat upon the

air. I was taking no chances of a last-minute bolt from the still restive *Imshallah,* however, and skirted the sandy bank so closely that twice I found myself mixed up in the remains of the past season's salmon-traps. Passing a big sawmill, I entered the canal and kept rowing until I came plump up against the lofty red gates. An astonishingly pretty girl who peered down from above said she didn't know what a lock-master was (being only a passenger waiting for the steamer herself), but thought a man hammering on the other side of the gate looked like he might be something of that kind. She was right. The lock-master said he would gladly put me through, but would be greatly obliged if I would wait until he locked down the steamer, as he was pretty busy at the moment. That would give me half an hour to go down and size up the tail of the Cascades, which I would have to run immediately on coming out at the foot of the lock.

There is a fall of twenty-five feet at the Cascades, most of it in the short, sharp pitch at the head. It is this latter stretch that is avoided by the canal and locks, the total length of which is about half a mile. The two lock chambers are identical in dimensions, each being ninety feet by four hundred and sixty-five in the clear. They were opened to navigation in 1896, and were much used during the early years of the present century. With the extension of the railways, (especially with the building of the "North-bank" line), and the improvement of the roads, with the incidental increase of truck-freighting, it became more and more difficult for the steamers to operate

profitably even on the lower river. One after another they had been taken off their runs, until the *J. N. Teal,* for which I was now waiting, was the last steamer operating in a regular service on the Columbia above Portland.

Opening the great curving gates a crack, the lock-master admitted *Imshallah* to the chamber, from where—in the absence of a ladder—I climbed up fifty feet to the top on the beams of the steel-work. That was a pretty stiff job for a fat man, or rather one who had so recently been fat. I was down to a fairly compact two hundred and twenty by now, but even that required the expenditure of several foot-tons of energy to lift it out of that confounded hole. The main fall of the Cascades was roaring immediately on my right, just beyond the narrow island that had been formed when the locks and canal were constructed. It was indeed a viciously-running chute, suggesting to me the final pitch of the left-hand channel of Rock Island Rapids rather than Grand Rapids, to which it is often compared. I had heard that on rare occasions steamers had been run down here at high water; at the present stage it looked to me that neither a large nor a small boat would have one chance in a hundred of avoiding disaster.

The canal and locks avoided that first heavy fall of the Cascades completely, but the swift tumble of waters below was quite rough enough to make a preliminary survey well worth while. The steamer channel was on the Washington side, so that it was necessary for a boat to head directly across the current immediately on emerging from the lower lock

chamber. The Oregon side of the river was thick with rocks right away round the bend, with not enough clear water to permit the passage of even a skiff. My course, therefore, would have to be the same as that of the steamer—just as sharply across to the opposite side as oars would take me. I had put *Imshallah* through worse water than that a score of times, and, while it wasn't the sort of a place where one would want to break an oar or even catch a "crab," there was no reason to believe that we should have the least trouble in pulling across the hard-running swirls. Of course, if *Imshallah* really was still smarting under the indignity of that oilbath. . . . But no—I honestly think there was nothing of distrust of my well-tried little skiff behind my sudden change of plans. Rather, I should say, it was due to the fact that a remark of the lock-master had brought me to a sudden realization that I now arrived at what I had always reckoned as my ultimate objective—tide-water.

I had been planning to run on four miles farther to Bonneville that afternoon, in the hope of being able to pull through the forty miles of slackening water to Vancouver the following day. There I would get a tug to take the skiff up the Willamette to Portland, where I intended to leave her. As some of the finest scenery on the Columbia is passed in the twenty miles below the Cascades, this promised me another memorable day on the river—provided that there was only an occasional decent interval between showers. It was the lock-master's forecast of another rainy day, together with his assurance that the foot of the locks was generally rated as the head of tide-water, that

prompted me to change my mind a few moments before I was due to pull out again to the river, and book through to Portland on the *Teal.*

With the idea of avoiding the wash of the steamer, I pulled down to the extreme lower end of the locks before she entered, taking advantage of the interval of waiting to trim carefully and look to my oars for the pull across the foot of the Cascades. I was intending to let the *Teal* lock out ahead of me, and then pull as closely as possible in her wake, so as to have her below me to pick up the pieces in case anything went wrong. It was close to twilight now, with the sodden west darkening early under the blank grey cloud-mass of another storm blowing up-river from the sea. If that impetuous squall could have curbed its impatience and held off a couple of minutes longer, it might have had the satisfaction of treating me to a good soaking, if nothing more. As it was, I flung up my hands and *kamerad-ed* at the opening pelt of the big rain-drops. Speaking as one Columbia River skipper to another, I hailed the Captain of the *J. N. Teal* and asked him if he would take me and my boat aboard.

"Where bound?" he bawled back.

"Portland," I replied.

"Aw right. Pull up sta'bo'd bow lively—'fore gate open!"

A dozen husky roustabouts, urged on by an impatient Mate, scrambled to catch the painter and give us a hand-up. I swung over the side all right, but *Imshallah,* hanging back a bit, came in for some pretty rough pulling and hauling before they got her on

deck. The two of three of her planks that were started in the mélee constituted about the worst injury the little lady received on the whole voyage.

And so *Imshallah* and I came aboard the *J. N. Teal* to make the last leg of our voyage as passengers. The gates were turning back before I had reached the upper deck, and a few minutes later the powerfully-engined old stern-wheeler went floundering across the foam-streaked tail of the Cascades and off down the river. Castle Rock—nine hundred feet high and sheer-walled all around—was no more than a ghostly blur in the darkness as we slipped by in the still rapidly moving current. Multnomah's majesty was blanked behind the curtain of night and a driving rain, and only a distant roar on the port beam told where one of the loveliest of American waterfalls took its six-hundred-foot leap from the brink of the southern wall of the river. Cape Horn and Rooster Rock were swathed to their foundations in streaming clouds.

Once the *Teal* was out on the comparatively open waters of the lower river, the Captain came down for a yarn with me—as one Columbia skipper to another. He had spent most of his life on the Snake and lower Columbia, but he seemed to know the rapids and canyons below the Canadian line almost reef by reef, and all of the old skippers I had met by reputation. He said that he had never heard of any one's ever having deliberately attempted to run the Cascades in anything smaller than a steamer, although an endless lot of craft had come to grief by getting in there by accident. The only time a man ever went through in a

small boat and came out alive was about ten years ago. That lucky navigator, after drinking most of a Saturday night in the town, came down to the river in the dim grey dawn of a Sunday, got into his boat and pushed off. It was along toward church-time that a ferry-man, thirty miles or more down river, picked up a half filled skiff. Quietly sleeping in the stern-sheets, with nothing but his nose above water, was the only man that ever came through the Cascades in a small boat.

The Captain looked at me with a queer smile after he told that story. "I don't suppose you were heeled to tackle the Cascades just like that?" he asked finally.

And so, for the last time, I was taken for a bootlegger. But no—not quite the last. I believe it was the porter at Hotel Portland who asked me if—ahem! —if I had got away with anything from Canada. And for all of that incessant trail of smoke, no fire—or practically none.

The day of my arrival in Portland I delivered *Imshallah* up to the kindest-faced boat-house proprietor on the Willamette and told him to take his time about finding her a home with some sport-loving Oregonian who knew how to treat a lady right and wouldn't give her any kind of menial work to do. I told him I didn't want to have her work for a living under any conditions, as I felt she had earned a rest; and to impress upon whoever bought her that she was high-spirited and not to be taken liberties with, such as subjecting her to garbage shower-baths and similar indignities. He asked me if she had a name, and I told him that she hadn't—any more; that the one she

had been carrying had ceased to be in point now her voyage was over. It had been a very appropriate name for a boat on the Columbia, though, I assured him, and I was going to keep it to use if I ever made the voyage again.

Portland, although it is not directly upon the Columbia, has always made that river distinctively its own. I had realized that in a vague way for many years, but it came home to me again with renewed force now that I had arrived in Portland after having had some glimpse of every town and village from the Selkirks to the sea. (Astoria and the lower river I had known from many steamer voyages in the past.) Of all the thousands living on or near the Columbia, those of Portland still struck me as being the ones who held this most strikingly individual of all the world's rivers at most nearly its true value. With Portlanders, I should perhaps include all of those living on the river from Astoria to The Dalles. These, too, take a mighty pride in their great river, and regard it with little of that distrustful reproach one remarks so often on the upper Columbia, where the settlers see it bearing past their parched fields the water and the power that would mean the difference to them between success and disaster. When this stigma has been wiped out by reclamation (as it soon will be), without a doubt the plucky pioneers of the upper Columbia will see in their river many beauties that escape their troubled eyes to-day.

The early Romans made some attempt to give expression to their love of the Tiber in monuments and bridges. It would be hard indeed to conceive of any-

thing in marble or bronze, or yet in soaring spans of steel, that would give adequate expression to the pride of the people of the lower Columbia in their river; and so it is a matter of felicitation that they have sought to pay their tribute in another way. There was inspiration behind the conception of the idea of the Columbia Highway, just as there was genius and rare imagination in the carrying out of that idea. I have said that the Cascade Gorge of the Columbia is a scenic wonder apart from all others; that it stands without a rival of its kind. Perhaps the greatest compliment that I can pay to the Columbia Highway is to say that it is worthy of the river by which it runs.

(THE END)

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